

**Report to Cabinet**

**Subject:** Temporary Accommodation

**Date:** 8 October 2020

**Authors:** Service Manager Economic Growth and Regeneration  
Housing and Welfare Support Manager

**Wards Affected:** All wards

**Purpose:**

To provide Cabinet with a progress update in respect of the work being undertaken to improve performance against the approved indicator (the average length of time spent in temporary accommodation), the submission of an application for external funding, to note the next steps for the Temporary Accommodation Officer Working group and obtain approval for the submission of an application to Homes England to obtain Investment Partner status.

**Key Decision**

This is not a key decision.

**Recommendation(s)**

**THAT Cabinet:**

- 1) **Notes the work which is being undertaken by the Temporary Accommodation Officer Working Group to improve performance of the average length of time spent in temporary accommodation performance indicator as set out in this report.**
- 2) **Notes the need for Gedling Borough Council to increase our access to temporary accommodation provision (as an alternative to B&B provision) within the Borough and the work being undertaken to identify the preferred option(s) to secure additional temporary accommodation.**
- 3) **Notes that an application has been made to Homes England for funding from the Next Steps Accommodation Programme.**
- 4) **Authorises an application to be made to Homes England for the Council**

**to obtain 'Investment Partner' status.**

## **1 Background**

### Context

- 1.1 At its meeting on 2 July 2020, Cabinet considered the Gedling Plan Quarter 4 and Year End Performance Report which included a summary of noteworthy performance indicators that had missed their target at the end of year. At that meeting Cabinet resolved to request a further report to Cabinet setting out progress made in relation to the underachieved performance targets. One of those performance indicators, in respect of Housing Needs, is *the average length of time spent in temporary accommodation (in weeks)*, which for 2019/20 was reported as 23.7 weeks against a target of 8 weeks (at that time). This reports provides the requested progress update in respect of this indicator.
- 1.2 During the 2020/21 quarter 1 performance monitoring it was discovered that the method previously used to calculate the performance indicator was incorrect, being based only on households leaving temporary accommodation during the quarter. This has now been rectified to include all households currently being accommodated in temporary accommodation and the quarter one figure reported to Cabinet was 17.9 weeks. This presents an improved position but is still in excess of the (revised) target of 15 weeks and performance still needs to improve. The target was amended to be more realistic in the current situation.
- 1.3 The Council has statutory duties to assist and, in specified circumstances, accommodate eligible individuals/ households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996. This includes a duty to provide interim accommodation whilst the Council is making enquiries as to whether a full housing duty is owed. In other words, the Council must find them temporary accommodation. Wherever the Council accommodates an applicant, it must ensure that the accommodation secured is suitable for the applicant and their household.
- 1.4 The Council currently have access to various properties, which it uses as temporary accommodation. This is a mixture of council-owned properties, and leased properties, providing 13 units of accommodation. Where these temporary accommodation options are fully occupied, the Council also utilises accommodation that is available on a nightly basis, primarily Bed and Breakfast (B&B) which are often outside of the Borough. This use of this type of accommodation has been increasing year on year since 2016/17. There are two main concerns linked this increase:
- **Health and well-being implications** – the facilities at a B&B mean that

cooking healthy meals in the accommodation is not possible and therefore adds to the costs of living as cooking facilities are not provided. Living in temporary accommodation can also affect mental health and well-being. Furthermore, the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities states that housing authorities should use B&B accommodation for applicants with family commitments only as a last resort and then only for a maximum of 6 weeks.

- **Significant cost implications** – nightly accommodation is often more expensive than other options (more details provided in section 2.3).

1.5 During 2019/20 the number of households accepted as homeless and placed in temporary accommodation was 141 an increase of 37 households compared to 2018/19. Between the 1<sup>st</sup> April and 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020, we have already placed 88 households in temporary accommodation. It is therefore projected that the total number of households requiring temporary accommodation in 2020/21 will again increase from the previous year figure of 141.

1.6 The average length of stay of in temporary accommodation during 2019/20 was 117 days (16.7 weeks), an increase of 34 days (4.9 weeks) from the previous year. Of the 141 cases eligible for temporary accommodation, 118 of these households were placed in nightly accommodation, including B&B, whilst either alternative more suitable temporary accommodation was secured or permanent accommodation was found. In total these 118 households were placed in B&B style accommodation at a net cost of £220,000

1.7 There are a variety of reasons why the use of temporary accommodation has increased in recent years:

- **Loss of affordable accommodation** - annually the Council is able to access around 200 social tenancies (for general needs and sheltered accommodation), however the majority of those properties are specifically for older persons, whereas the majority of homeless applicants (who the Council would be required to provide temporary accommodation for) are either singles or couples with families. The number of available general needs accommodation fell from 172 in 2018 to 131 in 2019 (and the number of sheltered properties stayed similar at around 85);
- **Reduced access to private sector** - previously the Council was also able to access affordable accommodation in the private rented sector, but as competition for private rented properties increases, landlords are charging higher rents which are no longer affordable for people in receipt of benefits;
- **Multiple and Complex needs** - more cases where people are presenting with multiple and complex needs, and without comprehensive support packages in place due to diminishing resources, landlords/housing providers are reluctant to offer tenancies;
- **Debt and anti-social behaviour** - If applicants, have significant

rent/mortgage arrears, or have been prosecuted for anti-social behaviour, landlords are very reluctant to offer tenancies;

- **Homelessness Reduction Act 2018** - This piece of legislation extended the level of support which LA's had to provide to people who are at risk of homelessness, and also reduced the impact of intentionality, making more people eligible for assistance; and
- **Welfare Reforms** - the impacts of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 were wide ranging, particularly with reference to the under occupancy tax, which caused many families financial hardships, and are still in place today. This impacted on Councils, as not only did they see an increase in the number of people presenting as homeless, but also families presenting at an earlier stage with the need to move from a 3 bed to a 2 bed roomed property in response to the reform.

1.8 Due to the increasing number of households being accepted as being owed a housing duty by the Council and placed in temporary accommodation for longer periods, and the consequent increased use of B&B accommodation, a corporate officer group was established ("Temporary Accommodation Officer Working group") in April 2019. This group comprises Officers from Strategic Housing and the Housing Needs teams with support from both finance and legal services, to review the Council's provision of temporary accommodation and other matters linked to temporary accommodation. The scope of the group includes:

- the implementation of homelessness prevention measures to reduce the number of households needing temporary accommodation;
- the supply of affordable housing to reduce the length of stay in temporary accommodation; and
- the options for the future provision of temporary accommodation in terms of suitability and cost effectiveness and based on an assessment of potential future demand.

## 2 **Proposal**

### 2.1 Current work programme

The Council has adopted the South Nottinghamshire Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy. This set the strategic direction for homeless prevention across Gedling, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe and outlines the key homelessness issues in South Nottinghamshire and sets our priorities for action. The strategy and action plan takes into account recent changes in guidance relating to homelessness and builds upon recent evidence of issues and good practice which have become available since the publication of the joint homelessness strategy in 2017. This provides the strategic steer.

2.2 In response to the Council's usage of temporary accommodation the Temporary Accommodation Officer Working group currently has two main streams of work:

- **Reducing time spent in temporary accommodation** – these are measures to improve the supply of, and access to, permanent accommodation and the prevention of homelessness thus reducing the need for temporary accommodation; and
- **Improving the provision of suitable temporary accommodation** – these are measures to improve the quality and the cost effectiveness of temporary accommodation.

## 2.3 Reducing the Time Spent in Temporary Accommodation

### **Improve the supply of permanent accommodation**

2.3.1 As detailed in paragraph 1.7, one of the main factors that impacts on the need to use temporary accommodation, is the amount of affordable properties available for people to move into. As part of the planning process and with the delivery of key housing sites, we are expecting an increase in the amount of affordable housing being provided as part of the private developments (secured through planning obligations given by the owner to the Council). This could have a significant impact on the Council's housing waiting list and should help to reduce the need for temporary accommodation. However, many of these developments have yet to start or have planning permission issued and therefore these are not guaranteed to be delivered. The level of delivery is uncertain and will have to be monitored carefully as this may impact on the need for temporary accommodation.

2.3.2 The Council is currently developing financial appraisals for the development of two sites owned by the Council at Burton Road and Station Road which could deliver around 17 dwellings (10 on Station Road site and 7 on Burton Road site). Options are being considered for these sites to deliver affordable housing with some units retained for use as temporary accommodation. A detailed business case is being prepared. These two capital projects will be subject to subsequent Cabinet consideration and approval.

### **Improve access to permanent accommodation**

2.3.3 Following legislative changes, the Council's Housing Allocation's Policy has been reviewed and revisions to the policy have been consulted on. A second round of public consultation is currently underway. The proposed changes are designed to ensure that people at risk of homelessness are given priority on the Council's waiting list. This should help to reduce the need for temporary accommodation, as a secure tenancy in permanent accommodation will be found more quickly. Any final changes are subject to a separate Cabinet approval.

### **Homelessness Prevention**

2.3.4 One of the main streams of work Officers are undertaking is linked to trying to prevent the threat of homelessness and the number of people presenting as homeless. This includes various initiatives:

- **Call Before You Serve** – this is a specialist support service for private landlords who are considering evicting a tenant, seeking possession or needing advice on tenancy support. This initiative is designed to provide independent advice and support to the landlord with the objective of preventing evictions. This service is funded across Nottinghamshire by the Rough Sleeping Initiative (<https://www.gedling.gov.uk/call-before-you-serve/>)
- **Advertising the housing needs service** – this is focused on ensuring local residents are aware of the help that the Council can provide, if they are at risk of being evicted or made homeless. Early intervention enables the best outcomes and is viewed as good practice by MHCLG We ran a 6 week bus campaign last year and have a targeted google search advert campaign ongoing (directing people specific to the Council's call before you serve website).
- **Youth/school engagement** - Broxtowe Youth Homeless have been commissioned to undertake a series of sessions with schools to help educate children about their housing options. This ran throughout the last school year across all the schools in the Borough (Covid19 permitting).
- **CAB in GP surgeries** – trial for the CAB to be located in one doctor's surgery and provide housing and debt advice to people who are also visiting the doctor with health problems.
- **Housing prevention officers** – the Council employs two housing prevention officers. Their role is to work with people to prevent them from becoming homeless, by offering advice and guidance. This can also mean working with the landlords or family members.

2.3.5 Although these measures are highly difficult to quantify in terms of how many cases of homelessness they have prevented (i.e. it is very difficult to show something that doesn't happen), there are signs that these measures are being successful. For example, the CAB pilot in a GP surgery has helped 27 different clients with a range of issues including benefits/universal credit and housing related matters. The Call Before You Serve advertisement campaign has been running since the 13<sup>th</sup> of January and has been clicked on 512 times, the webpage has had 300 views and there have been at least 22 phone calls generated from the adverts.

## 2.4 Improving the Provision of Suitable Temporary Accommodation

### **Current Provision of Temporary Accommodation**

2.4.1 The Council currently have access to various properties, which it uses as temporary accommodation. This is a mixture of council-owned properties, and leased properties. Currently used are 7 two bedroom Council owned flats and a

further 4 three bedroom houses and 2 two bedroom flats leased from 2 separate registered social landlords making a total of 13 units. Where these temporary accommodation options are fully occupied, the Council also utilises accommodation that is available on a nightly basis, primarily Bed and Breakfast (B&B). The Council can also refer cases to a neighbouring authority who run a hostel, which is located outside of the borough.

**Table 1: Usage of temporary accommodation by type per month since April 2019**

	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Average
<b>Council owned flats</b>	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
<b>Leased Apartment</b>	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
<b>Hound Lodge (hostel)</b>	5	4	4	6	5	4	5	5	4	6	6	0	0	0	2	4
<b>B&amp;B</b>	7	8	5	11	17	15	14	12	8	9	14	9	15	20	17	12
<b>Housing Network</b>	-	-	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	2	2	2	1	3	3
<b>Serviced Apartment</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	11	2	0	0	3
<b>Night shelter (SWEPE)</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	0	-	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>	24	25	25	33	38	35	36	34	31	34	38	35	32	34	35	35

2.4.2 As detailed in paragraph 1.5 to 1.7, the demand for temporary accommodation is increasing. There is an expectation that will be further increased demand for temporary accommodation, in light of Covid19, but to what extent is not known. This includes the potential increase in domestic violence cases where one party is fleeing and requires temporary housing (nationally there has been a 50% increase in these cases), early release of prisoners (a government initiative muted) and increase in private sector evictions (when the government's protection ends).

### **Current Usage of B&B and nightly accommodation**

2.4.3 The Council transferred its housing stock to a registered provider of social housing in 2008. Gedling is one of only two Councils in Nottinghamshire (along with Rushcliffe) that has transferred its housing stock to a Housing Association and therefore is not able utilise and access a supply of council-owned housing

stock with which to flexibly support the changing demands for temporary accommodation. As demonstrated in Table 1, the use of B&B accommodation has increased significantly since 2017/18 and it is therefore essential to secure alternative provision which is less costly and provides improved standards.

2.4.4 Data from the Housing Needs Team (August 2020) shows that the average length of stay in B&B and nightly accommodation was 55 days (7.9 weeks). The net cost of which is projected to be over £200,000 again this financial year which has been exacerbated due to the additional demands arising from Covid19 e.g. the requirement for self-contained accommodation and the requirement to house rough sleepers/people at threat of being homeless under the “Everyone In” initiative.

**Table 2: Use of B&B/Nightly accommodation since 2013/14**

Financial year	Number of TA cases	Number of days in TA	Net Expenditure		Total Amount spent on Nightly accommodation
			Bed & Breakfast £	Other Nightly Accommodation £	
2013/14	34	1560	12,400	0.00	12,400
2014/15	41	1683	25,300	0.00	25,300
2015/16	55	2142	30,900	0.00	30,900
2016/17	50	2478	24,000	0.00	24,000
2017/18	64	3668	60,500	0.00	60,500
2018/19	98	2585	74,100	0.00	74,100
2019/20	123	6770	185,000	35,100	220,100
2020/21 21 as of 18 <sup>th</sup> September	76	3758	107,400	13,300	120,700

2.4.5 B&B and nightly accommodation is used when the Council does not have an available temporary accommodation property that it leasing/owns. Officers are currently working to explore the current level of the under-provision of temporary accommodation and the size of the properties that may be required. The number of the households placed in B&B and nightly accommodation over the last 15 months has been on average around 20 each month (including approx. 5 in Hound lodge and the SWEP night shelter). This data will inform the business case and option appraisal currently being undertaken as detailed at paragraph 2.3.7 below.

### **Initiatives to Improve the Provision of Temporary Accommodation**

2.4.6 Officers have been seeking improvements to the quality and quantity of temporary accommodation available to the Council. This includes a variety of projects:

- **Securing additional properties for temporary accommodation** – an

options appraisal is being prepared to consider the provision of additional properties as an alternative to B&B – for example by purchase, leasing or the development of new units by the Council. The conclusion of the option appraisal will be presented to a future meeting of Cabinet for consideration.

- **Securing external funding to increase provision** – A funding application was submitted to the MHCLG/Homes England Next Steps Accommodation Funding Programme fund. Further details are provided below.
- **Improvements to provision through Covid19** – under the Government’s “Everyone In” initiative and the need to ensure people in temporary accommodation could isolate, Officers sourced appropriate self-contained accommodation and moved people swiftly.
- **Development of a procurement framework** for B&B accommodation and nightly accommodation – this will ensure that any accommodation we use meets a certain standard and that the value for money is secured through a tendering process. This is currently being prepared.
- **Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP)** – the provision is for rough sleepers or people at risk of being homeless to provide them with a place to stay in adverse weather conditions, and linking them with support services to address their housing situation.

## **Conclusion**

2.4.7 Overall, the only way to reduce the need for temporary accommodation is to be able to access permanent affordable accommodation and become more effective at preventing homelessness in the first place. However, the Council has a statutory duty to accommodate eligible individuals and their households who are homeless, and, based on the current usage, it is essential to identify options to initially reduce the use of B&B accommodation in the short term to ensure individuals/households are accommodated in accommodation suitable for them and reduce the costs incurred by the Council. There is a need to therefore identify options to reduce and improve the quality of other temporary accommodation in both the short and medium to long term.

2.4.8 Therefore, Cabinet is being asked to note the work that the Temporary Accommodation Officer Working Group is doing. As detailed above, the work programme has two main strands of work: to reduce the time spent in temporary accommodation and improving the provision of suitable temporary accommodation. This, in turn, will assist with the work which is being undertaken to improve performance of the average length of time spent in temporary accommodation performance indicator.

2.4.8 Furthermore, Officers are working up an options appraisal in order to establish the preferred method of meeting the current need for temporary

accommodation, improving the quality of the accommodation and reducing the cost to the Council. In order to do this, the Council will need to intervene and either build, purchase and/or lease some additional properties. Cabinet are therefore asked to note the need to increase our access to temporary accommodation provision (as an alternative to B&B provision) within the Borough and the work being undertaken to identify the preferred option(s) to secure additional temporary accommodation for a subsequent Cabinet approval.

## 2.5 Next Steps Accommodation Funding (NSAP)

2.5.1 The need to redress the issue of rough sleeping and the threat of homelessness has been an enduring Government commitment. The Council has been able to access additional funding, in partnership with the neighbouring 6 local authorities via both the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) and the Rapid Rehousing Pathway (RRP) since 2019, to deliver a comprehensive range of services tasked at reducing rough sleeping in the county. Although rough sleeping has not been a significant issue in Gedling, with the onset of the Covid19 pandemic, the "Everyone In" initiative placed the requirement on councils to urgently house all rough sleepers. There is an ongoing expectation that those who have been housed under this initiative, do not return to the streets/become homeless.

2.5.2 The NSAP has been set up by MHCLG to engage with and provide financial resources to local authorities, registered providers and local partners in the Government's next stage of their Covid19 pandemic rough sleeping/homelessness response. The NSAP includes two funding streams which are aimed at reducing rough sleeping and preventing those brought into temporary accommodation returning to the sleeping rough/becoming homeless:

- £161m (£130m capital and £31m revenue) - Longer-term Move on Accommodation
- £105m (revenue only) - Shorter-term/interim accommodation and immediate support

2.5.3 Officers have submitted a funding application, as part of a partnership bid with both Broxtowe, Rushcliffe and Framework Housing Association (Framework), though there are links to the wider county. The bid submitted was based on a two phased approach:

- **Phase 1:** short term measures to ensure self-contained affordable housing can be accessed and to deliver the Sever Weather Emergency Protocol obligation through adverse weather conditions. This fully funded revenue bid of £79k which covers the anticipated costs of B&B accommodation, £24k to refurbish 3 units at Elizabeth House and £105k pro rata for dedicated navigators (support workers), plus an

enhanced offer to incentivise Private landlords to work with local councils.

- **Phase 2:** long term permanent measures, which includes the purchase of up to 5 properties in the Gedling area for temporary accommodation (this was felt the appropriate level of “ask” based on advice from MCHLG and would go part way to reducing the overall need for B&B accommodation). This is a partly funded capital bid of £635,000 (£444,500 as match from GBC and 30% from MHCLG at £190k).

- 2.5.4 As part of the partnership bid, there were a number of other matters included:
- **Three Dedicated Navigator support workers** - this fully funded revenue bid of £105k pro rata to cover two posts, one for the three boroughs, and one for the Framework properties
  - **Enhanced offer for the Private Rented Sector** - this fully funded revenue bid of £140k.
  - **Framework – this includes** 8 units to be delivered in 2020/21 with a further 7 units 2021/22). These 15 units would be a shared resource with the other 2LA's, similar to the arrangement for Elizabeth House. This would require £22k match funding from Gedling, and would mean we have nomination rights.

- 2.5.5 Officers are expecting a decision in late September on this funding submission. Initial feedback suggests that the scheme was massively oversubscribed and that partnership working and the Framework proposals were given higher priority due to their perceived deliverability. Our bid has been initially awarded £42,500 for phase 1 and the details of how will be allocated is currently being explored. Further details of the phase 2 submission are to follow.

- 2.5.6 If successful, Officers will need to progress fully to procure the phase 1 accommodation and to block book some accommodation swiftly. Furthermore Officers will be preparing for the delivery of the second phase. This will include working up the detailed business case for the proposed purchased of 5 properties for use as temporary accommodation in order to secure the necessary approvals for the capital budget (this will also feed into the wider work being undertaken to review the Council's access to temporary accommodation (through an options appraisal as detailed in para 2.3.8) This will be subject to a subsequent report to Cabinet. Members are asked at this stage to note that an application for external funding to support the initiatives outlined above has been made.

### **Investment Partner status**

- 2.5.7 In order to qualify for NSAP funding, the Council would have to hold Investment Partner (IP) status. This would also allow the Council to apply for other funding from Homes England to deliver other affordable housing

schemes. The Council does not currently have this status and would need to formally apply to Homes England to be awarded IP status. The assessment of applications for IP Status by Homes England verifies the identity of the applicant and includes financial due diligence which considers an applicant's financial and technical capacity to undertake an agreed programme of new supply of housing and the organisation's good financial standing. IP status is required before Homes England would make payment under a completed funding contract and is reviewed and renewed annually.

- 2.5.8 Officers are therefore seeking authorisation to apply to Homes England for Investment Partner status which is required to receive payment of funding should the Council's application for NSAP funding be successful and to enable it to apply for other types of Homes England funding which may support delivery of temporary accommodation and/or affordable housing in the future.

### **3 Alternative Options**

- 3.1 There are a variety of options available to intervene and to ensure secure more access to temporary accommodation. These will be explored in more detailed as part of the options appraisal/business cases which will be subject to subsequent cabinet approvals.
- 3.2 Do nothing, and allow the anticipated increase in expenditure and usage of temporary accommodation to continue.

### **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 Table 1 in Section 2.3.4 sets out the net costs of nightly accommodation over a period of time. The table demonstrates significantly rising costs which are directly associated with the increased demand for temporary accommodation within the Borough.
- 4.2 Housing Needs has a Temporary Accommodation budget allocation each year, the expenditure is partially offset with income received from Housing Benefit payments, in 2019/20 this net original budget was £22,000. Outturn reported the actual net costs of temporary accommodation in 2019/20 at £220,000 (a variance of £198,000); this represents an increase of almost 200% from the previous year. The increase in cost was funded by utilising contributions from grants and reserves as set out in Table 4 below:

<b>Additional Funding of Temporary Accommodation in 2019/20</b>	
<b>Funding:</b>	<b>£</b>
Flexible Homeless Support Grant	40,000
Homelessness Reduction Reserve (B/F Grant)	72,000
Housing & Housing Benefits Reserve	86,000

<b>Total</b>	<b>198,000</b>
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- 4.3 The Flexible Homelessness Support Grant is currently used to fund two temporary housing support officers and expenditure relating to homelessness prevention, in 2019/20 the remaining grant was used to fund the increase in expenditure on temporary accommodation. However, as there was insufficient to fund the whole amount the balance of the Homelessness Reduction Reserve was used, in addition the shortfall of £86,000 was funded by a contribution from the Housing & Housing Benefit Reserve. Whilst we were able to cover the additional costs by utilising reserves, it is not sustainable to continue to fund these escalating costs in this way.
- 4.4 As stated in this report the officer-working group are currently investigating more cost effective alternative temporary accommodation provision from a range of different options. These options include additional provision through purchase, construction and/or lease and will be presented for approval on completion of an options appraisal and full business case at a later date
- 4.5 Paragraph 2.4.6 above states that The Council will need to make a match funding provision of £22,000 as a one off payment to access nomination rights of additional accommodation (in perpetuity) as part of the funding submission to NSAP, this will be funded by a contribution from earmarked reserves.

## **5 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The Council owes statutory duties to eligible individuals / households who are either homeless or threatened with homelessness under the Part VII of the Housing Act 1996. This can include a duty to provide interim accommodation or a full housing duty. The Council are therefore statutorily required to provide some households with temporary accommodation and must have means of accommodating these households. Furthermore the Council has duties to prevent or deal with homelessness at an early stage under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and thus must engage in homelessness prevention measures and initiatives to discharge its duties under this Act.
- 5.2 There is not a decision at this stage for the Council to acquire properties or develop land for temporary accommodation. The legalities of acquisition of properties or development of council-owned land would need to be considered fully before any commitments are made. Any decision on such matters, including the expenditure of the NSAP funding if the funding bid is successful, would be brought back to Cabinet for consideration.
- 5.3 The submission of an application to become an Investment Partner does not have any legal implications for the Council. If the Council obtains Investment Partner status it will be able to bid for funding from Homes England to secure more temporary accommodation and potentially support delivery of more

affordable housing in the borough.

## **6 Equalities Implications**

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required for this report. Any detailed proposals for securing the provision of additional temporary accommodation (which will be subject to subsequent Cabinet consideration) will be reviewed and an EIA prepared accordingly.
- 6.2 The Council has a duty to provide suitable accommodation which includes taking account of any equality issues. This includes assessing the household specific needs, such as access arrangements, size and nature of the temporary accommodation (wherever possible).

## **7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications**

- 7.1 These are considered throughout the work programme, but there is no specific implications at this point. Further work will be done on this going forward.

## **8 Appendices**

None

## **9 Background Papers**

None

## **10 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 10.1 To update Members with the work undertaken so far to improve the performance of the temporary accommodation performance indicator.
- 10.2 To ensure Members are aware of the need to increase our provision of suitable temporary accommodation to ensure compliance with the Council's homelessness duties and thus reduce the need for the Council to use B&B accommodation. The report also details the work being undertaken to identify the preferred route of achieving this.
- 10.3 To inform Members that a funding submission has been made to Homes England as part of the Next Steps Accommodation Programme.
- 10.4 To enable the Council to apply to Homes England for "Investment Partner" status.