

# LEISURE AND YOUTH POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

Meeting held on Monday, 7th September, 2015 at the Council Offices,  
Farnborough at 7.00 p.m.

## Voting Members

Cr. Liz Corps (Chairman)  
Cr. Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman)

a Cr. T.D. Bridgeman	Cr. J.H. Marsh	Cr. A.R. Newell
Cr. P.I.C. Crerar		Cr. M. Staplehurst
Cr. K. Dibble		Cr. B.A. Thomas

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Cr. T.D. Bridgeman.

## 153. MINUTES –

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th June, 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

## 154. HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – YOUTH CONSULTATION -

The Panel welcomed Mr. Ian Langley, Youth Support Services Board Member of Hampshire County Council (HCC), who attended the meeting to report on the impending Youth Support Services consultation. Mr. Langley advised that a service consultation had been held in 2014 on the Youth Support Services, but this had not been completed. Subsequently, the Executive Lead Member had agreed that financial support for 2015/16 would remain unchanged with the majority of commissioned Youth Support Service providers receiving a twelve month extension to their grants. The new consultation would start in November 2015 and the period prior to the start date would be used to consult with district and borough councils and district groups to inform them of the requirements of the consultation.

It was noted that further savings needed to be achieved in 2016/17 and the shape and delivery of Youth Support Services would need to undergo further transformation. However, it was important to ensure that vulnerable young people still received the service they required and HCC welcomed the views of what was considered important in each local area across the County. By consulting with district and borough councils, prior to the consultation, it was hoped that there would be no surprises when the consultation documents were released. In preparation, HCC needed to consider challenging the traditional ways of working, working together with

partners to offer the best possible service and to keep young people at the centre of its thinking.

The Panel was advised that engagement events had taken place with key stakeholders and providers in April 2015; following this, local engagement events had taken place in Hart/Rushmoor, East Hampshire, Havant, Fareham, Eastleigh, New Forest and Test Valley. In addition, discussions had been held with groups associated with the early help offer; these included children, young people and their families. Emerging themes from these discussions had been identified, including the need for frequent communication with the voluntary sector to give them sufficient notice to retain staff to deliver current services and to plan for any changes. It was also felt important to ensure focus on locality and the needs of the local providers; every area had different needs and requirements.

Mr. Langley reported that the next steps would be to continue the dialogue, and jointly consider the needs of each locality, identify any gaps and how they could be overcome. It was also important for each local authority to ask "what can we bring to the table?" Consideration would also need to be given to future delivery and commissioning models, examples of which could be:

- a grants based model,
- a third sector partner, or
- to run something through the local Children's Partnership, which in Rushmoor was a very active and productive group.

Members were asked to consider a number of things, for example; any groups that would benefit from advanced consultation on the review before the formal consultation began and any key issues, gaps and best practice in the locality. The Panel noted that the consultation would start in early November, 2015 with the outcomes to be reported on in March, 2016.

In response to a question, it was reported that the services to be reviewed covered children and young people aged 0-19. Most young people were referred to the services or attended through outreach projects and the emphasis had been on targeting the right young people with the reducing funds available. It was noted that the overall budget for Hampshire had been in the region of £1 million although the new proposed figure had yet to be determined.

A discussion was held on the pressures on the voluntary sector to provide services with less funding. Mr. Langley advised that a lot of work had been carried out in advance with organisations to pre-warn them of the proposed reductions and to allow them to start preparing for the future at this early stage. Partnership working and best practice had also been encouraged.

The Head of Community and Environmental Services agreed to circulate the presentation recently considered by the Rushmoor Local

Children's Partnership, which would help inform the Council's response to the consultation.

The Panel noted that, locally, Rushmoor Voluntary Services had been part of a similar consultation process around Community Voluntary Services and was now working closely with similar organisations in both Hart and Basingstoke to provide improved value and achieve the savings required by HCC.

It was noted that Mr. Langley would keep the Panel informed on the progress of the consultation if required and further discussion on the way forward would be held at the next mid cycle meeting.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Langley for his presentation.

#### 155. **ALDERSHOT LIDO UPDATE –**

Mr. Peter Amies, Head of Community and Environmental Services, and Mr. Ashley Sharpe, Contracts Manager, attended the meeting to give the Panel an update on the Aldershot Lido Review.

The Panel was advised that the season had now finished and due to the poor weather over the summer months the number of visits (17,500) had dropped considerably in comparison to the previous two seasons (28,000 in 2014 and 48,000 in 2013). The Council had offered a number of initiatives to increase usage for 2015; these included season tickets, loyalty schemes, military discount and discounted entrance from 3.30p.m (previously 4.30p.m.). These initiatives had been advertised via social media, the press, in the town centres and via a video on Facebook. Mr. Amies advised that the Council had entered into a "risk and reward" contract with the contractor. However, in view of the low attendances, caused by weather conditions, it was likely that for 2015 the Council would have to increase its contribution towards the running cost of the facility.

Mr. Amies reported that before the season had started a number of improvements/refurbishments had been made to the facilities at the Lido. £11,000 had been spent upgrading the changing room facilities, £2,000 on new outdoor lockers and £1,000 on new picnic tables for the Café. Wi-Fi had also been provided in the grounds.

A snap shot of users postcodes showed a 60/40 split in favour of use by local residents.

The Panel was advised that the Friends of Aldershot Lido (FOAL) had applied to list the Lido as a place of historical and architectural value; it was noted that the application had been refused which was likely to make it more difficult to secure lottery funding. It was noted that the facility would continue to run in its current format until an alternative approach had been agreed by Members. The Task and Finish Group would continue its work in conjunction with FOAL and other interested parties to develop the best options for the

future of the Lido. The next meeting of the Task and Finish Group was scheduled for 15th October, 2015.

The Panel discussed the report and commented on a number of points, in particular:

- The links to the 1948 Olympic Games, especially as there would be Olympic games held in 2016, and how to use them to market the Lido
- Market the season ticket and discount ticket options earlier as the timescales had been tight for the 2015 season
- Continue the work to assess viability of the various options being considered by the Task and Finish Group with the aim to provide a more sustainable facility.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Amies and Mr. Sharpe and requested that further reports would be made to the Panel as the work progressed.

156. **WORK PROGRAMME –**

The Panel **NOTED** the current work programme, and was advised that the next meeting would be focus on the annual report on the Princes Hall and its working arrangements.

The meeting closed at 8.01 p.m.

LIZ CORPS  
CHAIRMAN

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# ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

Meeting held on Tuesday, 8th September, 2015 at the Princes Hall, Aldershot at 7.00 p.m.

## **Voting Members:**

Cr. D.E. Clifford (Chairman)  
Cr. Sophia Choudhary (Vice Chairman)

Cr. M.S. Choudhary  
Cr. Sue Dibble  
Cr. D.S. Gladstone

Cr. G.B. Lyon

a Cr. J.J. Preece  
Cr. L.A. Taylor  
Cr. D.M. Welch

An apology for absence was submitted by Cr. J.J. Preece

## 157. **MINUTES –**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th June, 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## 158. **RECYCLING – IMPROVING PERFORMANCE –**

The Panel considered appointing a Task and Finish Group to look at improving the Borough's recycling rate.

Mr. James Duggin, Contracts Manager, explained that the Veolia Environmental Services contract was due to end in March, 2017 and, as part of the procurement process, the Cabinet had appointed a working group to consider various aspects of the contract, including improving recycling performance. The Working Group had looked at various ideas for improving recycling which had included:

- free garden waste collections;
- incentives;
- increasing the range of recyclable materials;
- education;
- the introduction of smaller residual waste bins; and
- alternate weekly collections.

The Working Group had been divided in opinion about alternate weekly collections and had recommended that the Cabinet consider the issue further. In considering the matter, the Cabinet had felt that a weekly collection of residual waste should be maintained. The current level of recycling was, however, of concern and it was agreed that the policy of reducing the size of residual waste bins over time should be continued.

The Cabinet was also keen that additional ways of improving recycling levels should be investigated. As recycling performance formed part of the remit of the Environment Panel, nominations were being sought for inclusion in a task and finish group to look at alternative approaches such as:

- learning from best practice, guidance and authorities where alternate weekly collection had been introduced;
- implementing behavioural change initiatives through education and incentive schemes; and
- collecting a wider range of materials.

The Panel **AGREED** that the Chairman (Cr. D.E. Clifford), G.B. Lyon and L.A. Taylor be appointed to the Recycling Task and Finish Group and requests for a further three Members would be sought from the remainder of the Council. Members were informed that initial meetings of the Group would take place in early October, 2015 in line with the contract pre-procurement project, with a report back to the next meeting of the Panel.

#### 159. **PUBLIC CONVENIENCES -**

The Panel received a presentation from Mr. James Duggin, Contracts Manager, which outlined the costs of providing public conveniences as well as the current approach to service provision being pursued under the negotiation process for securing a new contract.

Mr. Duggin explained that there were eight public conveniences in the Borough which were currently managed under the Veolia contract. The Panel was reminded that in September, 2008 Members had agreed to set up a task and finish group to look at service improvements/efficiencies. The group had recommended that no facilities should be closed and that the Rectory Road and Cove Green facilities should be included in the capital programme for refurbishment. In addition, the group had proposed a trial of temporary public conveniences in Aldershot town centre for six months.

With regard to service costs, the Panel was informed that the estimated net revenue expenditure for 2015/16 was £205,050. A small element of this related to organisational staffing costs, £30,000 were premises related and £166,000 would be paid to Veolia to open, close and clean the facilities and to deal with minor acts of vandalism. The projected capital expenditure for 2015/16 was estimated at £44,000 which would include the replacement of sanitary fittings at Manor Park and Aldershot Park toilets and the replacement of male public conveniences at Aldershot Bus Station.

Members felt that the costs involved in maintaining the service were excessive and discussed the scope for removing public conveniences from the pre-contract negotiations. In response Members were advised that toilet cleaning formed part of a basket of work for:

- refuse and recycling collections;
- street cleansing;
- grounds maintenance; and
- toilet cleaning.

Following market testing, it had become clear that toilet cleaning fitted well within grounds management activities and it had appeared that cost reduction was likely across the board in view of the current market conditions. Furthermore, the overall price was reflective of the whole contract and some elements were more or less profitable than others. It was explained that five of the eight public conveniences were situated in parks and potential contractors would want to manage any public conveniences in the vicinity.

Further discussion took place on the Council's capital investment in public conveniences and Members requested a breakdown of premises related costs.

The Panel was of the view that Rushmoor should consider removing the three public conveniences not located in parks from the procurement process and **AGREED** to request Mr. Duggin to seek legal advice on the matter and to respond to the Panel in due course.

160. **UPDATE ON THE HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE OPENING HOURS –**

The Panel received an update from County Councillor M.S. Choudhary on the reasons for the County Council's decision to reduce the County's Household Waste Recycling Centre opening hours. Cr. Choudhary informed the Panel that, as of 1st April, 2015, the County Council had approved a permanent change to the opening hours of all Household Waste Recycling Centres to:

Winter: (1st October – 28th February) – 9.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.  
 Spring: (1st March – 31st March) – 9.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.  
 Summer (1st April – 30th September) – 9.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Cr. Choudhary explained that the reason for the decision had been to deliver cost savings from the Household Waste Recycling Centre management contract in order to contribute towards the County Council's savings targets following a decision in principle to reduce opening hours taken by the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment in November, 2014. Hampshire County Council had considered a number of other options but these had been rejected based on: the negative impact on the day-to-day running of the centres, the number of site users that would be affected and the fact that they would not deliver the level of savings required to achieve the targets set for 2015.

As a result of the changes problems had been reported by Members about long queues of traffic waiting to use the facilities, particularly at weekends. The Panel was advised that a report would be considered by the Economy, Transport and Environment Select Committee at the County

Council on 30th October, 2015 which would provide an impact assessment on the consequences of the decision.

The Panel **NOTED** the update and that Cr. Choudhary would provide a further update at a future meeting.

161. **LITTER –**

The Panel received an update from Mr. James Duggin, Contracts Manager, on littering in the town centres and the approach that would be taken with regard to the issue under the competitive dialogue process for securing the new contract.

It was explained that the new contract included street cleansing and would be negotiated via a process called 'competitive dialogue'. This was a phased process which would allow for uncertainty in the scope of the work. The new contract had been divided into three 'lots' and contractors were able to bid for all or any part, meaning that specialist contractors could be included in the bidding process. The Council aimed to look at the issues around litter holistically with the contractor.

Members asked about performance management within the new contract and were assured that robust measures had been written in to the contract, with the Council able to recover the costs associated with any breach. It was suggested that bonus options should be considered and this was noted for further investigation.

The Panel **NOTED** the update.

The Meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

D.E. CLIFFORD  
CHAIRMAN

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# BOROUGH SERVICES POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

Meeting held on Monday, 14th September, 2015 at the Council Offices,  
Farnborough at 7.00 p.m.

## **Voting Members**

Cr. Barbara Hurst (Chairman)  
Cr. A.R. Newell (Vice-Chairman)

a Cr. T.D. Bridgeman	Cr. C.P. Grattan	Cr. S.J. Masterson
a Cr. D.E. Clifford		Cr. M.J. Roberts
Cr. A.M. Ferrier		a Cr. D.M. Welch

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Crs. T. D. Bridgeman, D. E. Clifford and D. M. Welch.

## **162. MINUTES –**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th June, 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **163. FOODBANKS –**

The Panel welcomed Mr. Jamie Beaton, Community Development Worker, Mrs. Jane Newton, The Larder, Holy Trinity Church, Aldershot and Mr. Mike Shea, Farnborough Foodbank, who had all been invited to attend the meeting to give an update on Foodbanks at a county and local level.

Mr. Beaton commenced by giving an overview of the report commissioned by the Bill Sargent Trust on the work of foodbanks in Hampshire. A seminar had been held in Winchester in July, 2015 which had been attended by representatives from foodbanks, housing associations, voluntary organisations and Officers and Members for local councils and the County Council. It was advised that, whilst Hampshire contained some of the most affluent areas in the United Kingdom, it had also experienced a remarkable rise in foodbank provision and use. It was reported that there were at least 20 foodbanks or similar projects in Hampshire, including some in a number of the wealthiest areas. The research in the report contained information from eleven foodbanks in the County from which workers, users and volunteers had been interviewed; therefore, it was a small scale study and the findings should be considered in that context. Users interviewed were of mixed gender and reflected users presenting with complex issues such as mental health issues, learning disabilities, physical health issues, and substance abuse.

It was noted that most users hit crisis point before asking for assistance, triggers included benefit delays, changes to benefits, jobcentre

sanctions, reductions in working hours and prolonged periods of illness. Most people would cope, until that final crisis trigger pushed them to ask for extra help, but users generally felt ashamed and embarrassed at having to ask. It was noted that budgeting was rarely considered an issue; most users, volunteers and workers had reported that, despite careful budgeting and frugal living, most users incomes, be it wages or benefits, had not provided enough to meet their basic needs

The Panel noted that benefits sanctions emerged strongly as a theme, within the report, as a tipping point for crisis. Stories, from users, suggested that individuals were ending up in crisis after being sanctioned as a result of unavoidable circumstances, such as prolonged periods of illness and hospitalisation. In addition to sanctions, some individuals were slipping through the safety net of support altogether due to the rigid rules and procedures of support agencies and a lack of flexibility or tailoring of support to individual circumstances. As a result, people could fall deeper into arrears, with rent and bills creating more debt. A lack of knowledge of entitlements might also be causing issues.

Foodbanks had a practical impact on users, often providing food packages to individuals who had gone for some time with very little or inadequate food. Users often suffered from low self-esteem, anger, frustration and a sense of helplessness, not knowing where they would find the money to feed their families. In some cases, individuals had no other support network than the foodbank and felt isolated and lonely.

The Panel was advised of the different ways in which individuals tried to avoid crisis, even though a few users regarded foodbanks as part of their regular landscape of support, most did everything they could to avoid needing food parcels. Several users commented on how they lived frugally and budgeted carefully, in one case, an individual had considered declaring themselves bankrupt, some actively sought work, and others sought to save whatever they could to help clear their debts. Often users wanted to give something back by volunteering to help at their local foodbank, others gave financial contributions once they were more financially stable.

It was reported that the use of foodbanks had increased in recent years but appeared to have plateaued in the last twelve months. An increasing number of families with children and people on low incomes had sought help and it had become common to see the “working poor” asking for help. As foodbanks had grown, some had extended their offer to include fresh food stuffs, toiletries and clothing and some had had to take on paid staff and were now renting or borrowing premises.

It was advised that most foodbanks operated on a voucher system or referral basis, meaning that most clients had to be approved before receiving help. Referral agencies included school staff, GPs and housing and welfare advisers. The relationship with Jobcentres varied across the County with some reported as refusing to issue vouchers and make referrals and others more willing to refer their clients. On occasions, foodbank workers would use

their discretion and would help users who had not been referred or gave extra help to those in particular need. In addition, foodbank staff, when appropriate, would signpost clients to other sources of help.

It was noted that, whilst a foodbank could offer a lifeline in times of crisis, the help that could be offered was limited. There was little capacity for service users to resolve entrenched and long term problems and foodbank staff were aware of their limitations and had clear boundaries of what they could and could not do.

The Report had identified that accommodation had become an issue for most foodbank providers and eight of the eleven interviewed had mentioned this as an issue. It was noted that food was being stored in various places including shipping containers, rented space and, in one case, a vacant shopping centre unit.

The Panel was informed that the general consensus was that foodbanks would be required in Hampshire for many years to come, if not permanently. Interviewees suggested that a form of social breakdown might be to blame for the need and sited fragmentation of family life and traditional roles, and the disappearance of basic skills such as cooking and budgeting as contributing factors to the breakdown. When posed with a question about the future of foodbanks in Hampshire, a number of questions were raised, including:

- What role should foodbanks in Hampshire play in the wider network of social support?
- Should relationships with statutory and voluntary agencies become closer?
- Should foodbanks collect and share more data so that it is possible to understand trends and challenges on a county-wide basis?
- Given the strong view among foodbank workers that need will continue and may grow, were Hampshire's food banks equipped to sustain their work?
- Do foodbanks have the capacity and resource to cope with unexpected demands?
- Do foodbanks need a better understanding of the current and emerging policy context

The Panel discussed the report and commented on the size of the study and the need to acquire more data, to gain a better picture of the situation in the county and at a local level.

Mrs. Newton addressed the Panel on the working arrangements of "The Larder", which was run from the Holy Trinity Church, Aldershot. It was

advised that The Larder was the only foodbank provision in Aldershot since the closure of the Kings Church, which had provided a similar service. The Larder had been operating for the last 7–8 years and worked on a referral basis only. Food came via donations from the Church and from local schools, especially at harvest time, and had been stored in a cupboard in the Church Hall.

It was noted that all parcels were hand delivered to individuals and currently 3-4 parcels a week were being distributed to each client. Clients were generally single men and couples with mental health or drug and alcohol issues. On occasions, referrals had been made for people from the Nepalese community and food parcels had been prepared to meet their dietary requirements. It was advised that most clients were regular users and came back again and again due to ill health or financial issues.

The Panel was advised that there were three people running The Larder at the present time, but Mrs. Newton would be taking a step back in the future due to other commitments. The Panel discussed the need for foodbank provision in Aldershot and the huge undertaking by volunteers and space requirements to provide a sustainable provision.

Mr. Shea talked to the Panel about the Trussell Trust Farnborough Foodbank provision. It was advised that 3,356 families in both Farnborough and Aldershot had received 33,000 meals during 2014, this equalled three meals a day over a three day period for each person in the family. It was noted that the Trust had tried to set up a satellite branch in Aldershot, but unfortunately it hadn't got the support it required to run effectively, therefore the Farnborough Foodbank served a small number of residents in Aldershot as well.

The donated food was stored at the Brownings Barracks, Aldershot, the building had no refrigeration facilities so only non-perishable food stuffs were stored. It was noted that Costco had donated a lot of fresh fruit and cakes on Fridays, which were then distributed to users on the same day.

The Trust had started a number of initiatives to support a wider range of needs, these included:

- Eat Well Spend Less Course – sponsored by Unilever, this included cookery classes, supermarket psychology and budgeting
- Kitchen Starter Packs – collection of household goods for people being housed for the first time
- Cold Packs - aimed at the homeless population who had no provision to heat/cook food
- Kettle Packs – aimed at users in bed and breakfast accommodation with access to a kettle and/or microwave only

- Clothing Packs – The Trust held a store of children’s clothes for those in need

It was advised that the lease on the Brownings Barracks had been for seven years but it was stressed that an exit strategy needed to be determined as the demand for foodbank services was likely to increase in the future. The Panel also discussed the lack of provision in Aldershot and the need to provide support to hard to reach groups across the Borough. The complex issues surrounding the involvement of the Jobcentre would be considered at the next mid cycle meeting.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Beaton, Mrs. Newton and Mr. Shea for their contribution to the meeting.

**164. BOROUGH SERVICES PORTFOLIO BUDGETS –**

The Panel welcomed Ms. Amanda Fahey, Head of Finance, who attended the meeting to report on the Budgets within the Panels portfolio to assist in identifying future items for the work programme.

The Panel noted the statutory and discretionary budgets and were also advised on regulatory services which were picked up elsewhere by other Panels or Committees, such as Hackney Carriages. After some discussion, the Panel identified the following items as potential items for future agendas:

- Pollution and Environmental Control – in particular around pollution and the impacts on the Community
- Integrated CCTV – update since the integration with Hart District Council and any impacts/effects caused by the merger
- Troubled Families – update on the current situation
- Grants – in particular Farnborough and Cove War Memorial Hospital Trust – a visit may be made to the facility
- Community Patrol Team – a background note would be given at the mid cycle meeting
- Meals on Wheels – an update would be given at the mid cycle meeting

Further discussion on the identified items would be held at the next mid cycle meeting.

**165. WORK PROGRAMME –**

The Panel noted the current work programme.

The Meeting closed at 8.29 p.m.

BARBARA HURST  
CHAIRMAN

# COMMUNITY POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 17th September, 2015 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

## Voting Members

Cr. M.D. Smith (Chairman)  
Cr. M.S. Choudhary (Vice-Chairman)

	Cr. Sophia Choudhary	Cr. Jennifer Evans	Cr. S.J. Masterson
a	Cr. R. Cooper		Cr. M.J. Roberts
	Cr. Liz Corps		a Cr. P.F. Rust

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Crs. R. Cooper and P.F. Rust.

## 166. MINUTES –

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th June, 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## 167. HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2011-2016 –

The Panel was joined by the Head of Environmental Health and Housing (Ms Qamer Yasin), Strategy Enabling Managers (Ms Zoe Paine and Ms Sally Ravenhill) and the Housing Options Manager (Ms Suzannah Hellicar) to consider the Head of Environmental Health and Housing Report No. EHH 1510 providing the fourth update of the Housing and Homeslessness Strategy and the delivery plan. The strategic housing objectives had been established in 2011.

The Panel was reminded of the purpose of the Strategy, which was to make sure that Rushmoor's residents had access to good quality homes that were affordable and appropriate to their needs. The Strategy had four themes:

- housing supply and the delivery of good quality housing
- homelessness and homelessness prevention
- meeting the needs of specific groups
- neighbourhoods and housing standards

It was noted that during 2014/15, 149 affordable homes had been delivered, equating to a total of 431 since the introduction of the strategy in 2011. Members were informed that the Wellesley development work had started, with the first 20 affordable units available from Spring 2016. North Town regeneration was described as First Wessex's priority development, with 135 units delivered in 2014/15 and another 152 units due to be completed by 2017/18.

The Panel was informed that the former Garrison Sergeants' Mess at Clayton Barracks in Thornhill Road, Aldershot had been developed into 45 units of temporary accommodation, with investments from Oak Housing and the Homes and Communities Agency. Some residents had been placed in the accommodation which was made up of large bedrooms that slept between 1-5 people, private kitchens and bathrooms and a large outside space. It was estimated that a £200,000 saving would be made by the Council per year. Members heard that this accommodation would only be available for seven years because of the Project Wellesley development, however, it was explained that more affordable housing would be made available before then.

During 2014/15, the Housing Options Team had given advice to over 600 households and provided 132 rent deposits to assist residents into the private sector. Rushmoor had given a £7,500 grant to go towards the Vine's Night Shelter, which assisted 28 people. It was noted that this was a very successful programme as it also encouraged people to engage with the Vine. The Panel heard that the Vine had received an award for excellent practice.

The presentation included a number of examples of work the Council had been doing in order to meet the needs of specific groups, including consultation work with Planning on pitch provision for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people. Other work involved home safety awareness training for older Nepalese residents with Hampshire Fire and Rescue, work with registered providers to deliver specialist housing for older residents and the development of wheelchair accessible units along with 90 disabled facilities grants used for ramps, grab rails and stair lifts to help residents stay in their homes.

It was reported that reviews of registered providers had improved partnership working as the Council had been able to gain a greater understanding of the way the providers operated. Members were also informed of the Council's new partnerships with housing associations and Hart District Council.

The Panel was then advised of the challenges faced by the Housing Strategy and Enabling Team included the new rent regime, viability challenges on affordable housing and the unknown impact of the Right to Buy scheme. The Housing Options Team had continued to see an increase in demand for the services provided, including tackling homelessness and moving residents from temporary into settled accommodation; there had also been an impact on the service due to reductions in other services, e.g. Supporting People. The Private Sector Housing Team had faced challenges around overcrowding, disrepair in the increasing number of housed in multiple occupation and the ability to assist residents to stay in their own homes as there had been a reduction in disabled facilities grants.

Members were informed that the Housing and Homelessness Strategy was due to end in March 2016 and that consultation for the 2016-2021 strategy would take place in early Spring 2016. The Panel requested that an

interactive workshop should be arranged to enable it to have an influence in the early stages of the development of the next strategy.

The Panel **NOTED** the update.

**168. HOMELESSNESS IN ALDERSHOT CAR PARK –**

The Housing Options Manager, Ms Suzannah Hellicar, was invited to the meeting to update the Panel on Aldershot's situation with rough sleepers and the actions that had been taken.

The Panel heard that there had been an increase in the number of people sleeping rough or sofa surfing both nationally and in the Borough. It was noted that there were approximately 24 rough sleepers in Aldershot, although, it had been difficult to record the numbers of street homelessness due to individual situations constantly changing. The majority were men, aged between 19 and 65 and many had substance misuse issues. While there had been a number of attempts to engage with the client group, they had demonstrated an unwillingness to engage with the Council and agencies. It was believed that they had also been associated with anti-social behaviour in and around Aldershot Town Centre. 70% of the rough sleepers in Aldershot were Rushmoor residents while others had potentially come from neighbouring areas, where work would be carried out to re-connect those residents to their home areas.

The significant increase in numbers was due to individuals moving in with vulnerable residents which had then resulted in those residents losing their homes following incidents of anti-social behaviour. Members were assured that the Council had been working with housing associations in identifying and stopping such behaviour.

Members were informed that approximately 8-12 homeless people had occupied the High Street car park which had resulted in a number of complaints about anti-social behaviour, hygiene and intimidation. Short, medium and longer term approaches were discussed with the Panel, in particular, the Council's intention to seek a legal injunction under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, which aimed to clear the car park and stop the anti-social behaviour in the Town Centre. The Panel was informed that while the injunction would exclude those named on it from certain areas in the Town Centre, the Council would ensure that they continued to have access to services they needed. It was also mentioned that the injunction would include positive steps, for example, the homeless must engage with Inclusion Services, the Housing Options Team, the Vine and other relevant services. It was explained that a multi-agency approach had been taken to tackle the issues and meetings for joint-agency problem solving had also been arranged. A multi-agency Hub had also been set up; a two-day event held at the Princes Hall which would be attended by Health, Drug and Alcohol services, Adult Social Services, the Police, Housing Services and the Vine.

Medium term options for consideration included eight existing beds to be made available to the most challenging and vulnerable individuals in



Rushmoor and Hart, out of hours community support for the vulnerable client group, continued multi-agency meetings and also an investigation into whether the Council needed a more robust method of outreach.

Longer term options for 2016-2021 were also discussed, for example, to continue the multi-agency meetings and joint working to ensure emerging issues would be rapidly addressed by all of the relevant agencies.

It was concluded that while this had been a difficult and challenging issue for the Housing Options Team, the multi-agency approach had been essential and a review of the legal approach would be carried out.

The Panel **NOTED** the presentation.

169. **WELFARE REFORM TASK AND FINISH GROUP –**

Members received a copy of the minutes from the Welfare Reform Task and Finish Group meeting that had taken place on 23rd June, 2015.

The Panel **NOTED** the minutes of the meeting.

170. **WORK PROGRAMME –**

The Panel **NOTED** the work programme and work schedule.

The Meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.

M.D. SMITH  
CHAIRMAN

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