



**URN:** 22-156

**Subject:** Rough Sleeping Update

**Report to:** ELT 24 August 2022  
Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee 15 September 2022

**Report by:** Nicola Turner, Housing Director

#### **SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS**

**This report provides information on the work undertaken to reduce the number of rough sleepers and the funding which has been secured/bids which are being developed to deliver extra services to support rough sleepers in the borough.**

#### **Recommendations:**

#### **That Committee:**

- 1. Note the update on the work of the Rough Sleeping Team and the external funding secured and being bid for.**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1** The report provides information on the work of the Rough Sleeping Team as well as a brief update on the wider Housing Options Service. It details specific funding which has been secured to support the Council's work on reducing rough sleeping.

#### **2. Rough Sleeping Team**

- 2.1** Since the Everyone In initiative in 2020, the Council has built upon and enhanced its approach to Rough Sleeping establishing a dedicated rough sleeping team within the Housing Options Service. Over this year and the next two years the focus of the team will to move from an approach led by interventions to support rough sleepers off the street to an approach which is prevention led in order to deliver a sustained reduction in rough sleeping across the borough.
- 2.2** The Rough Sleeping team consists of the following posts funded by RSI funding and directly employed by the Council:

- Rough Sleeping and Pathways Coordinator
- Landlord Liaison Officer

- Pathway Officer (complex cases)
- Pathway Outreach Officer x 3
- Reconnection and Assessment Officer – vacant
- Healthcare professional\* - vacant
- Mental Health Officer (0.5FTE) \* - vacant

\*The Council will be working collaboratively with East Norfolk Medical Practice (ENMP) to recruit these posts.

2.3 Whilst the Rough Sleeping Team as shown above are the Council's primary resource for reducing rough sleeping, they work collaboratively with the wider Housing Options Team and also with voluntary and statutory organisations as part of the wider system led approach.

2.4 The number of individuals sleeping rough does fluctuate, since November 2021 and the last formal annual count, the number of people known to be rough sleeping has reduced from 21 to 9 (29 July). Members are provided with monthly updates on the numbers of individuals rough sleeping and being supported by the team. The work of the team during the recent heatwave was featured in the Great Yarmouth Mercury team [see here](#).

### **3 Housing Options Service**

3.1 The Housing Options Service currently has four teams reflecting the additional temporary staff resourcing brought in to address the backlog of applications. This additional team is bringing down the backlog with a month-on-month reduction in housing applications which are yet to be assessed.

3.2 Work is currently underway to bring in a new waiting list and allocation system which will see the introduction of an online housing application form. Support will be available for applicants who will need assistance in applying. As part of the new system going live, the new Housing Allocations Scheme will go live. Prior to these changes going live, members will be notified of the final timescales for these changes and on the arrangements for applicants to re-apply.

3.3 Within the Housing Options Team there are a number of posts which are funded using external monies:

- Domestic Abuse Advisor – funded by DLUHC Domestic Abuse New Burdens monies, supporting victims of abuse and leading on the project to achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation.
- Ex Offender Officer – this post is one of a number of posts across Norfolk. Funding was originally to expire in September 2022, but a successful bid was made to extend the service until the 31 March 2023. A future bid to extend the post is due to be submitted to extend funding to March 2025.
- Homelessness Prevention Case Worker x 3 – these posts are funded by Norfolk County Council via the Council's contract with Bridges Outcomes Partnership. Originally funding two posts, a one year additional post was agreed reflecting the Council's exceeding its KPI referral numbers.

### **4. New Funding – Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant (RSDATG3) Funding**

4.1 Earlier this year, Public Health were informed by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) that an allocation of funding under the above programme was to be made to the Great Yarmouth area. The amount of funding was not advised and Public Health

were invited to submit proposals setting out the amount of funding sought and providing a clear rationale and use of the funding. Working collaboratively with the Council and the voluntary and statutory services in the borough, a bid proposal was produced. DLUHC have now confirmed the award of funding as follows:

2022/23 Allocation	2023/24 Allocation
£392,811	£523,747

The Council is one of 83 districts and 5 pan-London areas awarded RSDATG funding.

4.2 The emphasis of the funding is to provide wraparound and engagement teams which address existing gaps in service provision and which improve both initial access to treatment and sustained treatment for rough sleepers with drug and/or alcohol addictions. The proposal recognised the existing effective multi-agency working and focused on addressing gaps or weaknesses in provision. Whilst the proposal delivers extra posts to achieve this, one of the fundamental aspects of the proposal submitted is also to upskill existing staff in supported housing so they have the skills and confidence to be able to manage former rough sleepers who may drink and/or use drugs on premises. Currently this behaviour is generally not tolerated and leads to evictions which can then be a barrier to that individual’s ability to access or maintain treatment.

4.3 Reflecting the multi-agency response to rough sleeping, new posts funded by RSDATG will be hosted by a number of agencies. The Council will host three (potentially four) of the posts as part of the Rough Sleeping Team. Public Health will take on responsibility for the required funding reporting.

**5. Funding Bid – Mental Health Clinical Led service**

5.1 In July, Norfolk County Council submitted an EOI on behalf of Norfolk for new funding to support rough sleepers who have mental health problems. Additional funding is being provided through the NHS England and NHS Improvement (Eastern Region) team to improve support for rough sleepers with complex mental health needs. The funding allows for an area to become a “high needs rough sleeping site”, with sites in Luton, Milton Keynes and Southend already established. Funding is available in 2022/3 to mobilise and establish services by the start of Q4 with the full allocation of funding in 2023/4 available to deliver the service. Funding would then be rolled over into future years into core health funding.

5.2 The Norfolk EOI was developed collaboratively and at pace. The funding requires a clinical led approach to supporting rough sleepers which is welcomed reflecting the number of rough sleepers who have diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health conditions. The EOI was one of three successful EOI asked to submit a final proposal. The feedback on the EOI was to focus on a smaller geographical area, which the county wide group have agreed will now only be the borough of Great Yarmouth. If the final proposal is approved, a dedicated mental health clinician would be appointed to work within the Council’s Rough Sleeping Team and as part of the system of statutory and voluntary services, although they would be employed by the Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT).

5.3 The approach proposed in the final proposal reflects the RSDATG funding and addresses an existing gap in service provision which the RSDATG funded services cannot support – clinical support. The new service would share learning across Norfolk to support future bids for funding to extend the service to other parts of Norfolk.

## **6.0 Supported Housing Provision**

6.1 In recognition of the lack of supported housing available to rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping, the Council has successfully bid via the DLUHC/Homes England Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme for capital and revenue funding to deliver:

- **Housing First Scheme**

Providing five self-contained homes for rough sleepers who have multiple support needs. All five homes have been purchased of which two are now occupied and the remaining three allocated and awaiting their new residents once furnished. Access Community Trust were procured to deliver the dedicated support service. The new service is working well.

- **Transitional Housing Scheme**

Acquisition of six properties from a private developer to meet the needs of rough sleepers with low/medium support needs. The purchase is ongoing. Due to the level of revenue funding, it is proposed that the Council directly provides the support service by recruiting a dedicated Support Worker post.

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **8. Risk Implications**

8.1 There are no risk implications associated with this report.

## **9. Legal Implications**

9.1 The Council will enter into a funding agreement with Norfolk County Council in relation to the RSDAG3 funded posts which the Council will host and manage.

## **10. Conclusions**

10.1 The report provides an update on the work of the Rough Sleeping Team and the collaborative work which taken place in bidding for external funding to fund new posts which will bolster the services available to address drug and alcohol addictions of rough sleepers and to support rough sleepers with their mental health – both of which can be a barrier to successful moving away from the street. The report also provides a brief update on the wider Housing Options Service including the external funded posts within the service.

## **11. Background Papers**

Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme Bid – Transitional Housing Scheme. Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee 19 May 2022 and Council 23 June 2022

Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme Bid – Housing First Scheme. Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee 23 September 2021 and Council 28 September 2021

Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan 2020 – Policy and Resources Committee 28 July 2020 and Council 30 July 2020

Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Via ELT
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Via ELT
Existing Council Policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2023</li> <li>• Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan 2020</li> </ul>
Financial Implications (including VAT and tax):	None
Legal Implications (including human rights):	Discussed in report
Risk Implications:	None
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	The needs of individuals who are rough sleepers or at risk of rough sleeping with protected characteristics have been considered in the development of the bids for funding set out in this report and in the Council's support of rough sleepers.
Crime & Disorder:	None in relation to the adoption of the policy.
Every Child Matters:	Not applicable