

Manchester City Council Report for Information

Report to: Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 21 June 2022

Subject: Homelessness Update

Report of: Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

Summary

This report sets out the position of Manchester City Council's Homelessness Service in terms of how it supports local residents and how the emerging transformation programme is seeking to increase the prevention of homelessness, continue the successful reduction in rough sleeping, reduce the use of temporary accommodation and support residents, with a wide ranging variety of needs, including that of securing a place to call home.

In addition, set out in the report, is a deep dive into the activity to increase prevention, the support provided to people when placed in temporary accommodation and the arrangements to ensure the quality of the temporary accommodation provided.

The report is set out in three parts:

- An update on the current position of the homeless service in terms of numbers of presentations, preventions and households in temporary accommodation.
- The current activity to support Manchester residents in
 - Preventing homelessness
 - Support to people who find themselves homeless
 - Sourcing more suitable and affordable accommodation.
- An update on the Homelessness Transformation Programme.

Recommendations

Members are invited to consider and comment on the report in terms of Manchester City Council's Homelessness Service, and the revised transformation programme.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

Good quality and affordable homes reduce carbon emissions.
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Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Having good quality accommodation will help people to thrive. Reducing the number of people who are homeless, or placing them in appropriate accommodation with help to access employment and learning opportunities will contribute to Manchester becoming a thriving and sustainable city.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Having accommodation that people can access, in areas where they have a support network to help them, and their children, into education or employment will help grow talent in the city.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Having good quality accommodation in our communities improves the environment people live in and helps them to make a positive contribution.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Ensuring properties are a good quality and high standard will reduce the need to heat properties and therefore reduce energy waste.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Housing infrastructure is central to Manchester's inclusive growth ambitions

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

The Manchester Homeless Strategy

https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/5665/homelessness_strategy

Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee
Update on Homelessness in the City of Manchester - 2nd December 2020

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report is to provide an overview on the current position of homelessness in Manchester, the service and partner activity engaged to tackle homelessness in all its forms, as well as the Council's transformation programme.

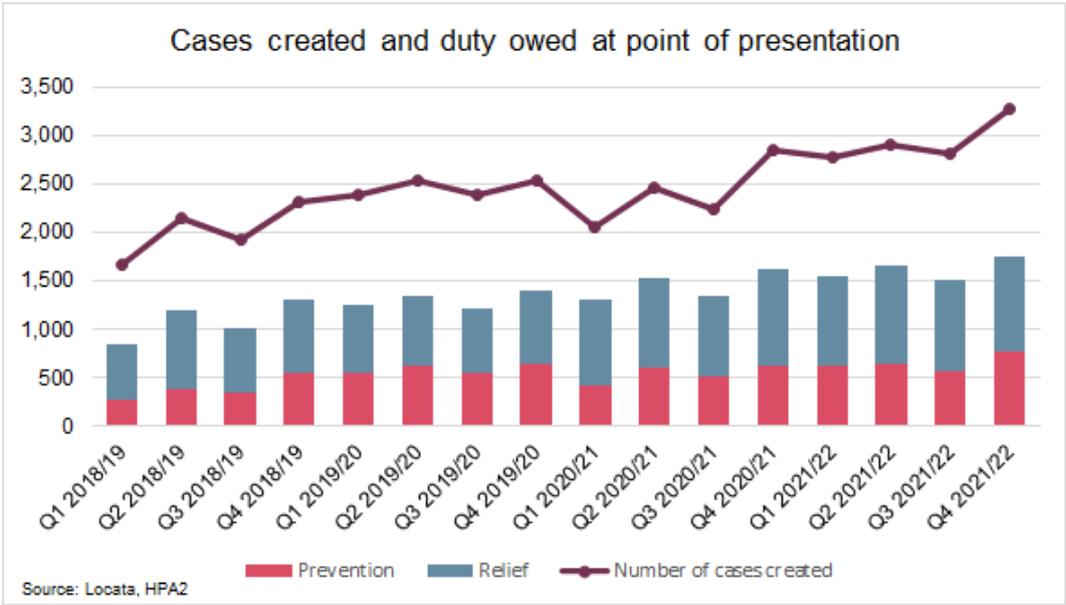
2.0 National, Regional and Local Context

- 2.1 The key drivers for homelessness in Manchester are varied and complex, ranging from significant population growth, affordable housing supply not keeping pace with unprecedented demand, low housing void rates and significant changes to the benefits system through the government's welfare reform act.
- 2.2 Undoubtedly, one of the key factors has been one of the most significant changes in housing legislation, the Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) which brought a wealth of new duties to local government to prevent and relieve homelessness, albeit in a context of significantly reduced local government funding and short term and uncertain homelessness funding arrangements.
- 2.3 In addition, post pandemic, the current impact of the cost of living crisis, rising inflation and other contributing factors is resulting in a challenging environment for residents, which is in turn, leading to increased presentations of homelessness in 2022.
- 2.4 In general terms, the local trend of increased homelessness is mirrored nationally, however, in Manchester the increase in homelessness and in the use of temporary accommodation has been particularly acute and this paper aims to set out the Council's strategy and action to first contain and then reverse this trend, noting the significant challenge that this ambition presents.

2.5 Homeless Presentations

- 2.6 One of the key challenges for Manchester is the number of people presenting as homeless remains significantly high. The numbers of people presenting as homeless since 2018/19 and up until March 2022, demonstrate a consistent increase from 1,500 presentations a quarter to over 3,000.
- 2.7 A key feature of the transformation programme is focussing on developing a better understanding of this issue and to introduce more effective strategies and practice to improve the position.

Chart: 2.1: Presentations of Homelessness at Manchester



2.8 **Reasons for presenting as homeless**

2.9 There are many reasons for people to present as homeless and although personal circumstances vary, the main reasons are consistent across the country and are primarily due to:

- Family eviction
- Eviction from private rented sector (Section 21)
- Domestic abuse
- Friends no longer willing to accommodate
- Relationship ended with partner (non-domestic violence)

2.10 In relation to combating one of the main reasons for presenting as homeless, ‘eviction from private rented sector’, the sector is currently awaiting the publication of Renters Reform Bill White Paper. The paper has been delayed to later in 2022 to ensure that the National Audit Office’s review of the regulations of the sector are taken into account, and there are no unintended consequences to the reforms. The Bill intends to:

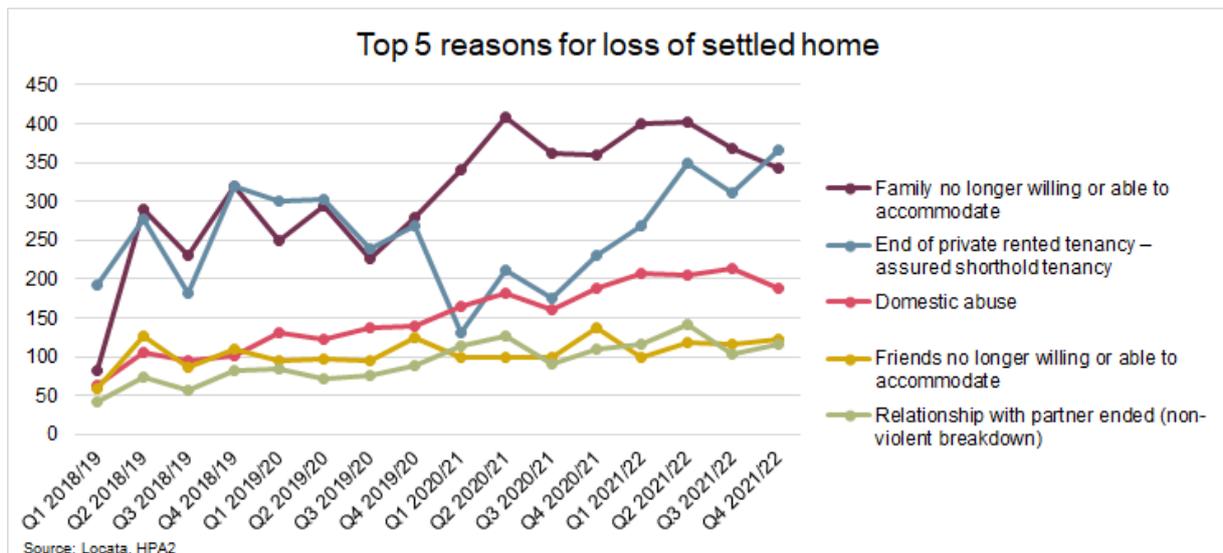
- Abolish Section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 - so-called ‘no fault’ evictions - and improve security for tenants in the private rented sector
- Strengthen repossession grounds for landlords under Section 8 when they have valid cause.
- Remove landlords’ ability to grant new assured shorthold tenancies (ASTs)
- Explore improvements and possible efficiencies to the possession process in the courts, to make it quicker and easier for both landlords and tenants to use.
- Outline proposals for a new ‘lifetime’ tenancy deposit model to help tenants when moving from one tenancy to the next.

- Drive improvements in standards, for example exploring the potential of a landlord register and requiring all private landlords to belong to a redress scheme.

2.11 Chart 2.2 below sets out the main reasons for presenting as homeless in Manchester up until March 2022. Again, a central aim of the transformation programme is to develop more effective interventions to prevent residents becoming homeless. Clearly, the issue of domestic abuse is different in this regard, as alternative and safe provision, as well as appropriate support, is absolutely crucial.

2.12 One of the more significant changes that the service is now seeing is the main reason for homelessness being the ‘end of private rented tenancy/assured shorthold tenancy’. This has been steadily rising since last year and signifies the importance of the abolition of section 21 ‘no fault’ evictions to reduce this increase.

Chart 2.2: Top 5 reasons for loss of settled home



2.13 Homeless Prevention and Relief

2.14 *Homeless Prevention* is when a household who is threatened with homelessness is supported to either stay in their home or find a new home before they become homeless.

2.15 *Homeless Relief* is when a household becomes homeless and the Council supports them by providing interim accommodation.

2.16 In terms of prevention, Manchester has an approximate 33% success rate, against a national average of 57%. There are a multitude of factors that influence successful prevention, such as the housing market, levels of deprivation and employment. However, a major focus of the refreshed transformation work is to increase the levels of successful prevention, which aligns with the Greater Manchester Homelessness Prevention Strategy.

2.17 Temporary Accommodation, including Bed and Breakfast

- 2.18 Temporary Accommodation is the accommodation that people who are homeless reside in whilst waiting for a settled accommodation offer. This can be in either a hostel or a dispersed property. This accommodation is either commissioned or paid for by the Local Authority and does not include 'exempt accommodation' which is fully Housing Benefit subsidy reclaimable.
- 2.19 Bed and Breakfast is a form of temporary accommodation provided on a more short term and often emergency basis. Similar to the overall position on temporary accommodation, the number of single people and families currently in bed and breakfast is higher than the Council would expect and would want, as is the average length of time that people remain in B&B before moving to more appropriate temporary or settled accommodation.
- 2.20 Again, a key focus of the Homelessness Transformation Programme and the work that the Council is currently undertaking with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is the aim to eliminate the routine use of bed and breakfast for families in the first instance and then single people. However, the reality is that this continues to be challenging due to the increase in demand and reduction in overall supply.
- 2.21 Table 2.3 below shows the number of people in temporary and emergency accommodation as of the 31st May 2022 and the average time they spend in the accommodation before move on to more settled accommodation.

Table 2.3: Number of households in B&B and Temporary Accommodation in and out of the City

	Manchester	Outside Manchester	Total	Average time in TA (days)
Families B&B	76	69	145	19
Singles B&B	219	152	371	100
Families Nightly Paid	9	21	30	73
Singles Morning Star	18	0	18	10
Families In-house TA	43	0	43	227
Singles In-house TA	249	0	249	223
Families dispersed	1108	721	1829	580
Singles dispersed	84	112	196	549
Total	1808	1076	2884	442

- 2.22 There are currently 2028 households living in dispersed Temporary Accommodation (TA) of this figure a third of these properties are out of borough. The Homelessness Service works with private accommodation providers to source dispersed temporary accommodation for homeless families. The priority is to source within Manchester because Manchester's homeless families want to stay living within the city, closer to their originating community and family/support networks. A higher rent level is offered for

properties in the city. Historically and practically, there are more affordable properties within the north and east areas of the city. This has led to a higher concentration of dispersed temporary accommodation in some wards of the city where more affordable PRS properties are more readily available.

- 2.23 Providers report that because of the buoyant housing market it is becoming increasingly difficult to source properties within Manchester that fall within the affordability of rents paid by the Council. Rents in the contract have largely not increased for over 5 years, whereas market rents have increased substantially.
- 2.24 A recent increase in 2 bed rates in Manchester was implemented to try to increase property flow in January of this year. This followed similar increases which had been applied to the 3 and 4 bed rates for newly procured properties in 2019. This is not demonstrating increased flow of new property. The lack of dispersed temporary accommodation is impacting on the length of time families who present as homeless are spending in B&B type accommodation. More affordable accommodation can still be sourced, but this will be increasingly out of borough. The service is currently reviewing rents paid and what the cost to the Council would be if an uplift was implemented.

3.0 Rough Sleeping

- 3.1 Manchester has made significant progress in reducing the number of people sleeping rough in the city, from a high of 123 people in the November 2018 headcount to 43 people in the latest headcount in May 2022. The reasons for this are many but include:
- Significant increase in government funding, staffing in the outreach team, and the development of a 'navigators' team which provides intensive support
 - Partnership working with the Anti-Social Behaviour Team (ASBAT) and Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to ensure a cohesive approach
 - Significant partnership collaboration across voluntary, public sector and registered providers working with people who sleep rough in the city
 - The 'Everyone In' initiative
 - Housing First
 - A Bed Every Night (ABEN)
 - Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Funding
 - Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP)
 - The Protect Programme
 - The Community Accommodation Service Tier 3 programme (CAS-3)
- 3.2 The Street Engagement Hub continues to have a positive impact on reducing begging and encouraging people who have accommodation to stay in their accommodation and find positive daytime activities. Real Change Mcr encourages the public to donate to the fund rather than give to people on the streets, and these donations are then used to help people find a long-term solution to rough sleeping.

3.3 **Rough Sleeping Initiative**

3.4 Manchester has successfully bid for funding through the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) since 2018 and has recently been successful in a bid to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) for a further £7.8million for the period 2022 - 2025. This funding will continue to support a range of existing accommodation and support services, as well as expand specialist provision for young people and for women with complex needs. It will also increase access to the private rented sector for people who are ready for their own tenancy with resettlement support.

3.5 The next section of the report moves on from the demands on the Homelessness Service and on to the key activity surrounding:

- Prevention
- Accommodation and Quality of Accommodation
- Support for people in Temporary Accommodation on a locality basis

4.1 **Prevention**

4.2 **The Section 21 and Court Service team**

4.3 This team has dealt with 707 cases from April 2021 - March 2022. The team have prevented 207 households from becoming homeless during this time through the identification of invalid S21 notices and mediating with landlords who have issued new tenancies to households.

4.4 Many of the cases were at the possession stage and all cases have been able to remain in their properties for at least a further six months.

4.5 **Private Rented Sector (PRS) Prevention**

4.6 The Private Rented Sector Team was set up to secure new tenancies aimed at prevention of homelessness and move on for households who are accommodated in temporary accommodation, which includes in house temporary accommodation, B&Bs / nightly rate and Housing Related Support accommodation, by matching them to a property in the Private Rented Sector, ending their homeless journey.

4.7 The PRS Team ensures that properties are suitable for residents, by carrying out inspections ensuring all properties meet the Housing, Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) standards, prior to applicants taking occupation. The team also carry out detailed assessments to ensure the property is affordable, suitable, and sustainable.

4.8 There are a range of developed incentives for landlords and tenants to facilitate access to tenancies in this sector. The incentives include specialist resettlement support, financial assistance, rental guarantees, and landlord insurance policies to provide additional support to private landlords.

- 4.9 Over the last 12 months to date the team have secured 813 new private rented tenancies.
- 4.10 The Private Rented Sector team face the challenge of an extremely buoyant rental market and rents are rising rapidly across the city and Greater Manchester. As a result, market rents greatly exceed the local housing allowance making properties unaffordable for a large number of households. This pressure means the team are having to place households further away from the city in order to ensure the property is affordable.
- 4.11 The Housing Solutions Service mainly discharges the prevention duty owed to people by the offer of a private rented property. However, the current homeless prevention rate for the Council is 36%, the service is aiming to increase this to at least 50%, the PRS offer will play a huge part in attaining this ambition. As part of the transformation project the service is developing an upstream prevention offer, which consists of a cell of three Housing Solutions Officers with a PRS Officer based in a targeted area of the city to ensure households at risk of homelessness are picked up at a much earlier stage. The cell will work in collaboration with partner agencies within the area, which will include statutory and community-based organisations.

4.12 Advice Homeless Prevention Pilot

- 4.13 In October 2021, the Government announced that as part of the Homeless Prevention Grant an additional £65 million would be made available to Local Authorities in 2021/22 to assist vulnerable renters who were facing eviction. Manchester received £689k for this purpose and £300k of this was awarded to the City-Wide Advice Service (comprised of Citizens Advice Manchester, Shelter, and Cheetham Hill Advice Centre) in March 2022 to provide an upstream prevention offer.
- 4.14 In addition, a communications campaign has been launched highlighting the support available for private rented sector tenants through advice providers, which has been targeted at areas of the city where data shows that individuals renting in the private rented sector are vulnerable to eviction.

5.1 Accommodation & Quality of Accommodation

5.2 Development of short stay family temporary accommodation

- 5.3 There is a commitment of the need to reduce the Council's dispersed Temporary Accommodation (TA) portfolio, to reduce the time families spend in temporary accommodation, and to reduce the cost pressure caused by Housing Benefit subsidy rules the use of this type of accommodation causes.
- 5.4 The size of the dispersed estate, the spread across Greater Manchester, and the number of providers, impacts on the level of control the service has over the Temporary Accommodation estate and property condition. The support staff to caseload ratio impacts on the frequency with which property checks and oversight of households can take place. There is a need to address high

concentrations of dispersed temporary accommodation in the north and eastern wards of the city. In addition, there is growing criticism from surrounding Greater Manchester authorities concerned at the Council's use of temporary accommodation in their boroughs and subsequent pressures on local services.

5.5 There is an alternative model of temporary accommodation which provides better outcomes for all families. This is the *Apex House* model, which delivers self-contained, decent quality short stay temporary accommodation for families. This model and type of scheme:

- Provides families with self-contained good quality right sized accommodation eradicating the use of B&B's.
- Ensures access to on-site support to assist in families making resilient and robust life and accommodation choices
- Provides direct move on into affordable and settled PRS properties
- Reduces the time spent as homeless and living in temporary accommodation down to an 8-to-12-week period
- Limits the impact of homelessness on existing school placements for children within the family
- Keeps Manchester families closer to their existing support networks whilst homeless.

5.6 Of the 75+ families supported at Apex House since opening in 2021 the majority have been supported into settled private rented sector homes. Only 4 families were moved into dispersed temporary accommodation. This model has delivered proof of concept and demonstrates improved outcomes for homeless families.

5.7 The service is currently working with a property developer to develop additional short stay temporary accommodation to scale up this successful model. This initiative will ensure Homelessness Services secures decent quality family temporary accommodation with rents at Local Housing Allowance rates where Housing Benefit income can be maximised. This development will require no capital contribution from the Council.

5.8 Increasing access to settled homes

5.9 As part of the transformation programme there is an ambition to significantly reduce the number of temporary accommodation units, by utilising the private rented sector and settled accommodation schemes.

5.10 The Homelessness Service is considering a number of options for settled accommodation within the private rented sector to enable the Council to increase prevention of homelessness and reduce the use of temporary accommodation units.

5.11 A criteria framework has been developed which includes what the Council's requirements are in terms of bringing new units of settled accommodation online. This will enable the Council to assess each offer of accommodation

against the Framework. Appraising against the Framework will enable officers to determine whether the proposal is feasible or not. A project group has been established to look at each proposal in more detail including wider aspects such as planning, procurement, finance, legal and value for money.

- 5.12 The Council is currently exploring a number of viable options that aims to increase access to more affordable homes, that are also better quality.

5.13 Improving Housing Management functions for homeless households

- 5.14 As part of a programme of improved service delivery working with temporary accommodation providers the Rents & Property Team have established an Accommodation Provider forum. The aim is to work in partnership to address property standards, disrepair issues, property supply and tenancy matters together.

- 5.15 In addition, the Housing Management Team has put in place additional visits with tenants to assist them in effective tenancy management. The aim is to reduce damage and disrepair costs as a result of misuse / mismanagement of properties. Ensuring people understand how to operate heating and plumbing systems, manage storage to reduce infestations, and operate effective recycling practices will help tenants to become good neighbours, independent and tenancy ready to move on with resilience into their settled home.

- 5.16 All properties procured as dispersed temporary accommodation are inspected by the Housing Management Inspection Team. Properties must meet the Housing Health & Safety Regulation Standard to be deemed suitable.

- 5.17 The inspection ensures properties are safe and compliant for the Council to use as temporary accommodation. All properties must have gas and electrical safety certification in place. The Dispersed contract places a responsibility upon all providers to regularly conduct their own property visits by appointment with householders to ensure properties are not falling into disrepair.

- 5.18 In addition, the service's Inspection Team conduct annual inspections of all properties on the contract to ensure oversight of property condition is maintained. In the first instance of any property issues the tenant should contact the housing provider. This process is to help tenants develop good tenancy practice.

- 5.19 If an issue is not addressed, it is then escalated to the Housing Management Team who will progress relevant action with the provider and resident. If providers do not bring a property up to the required standard, the service will remove the property from the scheme.

5.20 Development of Alternatives to Bed and Breakfast for Single People

- 5.21 The Council is committed to moving singles directly into supported accommodation rather than utilising bed and breakfast accommodation.

Commissioners have been working with Caritas and de Paul to develop a proof of concept at the Morning Star hostel, which is attached to the Cornerstones day centre.

- 5.22 The project opened on the 17th May and is already full. There are 20 bedspaces for single people who have been assessed as homeless and have been given a homeless duty under the 'relief duty' (see 2.14). People are referred by the Housing Solutions Service. Caritas provide support to people whilst they are residing there, and there is a process agreed to ensure people are moved on to the most appropriate accommodation. This may be Housing Related Support, inhouse temporary accommodation or the private rented sector.

6.0 Support for People in Temporary Accommodation

6.1 Improving coordination across Health, Mental Health, Adult Social Care and Homelessness

- 6.2 As the population of homeless households presenting and requiring temporary and settled accommodation increases, so does the need to provide supported and specialist services for the increasingly complex needs they present with. This is particularly prevalent in the singles cohort.

- 6.3 Mental health, co-morbidities and autism are increasingly commonplace in this cohort which places huge pressure on public services. As a result, Homelessness, Health, Adult Social Care and Mental Health services are working together on a number of existing and new developments to address this issue. These are:

- Homelessness, Adult Social Care and Mental Health services attend a fortnightly MDT (Multi- Disciplinary Team) where specific cases referred into the MDT are discussed to address health, mental health and housing issues, to ensure better outcomes for the citizen.
- The development of the Enabling Independence Strategy in conjunction with Strategic Housing and commissioners to identify gaps in accommodation and support provision.
- A Homeless Commissioning Summit was held; the outcome was a jointly held action plan by Public Health, Adult Social Care and the Local Care Organisation which will be overseen by the Homelessness and Health Board
- Attendance at the monthly Strategic Autism Board to ensure that the challenges that autistic people have, which result in a higher proportion of them becoming homeless, are addressed.
- The development of an agreed joint working protocol with adult social care
- Improved access to primary and secondary health services.

6.4 Domestic Abuse

6.5 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 aims to strengthen support for victims/survivors of domestic abuse. A key element of the new Act was the creation of a new duty on Local Authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation. New Burdens Funding of £1.6m was awarded to the Council in 2021/22 to support this new duty and in response to this Commissioners developed a coordinated Domestic Abuse Support in Safe Accommodation Pathway, which includes:

1. An integrated specialist front door and support planning offer utilising specialist domestic abuse officers within the Housing Solutions Service
2. Enhanced safe accommodation and support offer including enhanced refuge provision and a comprehensive domestic abuse floating support service for singles and families in temporary dispersed accommodation
3. Move on and recovery including specialist domestic abuse private rented sector Officers

6.6 Services have been in operation since October 2022 and ongoing evaluation is demonstrating a range of positive outcomes. Funding of £1.6m was recently confirmed for 2022/23, which will allow services to remain in place until the end of March 2023. In addition, unallocated spend from the previous year's allocation has been utilised to fund several one-off initiatives, including a grant programme aimed at groups such as older people and disabled people who have been identified as groups where additional support services would be beneficial.

6.7 Support for Families in Dispersed Temporary Accommodation - a Strength Based and Trauma Informed Approach

6.8 Support to families in dispersed temporary accommodation is provided via a floating support model. A service level agreement is discussed and signed with all families. This establishes the agreement of the family to work with the service to engage with support. This is a required condition of accepting temporary accommodation. A family will have their own dedicated support worker and regular home visits are established.

6.9 A discussion about the one offer/rehousing policy takes place which sets out that one reasonable offer of accommodation will be sourced for the family. This will be either a private rented sector or social housing property – whichever can be found soonest. Staff ensure Housing Benefit / other benefits are in payment.

6.10 Support workers take a trauma informed approach, knowing that many of the families will have had adverse childhood experiences. They may make referrals to other services to help the family. This could include:

- Benefits Service, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Sure Start, Early Help, Children's, and Adults Services, Substance Misuse Services, Mental Health Support Services, Anti Social Behaviour Action

Team (ASBAT) Services, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Services, Greater Manchester Police.

- 6.11 Based on the initial homelessness assessment the Council regularly engages with residents providing support on key issues, such as education, employment, health and housing offers. If required the support worker may attend Child in Need meetings, Team around the Family meetings and Child protection conferences. They will liaise with schools and health visitors as required. A commissioned Domestic Violence & Abuse service works closely with families impacted by this.
- 6.12 Support Workers are currently carrying an average caseload of 45 cases each. This results in a focus on the most complex and demanding cases to the detriment of others in a caseload. Time is lengthened between visiting a family in their temporary accommodation home and, for example, Early Help assessments (a vital support tool) can take several meetings to complete fully.
- 6.13 The service recognises that there is too long a delay between arrival in temporary accommodation and the allocation of a case to a named support worker. Interim support is provided via a telephony Welfare Contact Service. Currently the time to allocate a case to a dedicated support worker is 4 to 6 months. As part of the service transformation the floating support model is being reviewed.
- 6.14 A new prototype model of support is to be trialled, increasing the effectiveness of support as well as introducing support at a much earlier stage. The service will review the support model for families in temporary accommodation to ensure better outcomes and better lives for homeless families. Work is currently underway to prototype a new support model which will ensure:
- Families are allocated a support worker on arrival in temporary accommodation
 - Intensive support will be delivered to a family over an initial 3-month period – with bimonthly visits.
 - At 3 months a case review will be undertaken to decide if a stepped down support offer is more appropriate. Families who are thriving and managing their tenancies well will receive the stepped down support offer.
 - Families who have higher needs will continue to be supported by a dedicated support team.
 - All households will be supported to move on into suitable, affordable settled accommodation which is most likely to be a Private Rented Sector property rather than social housing.
- 6.15 This will operate in tandem with a strengthened housing management function to help families to better manage their home, become tenancy ready to move on to their own settled accommodation at greater speed and with greater resilience. As part of the move on support offer a targeted family resettlement service will be put in place.

6.16 Bringing Services Together for People in Places – The Integrated Neighbourhoods Offer through Team Around the Neighbourhood (TANs)

6.17 The Bringing Services Together for People in Places is delivered by 13 Team's Around the Neighbourhood (TANs).

6.18 The purpose of Bringing Services Together for People in Places is to ensure:

- Improved outcomes for people who live in Manchester
- Public services are connected to our neighbourhoods and work in a place-based way
- Solutions are in the community – services stop 'fixing'
- Joined up and flexible support around real people and the places they live
- Reduced duplication and unnecessary complexity in the system
- Spending less on reactive demand with investment shifting to prevention
- People only need to tell their story once and we build from strengths

6.19 The team's consist of:

- City Council Neighbourhood Manager, who leads the TAN,
- Children's services representative,
- Adult's services representative,
- Greater Manchester Police,
- Registered Provider,
- Manchester Local Care Organisation (Integrated Neighbourhood Team Lead)
- Alongside other services relevant to the area

6.20 There are at least 4 meetings per annum, with Ward Councillors attending two of the meetings per year to ensure stronger collaboration on strategic priorities.

6.21 Each Team Around the Neighbourhood has a Neighbourhood Priorities plan that drives the work and is based on the geographical area. These are in the process of being refreshed; the end result being a 'plan on a page'.

6.22 Alongside the TANs, there are also three Bringing Services Together Locality Groups in place – one in the north, central and south of the city, led by the Neighbourhood Strategic Leads. The role of the locality groups is to work with the local TANs to address priorities that are consistent across them, to address blockages and trial new ways of working. These Locality Groups link to the city-wide Bringing Services Together Group chaired by the Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods.

7.0 Homelessness Strategy & Partnership

7.1 The Manchester Homelessness Partnership, including the City Council, created the City's Homelessness Strategy which has enabled organisations, services and residents to work together on the challenges that can affect people who are experiencing homelessness. The strategy still resonates and focuses on the key aims to:

- Make Homelessness a rare occurrence: increasing prevention and early intervention
- Make Homelessness as brief as possible: improving temporary and supported accommodation
- Make the experience of homelessness a one-off occurrence: increasing access to settled homes
- Reduce the number of people sleeping rough in the city.

7.2 **MCC Homelessness Transformation Programme**

7.3 To support and accelerate the successes of the Manchester Homeless Partnership and collaboration with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the Council is now embarking on a refreshed transformation programme as a different approach is vital to unlock some of the most intransigent system issues that are adversely impacting our residents. On that basis, the programme is focussed on the following outcomes:

1. Increasing Prevention
2. Ending Rough Sleeping
3. More suitable and affordable accommodation
4. Better Outcomes and Better Lives for people and families at risk of homelessness or who are homeless.

7.4 As well as these outcomes, a revised Financial Sustainability Strategy is being developed for the Homelessness service that first seeks to contain the existing net spend of the service and then to reduce in subsequent years.

7.5 There are a series of projects that are in place to support these outcomes, as well as activities planned for the future, as it is intended that the transformation programme spans over a three-year cycle.

7.6 The table below sets out the aims of each outcome, the activity undertaken to deliver and timeframe.

Increasing Prevention	Aim: To increase prevention from 36% to a minimum of 50% over a three year period. Activity: The Council has embarked on a process review of homeless presentations with a view to establishing new practices to increase prevention in the priority areas of families and friends no longer able to accommodate and evictions from private tenancies.
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	<p>Timeframe: Programme started in Jan 2022 and will seek to implement in Summer 2022</p>
<p>Ending Rough Sleeping</p>	<p>Aim: 20% year on year reduction of rough sleeping</p> <p>Activity: Continue and accelerate the strategies introduced through the Council's rough sleeper initiative (RSI), Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP) and many more, working with partners across Greater Manchester and the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Community (DLUHC).</p> <p>Timeframe: Ongoing and to 2024/25</p>
<p>More suitable and affordable accommodation</p>	<p>Aim: To significantly reduce the overall numbers of temporary accommodation and create more suitable and affordable permanent housing options for residents.</p> <p>Activity: The Council to create a new Accommodation Strategy for temporary accommodation and settled accommodation to deliver a mix of new housing options that improve the quality of provision at considerably lower cost.</p> <p>Timeframe: Commence February 2022 and present options appraisal by Summer 2022.</p>
<p>Better Outcomes and Better Lives for people and families at risk of homelessness or who are homeless</p>	<p>Aim: Prevent homelessness for particularly vulnerable groups, improve specialist provision for complex needs and support the delivery of the broader Our Manchester priorities in partnership with Council stakeholders, the Local Care Organisation, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Greater Manchester Housing Providers and Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Organisations.</p> <p>Activity: Developing new Commissioning Strategy in partnership with key stakeholders to provide an improved, systems response to complex issues, across multiple agencies.</p> <p>Timeframe: Ongoing</p>

- 7.7 Since the last update to Communities and Equalities Scrutiny in February 2022, the Council has commissioned two projects under the auspices of the Transformation programme to provide additional capacity and capabilities, building on the good practice within Manchester but also nationally.
- 7.8 In essence the projects are focussing on the following areas and are due to report back to Council in July 2022.
- 7.9 The focus of the projects are to:

- Increase the prevention of homelessness in Manchester
- Enhance the level of support to people who are at risk or find themselves homeless
- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of sourcing temporary accommodation
- Provide a series of deliverable property options for the medium term to reduce the rising revenue cost of the service and identify more suitable provision
- Identifying Invest to save models
- Identifying and appraising longer term models of intervention
- Providing an independent and respected local government sector voice, which highlights good practice and positions the Council to access future funding opportunities

7.10 Financial Sustainability

7.11 Running in parallel with the transformation programme, is the development of a new financial sustainability strategy, specifically for the homelessness service, which is focussing on, over time, reducing the net cost of the homelessness service. Please see section 8 for more details.

7.12 MCC Housing Strategy & Housing Allocations Policy

7.13 The approach to homelessness forms part of the Council's overall Housing Strategy, which is currently being refreshed, with a view to being finalised in summer 2022. A key tenet of the revised strategy is to increase the development of affordable homes, which will help to alleviate homelessness in the city.

7.14 In addition, there is a review of the Housing Allocations Policy, which will evaluate the impact of the recent changes to the policy from a homelessness perspective. It is likely that some refinement will need to be considered by Members at a future date.

7.15 The Enabling Independence Strategy, which is currently being written and will be finalised in the autumn of 2022, is a cross Council strategy looking at temporary and supported accommodation across all services.

7.16 As part of the process, a key facet will be analysing demand and understanding where there are gaps across services that lead to people falling out of services and potentially into homelessness.

7.17 A significant number of singles in homeless services are not able to access independent tenancies without ongoing support, and the strategy will look at how the Council as a whole will be able to support them long term.

8.0 Finance

8.1 As part of the 2021/22 budget setting process ongoing demographic funding for Homelessness had been included for 2022/23 at £1.7m, increasing to

£6.7m by 2024/25. In addition a further £7m was added to the start budget for 2021/22 to reflect the additional impact of covid-19 on demand for homelessness services, in anticipation of the impact of the removal of the universal credit uplift and the tenant eviction ban ending.

- 8.2 Whilst the £7m has been utilised, this has been in response to the pandemic and action taken in 2021/22. It is expected that the changes to the service and additional government grant funding around the rough sleeper initiative of £3.0m will mean that the budget to be sufficient for 2022/23, and that demand reductions and therefore budget reductions will be possible in future years.
- 8.3 Further details will be provided as the Transformation Programme progresses in the coming months. It is therefore not expected that the further planned £1.7m per annum increase that was originally budgeted for 2022/23 will be required and this has now been removed from the budget assumptions, although the position will be kept under review. This proposal was approved by Executive in February 2022.
- 8.4 To manage risk in this area a £1.5m homelessness contingency reserve remains.

9.0 Equalities & Diversity

- 9.1 Central to Manchester's Building Back Fairer (BBF) programme, is the issue of good housing as a key determinant of good health. As such, Housing features as a key work stream of the council's BBF programme, which is due to be presented to Members shortly. From a homelessness perspective, people from ethnic minorities are disproportionately impacted and a key tenet of the developing BBF programme will be increasing prevention from a systems perspective. Essentially, making the prevention of homelessness everybody's business.

10.0 Risks and Issues

- 10.1 The main risks as of June 2022 are:

- Demand for services, from an increasingly complex client-base, post austerity, post Brexit, post Covid (and the full impact of COVID-19 yet to be understood) and in the midst of a cost of living crisis continues to drive homelessness and costs upwards.
- Government strategy and funding on Homelessness, Welfare (Universal Credit, Local Housing Allowance rates) continues to decrease
- In this context, the scale and complexity of transforming Manchester's homeless service at pace is challenging.
- The Housing market provides both risks and opportunities to provide more affordable and appropriate options.

11.0 Conclusion

- 11.1 The report sets out the current position of Manchester's homelessness service, detailing the complex and changing national policy context, as well as the local conditions impacting the levels of homelessness in the city.
- 11.2 Significant progress has been made in reducing rough sleeping in the City through coordinated partner activity and a substantial increase in public funding to tackle the most acute aspects of homelessness.
- 11.3 However, significant challenges remain in the levels of people presenting as homeless and the current socio-economic landscape compounds these difficulties.
- 11.4 That said, the council is committed to increasing the levels of prevention, reducing demand and increasing the availability of affordable homes to mitigate the continued pressures on the service and the impact on our residents.
- 11.5 Homelessness, for any period of time, can have a devastating impact on individuals and families and the council is absolutely committed in its mission to prevent homelessness in all its forms. Despite the challenging national picture, the council and its partners are steadfast in their ambition to make homelessness a rare and brief occurrence in our City.