**HOMELESSNESS FORUM**

**TVBC, CONFERENCE ROOM 1, BEECH HURST, WEYHILL ROAD, ANDOVER SP10 3AJ**

**Minutes of the Homelessness Forum Held 12 December 2016**

Present: Karen Thorburn, Barbara Ward (TVBC Housing Options) , Windebank, Jane (TVBC Development Manager), Deborah Vincent (TVBC Private Sector Housing Manager) Elizabeth Wallington(Hampshire Home Choice Manager). Janice Broomfield (TVBC Head of Revenues), Dawn Elson (Test Valley Community Services), Cllr Mrs Hawke (TVBC Portfolio Holder), Jan Lefley (Supporting Families), Yvonne freeman (Early Help Hub and Troubled Families), Kerrie Green (Two Saints), James McDermott (Two Saints), Barbara Allen (Andover Mind), Jane Harri (NHS), Samuel Knight (DWP), Sharon Green(DWP), Tom J (CAB), Allan Appleby (Probation), 'Sara Craig (Inclusion–Drug and Alcohol), Julie Lawrence (EHH), Yvonne McCauley (Aster),'YoungMumsMatter, Debra Ramchurn (Andover Mind).

Apologies: Keith Sutcliffe (Housing, TVBC), Paul Markham (Hampshire Police), Siobhan Down (Yellow Brick Road).

1. **Introduction & Welcome**

KT opened the forum with a welcome to everyone and there was a quick introduction by each individual around the table.

1. **Preventing Homelessness Strategy 2016 – 2019 Update**

The Strategy went ‘live’ in June 2016 and one of the actions from the Strategy was for the Homelessness Forum to regularly update the Delivery Plan within the Preventing Homelessness Strategy.

KT reminded the meeting of the 6 six main priorities on the Delivery Plan and the meeting discussed and updated the plan in light of recent legislative changes and progress made against the actions detailed in the Strategy.

KT thanked the meeting for their contributions and advised that the Delivery Plan would be updated to incorporate progress to date and will be regularly reviewed by the Forum.

1. **Homelessness Reduction Bill**

The forum received a briefing on the Homelessness Reduction Bill which has been tabled as a result of Private Members Bill. The Bill has received wide spread support from MP’s and homeless charities and will fundamentally change the duties of local authorities in relation to homelessness and prevention of homelessness.

The bill proposed significant changes to existing duties and introduces a number of new duties and will represent the most fundamental change to homelessness legislation since the introduction of the 1977 Act came into force.

The bill has been piloted in Wales & has been very successful. Local authorities will be required to take reasonable steps to:

1. prevent a person from becoming homeless (prevention) within 56 days:
2. a duty to relieve homelessness.

These new duties will be priority need and local connection blind. Each applicant will be entitled to a Personalised Housing Plan which will be reviewed regularly and reviewable. For further details please see the Homelessness Reduction Bill briefing attached to the minutes.

1. **Homeless Trailblazer Bid** – bid has been submitted to DCLG, incorporating TVBC, East Hants, Winchester CC, Eastleigh and Havant. We will know by Christmas whether it has been successful.

1. **Rough Sleeping Estimate/Count Update**

The count/estimate took place on 9th November across Hampshire. In Test Valley, the count will be an estimate. TV met with the key providers on 7th November and agreed the ground rules for the estimate, definition of a rough sleeper and how the results would be verified and reported.

The Estimate showed an increase in Test Valley from 3 in 2015 to 5 in 2016. The full results of the Hampshire authorities Rough Sleeper count/estimate was circulated.

Cllr Hawke asked if any of the rough sleepers were asked specific questions. She was advised that the agencies conducting the estimate would have engaged with the rough sleeper. However, not all rough sleepers were willing to divulge personal information.

A query was raised regarding what happens to all the information/stats that are collated. KT advised that the figure is verified by Homeless Link on behalf of the DCLG before the formal return is completed and returned.

1. **PEIRS, West Hampshire**

The **P**revention, **E**arly **I**ntervention & **R**esettlement **S**ervice is delivered by Two Saints and commenced in April 2016 on a 3 year contract. The service has been let by Hampshire County Council and is split across 3 lots in the county. PEIRS West covers Test Valley, Eastleigh, New Forest & Winchester.

There are 3 main elements of the service

* Prevention,
* Early Intervention & Resettlement.
* Community Support

The project has received good feedback from its partners. Two Saints reported that more and more of their referrals are seeking assistance with debt management and their community support service is over subscribed. Their accommodation based services at Dene Court is fully utilised and they are developing their stage 2 and move on accommodation based services at Bridge House, Stubbs and Turin Court.

Two Saints were able to clarify that their drop-in sessions will be held at Bridge House and The Rendezvous, in Andover. They are looking for suitable venues in Romsey to deliver the sessions in the south of the borough.

For further detail on the PEIRS project, please see attached presentation notes.

1. **Housing Strategy**

Jane Windebank (Housing Development Manager, TVBC) gave a presentation on the Housing Strategy 2016 – 2019.

The presentation provided an overview of the demographics of Test Valley and the contents of the Review of Housing Evidence and Assessed Housing Need in Test Valley.

The Housing Strategy provides the Council’s responses to the emerging priorities which are:

a) The Economy and Responding to new Legislation and Guidance

b) Housing Need

c) Housing Supply and Maximising Affordable Housing Development

d) Neighbourhood Planning and Community Benefit

e) Improving Housing Quality

The Housing Strategy 2016 – 2019, was adopted by Cabinet in November 2016 & will be published on our website.

An Action Plan has been developed setting out the key projects which will be undertaken under each priority & will be updated annually. Please see attached presentation notes for further information.

1. **Frequency of meetings**

The forums/meeting have been held annually, however, it was agreed that given the unprecedented level of current change around housing and in particular the homelessness reduction bill, the meetings should become more regular. It was agreed that future meetings would be held 6 monthly.

1. **AOB**

Housing Portfolio Holder, Cllr Hawke thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions. The next forum will be held in May 2017.