

Report to: Cabinet



Date of Meeting 29 November 2023

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Homelessness Service Update

Report summary:

To provide an update and review of the homelessness service and resource levels for the Housing Options team, including details of challenges ahead and progress on the composition of the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy. Whilst staffing levels are considered adequate at this moment in time there are a number of challenges and risks ahead that may result in the need for additional resources in the future.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That Cabinet note the report and the potential impact of the challenges ahead, and a further report is provided in six months' time confirming progress and impact.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure the homelessness service is sufficiently set up and equipped to deal with the level of pressure and homelessness demand, and to keep Cabinet informed and updated in respect of the potential consequences of the challenges ahead.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
 - A greener East Devon
 - A resilient economy
-

Report in full

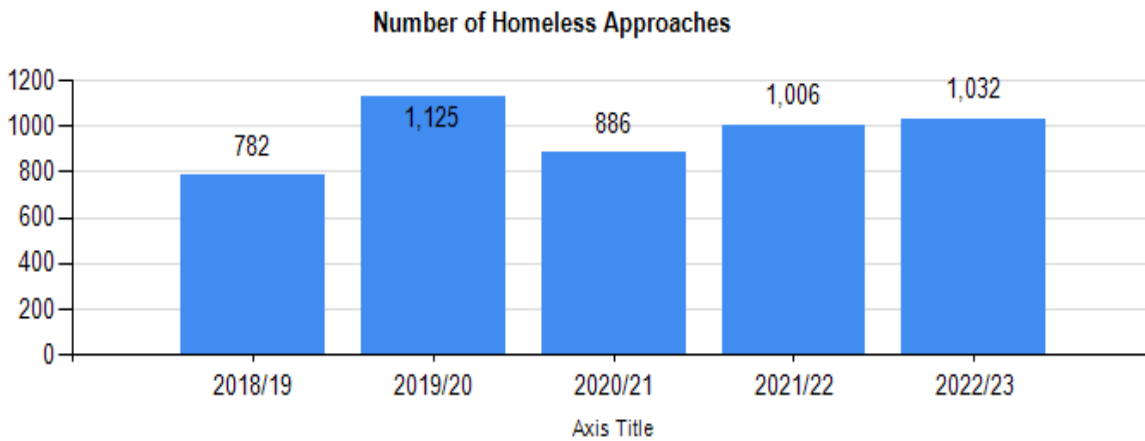
1. General homelessness update

1.1 There has been a significant rise in homelessness demand over the past few years owing to factors including:

- The overall housing environment within the region with a shortage of available accommodation required to meet increasing demand that has been created by a number of factors including the cost-of-living crisis, increases in numbers of poverty cases, lasting effects of the pandemic and more recently rises in cases of refugees becoming homeless.
- This increase in demand affects all forms of housing, in particular social housing. This is demonstrated through an increase in the number of households registering for social housing through Devon Home Choice. On 1st April 2022 there were 4547 Devon Home Choice applications managed by East Devon. This figure rose to 5374 as of 1st April 2023 representing an increase of 18%. In the first six months 2023/24 there has been an increase of 6.6% from 1st April 2023 with the total number of applications managed by East Devon totalling 5732 as of 1st October 2023.
- There is also huge competition for all forms of private sector housing. Scarcity and shortage of availability, a lack of affordability and rising rent levels contribute towards this situation creating a scenario whereby the private sector is realistically out of reach for many of our customers.
- Also to be factored in is the extremely limited availability of supported accommodation projects which would ordinarily provide a suitable accommodation option for many of our customers, especially those with higher levels of support needs. Currently there is only one such project that exists within East Devon, Alexandra House in Exmouth. However, the future of Alexandra House is currently under threat – full details contained within Annex 1.
- Within this environment, levels of homelessness are rising. We are seeing increasingly high numbers of homeless approaches and it is important to note that within these rising numbers is the situation whereby it is increasingly difficult to resolve these cases due to the situations our customers are in and the stark reality of extremely limited accessible options with which to prevent or relieve homeless situations.
- This situation is in turn reflected through a significant rise in numbers of homeless households requiring temporary accommodation, when faced with no other available accommodation options.

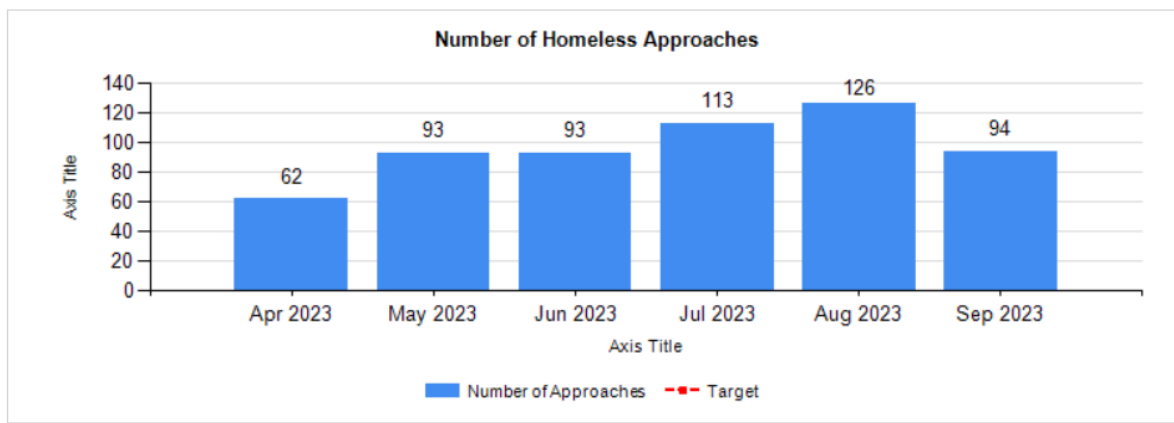
2. Homelessness Statistics (up to the end of September 2023)

Chart 1a - Supporting figures to show levels of homelessness demand, via number of approaches, from 2018-19 to 2022-23 inclusive.



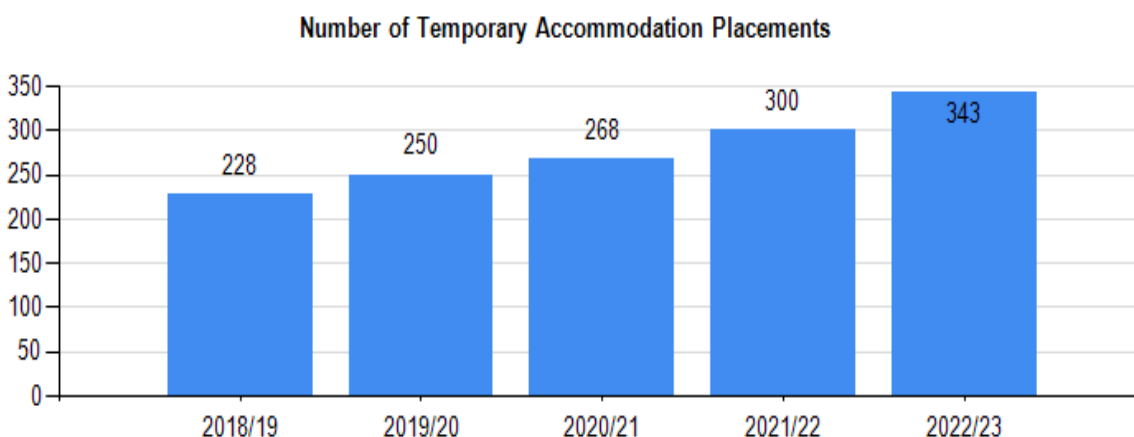
2.1 Chart 1a shows that the number of approaches fluctuated in the early years of the reporting period, around the time of the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act. There was a dip in the number of approaches in 2020-21 due in main to restrictions put in place during the Covid pandemic. The last two years have shown consistently high levels of approaches and there has been an overall 24% increase in approaches over the five year period.

Chart 1b - Supporting figures to show levels of homelessness demand, via number of approaches



2.2 Chart 1b shows the number of approaches in the first six months of 2023-24, totalling 581. This number is on course to eclipse the number for 2022-23.

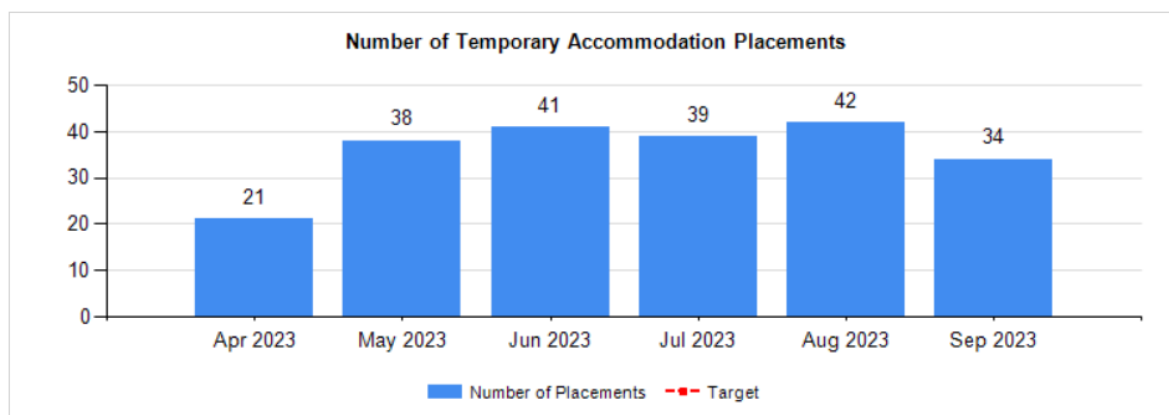
Chart 2a - Temporary accommodation numbers from 2018-19 to 2022-23 inclusive.



2.3 Chart 2a shows that there has been a significant increase in the number of households placed into temporary accommodation from homeless situations over the five year period,

owing to increasing numbers of homeless approaches and decreasing numbers of accessible alternative accommodation options.

Chart 2b - Temporary accommodation numbers for the first six months of 2023-24.



2.4 Chart 2b shows the number of temporary accommodation placements within in the first six months of 2023-24, totalling 215. As with the number of homeless approaches, this figure is also on course to eclipse the number for 2022-23.

3. Focus on Temporary Accommodation Reduction

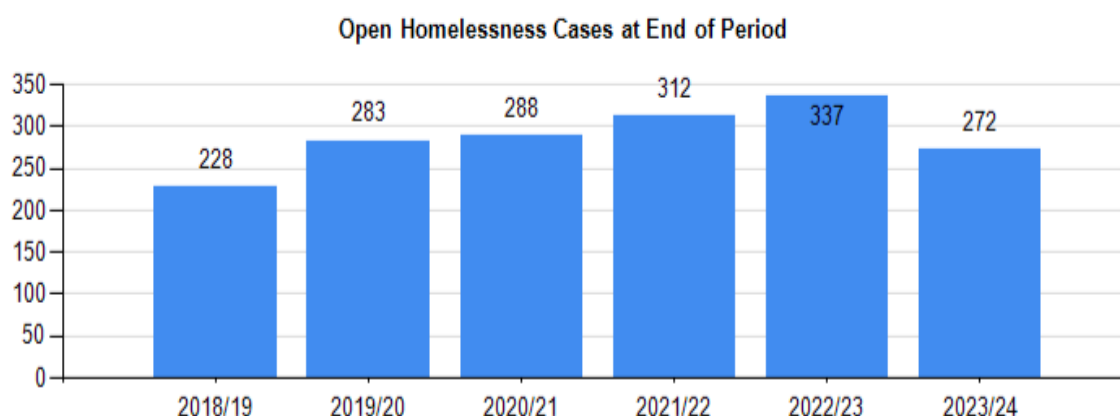
- 3.1 There has been a significant rise in not only the demand for temporary accommodation over the last few years but also in the difficulty in moving people on due to the lack of available alternative accommodation owing to the housing crisis and the overall environment.
- 3.2 These numbers demonstrate the significant increase in temporary accommodation numbers over the past few years. The main factors in this increase are (a) the rise in homelessness demand and (b) the significant reduction in and increasing competition for suitable and available move-on options for homeless households, ie social housing, accommodation in the private sector and supported housing projects.
- 3.3 This situation results in customers remaining in temporary accommodation for longer periods which is a negative outcome all round, with challenges in being able to move people on to appropriate alternative accommodation options.
- 3.4 It has been necessary to expand our range of temporary accommodation options throughout the district in order to meet the Council's statutory responsibilities. Our current temporary accommodation portfolio is made up of an 8 bed supported project in Honiton owned and managed by a third party, an 8 bed HMO in Exmouth owned and managed by EDDC, a further ten EDDC properties throughout the district designated as temporary accommodation and one private sector leased property.
- 3.5 Any other temporary accommodation placements are made through spot purchase arrangements, ie holiday lets or B&B's. All accommodation options are contained within a very wide geographical area making management increasingly challenging.
- 3.6 A main objective of the Housing Options Team is to reduce the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation, and in particular to focus on reducing the use of spot-purchase arrangements by providing more cost-effective methods of temporary accommodation provision.
- 3.7 Recent positives in this area include the purchase of a new 6 bed HMO that aims to be available for occupation in December, and other recently purchased properties using right-to-buy receipts to be utilised as temporary accommodation. The focus throughout Housing

on reducing the number of EDDC void properties has resulted in more properties becoming available for allocation.

4. Resource levels - staffing

- 4.1 The Housing Options team currently consists of twenty-two members of staff including five fixed term posts financed through utilising external funding.
- 4.2 Four of the five fixed term posts have been added to the team via a bid for funding from DLUHC (the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) to focus specifically on reducing rough sleeping, the Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI). This funding stream covers the period until 31st March 2025 and there is no guarantee of any further funding after that date.
- 4.3 One of the five fixed term posts has been added through funding via Homes for Ukraine in order to provide support to the team to deal with the additional overall pressure resulting from additional workloads due to the fall out from the war in Ukraine, and the number of Ukrainian refugees becoming homeless within the district. Again, the post is only currently provided for a fixed period, in this instance up to February 2024, and there is no guarantee of an extension to this funding after that.
- 4.4 To date 71 Ukrainian households have presented as homeless within East Devon, and there are a further 75 Ukrainian families still hosted within the district, where there will be a high possibility of future homeless presentations when the arrangements end.
- 4.5 Overall, it is considered that resource levels are adequate to cope with demand at this moment in time. Adequate staffing numbers have resulted in manageable caseloads for the Housing Officers, in turn increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes and overall ability to resolve cases of homelessness (as can be seen through Chart 3, below). However, there are a number of challenges and risks ahead, listed under section 5, that could considerably alter this situation.

Chart 3 – Open homelessness cases from 2018-19 to 2023-24 inclusive.



- 4.6 Not having the required levels of resources would inevitably lead to a lessened ability to prevent or relieve homeless cases creating higher numbers of unresolved cases of homelessness. This in turn would increase the risk of homeless households being unable to access support, therefore driving up homelessness numbers within the district. As a result we would see higher numbers of customers requiring temporary accommodation, leading to further increases in the temporary accommodation budget.
- 4.7 As supporting evidence for our current staffing levels, we can demonstrate strong performance from the team in providing positive outcomes for individuals and families who approach the service in need of assistance from homeless situations. One of our key performance indicators focuses on the performance of the team through the percentage of

successful homeless preventions. Table 1 shows that as an example, in August 2023 we closed 35 prevention cases, 30 of those were positive, making it 85.71% positive outcomes, which is higher than the national average.

Table 1 – Successful homeless preventions

TABULAR SUMMARY 2023/24									
PI Code	Performance Indicator	Final 2022/23	Q1 (Apr-Jun)	Q2 (Jul-Sep)	Q3 (Oct-Dec)	Q4 (Jan-Mar)	August 2023	Year To Date	2023/24 Target
HA09	Successful homeless preventions as a % of prevention cases	71.67	77.23	80.3	N/A	N/A	85.71	78.44	60

4.8 In addition to the performance information we consider that a good service is provided to our customers and this can be demonstrated through low numbers of complaints and the low number of review requests for homeless decisions made. Only 8 review requests were received in 2022-23 with 4 in the first six months of 2023-24.

5. Future risks and challenges

5.1 Whilst current demand is being met, with expected further rises in homelessness and challenges ahead there is a strong possibility that additional resources will be required in the future. There are a number of areas of significant risk which could place additional pressures onto the homelessness service of EDDC:

- Potential Devon County Council cuts to funding for homelessness services throughout Devon, totalling £1.5 million. There has been much coverage in the media and a decision is expected by Devon County Council in December 2023. EDDC's response to DCC's consultation exercise, listing the risks to existing services and service users, is included in full within Annex A. The risks of cutting this funding stream are potentially extremely damaging, with the key areas of risk being the floating support contract – currently Sanctuary provide this service via the DCC funding and they typically support 60 households within East Devon at any one time – and three supported housing projects that EDDC regularly refer homeless applicants in need of support into, Alexandra House in Exmouth, Gabriel House in Exeter and Exeter YMCA. Should the cuts go ahead as proposed instances of homelessness for members of the public will inevitably rise significantly.
- Increases in refugee resettlement. This has also been well documented in the media and for East Devon the large numbers of Ukrainian refugees where a future homeless situation threatens (ref 4.4) and the existence of bridging hotels and asylum hotels in the district represent a significant risk of future homeless situations for several households. A bridging hotel in Exmouth closed in August 2023 with the Home Office giving notice to the occupants at the time, resulting in a large scale homeless situation. 18 households were in the bridging hotel at the time notice was served, the resulting homeless situations resolved via partnership working between the Housing Options team and Devon County Council. There is also an asylum hotel based in East Devon with 65 families residing in it, as of 25th October 2023. Therefore, there is a risk that the occupants in that establishment could also be served notice at any time, ending up in homeless situations and in need of assistance.
- Funding streams that cover a number of posts within the team, four linked to the RSI (Rough Sleeper Initiative, see 4.2) and one linked to Homes For Ukraine (see 4.3) have limited life spans with no guarantee of extension. With five posts linked to these funding streams, there is a significant risk to the existence of a significant proportion of the overall team.
- We are seeing reductions in the number of available properties within the private sector due to landlords selling, owing to reasons including mortgage rate rises and future introduction of new legislation, the Renters (Reform) Bill. This is resulting in an increase of households

renting in the private sector being given notice, as well as reducing accommodation options for the future, contributing to an overall detrimental effect on the market.

- Funding will also be required in order to 'level up' various homelessness prevention schemes available to homeless applicants, namely the Council's Rent Deposit and Bond Scheme which at the current time is less favourable to potential landlords than the Homes For Ukraine funded package.

6. Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy

- 6.1 The current Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy covers the financial year until 31st March 2024. A review has been conducted and we are currently in a period of consultation before the Strategy can be updated.
- 6.2 We have run a series of focus groups with staff members, former service users and partner agencies and organisations focused on tackling homelessness. Following these sessions the draft Strategy will be put out for public consultation until January 2024. The feedback and results will contribute towards the finalised Strategy which we intend to publish in April 2024.
- 6.3 In the meantime the Homelessness Strategy Review Group will continue to meet on a quarterly basis to review the ongoing, live homelessness action plan. This group is made up of former service users, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Homes & Communities, representatives from partner agencies and organisations and staff members.

Annex 1

Devon County Council 18+ Homelessness Prevention Fund and contract cessation **East Devon District Council Response Consultation**

Proposal

Devon County Council are proposing to cease the adult social care contribution to the overall 18+ homelessness prevention fund and contract across the Devon County Council geographical boundary (excluding Torbay and Plymouth). The fund and contract totals £1,454,478.48 per year and purchases support hours to people living in supported housing projects and also in their own accommodation. The contract does not pay for building or accommodation costs.

The supported accommodation element of the contract is delivered through five providers and supports around 250 people at any one time. This is made up of around 113 bed spaces in managed multiple occupancy supported accommodation project settings and around 132 people receiving floating support. The floating support element of the contract is delivered by Sanctuary Supported Living and managed by Devon County Council with referrals shared amongst the various Local Authorities

Providers use support hours to target people aged 18 years and over whose homelessness is not only a housing issue but something that is linked with their personal challenges. Providers build professional, helping relationships to help bring about changes across multiple areas of the individuals' life that are directly relevant to the prevention of and recovery from homelessness. Where appropriate, individuals are helped to engage with the relevant Health, Housing and Social Care practitioners to achieve a lasting recovery and independence.

Background

Devon County Council have made the proposal due to budget pressures. At the present time there is no confirmed date proposed for when the cessation of funding would take effect from.

Over recent years there have been a series of meetings and discussions between Devon County Council and the Local Authorities in respect of a proposal by Devon County Council to devolve the 18+ homelessness prevention contribution to the Local Authorities. There was a collective willingness from the Local Authorities to take over the responsibility for managing this funding stream although no agreement was reached. In July 2022 Devon County Council confirmed that they had listened to feedback and concerns and halted plans to devolve the contribution for the financial year 2022-23.

Devon County Council announced on 22nd February 2023 that consultation had been launched on the current proposals, giving very little notice to the Local Authorities and the accommodation and floating support providers likely to be affected.

Homelessness Landscape

Devon

Should the proposals result in the cessation of this stream of funding the impact on all Local Authorities in Devon will be devastating. This proposal is being made in a time when the outlook for the homelessness landscape is bleak and more challenging than ever.

We are already well within a homelessness crisis, with increasing numbers of people who are either homeless or facing homeless situations. Higher demand, increasingly limited and reducing accommodation options, and reductions in the availability and resources of partner support agencies (for example mental health services) are all factors that contribute towards this situation.

There has been a steady and significant increase in homelessness over the past few years, including a 28% rise in homelessness across Devon in the past year alone. Compounding this are factors including higher numbers of people approaching the service with complex needs, making resolving their homeless situation even more challenging, against a backdrop of extremely limited resources – in particular supported accommodation and support services. Furthermore, an announcement has been made that notice will be served by the Home Office on the occupants of bridging hotels housing Afghan refugees throughout Devon, including one based in Exmouth currently accommodating 77 people. This will add significantly more pressure on already scarce accommodation resources and pressurised support services.

East Devon

There are currently 341 live homeless cases being managed by the Housing Options team (snapshot from 31st March 2023). These are by far the biggest numbers we have ever faced, with the numbers of homeless approaches over the past three years demonstrating the growing trend of increasing homelessness in the district:

2020-21 = 897

2021-22 = 1022

2022-23 = 1031

Options to resolve people's homeless situations are increasingly challenging and dwindling. There is a severe lack of suitable, available accommodation across the board available for people who are either homeless or facing homelessness. Demand for social housing far outstrips the available supply and this is demonstrated through the significant increase in the number and complexity of Devon Home Choice applications. Demand and competition for limited private sector accommodation is extremely high, with increased competition for available private lets, increasing rent levels in the private sector and the effects of the cost of living crisis. Well documented

migration to the region following the pandemic due to a cultural rise in home-working has compounded the issue by further reducing the availability of accommodation in the private sector further. Compounding this situation is increased competition from refugees being resettled into private sector accommodation within the district, in particular those fleeing the war in Ukraine.

Aligned with this scenario is the inevitable rise in the need for and subsequent provision of temporary accommodation. Using averages from month-end snapshots of temporary accommodation placements throughout 2022-23, a total of 66 households from homeless situations were provided with temporary accommodation at any one time throughout the year, 36 of which were individuals. Of these placements, spot-purchase arrangements (ie bed and breakfasts and holiday lets) averaged 35 at any one time, 19 of which were individuals.

This overall scenario of increased homelessness demand and a lack of available, suitable accommodation has increased the reliance on the services provided by this stream of funding in order to meet significant demand and meet our statutory duties towards people who are either homeless or facing homeless situations – namely the supported accommodation projects in the Eastern region of the county and the floating support services.

Impact of Proposed Cuts – Supported Accommodation Projects

Compounding this challenging scenario is a lack of specialised, supported accommodation projects or 'hostels'. Supported accommodation projects are a vital component of the protocol to prevent and relieve homelessness throughout the district and very often the only realistic and achievable solution for people with limited options from homeless situations. There has already been a significant reduction in the number of supported projects within Devon in recent years, halving from ten to five following a reduction in available funding via Devon County Council and a procurement exercise in 2013.

Three of the five supported accommodation projects are situated within the Eastern area of the district: Alexandra House in Exmouth (Westward Housing), Gabriel House in Exeter (BCHA) and Exeter YMCA. Despite Gabriel House and the YMCA both being situated in Exeter, EDDC has had great success in referring people in need into both projects, alongside referring people into Alexandra House which is based in Exmouth, which also receives referrals from Exeter. The combination of different levels of support being available is vital in combatting homelessness depending on the circumstances of the person in need. For example, Gabriel House provides high level support and is suitable for many rough sleepers and homeless applicants with complex needs, whereas Alexandra House is considered as medium level support and will assist people from homeless scenarios where there is a lesser but still significant and recognised support need. An indication of the likely impact, both personally for the people who will no longer be accommodated and supported, and on local services can be drawn from the following snapshot of the needs of 23 current residents of Alexandra House in Exmouth:

- 96% of individuals experience poor mental health
- 30% are open to secondary mental health Services
- 22% have a drug addiction
- 13% have an alcohol addiction

From January 2022 through to March 2023 a total of 33 people have been successfully referred into the three projects by EDDC from rough sleeping and homeless situations, broken down as follows: 14 to Gabriel House, 10 to Alexandra House and 9 to Exeter YMCA.

Risks to the Working Model

The proposal to cease this funding stream puts the established and effective supported accommodation model that has been set up to successfully assist people with a recognised

support need at great risk. The current set up enables people escaping from traumatic events and homeless situations, including rough sleeping, to obtain a period of supported accommodation for a period until they are ready to move on into independent living. This is the only model that will work in practice for several people to whom we have a statutory duty to assist, especially considering the increase in complex and support needs linked with the people we have a duty of care towards. People are given much needed support hand in hand with their accommodation and are only moved on to alternative accommodation when it is agreed by all parties that they are ready to do so and there is a significant chance of success and sustainability. The model is well established, aiming to set the individual up to succeed, and it works.

Without this vital step in the overall recovery process there will be inevitably higher instances of homelessness and people facing crisis situations. There would be a non-existent opportunity within the district to provide this much needed period of support and stability for people who have been homeless or threatened with homelessness inevitably resulting in higher numbers of rough sleepers, higher numbers of people living in unsuitable and unsafe accommodation, and higher numbers of failed temporary accommodation placements, due to a lack of specialised and necessary support. There would be an increasing number of people facing the 'revolving door' scenario of repeat homelessness and rough sleeping which every time will significantly reduce the possibility of successful resolution in the future. There would be a higher number of 'entrenched' rough sleepers for whom there would be no viable or achievable resolution opportunity.

On a longer term basis, the current model is set up to ensure long term sustainability with people receiving essential support and encouragement over time to enable them to move on to long term successful accommodation arrangements. Removing this vital step in the recovery process will be catastrophic for the individuals who would be no longer able to access supported accommodation, inevitably leading to increases in physical and mental health collapses.

In addition, it is inevitable that numbers of homeless approaches and temporary accommodation figures will significantly rise further owing to the lack of availability of suitable, supported accommodation which is the only avenue to prevent and relieve many people from homeless situations. Costs to the Local Authority would significantly rise. The number of people requiring temporary accommodation would increase as there would be no available alternative options. Time spent in temporary accommodation would also increase with a lack of move on options. The lack of support for individuals in need of supporting services would see an increase in the number of failed temporary accommodation placements.

Impact of Proposed Cuts – Floating Support Funding

These risks are mirrored with respect to the floating support funding, where valuable and necessary support is required to assist people to sustain their tenancies, preventing potential returns to homelessness and rough sleeping. Typically in East Devon referrals are made to Sanctuary to provide floating support for people accommodated within the private sector, where there is a recognised support need that is necessary to ensure the tenancy succeeds and the tenant does not become homeless. As with the supported accommodation projects, this floating support service is severely oversubscribed and considered vital in the work carried out to prevent homelessness by increasing tenancy sustainability.

The contract has been managed by Devon County Council and unfortunately there are no figures or supporting evidence to show numbers of referrals specifically within East Devon. However, it goes without saying that the impact of no longer having this service available to support vulnerable individuals and families in maintaining their accommodation would be devastating. Without necessary floating support services which help to increase tenancy sustainability for people at risk of homelessness there would be an inevitable rise in homelessness and rough sleeping.

Implications for the Residents of East Devon, EDDC and other related services

Should the proposal to cease this funding stream go ahead, already high and escalating numbers of people in homeless and rough sleeping situations would increase significantly further. Removing a model and pathway that succeeds in improving people's lives from desperate situations within an already hazardous environment where there is a recognised shortage of services and available, attainable accommodation would have a devastating effect on both the individuals and local services.

Personal Impact for Residents in Need

Without the necessary levels of support or accommodation, an increase in homelessness and rough sleeping would inevitably increase the possibility of severe harm coming to those individuals affected, those no longer supported or assisted. The funding cuts would create and compound physical and mental health issues for those individuals affected, increasing the need for hospital admissions, GP and hospital appointments, mental health service support, police and probation assistance and interventions. Giving consideration to the needs of the current cohort of residents at Alexandra House, where the recognised support needs are recorded and established, it can be evidenced that there would be an escalation in need and reliability on support services for those particular individuals. And that would just be the current cohort, it would not take into account the future needs of people who would be requiring urgent support and assistance and would no longer be in a position to have their needs met.

Impact for EDDC and other local services

The proposals to cease this stream of funding will have severely damaging implications for East Devon District Council and our statutory responsibility to assist people from homeless situations. Effectively there would be a scenario of no resources available to provide supported accommodation alongside a lack of floating support being available to enable people to maintain successful tenancies within the private sector.

In addition to effectively ending the realistic possibility of preventing people from becoming homeless, there would also be a severe reduction unrealistic and attainable move on opportunities for people who have become homeless and are potentially accommodated in unsuitable and unsupported temporary accommodation placements. This is on top of the personal cost to people with a recognised support need who could no longer be provided with supported accommodation or necessary floating support where quality of life will be severely impacted.

There would be an inevitable increase in numbers of rough sleepers across Devon and this will come at a high personal cost to people who may have to sleep rough as a direct consequence of the cessation of this funding stream.

The proposal would undermine and disrupt the significant amount of work that has gone into tackling rough sleeping over a number of years, typified by the RSI (Rough Sleeping Initiative) scheme set up to specifically tackle rough sleeping across the country. One of the main methods of success has been securing positive outcomes for rough sleepers, and people at risk of sleeping rough, through the number of successful referrals into the various supported projects.

The proposals will also put at risk the Council's commitment to end rough sleeping, an ambition that has been made in line with the DLUHC's Rough Sleeping Strategy and demonstrated through EDDC's Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy and 'Ending Rough Sleeping Plan', to which EDDC are committed.

Our temporary accommodation budget would, without doubt, significantly increase and we would see higher numbers of people placed into unsupported and unsuitable temporary accommodation without their support needs being met. This would inevitably increase the chances of the

temporary accommodation placements failing and people returning to homeless and rough sleeping situations.

In addition to the added pressure on EDDC services, there would be increased pressure and demand on other related services including physical and mental health services, hospitals and GP surgeries, the police, probation and charities and organisations set up to assist people from homeless and rough sleeping situations. All of the above mentioned services, which is not an exhaustive list, are already under well documented levels of pressure and the cessation of this stream of funding would place these services and the people relying on them to achieve a decent quality of life at grave risk.

Summary - Alternative Solution?

It is appreciated that to meet budget requirements, Devon County Council will need to make significant cuts. However, the proposal to cease this funding stream altogether would be counter-productive as the consequence would be a significant increase in the levels of costs then required to assist those people no longer accommodated or provided with the support they desperately need. Any mitigating actions, all with cost implications, could only be seen as a 'sticking plaster' rather than a genuine plan to improve an individual's quality of life through the effective working and established model of supported accommodation projects.

Therefore it is proposed that there is a compromise to the proposal to completely end this funding stream. Rather than a complete cessation, it is suggested that the supported accommodation projects are maintained to enable the continuation of a genuine means to resolve instances of homelessness and rough sleeping, preparing people in desperate need on the way towards an achievable positive outcome that would not be possible without the existence of the supported accommodation projects. For other areas of Devon where there is no access to supported accommodation projects then there would need to be floating support provision. If this possibility can be agreed, EDDC would commit towards working alongside Devon County Council and the other local Authorities to make this work.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications identified from the recommendations in the report but a number of risks and challenges are identified including the possibility of reduced funding from DCC which will have an effect on our residents and our associated costs. Homelessness in an area of financial risk to the Council and needs careful monitoring with actions developed to mitigate costs where possible.

Legal implications:

As this report is for note only, there are no substantive legal issues directly arising at this stage.