

**Torbay's Housing Crisis Review – Implementation Monitoring Report****Report to Torbay's Housing Crisis Review Panel – 25 October 2022**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Cabinet Response:</b>	<b>Update:</b>
1.	To request officers to lobby the Government and Valuation Office in-year providing the evidence base to demonstrate the huge increase in cost of rent in order to request that the Local Housing Allowance is increased in-year and going forward (consideration to be given if other areas having a similar position to us and joining up with them).	Initial contact has been made with the valuation office and an assessment done of local LHA rates compared to neighbours and the average rent by accommodation type. Cornwall's approach is also being explored in that a wider strategic assessment of the market and increased property prices has been undertaken. Further strategic work will be conducted to assess and link in with relevant statistical partners either to benchmark and or in a joint approach central government.  <b>Lead Officer:</b> Tara Harris	No further progress has been made on influencing LHA rates.

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2.	To consider paying private landlords more than the standard one month deposit (normally the equivalent to one month's rent) to encourage them to rent properties to care experienced young people to give them more confidence they will not be left out of pocket once the young person has moved on.	<p>For those who are care experienced a leaving care grant is awarded. Discretionary Housing Payments are also used.</p> <p>The current assistance will be reviewed appreciating that a case by case basis maybe required due to circumstances and property availability.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer:</b> Becky Thompson/Tara Harris</p>	In respect of all care experienced young people, the Local Offer provides for one month's rent and one month's deposit to be provided in respect of any private accommodation. However, on a case by case basis, a presentation to the Access to Resources Panel can be made to extend this to six months' rent and one month's deposit, to provide this assurance to private landlords. This process has been operational for many months, with a number of care experienced young people successfully moving on to privately rented accommodation as a result. Similar processes are also in place within Housing Options to ensure connectivity across services.
3.	To request that officers progress the Rightsizing Project as a priority to explore appropriate incentives and support to make it easier and encourage people living in accommodation that is too large for their need to downsize to free up the accommodation for larger families, working across all Registered Housing Providers and Devon Home Choice to	This project has been instigated with engagement from all the significant RP's in Torbay accounting for the majority of the housing stock. A partnership action plan is currently being developed looking at the reasons why, incentives required and scale/impact of the project.	A partnership action plan has now been developed. A financial assessment is being finalised with a report to SLT in November. Similar discussions are also being undertaken in the relevant RP's to be able to progress the project including the allocation of funds.

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	<p>maximise the use of suitable housing stock within Torbay.</p>	<p>It is essential that this project also links in with strategic housing development opportunities, to enable appropriate move on homes to be accesses, that are suitable in the right locations for families to stay connected and supported.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer:</b> Tara Harris</p>	
4.	<p>To request that provision of new accommodation for care experienced young people should be a priority for TorVista Homes and other registered housing providers.</p>	<p>TorVista Homes are keen to work with Children's services to better understand their accommodation needs and work together to develop a suite of solutions to help increase the supply and deliver positive outcomes. This was also supported by other Registered Providers as outlined in feedback from the Strategic Housing Board. We will ensure that we are following up with specialist providers.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer:</b> Liam Montgomery</p>	<p>Off the shelf purchases has been added to the TorVista business plan for this client group to ensure the needs can be met. Other solutions are also being considered including leasing properties and also direct delivery. Children's are in the process of providing detail on their requirements so that delivery can be modelled more accurately.</p>
5.	<p>To explore options to enable more care experienced young people to remain longer term with their foster carers.</p>	<p>We currently as of December 2021 have 30% of our eighteen-year-old care experienced young people in a Staying Put arrangement which reflects a significant year on year increase: 2019/20 YTD 6%, 2020/21 15% and YTD figure is 30%. We will</p>	<p>Staying Put is a statutory responsibility that is offered to all cared for children in foster care at the age of 18. However, although this is positive and gives support it is not a permanent resolution nor does it offer long term security, these young</p>

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		<p>be reviewing the Staying Put Policy and Offer by April 2022.</p> <p>Of our 64 cared for young people, 29 are identified as strong likelihood of converting into Staying Put arrangements with their former foster carers post-eighteen (45%).</p> <p>We are planning to review our Staying Put Offer, and in order to do this meaningfully, this needs to be done with our fostering families. Therefore, we are planning to seek feedback from our fostering families by email and focus group before meeting to review the Offer and consider any amendments of changes necessary.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer:</b> Nancy Meehan</p>	<p>people still require move on accommodation at 21 with the local authority having corporate parenting responsibility for them up to the age of 25. Therefore, this is not a permanent solution for care experienced young people and there is still a requirement for the provision of alternative housing accommodation.</p>
6.	To explore options for Banding in Devon Home Choice to see if care experienced young people can be given a higher priority and what processes are in place.	The Personal Advisor in Children Services currently refers the care experienced young person to Move-On Panel if they are in housing need a Band B is awarded, if need is assessed. This is standard policy across Devon Home Choice partnership. The extracts from the policy are:	Completed as per previous update.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ready for Move on from Supported Accommodation within Devon (including care leavers) (Band B)</li> <li>• The Devon Home Choice Policy states that applicants living in supported accommodation in Devon who are assessed as being ready to move on will be placed in the High housing need band (Band B).</li> </ul> <p>As such B Bands are awarded. A process and policy review will be undertaken including opportunities to streamline the process and hence reduce delays.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer:</b> Tara Harris</p>	
7.	That a dedicated resource should be appointed to carry out appropriate enforcement on poor standards of accommodation. That resource and to bring empty properties back into use and an additional resource should be appointed to chase developers to progress sites which are not coming forward but have received planning	<p>In response to the budget consultation, posts have been identified and have been included as part of the budget proposals.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer:</b> Tara Harris (Housing Standards and Empty Homes) David Edmondson (Housing</p>	Resource for Empty Property work will be in place from 1 December to deliver the policy that has already been produced. Due to staffing challenges and the inability to recruit qualified staff, alternative interventions have been put in through CAB to provide advocacy support to assist tenants, as complaints received by the

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	<p>permission; this is all linked to the establishment of the housing enabling role in-house. <b>(Note: this recommendation has been included as one of the recommendations from the Priorities &amp; Resources Panel review of the Revenue and Capital Budget 2022/2023.)</b></p>	<p>Enablement)</p>	<p>department are falling. It is considered that this is because of the inability to source alternative accommodation and concerns over rental increases by tenants. Alternative arrangement are also being out in place with a focus more on energy efficiency as excess cold is the main housing issues experienced.</p> <p>List of Sites that are subject to Section 215 Notes (untidy sites) drawn up and prioritising and costing of works being undertaken. Assisting in appearance but also potential re-use. One such site currently the subject of a live planning application for conversion to flats.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>To explore how the Council will resource the investigative work required from April 2022 to confirm the availability and actual short-term letting of residential properties (holiday lets/Airbnb) linked to the changes in Council Tax and Business Rates coming into force from April 2023 which requires proof over the previous 12 months to ensure that the appropriate taxes are collected from the owners of these properties.</p>	<p>A full review of resource is currently being concluded to enable this work to be undertaken, whilst also progressing other government initiatives that have been implemented and recently announced. The same resource is therefore currently being drawn upon to deliver the additional work related to Business Grant Scheme, Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF) and the significant impact of Council Tax rebate related to fuel. It is also</p>	<p>Significant work pressures remain on the service. This is due to the implementation of government grant schemes and in addressing the backlog of work as a result of the diversion of resources to meet these requirements.</p>

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		<p>anticipated that additional schemes will also be announced.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer:</b> Tara Harris</p>	
9.	<p>To request that officers provide more regular communication to raise awareness of what the Council is doing to address the housing crisis and to highlight the options and support available to local residents and improve engagement and support to community housing groups.</p>	<p>A landlord campaign was launched at the beginning of March to access more affordable private rented accommodation and improve engagement. A detailed communications action plan will be developed and implemented raising awareness and actions being undertaken by the Council whilst working with partners to address homelessness.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer:</b> Tara Harris (Homelessness agenda) David Edmondson/Local Housing Community Groups (Housing development and supply)</p>	<p>Regular communications have been released on the housing crisis and information related to assistance for financial support. All Housing Options webpages have been updated and will be live at end of October to assist with preventing homelessness. The Housing Options team have been going through a process of recruitment to ensure that sufficient staff are in place to deal with demand. Staffing structures have therefore now stabilised, and a campaign related to prevention and seeking winter let accommodation will not be launched at the beginning of November, as enquiry's can be resources appropriately.</p> <p>The local Community Housing Group now included on the Torbay Housing Development Partnership, working with them on potential sites in the area.</p>

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10.	To request that officers look at good practice from other local authorities when refreshing the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to see how we can encourage the development of more larger family homes, single units, units for care experienced young people or units to assist adults with a disability to live independently.	<p>This matter will be picked up by the existing Housing Delivery Group as part of their role to oversee, review and implement the Torbay Housing Strategy Delivery Plan. Internal consultation to start on revised SPD in mid-March.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer:</b> David Edmondson</p>	<p>Consultation completed in early October on the revised SPD, responses being assessed and summarised for December Cabinet report. Good engagement with colleagues at Homes England, with other good practice examples. Also, have had input from our own Torbay Strategic Housing Board.</p> <p>These matters also being addressed in part through revised housing policies as part of the current Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation, which closes on 21st November.</p>
11.	To request that officers be encouraged to be more creative to make best use of sites to ensure that they are maximised, including considering greater density and higher developments and to review relevant Policies, where necessary, to enable this to be acceptable within our Policies; and to undertake a structured review of policies which have an impact on housing delivery to ensure that there are (a) no irrelevant/old policies, (b) no elements of policy which conflict with each other	<p>This matter will be picked up by the existing Housing Delivery Group as part of their role to oversee, review and implement the Torbay Housing Strategy Delivery Plan. However, it will also be addressed through the review of other Policy documents including the Torbay Building Heights Strategy and in consultation with relevant key stakeholders and Neighbourhood Forums. Higher density development will need to be</p>	<p>Higher density schemes being discussed, despite a reluctance by housebuilders to consider higher rise developments following Building regulation changes and soaring costs.</p> <p>Town centre regeneration sites particular focus for greater densities and making the best use of our Brownfield Development Sites is the priority.</p>



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	e.g. not several top priorities, (c) no policies which are too detailed and indirectly make development stagnate, and (d) whether policies encourage development.	located in the right places and respect the character of the existing area.  <b>Lead Officer:</b> David Edmondson	Specific sites can accommodate greater heights of development, but there is a need to revisit the Torbay Building Heights Strategy document.
12.	To request officers to be more robust in challenging developers to ensure that they are maximising the development potential of the site and providing sufficient affordable housing either within the development or via Section 106 contributions and to use experienced professionals to challenge developers assumptions and to follow up on outcomes with clawback mechanisms.	This matter will be picked up by the existing Housing Delivery Group as part of their role to oversee, review and implement the Torbay Housing Strategy Delivery Plan.  <b>Lead Officer:</b> David Edmondson	Strong discussions taking place between Housing Enabling Officer and developers agents, during negotiations with both developers and Registered Providers on new and existing Section 106 Agreements, to ensure the Council achieves the maximum amount of affordable and social rented properties. This matter will also be picked up on in the revised Torbay Housing Strategy - Action Plan, as that is developed. Homes England coming to provide additional training for Officers on these matters.
13.	To identify a named person to take forward the actions arising from the recommendations of the Board.	As identified above.	Complete