

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

Date and Time :- Tuesday, 14 July 2020 at 1.30 p.m.

Venue:- Virtual Meeting
<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcasts>

Membership:- Councillors Atkin, Buckley, B. Cutts, Elliot, Jepson, Jones, Khan, Mallinder (Chair), McNeely, Reeder, Rushforth, Sansome, Sheppard, Taylor, Tweed (Vice-Chair), Julie Turner, Whysall and Wyatt.

Co-opted Members:- Ms. K. Bacon, Ms. M. Jacques.

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view [via the Council's website](#). The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

Rotherham Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair or Governance Advisor of their intentions prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 June 2020 (Pages 1 - 6)

To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 June 2020, as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of items listed on the agenda.

4. Questions from members of the public and the press

To receive questions relating to items of business on the agenda from members of the public or press who are present at the meeting.

5. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any part of the agenda.

6. Communications

To receive communications from the Chair in respect of matters within the Commission's remit and work programme.

7. Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-22 - Progress Update (Pages 7 - 38)

To consider a report providing a progress update on performance within the 2019-20 reporting period and the first two months of 2020-2021, up to the end of May 2020.

8. Housing Revenue Account - Rents and Service Charges - Response to the pandemic and future provision (Pages 39 - 43)

To consider a report outlining the success of the new service model, the response to the pandemic and the development of future provision.

9. Improving Places Select Commission Work Programme 2020-21 (Pages 44 - 46)

To approve the Work Programme of scrutiny for the 2020-21 municipal year.

10. Urgent Business

To consider any item which the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

11. Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission will take place on Tuesday 8 September 2020 commencing at 1.30 p.m.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION
Tuesday, 9th June, 2020

Present:- Councillor Mallinder (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Buckley, Elliot, Jacques, Jepson, Jones, Khan, McNeely, Reeder, Rushforth, Sansome, Sheppard, Taylor, Tweed, Whysall and Wyatt.

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs. W. Birch and Cllr. B. Cutts.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-
<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

66. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 5 MARCH 2020

The minutes of the meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission on 5 March 2020, were approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

As a matter of clarification, Councillor David Sheppard declared a personal interest as someone who lives in one of the newly established selective licensing areas.

68. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions submitted from members of the public or press.

69. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items of business for which it was necessary to exclude members of the press or public.

70. COMMUNICATIONS

No communications were presented.

71. HOUSING STRATEGY 2019 - 2022 PROGRESS UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report detailing progress against the housing targets and measures for housing strategy and growth. Attention was also given to a presentation on the three-year Housing strategy for years 2019-2021, including creating new homes, strengthening existing homes, improving health and well-being via improving housing, and working collaboratively in partnerships. The presentation noted the challenges in recent months to be able to work with tenants and residents face to face. Details were provided as to how Housing services were responding to an increasing demand for housing solutions that accommodate individuals with specific disabilities or unique needs.

Further, an update was provided around several services that were suspended because of COVID-19 that were now being stood back up. The presentation highlighted areas of the Borough where schemes have successfully opened new homes and properties. Aims for recovery following COVID-19 were also addressed, specifically in terms of returning services to full operation, taking into account lessons learned about efficient ways of working under new restrictions. It was noted that almost all rough-sleepers in the Borough were now off the streets, even though homelessness has risen and was expected to rise following the pandemic.

In discussion, Members asked for further information about any plans for modernisation or redesign of council houses. The response emphasised the need to assess the costs, including opportunity cost, associated with remodelling, but affirmed that the homes were kept up to the required standards.

Members also sought clarification as to how many of the homes were occupied and the origin of the target numbers. The response affirmed that every five years an analysis of the housing market was carried out, from which the figures were derived that indicate these anticipated changes in demand for various types of housing. Further, it was noted that the occupation of properties was not tracked, but it was likely that the newly constructed buildings were being sold upon completion. It was also noted that just over 300 sites in the Borough were being considered for developments. Each Ward Member was to receive an information pack about these sites in question. These packs are designed to help capture local knowledge and insight that may be available. It was further noted that within the next two to three weeks, Members were to be emailed these lists of potential future sites and invited to provide feedback.

Further detail was requested as to how the service will respond to increasing demand for social housing following the current and anticipated economic downturn, specifically in terms of strategic acquisitions as a way to replenish housing stocks. In response, officers described a current initiative to buy bungalows by working directly with builders and with organisations such as Red Mile.

Members expressed concern that plans were in place to protect residents at risk of homelessness once the end of the rent embargo arrived. In response, officers explained that this year, the number of such needs had risen from 35 to 89. Hotel accommodation has also been utilised this year, which had not been the case in the past. It was further noted that private landlords were expected to be responsible in the circumstances and not carry out unnecessary evictions. Members were assured that numbers were monitored and analysed on a weekly basis.

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Members were interested in more information about the Tenant Engagement Framework. The response indicated that the strategy group was to meet the following week to work out how best to ensure business continuity via virtual communication. It was noted that resources were allocated at the ward level and that the decisions were to be taken from tenants to ward members so that funds were spent for the things that really mattered to tenants.

Members wished to know if, given the demographic facts about increasing population in Rotherham, the design of new-built residences had taken into account specific needs for the older age group. The response affirmed that the increasing demographic was very much being considered. Apartments were being designed to include a lift, to be offered as shared ownership, and to allow people to downsize. It was noted that it would not be possible to provide enough land to meet the demand for bungalows, so some of what was needed was smaller homes with stairlifts. Therefore, the tenure and design of these homes had been carefully planned and considered.

Members inquired about the future of a specific site in the Borough. In response, officers explained that sites were sometimes not designated as Housing, but rather were organised in the general fund. Therefore, the Housing Service worked closely with Regeneration and Environment and with the Asset Management Board to consider a range of possibilities for surface assets, like these sites, with Housing as a consistent early consideration. A full strategic assessment was routinely conducted and changes in use considered where appropriate. The financial implications were also considered before determining whether it made sense to develop through the HRA or to auction. With regard to the Brinsworth Library site in particular, officers offered to look into it and return an answer after the meeting.

Clarification was requested about the service's 100% compliance rate on Gas Safety checks and any safety check refusals. Officers identified that the rate has consistently hovered at or above 99%. As a matter of policy, contractors did not go into a property where the resident was shielding or needing to isolate upon having contracted the virus. In such cases, the service revised the safety check schedule and made a new appointment.

Members expressed curiosity as to how the Town Centre was developing despite setbacks associated with the pandemic. The response supplied information about an initial hiccup in the work process with the contractor that has now been worked out, such that the contractor was now currently performing building activities that could be undertaken safely. Officers reported that demolition works had started, and the holdings had gone up near the swimming pool site. The response was a resounding yes, that the sites were progressing such that the homes in the Town Centre would be able to be delivered.

Members also pointed out that the Housing figures also appear in the upcoming Cabinet agenda papers. Clarification was sought as to whether the Old Oaks Day Centre site had been released and whether Housing had any plan to take this site over. In response, the officers offered to find out about the status of the specific site and inform Members.

Members requested further clarification around progress at other specific sites. The response provided an update that the bungalows and homes in question had been completed and lettings were taking place soon. It was noted that during the pandemic, homeless lettings had been prioritised, but general lettings were now also a returning priority.

Members wished to know more about the total number of strategic acquisitions over the last year and the associated costs. Members were informed that there have been 130 so far this year. For reference, there were 3 in the previous financial year. The Cabinet Member for Housing also added that the Local Lettings Criteria where applicable were followed, which meant that half of the lettings were reserved for people from the village area. These Criteria were put into place 5-6 years ago and may be ready for review. Members reiterated the request that the associated costs be circulated.

Members also wondered if former school buildings and the associated land could be examined by the Asset Management Board. Officers noted that the properties will be examined by the Asset Management Board, and that if they are appropriate for housing development, this would be ascertained. Officers offered to raise this question at the Asset Management Board Meeting as part of a combined discussion about CYPS assets.

Resolved:-

1. That when the Social Value Policy is presented for review by Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, the Housing-specific issues be highlighted within that report.
2. That the Housing-related elements of the Covid-19 recovery plan be considered for scrutiny.
3. That the progress update in respect of the Housing Strategy be noted.

72. INITIAL WORK PROGRAMME 2020-21 MUNICIPAL YEAR

Consideration was given to a report providing a draft of the Improving Places Select Commission Initial Work Programme for the 2020-21 municipal year. The purpose of the report was to invite Members to contribute ideas and suggestions to be incorporated into a final draft of the Work Programme. The report provided a summary of the remit and goals for scrutiny and the various means available to perform scrutiny work in the upcoming year. The report also included guidance for selection and prioritisation of work items to be included the Work Programme.

In discussion, Members raised a few points for further consideration as part of compiling the final draft of the Work Programme.

Members wished to consider how the work programme could be made broader in its effect, so that the work benefits as many people in the Borough as possible.

Members voiced the suggestion that the Major Incident Plan be prioritised in the Work Programme with the threat of future floods in mind.

Members suggested it could be useful to have a COVID-19 impact assessment, to help identify what work could be undertaken and to inform us about the consequences of our efforts for residents while the pandemic is going on. It was noted that Culture, sport and tourism currently appears late on our program and we might somehow bring something forward that will help us to transform our green spaces to design for accessibility during the COVID restrictions.

Members voiced concerns that the Town Centre Master Plan may also need to be considered with a broader remit, such that business continuity in the Town Centre itself might be effectively supported. Members also expressed concern for small shops throughout the Borough not just in the Town Centre.

Members underscored the importance of careful prioritisation of Work Programme items in view of the fact that the magnitude of devastating effects was as yet unable to be foreseen, and that it was of course inadvisable to attempt to achieve everything on the Work Programme within the next three months.

Members also referenced valuable resources in association with Sheffield City Region and South Yorkshire scrutiny for informing the response to the emerging needs of businesses, an estimated 40% of which could be struggling after COVID-19. It was noted that not only the larger businesses merited support, rather, grants were to be distributed across all of South Yorkshire.

Resolved:-

1. That the Improving Places Select Commission give consideration to an outline work programme using the draft set out in Appendix 1 as a basis for the discussion.
2. That the Chair and Governance Advisor meet with the relevant Cabinet members and link officer for IPSC to receive feedback on these proposed areas of work.
3. A final report proposing the formal work programme for 2020-21 will be submitted to the meeting in July of 2020 in order for Members to agree a clear set of priorities for this municipal year.

73. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

74. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Chair announced that the next virtual meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission will be held on 14 July 2020 at 1.30 pm.

<h1>BRIEFING</h1>	TO:	Improving Places Select Commission
	DATE:	14/07/2020
	LEAD OFFICER:	Sandra Tolley, Head of Housing Options. RMBC 01709 255619 Jill Jones, Homelessness Manager 01709 255618
	TITLE:	Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-22. Progress Update including service performance
1. Background		
1.1	<p>The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleepers Strategy 2019-22 was approved by Cabinet in April 2019 and published in May 2019.</p> <p>The Strategy sets out six key aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To support people with complex needs 2. To prevent homelessness and offer rapid housing solutions 3. To increase support for young people to prevent homelessness 4. Ending rough sleeping and begging in Rotherham 5. To improve access to tenancy support, employment and health support services 6. To ensure there is enough emergency accommodation <p>This report also provides a summary of key performance within 2019-20 reporting period and the first two months of 2020-2021 (up to the end of May 2020). The performance report has given a much clearer picture about what is happening in the Homelessness Service. Escalation triggers have been introduced to flag business critical areas so that responses and resources can be deployed to implement solutions.</p>	
2. Key Issues		
2.1	Service Performance:	
2.1.1	Homelessness Case Loads	
2.1.1	<p>The table below shows that this year there is more new homelessness cases than the same period last year 1813 compared to 1577 between April 2018 and March 2019. This 15% increase is due to the Act now being embedded and other agencies are now referring homeless people to the service.</p>	

Period	Number of cases	Trend
April 2018 to March 2019	1577	
April 2019 to March 2020	1813	

2.1.2

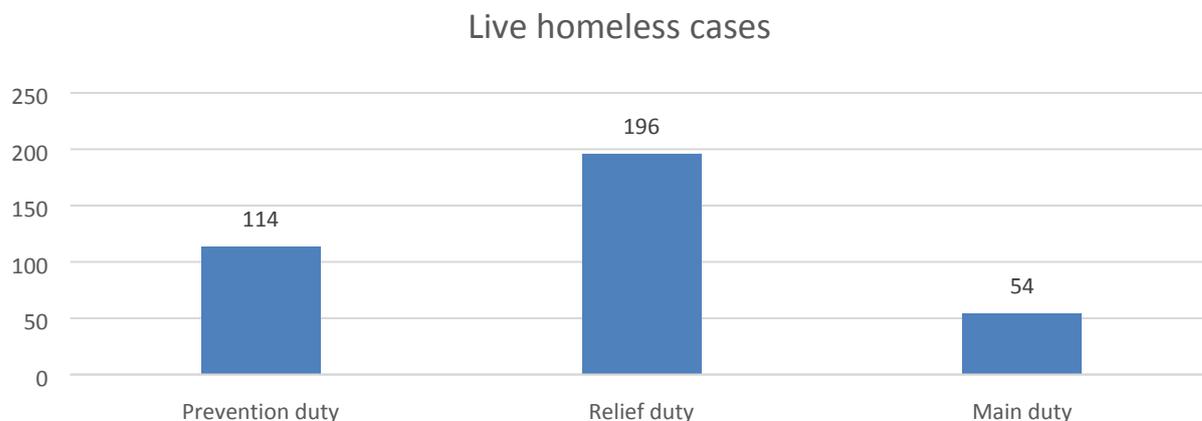
The table below shows that the number of live homelessness and case loads

Month	Apr 19	May 19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug 19	Sep 19	Oct 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Trend
Number of Open Cases	368	398	416	319	346	343	389	340	307	299	304	364	
Number of FTE	10	8	8	8	10	10	10	10	10	10	11	13	
Average case load	36.8	49.75	52	39	34	34	38	34	30	30	27	28	

The results in the table above show that the first 9 month period caseloads reduced from 368 to 307 at the end of December 2019, and the average case load per officer from 36.8 to 30, with a spike in June 2019 when total caseload were 416, with an average of 52 cases per officer. (This increase was impacted by 2 officers absent from work due to long term sickness, holidays and vacancies). Caseloads started to increase towards the end of March 2020, however the average caseload reduced due to more staff being recruited to the team.

2.1.3

The chart below shows the stages of the 364 live homeless cases on 31st March 2020.



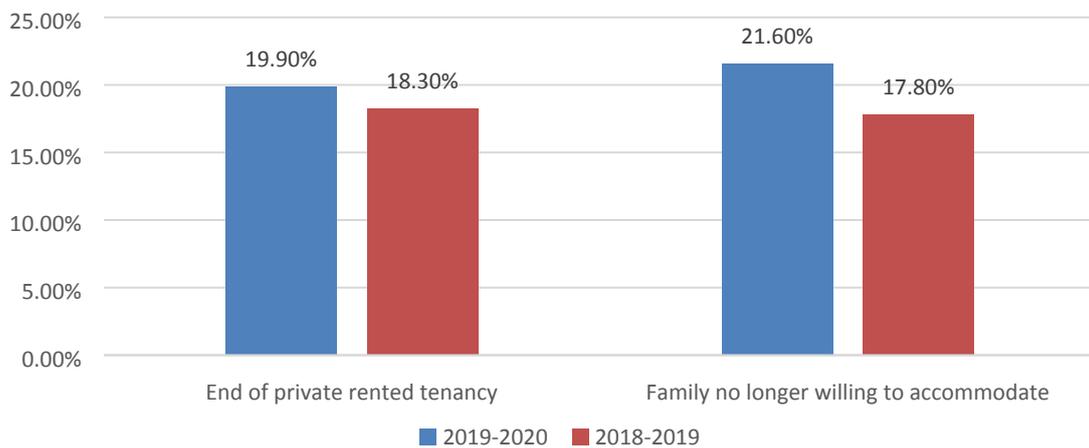
2.1.4 The chart below is the number of households prevented from becoming homeless in the prevention stage - (high is better)

2018/19	2019/20	Year on Year Direction of travel
419	467	↑

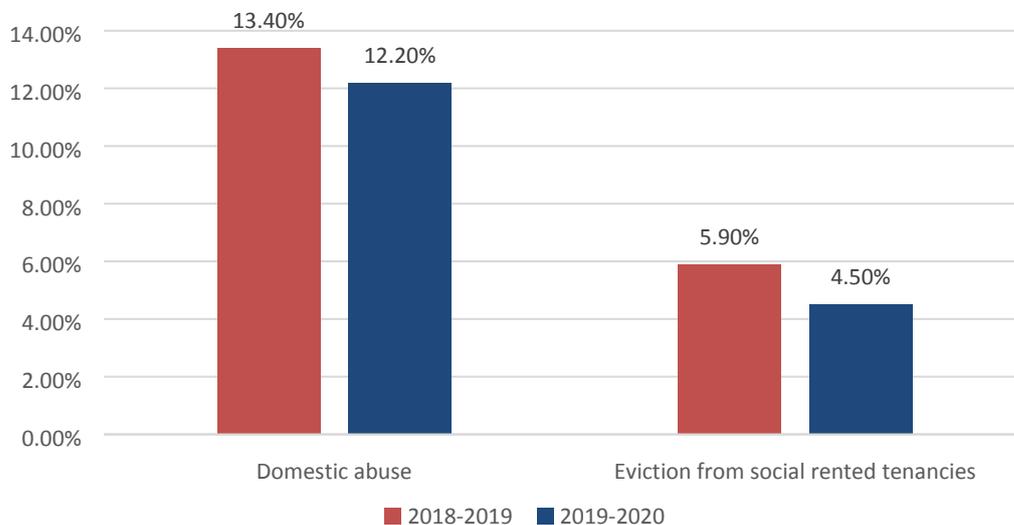
2.1.5 The chart below details the total number of homelessness cases prevented from becoming homeless in all stages (Prevent, Relief and Main) high is better

Annual Performance		Year on Year Direction of travel
2018/19	2019/20	
1106	1680	↑

2.1.6 The chart below shows the top main reasons for homelessness are increasing



2.1.7 Reductions have been seen in cases due to;

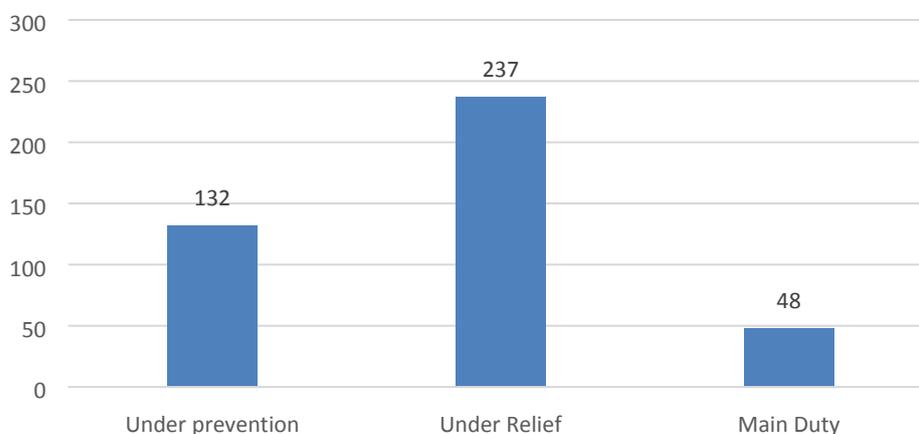


2.1.8 Since April 2020, during the Covid 19 restriction - The team have seen an increase in homelessness presentation and as such have closely monitored demand each day.

Due to the lack of move on options the number of people in the prevention stage is decreasing and those who are owed a main homeless duty is increasing. Households in the relief stage who remain homeless for more than 56 days automatically move into the Main duty stage. The Main duty can only be discharged with a Part 6 offer of Council or Housing Association accommodation or a 12 months Assured Shorthold Tenancy in the private rented sector (this duty can be discharged with a 6-month tenancy in the relief stage). This will create more demand for social housing as it is unlikely that private landlords would be willing to offer 12-month tenancies.

2.1.9 The homelessness live duty stages of case work as at 12 June is:

The total number of open homelessness cases = 417



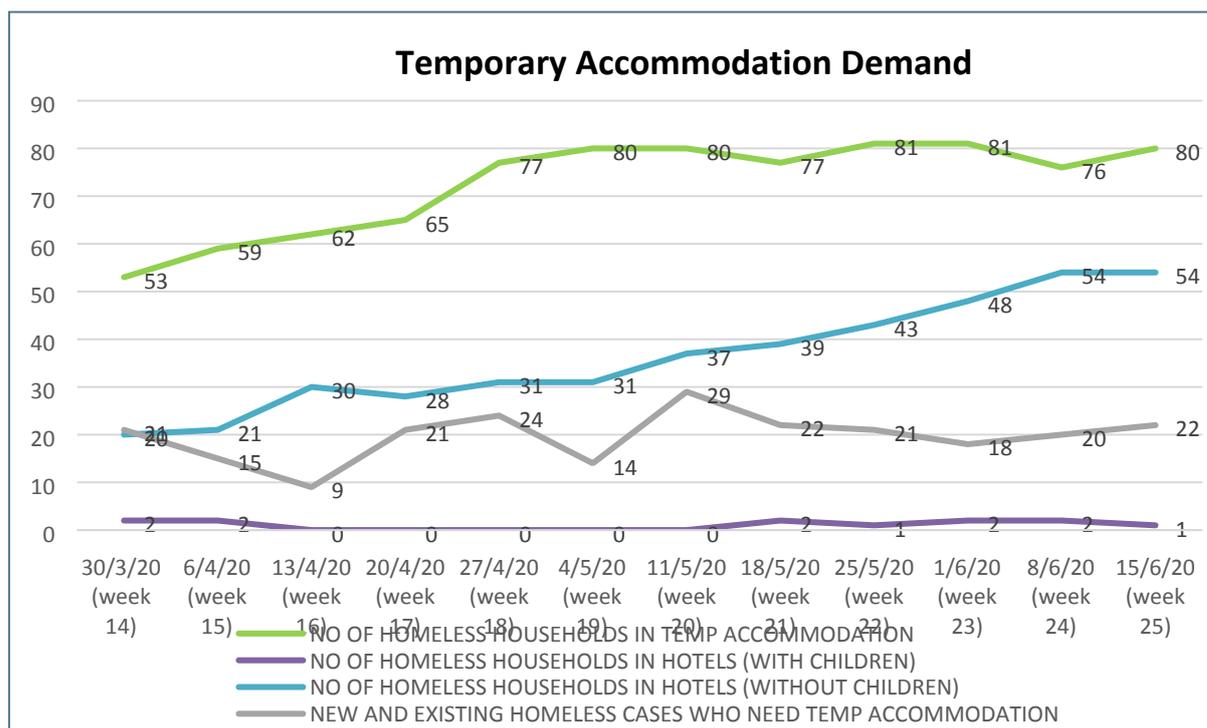
Since the 30th March the team have received 297 new homeless applications, 214 of those needed to be placed in temporary accommodation

2.1.10 Temporary Accommodation usage since 31st March 2020.

The availability of temporary accommodation is not static and is subject to both inward and outward occupancy activity. The Homelessness team are constantly managing new placements as people move out into more permanent housing. However, at the current time we will not be in a position where temporary accommodation is not in use. Temporary accommodation is being closely monitored to ensure that it is being used when requested and made available for further use when it becomes vacant.

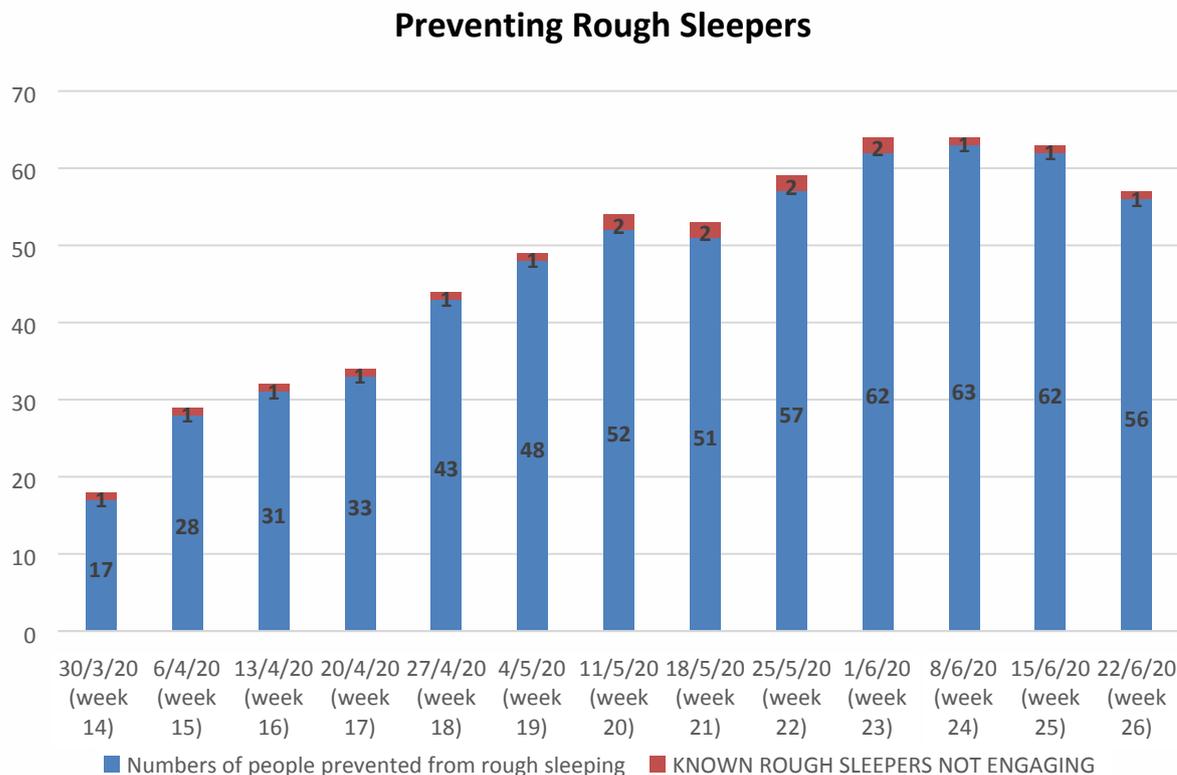
The current fluidity of the Homelessness Service’s emergency accommodation provision is as follows.

2.1.11 The chart below shows the Council’s Emergency Temporary Homeless demand since W/C 30th March 2020:



2.1.12 Preventing Rough Sleepers

The chart below shows the number of people accommodated on 1 June is 62, this has prevented them from rough sleeping. There is still 1 male who is not willing to engage.



The Government has a campaign “Get Everyone in Campaign” which aims to prevent people from sleeping rough and to try and change their lives for good.

On 26th May 2020, Dame Louise Casey, who is leading the specialist taskforce responsible for implementing the next phase of the Government’s support for rough sleepers during the pandemic, made an announcement, calling for community partners to help with the COVID rough sleeping crisis.

The taskforce will work with councils across the country on plans to ensure rough sleepers can move into long-term, safe accommodation once the immediate crisis is over – ensuring as few people as possible return to life on the streets. Further funding has been announced to provide a budget of up to 6000 units of accommodation to support rough sleepers.

In response, the Homelessness team are starting to put plans in place for those people who we have prevented from rough sleeping who have been accommodated in hotels and temporary accommodation in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In Rotherham at the end of March 2020 prior to lock down there was 1 known rough sleeper. On 12th June, in accordance with the Government guidelines, the team were accommodating 62 people to prevent them from sleeping rough (46 households in hotels and 16 households in Council’s temporary homeless.) Nationally, there has been 14,610 people being accommodated to prevent them sleeping rough.

2.2

The Homelessness team are have establishing a working group of partners, under the title of 'First Steps Rotherham' which is the name we use for the rough sleeper initiative project, funded by RS13.

The group includes Council Officers, (including homelessness and commissioned services,) Crisis, South Yorkshire Housing Association, Action, Target Housing, Shiloh (our local charity) mental health practitioner working within the rough sleeper team, primary care and the hospital trusts.

This group works together to provide:

- tenancy and specialist support
- provision of food and resettlement support
- o whilst people are in temporary accommodation, and
- o when people move into their own accommodation

The aim of this work is to support clients to sustain their tenancies. As a result of the work of this group there have been 43 referrals for support.

Impact Measures Performance

Indicator	2018/2019	2019/2020	Trend
Reduce the number of homeless people with complex needs awaiting accommodation	471 (30% of new cases)	381 (21% of new cases)	 (positive decrease)
Reduction in repeat homelessness (as % of all new cases)	1.01% of all new cases (16 people)	0.99% of all new cases (18 people)	 (positive decrease)
Reduce the number of rough sleepers	10	1	 (positive decrease)
Increase the number of households supported by the homelessness team who are in the preventions stage	703 (44.6% of all new cases)	615 (33.9% of all new cases)	 (negative decrease)
Increase the number of applicants assisted to move to private rented	30	21	 (negative decrease)
Reduction in the number of young people (aged under 25) requiring the	407	476	 (negative increase)

2.3	Homelessness team's support			
	Reduction in the number of young people (aged under 25) requiring the Homelessness team's support again in 12 months of being accommodated	4	2	 (positive decrease)
	Increase the number of households who are given debt advice	352 (45% of new cases)	398 (46% of new cases)	 (positive increase)
	Increase the number of households who are supported to access employment or training	Not recorded	100 (47 into work and 53 into training)	
	Reduce the number of households accessing temporary accommodation	45	53	 (negative increase)
	Reduce the number of single households accessing hotel accommodation	Not recorded	20	
	Reduce the number of households with children accessing hotel accommodation	Not recorded	2	
2.3.1	Progress against the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Action Plan:			
	Aim 1 - To support people with Complex Needs			
	Outcome - No one sleeps rough			
	Action	Progress		
	To work with housing partners to extend the Housing First Model	11.9% of 2019/20 new cases had 2 or more priority needs compared to 6.7% in 2018/19		

		As part of the Rough Sleeper funding we have an additional 5 properties which will provide Housing First accommodation – this will increase the number of Housing First properties available in Rotherham to 30.
	Provide a resettlement/floating support package for every person with complex needs to support them in accessing independent tenancies	<p>We have set up a working group of partners, under the title of 'First Steps Rotherham' which is the name we use for the rough sleeper initiative project, funded by RS13.</p> <p>The group includes Council Officers, (including homelessness and commissioned services,) Crisis, South Yorkshire Housing Association, Action, Target Housing, Shiloh (our local charity) mental health practitioner working within the rough sleeper team, primary care and the hospital trusts.</p> <p>This group works together to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tenancy and specialist support • provision of food and resettlement support whilst people are in temporary accommodation, and when people move into their own accommodation <p>The aim of this work is to support clients to sustain their tenancies. As a result of the work of this group there have been 43 referrals for support.</p>
2.3.2	Aim 2 – To prevent homelessness and offer rapid housing solutions to get people in urgent need rehoused quicker	
	Outcome - Homelessness is prevented	
	Action	Progress
	Improve access to information for people including landlords about services to prevent homelessness	Leaflet under development. Progress has been made to improve information on the website
	Provide a digital web-based service to help people find Private Landlords who have available properties	Exploring software sub regionally
Evaluate the impact of the changes to the Housing	Numbers of households rehoused via the Allocation Policy is being monitored weekly as part of the performance recording.	

<p>Allocation Policy for people at risk of homeless</p>	<p>The decision was taken on March 23rd to reduce the Housing Options service to offer lettings only to homeless households including those living in temporary accommodation. This was following on from government guidance issued on March 16th stating that we needed to find accommodation for rough sleepers and those with no recourse to public funds.</p> <p>Since March 23rd 2020 to 12 June 2020, there have been 82 homeless households assisted to alternative Council accommodation.</p> <p>Between 1st April 2019 and April 2020 there have been 491 homeless households assisted to alternative Council accommodation compared to 307 during April 2018 to March 2019</p>
<p>Improve the referral pathway and service for people being discharged from hospital without suitable housing accommodation</p>	<p>Pathway developed with hospital discharge team. Homelessness Officer attending weekly outreach at Swallownest Court (Mental Health) and Homelessness Officer based 1 day per week at the hospital with the discharge team. There is 8 current open cases.</p>
<p>Improve information on how to access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces, Veterans, and their families</p>	<p>90K funding awarded across the sub region which will be used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an e-learning package across South Yorkshire, specifically about homeless ex-services personnel and their families. This will be done in conjunction with specialist organisations who understand what content is required. This is in the final stages • Commission research to develop good practice - Each local authority has a statutory homelessness duty. The aim of this commission is to produce a strategic approach (es) incorporating good practice on supporting the homeless armed forces community. • £55k funding for the four South Yorkshire authorities to support armed forces community. It could include for example: - housing options through the provision of

2.3.3		bond and rent deposit - provision of furniture / white goods - mental health support
	Monitor the local causes of homelessness to align resources and services	<p>A report has been developed to find out causes of homelessness: The top main reasons which are increasing are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of private rented tenancy – Between April 2019 to end March 2020 19.9% compared to 18.3% during a 12-month periods 2018/19 • Family no longer willing to accommodate between April 2019 to end March 2020 21.6% compared to 17.8% during a 12-month periods 2018/19 • Domestic Abuse - Between April 2019 to end March 2020 12.2% compared to 13.4% during a 12-month periods 2018/19 • Eviction from social rented tenancies - Between April 2019 to end March 2020 4.5% compared to 5.9% during a 12-month periods 2018/19
	Aim 3 – To increase support for young people to prevent homelessness	
	Outcome - Homelessness is prevented	
	Action Progress	Progress
	Provide information for young people on their housing options to prevent homelessness	<p>Prior to lock down Housing Options being undertaken at Chatham Villa's (Leaving Care Team) every 2nd Tuesday</p> <p>Housing Advice Team attend fortnightly outreach for the residents of Eastwood in order to assist them with accessing services.</p> <p>Housing Advice have plans to commence outreach at Fleming Gardens and Roundabout, this along with the leaving care outreach work will fit in with Young Person's Moving on Panel. By doing outreach we can see the young people and their support workers in an environment that they are comfortable and familiar with. Restarting these sessions will be considered as part of our recovery plans</p>

2.3.4	Undertake housing advice sessions in special schools and colleges	Housing Options advice sessions were being held at Abbey and Newman school and also RCAT and Dinnington College. Restarting these sessions will be considered as part of our recovery plans
	Continue to fund a social worker in the Early Help team	Three Early Help Support workers are funded via the Housing Revenue Account to support families in financial distress and at risk of eviction.
	Set up 10 properties as part of the House Project for Care Leavers	2018/19 - 7 people identified for the House Project, Monthly progress meetings held to start to identify housing requirements for the next round.
	Aim 4 – To end rough sleeping and begging	
	Outcome - no one sleeps rough and all people begging will not be homeless	
	Action	Progress
	Explore the development of an “Alternative Giving Scheme” which aims to reduce rough sleeping and begging	<p>Alternative Giving Scheme was in the final stages. H.O.M.E. (Helping Other’s Made Easy) is an alternative giving scheme for Rotherham which has been developed with Shiloh and other partners.</p> <p>The scheme is on hold due to Covid 19 and the Governments campaign to get everyone in off the streets. It was intended to be launched in 2 phases, however due to Covid 19 the initiative is on hold:</p> <p>Phase 1 – Digital – Mid March 2020 Phase 2 - Poster – September 2020</p> <p>The scheme is aimed to provide more information to members of the public about services available for homeless people and a quick link to homeless charities for people to donate money as an alternative to giving money to beggars.</p> <p>In summary the scheme provides:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education on the street begging issues 2. Knowledge of what's being done to support them 3. Details of all local providers working to help them 4. Opportunity to donate directly to any of the providers either online, or by post. <p>Beggars in the town had reduced from 17 to 5. The reduction is due to Operation Carbon, Close partnership working with CPU, the police and homelessness service</p>

<p>Ensure people have access to ongoing support if required when they move out of temporary accommodation into their own tenancy.</p>	<p>Resettlement and Tenancy Support Officers now patch based with a portfolio of temp accommodation. Each occupant has a move on plan which includes ongoing support to set up their new home if required</p> <p>Attained £380K of funding to support rough sleepers</p> <p>Developing a Rough Sleeper Initiative Team, with additional specialist roles to help improve Coordination and move on effort</p> <p>First Steps Rough Sleeper Ring fenced accommodation already in place</p> <p>Rough sleepers ringfenced short term move on accommodation, has been in place since 3rd April 2020, providing 7 bedrooms and 1 emergency bed space (small box room). Due to staffing levels this can only accommodate 4 people who would have been rough sleepers</p>
<p>Work with partners to ensure continued advice and support for rough sleepers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly meetings held at Shiloh. • Side by Side meetings held quarterly
<p>Conduct quarterly rough sleeper counts and continue to undertake weekly outreach work in key locations to connect people to services</p>	<p>Daily rough sleeper counts being undertaken. Last year's annual return recorded 10 rough sleepers. On 12th June this had decreased to 2 rough sleepers who won't engage. However, 63 people have also been prevented from rough sleeping as they have been accommodated (46 households in hotels and 17 households in Council's temporary homeless.) Nationally, there has been 14,610 rough sleepers being accommodated.</p> <p>Of the 63 people in accommodation we estimate the need for the following types of accommodation and support to move on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing First/Supported Housing with intensive support = 6 • Supported housing or housing led with floating support = 18

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRS/social housing tenancy with start-up floating support= 33 • Assistance to reconnect to family and friends/return home= 6
	Provide outreach work in key locations	<p>Prior to lock down outreach for rough sleepers was undertaken at Shiloh. During winter, members of the Homelessness Team and South Yorkshire Police step up the work to tackle homelessness.</p> <p>Members of RMBC's Homelessness Resettlement team, Drugs Services and the police actively go out during the early hours to locate any rough sleepers to try and encourage them to connect them to relevant help and support.</p>
	Ensure there is enough capacity and support available to run SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocols) all winter.	<p>In respect of accommodation the Council has an arrangement with South Yorkshire Fire Service to utilise their training room to provide a winter night shelter for up to 8 rough sleepers. Referrals are made solely by the Homelessness Service.</p> <p>In addition, during the cold weather (not necessary below zero) rough sleepers are offered self-contained temporary accommodation and hotel accommodation.</p> <p>The team can also make referrals into Rotherham's Housing First Scheme which has 30 units for people with complex needs.</p>
2.3.5	Aim 5 – To improve access to tenancy support, employment and health support services	
	Outcome - Create financial resilience, more options to access work and training	
	Action	Progress
	Provide a planned approach via the South Yorkshire Accommodation Hub to rehousing prior to all offenders leaving prison who have a local connection to Rotherham	Sub regional funding attained for 3 Prevention Officers across the region to work with local prisons. Updates are received from the link officers in prison and the Prevention Officer will undertake a homelessness assessment so that there is a plan in place on release. The current open case load for

		people being released from prison is 33 at 17th June 2020
Ensure all individuals presenting as homeless who have substance misuse issues are referred straight away to commissioned treatment services		All homeless applicants are encouraged to take up services at CGL drug and alcohol services. 24 referrals have engaged with CGL between April 2019 and March 2020
Connect people to employment, training, volunteering		<p>The Financial Inclusion Team has continued to provide advice and support to homeless customers. Since May 2019 the team have provide pre-tenancy support to 1,249 customers.</p> <p>There have also been 314 people supported with claims for Universal Credit and 37 referrals for employment support.</p>
Ensure people have speedy access to money advice, debt services and gambling support when needed		<p>There have been 145 referrals to agencies providing debt and welfare advice since May 2019.</p> <p>Harmful Gambling Training</p> <p>Free training sessions have been organised to increase the awareness of harmful gambling and its impact on families and local communities as well as the individuals directly harmed by it. There have been 135 front line staff have received Awareness training to date, with four more sessions to be planned in the next year.</p> <p>There have been 6 referrals for gambling support</p>
Implement 'Tenancy Health Checks' to prevent problems from escalating and tenancies being jeopardised.		<p>6122 Tenancy Health Check visits were undertaken between April 2019 and March 2020.</p> <p>The outcomes from the visits included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 referrals for affordable warmth • 2 Adult Safeguarding Referrals due to concerns about wellbeing • 127 Referrals for Adult Social Care Assessments • 23 Requests for Assistive Technology • 9 CYPS Early Help Referrals • 11 Employment Support Referrals • 59 Financial Support Referrals

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 referral to children’s safeguarding due to concerns about a child • 16 referrals for support with their mental health • 42 referrals/signposting to activities due to loneliness • 4 Drug/Alcohol/Smoking Support Referrals • 2 Make Every Contact Count Further Information Provided • 5 referrals to Rotherham Sight and Sound • 11 South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Fire Safety Advice Referrals • Range of information and advice provided <p>Tenancy wellbeing checks have been undertaken remotely via telephone since the COVID-19 pandemic. 4740 telephone calls have been made to potential vulnerable tenants to date resulting in referrals for support to the community hub, financial tenancy support and adult social care.</p>
2.3.6	Aim 6 – To ensure there is enough decent emergency accommodation	
	Outcome - Everyone has a safe place to live and nobody is in emergency accommodation without a plan to move on	
	Action	Progress
	Set up 6 “Step-up Step-Down properties” for hospital discharges	6 step-up step-down properties set up.
	Set up 2 assessable temporary accommodation units for people with a disability	3 properties in use
	Set up a dog friendly temporary emergency accommodation	Introducing a dog pack where we provide pet bowls and dog/cat cages for owners of dogs/cats
	Set up 4 dispersed properties for people fleeing domestic abuse	Now in operation
	Maintain decency of temporary accommodation	During the last 3 months the portfolio of temporary accommodation has increased from 64 to 89 units of temporary accommodation. Checks are undertaken twice per week; a condition report is provided. Full refresh project planned.
	Carry out a regular safe and well-being checks for all households placed into temporary accommodation	Resettlement officers now in post – they are patch based; all occupants have a move on plan

3. Key Actions and Timelines	
3.1	<p>Key areas of focus for the next six months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement next steps move on plans for Rough Sleepers • Review of the Housing Allocation Policy (start from July/August 2020) • Housing Service Covid-19 recovery plan • Recruit to new posts • Bid for funding • Working in partnership through the SHP with all stakeholders • Utilising improved data through dashboard • Analysing potential spikes • Amending policies and will be implementing findings of temp accommodation review
4. Recommendations	
4.1	The Improving Places Select Commission continues to receive twice yearly update reports.

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Progress Report July 2020

Tom Bell
Assistant Director of Housing

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019 -2022

- 6 Aims
- Service Performance
- Progress
- Next 6 months



The 6 Aims

1. To support people with complex needs.

So that no one sleeps rough

3. To increase support for young people to prevent homelessness

So that homelessness is prevented

5. To improve access to tenancy support, employment and health support services

Create financial resilience, more options to access work and training

2. To prevent homelessness and offer rapid housing solutions

So that homelessness is prevented

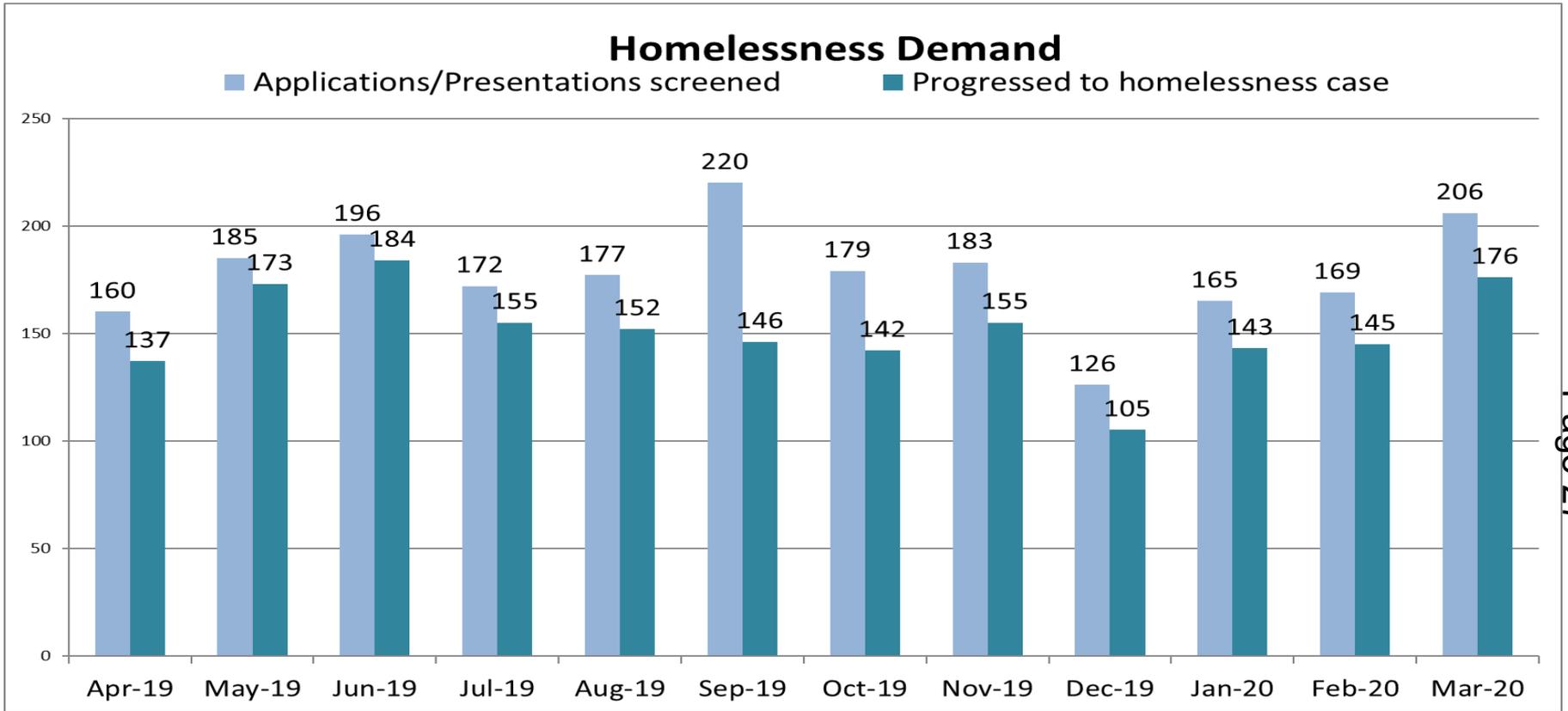
4. Ending rough sleeping and begging in Rotherham

So that no one sleeps rough and all people begging will not be homeless

6. To ensure there is enough emergency accommodation

So that everyone has a safe place to live and nobody is in emergency accommodation without a plan to move on

Service Performance

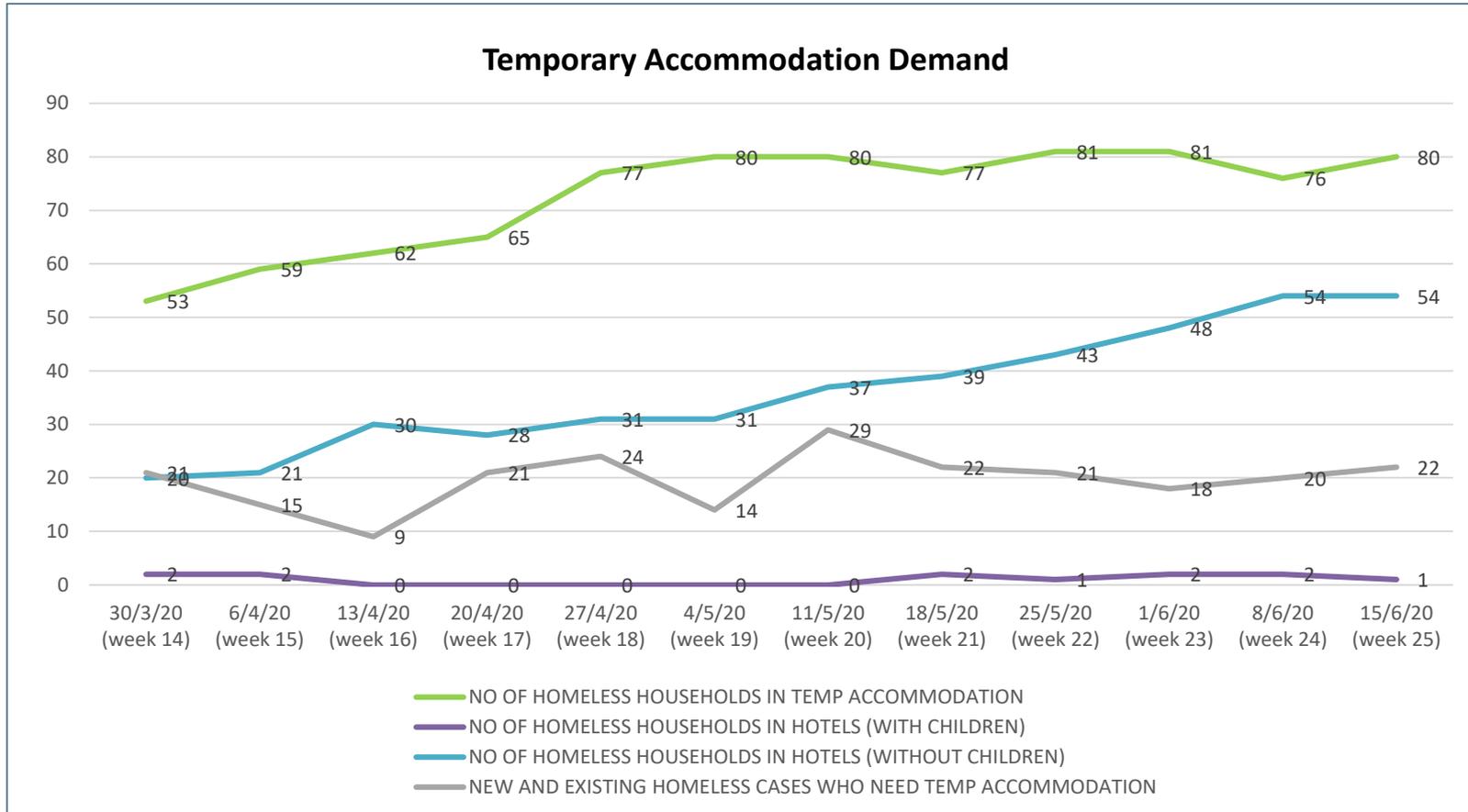


Total of 1813 new cases in 2019/20, compared to 1577 in 2018/19
= 15% increase

Service Performance

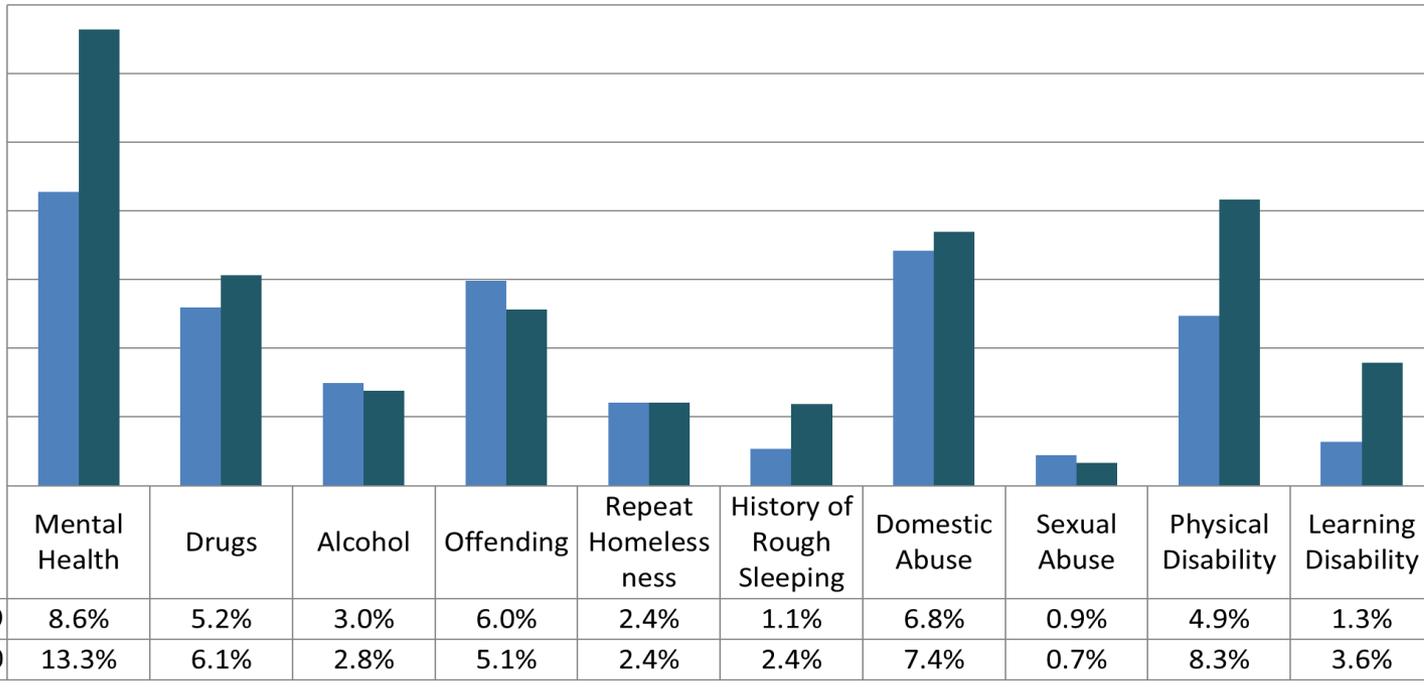
Month	Apr 19	May 19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug 19	Sep 19	Oct 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Trend
Number of Open Cases	368	398	416	319	346	343	389	340	307	299	304	364	
Number of FTE	10	8	8	8	10	10	10	10	10	10	11	13	
Average case load	36.8	49.75	52	39	34	34	38	34	30	30	27	28	

Service Performance



1.To support people with complex needs.

% of Homelessness cases in the year with Priority Needs by type



11.9% of 2019/20 new cases had 2 or more priority needs compared to 6.7% in 2018/19

Wider Progress

- Housing First accommodation increased to 30.
- We have set up a working group of partners, under the title of 'First Steps Rotherham' which is the name we use for the rough sleeper initiative project, funded by RS13.

2. To prevent homelessness and offer rapid housing solutions

Wider Progress

- Improved the website information for people including landlords about services to prevent homelessness
- Numbers of households rehoused via the Allocation Policy is being monitored weekly as part of the performance recording.
- Pathway developed with hospital discharge team
- Improved information on how to access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces, Veterans, and their families
- Monitoring the local causes of homelessness to align resources and services

Number of households prevented from becoming homeless in the prevention stage (high is better)

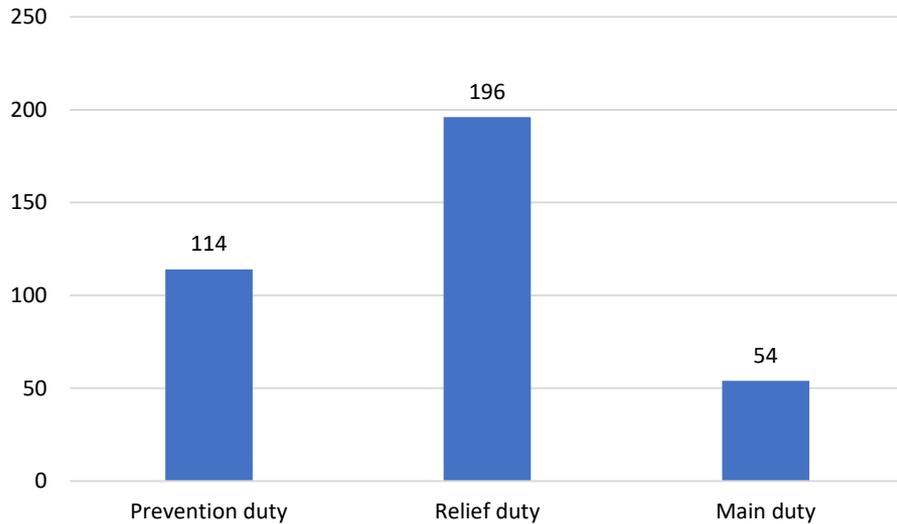
2018/19	2019/20	Yr on Yr DOT
419	467	↑

Total number of homelessness cases prevented from becoming homeless in all stages (Prevent, Relief and Main) high is better

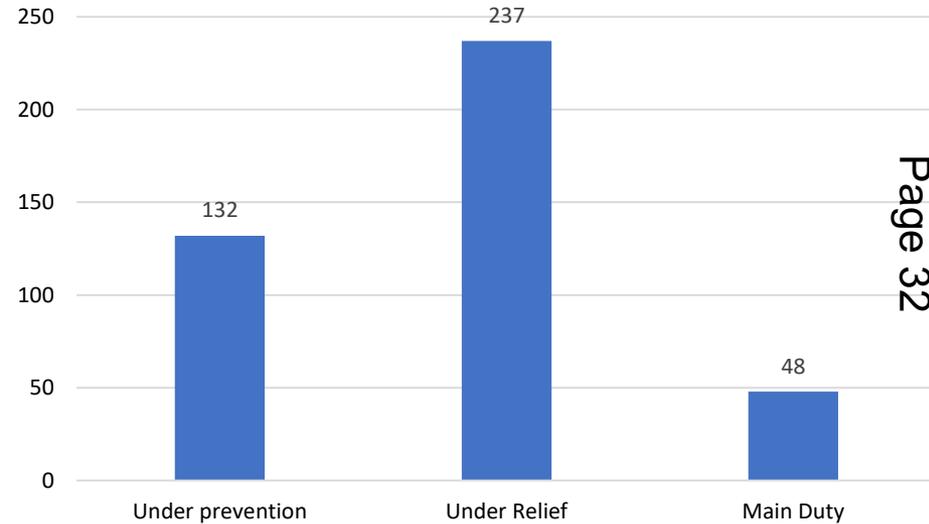
2018/19	2019/20	Yr on Yr DOT
1106	1680	↑

2. To prevent homelessness and offer rapid housing solutions

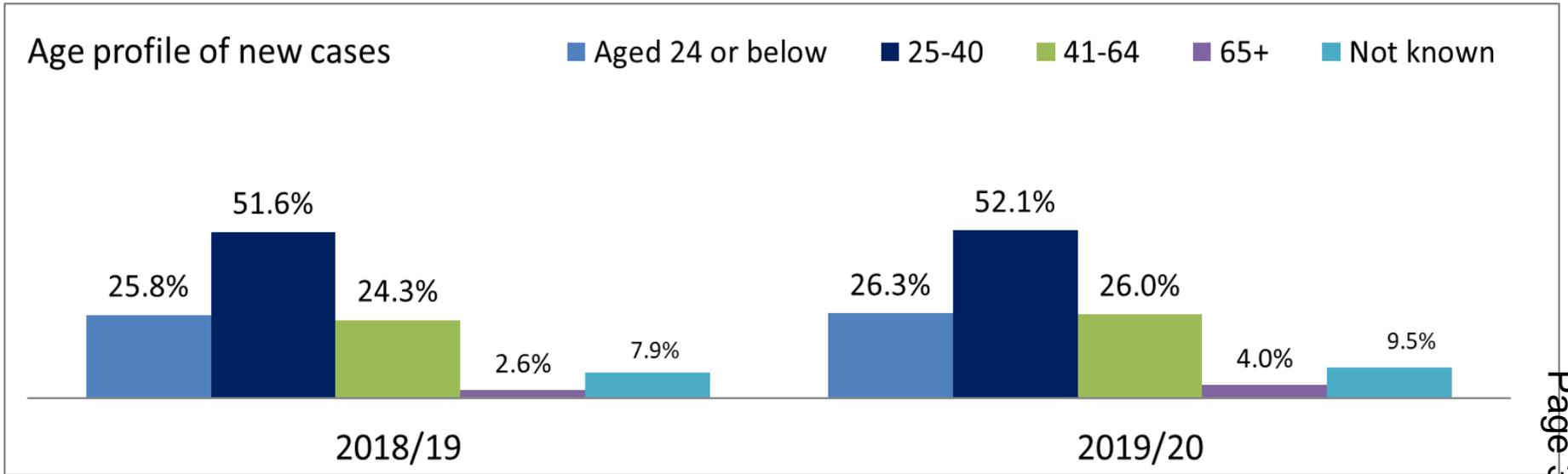
364 open homelessness cases on 31st March 2020



417 open homelessness cases on 12th June 2020

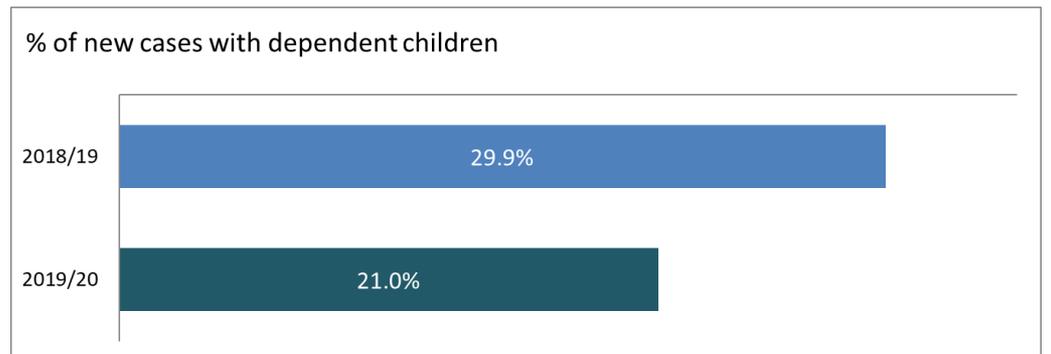


3. To increase support for young people to prevent homelessness

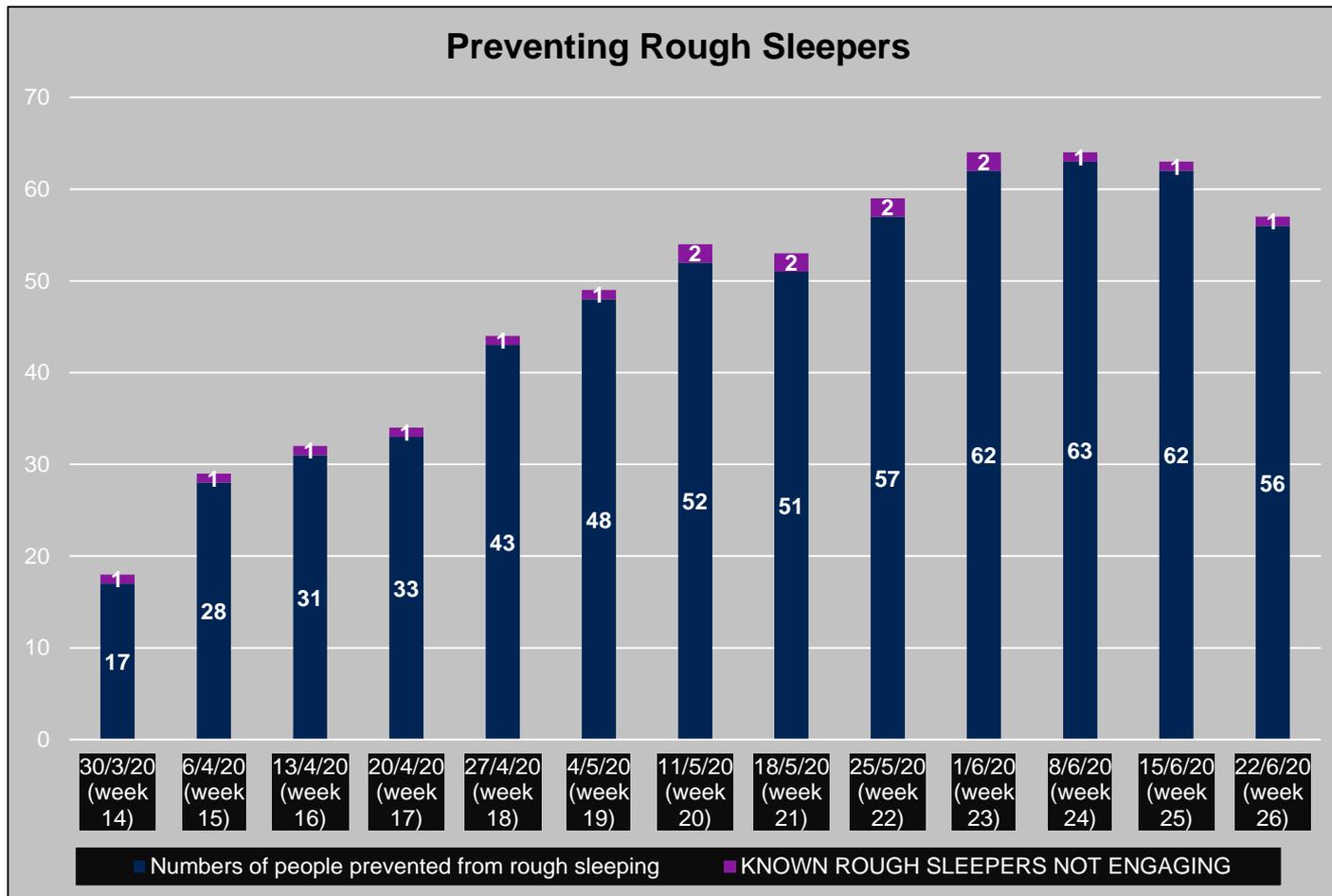


Wider Progress

- Continuing to fund 3 Early Help Support workers to support families in financial distress and at risk of eviction
- Set up 7 properties as part of the House Project for Care Leavers and continuing to identify further properties



4. Preventing rough sleeping and begging in Rotherham



4. Ending rough sleeping and begging in Rotherham

Wider Progress

- Resettlement and Tenancy Support Officers now patch based with a portfolio of temp accommodation. Each occupant has a move on plan which includes ongoing support to set up their new home if required
- Attained £380K of funding to support rough sleepers
- Developing an Rough Sleeper Initiative Team, with additional specialist roles to help improve Coordination and move on effort
- First Steps Rough Sleeper Ring fenced accommodation already in place

5. To improve access to tenancy support, employment and health support services

Wider Progress

- Attained sub regional funding attained for 3 Prevention Officers across the region to work with local prisons.
- The Financial Inclusion team are Connecting people to employment, training, volunteering
- Tenancy Health Check Visits have been undertaken

6. To ensure there is enough emergency accommodation

Wider Progress

- During the last 3 months the portfolio of temporary accommodation has increased from 64 to 89 units. A further review is being undertaken
- Set up 4 dispersed properties for people fleeing domestic abuse
- Set up 6 step up step down properties

Next 6 months

- Implement next steps move on plans for Rough Sleepers
- Review of the Housing Allocation Policy (start from July/August 2020)
- Housing Service Covid-19 recovery plan
- Recruit to new posts
- Bid for funding
- Working in partnership through the SHP with all stakeholders
- Utilising improved data through dashboard
- Analysing potential spikes

<h1>BRIEFING</h1>	TO:	Improving Places Select Commission
	DATE:	14 July 2020
	LEAD OFFICER:	Sue Shelley Business Development Manager Tel: 07989 985831
	TITLE:	Housing Revenue Account – Rents and Service Charges – Response to the pandemic and future provision
1. Background		
1.1	The Housing Income Service Transformation Programme was initiated and completed in 2018. This report outlines the success of the new service model, the response to the pandemic and the development of future provision.	
1.2	The Transformation Programme was designed to reflect current thinking in the field and built upon a set of principles encompassing contemporary operational practices, placing the customer at the heart of the service delivery model, despite the service having the ability to deliver life changing sanctions.	
1.3	The outcome of the Transformation Programme was to create a Housing Income Recovery Service, restructured and very specifically focussed on maximising housing income in all its forms, with a joining up of responsibility for the collection of both current and former tenants rent arrears. In addition, a new and better equipped Financial Inclusion and Tenancy Support Service was created. This part of the service develops and delivers practical interventions and projects to enable tenants to get the maximum benefit from their income. In 2019 the Advocacy and Appeals Team became part of the Financial Inclusion Service. The Advocacy and Appeals Team deliver specialist benefit advice to people living with cancer and debt advice. The appeals part of the service supports people with appeals on Employment Support Allowance (ESA). In 2018/19 the team carried out 614 telephone and 224 face to face appointments from 885 new referrals. Where necessary the team will refer to other partner organisations including Macmillan Information Service, IAPTs (counselling) Macmillan advocacy, DWP visiting team, RMBC single point of access, advocacy & appeals, housing dept, benefit visiting team and Macmillan National Helpline teams. The Appeals part of the service has a strong performance record. In January 14 appeals were supported and succeeded, In February 17 of which 15 were successful and in March 12 of which 10 had a successful outcome.	
1.4	The figures for the number of appeals dealt with does not give the full story of the impact on individuals. One case recently dealt with by the team took ten months to resolve with the DWP only re-examining their decision when the case went to tribunal. At this point the DWP changed their decision, reinstated his ESA and paid the individual concerned £7,772 the full weekly allowance that he had been without for the previous ten months. Mr W had been without income during the ten months which had put him in hardship but it had also worsened his mental health condition due to the stress and anxiety he had	

suffered. Receiving this decision alleviated this and enabled him to focus on his mental health therapy rather than worrying about the opening times of his local food bank.

- 1.5** The Advocacy and Appeals Team have only been part of the Housing Income Service less than a year but a review of advice services has been started through the Advice Services Partnership to make sure that tenants and residents are getting the best service from available resources and advice services across Rotherham are not unnecessarily duplicating some offers and leaving potential gaps in service that could be met by working in a different way.
- 1.6** The success of the transformation of the Housing Income Service can be seen through performance data. Although we are still waiting for the official year-end data to be received via Housemark, RMBC attend and take part in the Northern Benchmarking group (which include organisations such as Sheffield CC, Hull CC, Wakefield, St Leger Homes, Nottingham) and are RMBC currently out performing all others on rent collection. At the end of the 2019/20 financial year rent collection was the highest for over a decade.
- 1.7** The service manages 23,000 accounts (20,500 properties and 2,500 garages), the homes of over 20,000 tenants. On behalf of these tenants in 2019/20 the service achieved:
- Submission of 4100+ UC claims.
 - Collection of £900,000 arrears achieving a reduction in the financial year 2019/20 (circa £3.9m – just under £3.0m)
 - Evictions reduced by 32% between 18/19 and 19/20
 - A Rent Collection rate of 100.75% - rent due was £83,475,254.55 – rent collected totalled £84,102,936.59.
 - Bad debts provision – decrease from £894,266 in 2018/19 to £792,284 in 2019/20
- 1.8** Performance has also been measured in relation to the response to the pandemic.
- An initial spike in weekly case load to circa 2,600 cases per weekly, which has now gradually reduced and stabilised at 1,600 per week
 - Number of calls made has increased significantly. April 4837 calls, May 5056 (with 1080 tenancy support related), June up to and including w/c 22/06/2020 5620 (1379 tenancy support related)
 - An increase of 945 in Universal Credit (UC) claims from 3187 in Feb 2020 to 4132 in May 2020
 - An increase of 155 in Alternate Payment Arrangement (APA's) from 967 in Feb 2020 to 1122 in May 2020
- 1.9** The expectation would be that arrears would increase now but there has been a £5.17 decrease on average in the balance of those on UC (from £381.17 in Feb 2020 to £376 in May 2020). This is a testament to the work done by the team to explain to tenants how UC works and the support given to tenants with budgeting. In addition, in response to the pandemic the Advocacy and Appeals Team have supported 304 (up to May 24th) cases from the Community Hub.
- 1.10** The performance of the service has been recognised through awards and requests from others in the sector to share good practice. In February 2020 the Financial Inclusion Team were presented with the award for Promoting Financial Inclusion and a cheque for £1,000 to be donated to a non-profit organisation or charity of their choice. The team decided to donate this to the Mayor's Charity. As part of sharing good practice Nick Beasley recently contributed to a webinar '**Universal Credit: Managing the Surge in**

Yorkshire' Leicester CC, Bristol CC and Sandwell have all been in in contact to learn from Rotherham's journey to outstanding performance.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1** The period of the pandemic and initial recovery has shown that the service is not only high performing but also able to flex to meet the needs of its customers with staff maintaining high levels of performance from home while supporting their families and in some cases home schooling alongside meeting work commitments.
- 2.2** In the period before lockdown the Housing Income Team along with other parts of the Housing Service tested their ability to work from home including access to systems. Since the start of lockdown staff have continued to work from home to deliver the service to tenants across Rotherham. In preparation for the predicted pandemic evictions were suspended. Work for some parts of the service, including evictions, were later stopped by government mandate, for example, court work and pre-tenancy assistants could no longer process lettings. These staff were quickly trained on the housing management system and debt recovery to free up income officers so they could deal with the increased number of calls and claims for UC. Staff responded and flexed to meet customer need and continue to do so.
- 2.3** The service has risen to the challenge of the pandemic and performance has remained strong. This has been achieved by working with and advising tenants on benefits and the promotion of a rent first culture.

Housemark 2020-21 Rent Service Performance Indicators

Indicator Description			
Rent Collected as a Percentage of Rent Due (Excl Arrears Brought Forward)	Month	APR	MAY
	Outturn	100.71%	100.44%
	Target	99.05%	98.75%

- 2.4** The positive outcomes being achieved for tenants can be illustrated by feedback from both staff and tenants even before the pandemic response. In the Spring 2020 edition of Home Matters Tenancy Support Officer, Sheridan Hampton explained what she did in her role. The approach staff in Housing Income take is summed up by Sheridan's comment "I love my job because every day is different. I especially love it when tenants realise how their own positive actions can get them out of debt and stop putting themselves at risk of eviction."
- 2.5** Practical support and advice have been developed and sent to all tenants through a leaflet developed in response to the pandemic (Appendix 1). This leaflet 'How to Stretch Your Money Further' gives tenants a range of advice on possible benefits and contact details for other lines of support as well as the teams contact details for any further advice or information.
- 2.6** Support for tenants in the current situation is more important than ever and the service is looking at how existing good practice can be built upon to reach more tenants and residents in the borough. The Employment Solutions Team within Financial Inclusion has already proved to be successful in helping tenants into employment in the first year of operation. In the first year of the Employment Solutions post there were a total of 351 referrals. Of these referrals' 35 were from the Homelessness service. From these referrals 49 customers secured employment and 1 an apprenticeship. Working in partnership with the DWP and training providers 53 customers were able to access free

	training with 30 of these customers obtaining free laptops to complete a computer course. The Employment Solutions Officer has worked with the Income Collection Team supporting 67 tenants with rent arrears helping to prevent evictions and sustain tenancies.
2.7	The Housing Income Service has now been offered the opportunity to build upon this successful model with ESF funding. The ESF Pathways to Progression project will build upon the existing work, while the additional capacity created through these roles will ensure the project can be delivered without taking away from the service already being delivered to tenants. This project will work with tenants and residents either to help them find work directly supporting with CV's or interview preparation or by helping them access training to move them closer to the world of work.
2.8	The service is also working to introduce a new software package to manage calls to customers. Voicescape is able to check if phone numbers are current and make the initial outbound call which is then picked up by an officer. Once this is operational officer time will be saved on transactions giving more time to support more vulnerable tenants.
2.9	All of this means we continue to have a healthy HRA business plan, which allows the service to deliver the Housing priorities; delivering tenant focussed services and building new homes. At this point it is important to be cautious about the future as the impact of the end of furlough is not yet known. This may increase the amount of bad debt but the impact on rent collection could be offset by UC and other benefits.

3. Key Actions and Timelines

3.1	As part of the planning in the run up to the national lockdown Housing Income had prepared by making sure that staff could work from home and access systems as required. The decision was taken to stop evictions before this was confirmed by the government as part of the work to make sure everyone in Rotherham would have a roof over their head in a national emergency.
3.2	On March 18 th Cabinet confirmed that the essential services that Housing must continue to deliver included, the administering of Housing Rent Direct Debits and Tenancy Support to Tenants through Financial Inclusion.
3.3	The decision to stop all evictions was taken by government at the start of the lockdown to the end of June. This has now been further extended to August 23 rd , 2020.
3.4	Staff working on court proceedings and pre-tenancy support for lettings could no longer do their work so they were quickly trained on the housing management system and debt recovery to free up income officers so they could deal with the increased number of calls and claims for UC.
3.5	The Macmillan work was reduced as a consequence of the lockdown and the team started to pick up requests for support from tenants and residents coming through the Community Hub.
3.6	Calls from tenants showed a real need for advice on where to access help and managers and staff worked to create the 'How to Stretch Your Money Further' leaflet which was sent out to all tenants with rent statements in May 2020.

<p>3.7</p>	<p>Following on from the initial emergency response work was then undertaken to develop a programme to deliver the ESF Pathways to Progression project based on the successful Employment Solutions model. This work was accelerated partly in response to the number of people at risk of losing their jobs. Work is now underway to recruit to this project so delivery can start in September.</p>										
<p>3.8</p>	<p>Staff have continued to share best practice during the pandemic, for example, the development of the webinar 'Universal Credit: Managing the Surge in Yorkshire'.</p>										
<p>3.9</p>	<p>Work has started on the HRA Business Plan. This will set out the rents and service charges for 2020/21 and be presented to Cabinet on December 21st. The timeline for production of the reports is below. It will be vital that income collection is maintained during this period of economic uncertainty to ensure the vital services to Council tenants continue to be provided and the housing growth programme is maintained.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="220 629 1477 745"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="220 629 667 667">HRA Business Plan Report</th> <th data-bbox="667 629 852 667">SMT</th> <th data-bbox="852 629 1062 667">DLT</th> <th data-bbox="1062 629 1270 667">SLT</th> <th data-bbox="1270 629 1477 667">Cabinet</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="220 667 667 745">Meeting date</td> <td data-bbox="667 667 852 745">28 October</td> <td data-bbox="852 667 1062 745">10 November</td> <td data-bbox="1062 667 1270 745">17 November</td> <td data-bbox="1270 667 1477 745">21 December</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HRA Business Plan Report	SMT	DLT	SLT	Cabinet	Meeting date	28 October	10 November	17 November	21 December
HRA Business Plan Report	SMT	DLT	SLT	Cabinet							
Meeting date	28 October	10 November	17 November	21 December							

<p>4. Recommendations</p>	
<p>4.1</p>	<p>The Improving Places Select Commission is asked to note the contents of this report.</p>

<h1>BRIEFING</h1>	TO:	Improving Places Select Commission
	DATE:	14 July 2020
	LEAD OFFICER:	Katherine Harclerode Governance Advisor 01709 254532
	TITLE:	Improving Places Select Commission Work Programme 2020-21
1. Background		
1.1	The remit of the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) is to undertake scrutiny activity in respect of all matters pertaining to the borough of Rotherham as a place. In broad terms, this remit relates to business and economic development, employment, emergency planning, environment, housing, climate change, leisure, culture and tourism, transport and highways, as well as regulatory services such as trading standards and environmental health. The breadth of functions and services that fall within the Commission's remit is significant. The way in which the Commission discharges its scrutiny activity is a matter for itself, having regard to the provisions of the Constitution and any direction from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.	
1.2	Members are required to determine their work programme for the 2020/21 municipal year to give focus and structure to scrutiny activity to ensure that it effectively and efficiently supports and challenges the decision-making processes of the Council, and partner organisations, for the benefit of the people of the borough.	
1.3	At the previous meeting it was agreed that further work would be undertaken to develop the work programme in order for it to be approved at this meeting. Meetings involving the Chair and relevant senior officers have taken place to better inform the development of the work programme. This paper sets out the proposed work programme in accordance with the resolution of the Commission its June meeting.	
2. Key Issues		
2.1	The work programme needs to address key policy and performance agendas, with a clear emphasis on adding value by leading to improved outcomes for the people of Rotherham. It should also be focused on issues that Scrutiny will be able to influence.	
2.2	The Work Programme does need to maintain flexibility to accommodate additional or urgent items that may emerge during the year, and, if items are added, this may necessitate a review and re-prioritisation of the Work Programme. Furthermore, the scheduling of items may require some flexibility to take in to account the constraints on the capacity of officers and services currently responding to the active Covid-19 Crisis. As many services are being delivered very differently at present as a result of the pandemic, it also presents an opportunity to reconsider how things might be done in the future, rather than an automatic resumption to former ways.	

2.3	With the postponed Whole Council election now scheduled to be held in May 2021, no meetings will be held in April 2021 during the pre-election period. The work of the Commission is therefore going to need to be completed by the meeting planned to be held in March 2021 before a new Council is elected for the 2021-22 municipal year.
3. Key Actions and Timelines	
3.1	The work programmes have been developed following consultation including multiple emails to Members and suggestions sought from relevant Directorate Leadership Teams. The Governance Advisor will continue to liaise on a monthly basis with relevant Directorate Leadership Teams to ensure that agenda items are submitted in a timely fashion for Members to consider matters in accordance with the work programme detailed at Appendix 1.
3.2	A report will be submitted to each meeting providing an update against the progress made and advising of any changes made by the Chair in between meetings. In order to enable this, it is proposed that authority is delegated to the Chair, in consultation with the Governance Advisor, to enable the amendment of or addition(s) to the work programme during the current municipal year.
4. Recommendations	
4.1	That approval be given to the work programme for the 2020-21 municipal year set out at Appendix 1
4.2	That authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with the Governance Advisor, to amend the work programme in between Commission meetings as required.

**Appendix 1 Outline Work Programme -
Improving Places Select Commission**

Meeting Date	Agenda Items
9 June 2020	Housing Strategy Progress Update
	Initial Work Programme 2020-21
14 July 2020	Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Update
	Housing Income and Service Charges Update
	Revised Work Programme 2020-21
July/August 2020 Workshop	Housing Maintenance and Repairs
8 September 2020	Town Centre Update
	Dignity, Ltd. Update
20 October 2020	Economic Recovery
	Clean Air Zone
	Highways Maintenance
November 2020 Working Group	MIP Review and Flooding Response
8 December 2020	Allotments Self-Management
	Update on CCTV Review
	Cultural Strategy Implementation
January/February 2021 Working Group	Homes Allocation Process
2 February 2021	Rotherham MBC Code of Practice for Highway Inspection and Assessment
	Council Plan Performance Measures - Exception Reporting
16 March 2021	Transportation - Active Travel, Transforming Cities
	Aids and Adaptations Tenant Scrutiny Review