

## Manchester City Council Report for Information

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 20 June 2023

**Subject:** An update report on the Homelessness Service

**Report of:** Director of Housing Services

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### Summary

The following report is an update on the Homelessness Service and the improvement and transformation that is happening across the service in an increasingly challenging social and economic context. The Council's Homelessness Transformation Programme (A Place Called Home) is focussed on:

- Significantly increasing the successful prevention of homelessness.
- Continuing progress to end rough sleeping.
- Considerably reducing the use of temporary accommodation, including reducing the amount out of borough and evenly distributing temporary accommodation across the city.
- Delivering Better Outcomes and Better Lives for people and families at risk or who are homeless.

The report highlights the successful reduction of Bed and Breakfast use, which is the first step in the transformation of the service, and the ongoing reduction in the numbers of people sleeping rough.

The transformation programme directly contributes to our broader Housing Strategy and the Making Manchester Fairer programme, as reducing homelessness is a key contributor in delivering better education, employment, health and wellbeing outcomes.

### Recommendations

Members are invited to consider and comment on the report.

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### Wards Affected: All

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city
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Good quality and affordable homes reduce carbon emissions.
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**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

The housing disadvantages suffered by some individuals or groups were comprehensively evidenced in the Marmot Report 'Build Back Fairer in Greater Manchester: Health Equity and Dignified Lives'. It has since been acknowledged that housing inequality in Manchester is directly related to the disadvantages suffered by some individuals or groups because of their characteristics. The work of the Homeless Service in helping people retain their existing accommodation or find alternatives that are affordable to them meets our public sector equality duty and broader equality commitments. The people sleeping rough in our city are the most vulnerable and marginalised cohort of people in the city and helping them to find dignified and supportive accommodation meets our moral and statutory duty.

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS</b>
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

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

#### **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

N/A

#### **Financial Consequences – Capital**

N/A

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

Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee - 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020 -

Update on Homelessness in the City of Manchester

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022 – Homelessness Update

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – February 2022 – Homelessness Update

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022 – Homelessness

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023 – An update report on the homeless service.

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Scrutiny with a detailed update on the activity undertaken in the Homeless Service since January 2023.
- 1.2 Since the previous homelessness report to Scrutiny, the ongoing cumulative impact of austerity, covid, inflation, the work around addressing damp and mould concerns, the changes to migration and the cost-of-living crisis has put more strain on the country's housing market. This is alongside the potential impact of the Renters Reform Bill, as some landlords chose to leave the market, and the increasing market rents in Manchester which makes the housing market increasingly challenging.
- 1.3 This report focuses upon the significant progress that has been made to reduce the number of households in bed and breakfast, explaining how this has been achieved, and how the service is going to continue to reduce the numbers of people in emergency and temporary accommodation.
- 1.4 The report will also focus on how the service is continuing to reduce the number of people who are sleeping on the streets in Manchester and the work progressing to increase accommodation options and help support them into appropriate affordable and sustainable accommodation.

## **2.0 Data**

- 2.1 Two key metrics for the Homeless Service are the number of homeless families (those with dependent children) placed in bed and breakfast accommodation, including those placed for longer than 6 weeks, and the number of people sleeping rough on a single night.
- 2.2 A bed and breakfast placement for a homeless family can never be suitable accommodation within the meaning of homelessness law. The 2003 Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order stipulates that homeless families should only be placed in bed and breakfast accommodation in exceptional circumstances and then for no longer than 6 weeks.
- 2.3 All Local Authorities with five or more families placed in bed and breakfast accommodation for longer than six weeks must develop a Bed and Breakfast Elimination Plan. The number of Local Authorities across the country to whom this is relevant is significantly growing. The Council's plan is framed around three themes: maximising homeless prevention, maximising temporary accommodation move-on and sourcing alternative temporary accommodation supply to bed and breakfast. The Council has agreed with Government a stretch target to end six-week plus placements by the end of June 2023.
- 2.4 The table below sets out progress to reduce bed and breakfast placements, especially for families, and wider temporary accommodation placements that have been achieved since the last scrutiny meeting in January 2023. As can be seen in the table, there has been a 94% reduction in the number of families placed in B&B for over 6 weeks.

	Peak	Current (6 June 2023)	Reduction	% Reduction
Number of households in Temporary Accom (peak 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 22)	3,194	2,775	419	13.1%
Of which in B&B (peak 6 <sup>th</sup> Feb 23)	814	278	536	65.8%
Of which families (peak 6 <sup>th</sup> Feb 23)	227	46	181	79.7%
Of which families placed over 6 weeks (peak 6 <sup>th</sup> Feb 23)	131	8	123	93.9%

- 2.5 Manchester's progress in reducing temporary accommodation and B&B contrasts with the national trend in respect of increased temporary accommodation placements. Local Authorities are required to report, on a quarterly basis, homeless data to government called an 'H-CLIC return'. The government publishes data with a 4–5-month time lag and the latest published data relates to the period October to December 2022. The temporary accommodation data is a snapshot of numbers on the 31 December 2022. This has been compared to data for 31 December 2021 in the table below:

	31 Dec 2022	31 Dec 2021	Increase	% increase
Total Temporary Accom	101,300	96,410	4,890	5.1%
Of which B&B	12,220	9,270	2,950	31.8%
Of which families in B&B	2,980	1,300	1,680	129%
Of which families in B&B 6 weeks plus	1,630	550	1,080	196%

- 2.6 Dialogue with government officials and other Local Authority colleagues has indicated that both temporary accommodation and bed and breakfast placements across the country have continued to rise in 2023. The reduction in placements this year in Manchester needs to be viewed within this context, as does the stretch target to end bed and breakfast placements for families that exceed six weeks.
- 2.7 The change in total temporary accommodation placements in Manchester since the end of 2021 is in the table below. In contrast to other Local Authorities, placements are continuing to reduce due to the ongoing prevention work reducing numbers going into temporary accommodation, and the partnership work with registered providers and private sector landlords in moving people out.

	31 Dec 21	31 Mar 22	30 June 22	30 Sept 22	31 Dec 22	31 Jan 2023	28 Feb 2023	31 Mar 2023	30 Apr 2023	31 May 2023
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Total TA	2705	2793	2879	2996	3194	3169	3037	2964	2877	2787
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2.8 The breakdown of the 31 May 2023 temporary accommodation figure by accommodation type is below. As per the Councils policy, the majority of families are accommodated in dispersed accommodation, with only a few in hostels where they require 24-hour support. The majority of single people are accommodated in hostels and temporary accommodation where they can access appropriate on-site support.

	Single	Family
B&B	238	50
Dispersed	22	1,900
In-house temporary accommodation	446	44
Nightly paid	0	87
Total	706	2,081

2.9 Alongside the statutory accommodation, the Council also provides 579 bedspaces in housing related support; 163 bedspaces in A Bed Every Night (ABEN) accommodation, including 10 bedspaces that are specifically allocated for people with no recourse to public funds; and 36 refuge places for women experiencing domestic abuse.

2.10 The breakdown of the 31 May 2023 temporary accommodation figure by location is below. The reduction in placements has allowed the team to cease using expensive bed and breakfast accommodation out of area and start to fully utilise the framework hotels inside the boundaries of Manchester. This provides a better support package whilst the household is in bed and breakfast. It has also allowed officers to ensure that families and singles are no longer accommodated in the same hotel accommodation where possible.

	Singles		Families	
	In Manchester	Outside Manchester	In Manchester	Outside Manchester
B&B	188	50	45	5
Dispersed	10	12	1,115	785
In-house temporary accommodation	446	0	44	0
Nightly paid	0	0	27	60
Total	644	62	1,231	850

2.11 The government has set a target to eliminate rough sleeping by the end of the current Parliament. The Council is required to carry out a full city rough sleeper count on a single night every two months with the count figure for October/November published by government. The table below sets out the single night bi-monthly rough sleeper count figures since the start of 2022.

	Jan 2022	Mar 2022	May 2022	Jul 2022	Sep 2022	Nov 2022	Jan 2023	Mar 2023	May 2023
Count Number	41	43	43	48	61	58	52	41	37

2.12 In comparison to other Local Authorities across the country, Manchester's numbers are decreasing whereas many others are increasing. As set out in more detail below, the decrease in numbers is attributable to the intensive assertive individualised approach, a new off-the-street accommodation offer and increased partnership working to address systematic barriers and gaps between services as people require additional mental health and drug and alcohol support to sustain accommodation.

### **3.0 What has been progressed to reduce Bed and Breakfast and temporary accommodation placements.**

3.1 The reducing numbers in bed and breakfast and temporary accommodation could not have been managed without the support of Members and a true cross Council approach. Although the report will set out in more detail the changes, the work with Strategic Housing in ensuring the social allocations policy was changed has been fundamental in changing our conversations with people at the front door. The close one-team approach with Housing Services in managing the Manchester Move process and the move on work with Registered Providers has been amazing. Regular joint service meetings with Children's services have enabled our services to have joint conversations with families to encourage them to accept accommodation offers, and to help us jointly come to solutions for vulnerable families; and the work with the drug and alcohol social work teams in adult's services have fundamentally changed the outreach team to be truly person centred.

3.2 The reducing numbers has allowed the service to focus on moving people from out of borough to inside the city of Manchester. It has also allowed the service to arrest the growth of temporary accommodation in certain areas of the city. Accommodation that has, or is going to be brought on-line, such as Etrop Court and potential new SHAP schemes are in areas of the city where there is not a high density of dispersed accommodation.

### **4.0 Change to Allocations Policy**

4.1 The Manchester Allocation of Social Housing Policy was updated on 6 February 2023. The key changes are:

- Applicants owed the prevention duty would be awarded Band 2 status for re-housing; the same banding awarded to applicants owed the relief or main duties. The purpose of this change is to encourage people to present to the Council for assistance when they are at risk of homelessness rather than after they have become homeless.
- Applicants who voluntarily accept a private rented tenancy, to end a prevention or relief duty, would retain their Band 2 status for re-housing. The purpose of this change is to encourage people to accept an offer of

private rented accommodation as an interim housing option, and as an alternative to going into temporary accommodation, pending social re-housing.

- 4.2 The changes to the Allocations Policy have made a positive contribution to the reduction in bed and breakfast and temporary accommodation numbers. People have been willing to accept a private rented tenancy, as an alternative to or to facilitate a move-on from temporary accommodation, given that a Band 2 award can be retained.
- 4.3 The Homeless Services believes that more work is to be done to ensure people are aware of the changes to the Allocations Policy especially in respect of a Band 2 award made to applicants who are at risk of homelessness (owed prevention duty) to encourage people to present as early as possible for assistance.

## **5.0 Prevention**

- 5.1 A key focus of the service is to increase the prevention of homelessness. Managers in Housing Solutions are working through an intensive four-week case review period with Housing Solutions Officers to review all open homeless cases. The case reviews are an opportunity to maximise prevention opportunities by reviewing the current situation and put in place innovative and creative solutions. Officers are supported with good practice and direction on cases which can be closed through effective interventions. Case reviews to date have led to a reduction of open cases from 1,721 at the start of April to 1,377. Case review activity will continue at the end of the intensive four-week period with a shift towards new cases. The impact of the case reviews will be the ongoing reduction in referrals to temporary accommodation because of the early identification of opportunities to prevent homelessness.
- 5.2 A new Homeless Prevention Hub opened in April in Harpurhey and was temporarily located at the No 93 Community Centre in order to establish and build on local partnerships. From early June the Homeless Prevention Hub will move to the Harpurhey District Office to facilitate a 5-day appointment service.
- 5.3 Staff based at the Hub have been promoting the service locally to ensure services and residents are aware of the Hub and are able to access an appointment at the earliest signs of potential homelessness occurring such as rent payment issues; receiving a notice from their landlord or property disrepair issues.
- 5.4 In May, the Moss Side Prevention Hub expanded the boundaries for referrals to cover Hulme as well as Moss Side to increase the range of appropriate referrals from local community services.



#### Case Example

By working with Manchester Communications Academy and their network of connected schools the Hubs have been able to offer interventions to several households to prevent homelessness occurring. Cases have been identified through those connections which have enabled early interventions to be put in place such as support to access a private rented property for a family who were on the verge of losing their accommodation; purchase of a sofa bed to enable a family to make better use of their space and enable them to stay in a home that they loved that was near to support and schools; paying a short term top up on rent to allow a household to get back into work. This work has also identified a number of disrepair issues in the private rented sector, which have been referred to the housing compliance team.

## **6.0 Accessing the homeless service**

- 6.1 Face-to-face appointments for households are offered across a number of venues, including the Town Hall Customer Service Centre; Centrepoin; Day Centres; the Community Hubs; Hospitals and Prisons.
- 6.2 Nevertheless, the Housing Solutions Service is currently holding a significant number of vacancies (20 vacancies from a team of 47 staff), with new staff in their induction training, some having been interviewed and going through on-boarding and a new recruitment process currently being progressed. When fully staffed, officers are going to increase the number of face-to-face appointments at alternative venues, including Wythenshawe and Gorton.
- 6.3 The telephone access service is an area which needs to be improved. The average wait time is 34.19 minutes which is well above the target of 10 minutes. The telephone access service has been reviewed and intensive work has been undertaken to put in place immediate operational information that can be accessed by management on an ongoing basis to understand peaks and troughs to better manage this part of the service. Due to current staffing levels, there is a tension between ensuring there are sufficient people answering the telephone and sufficient people undertaking assessments. Staff from elsewhere in the service have been reallocated to help on the telephone lines and this is a key area of development once the team is fully staffed.
- 6.4 To help people self-serve and access good quality advice, Advice Aid are being commissioned to provide online homeless advice. This should be available towards the end of summer.

## **7.0 Bed and Breakfast Placements**

- 7.1 In January 2023 there were 227 families & 587 singles in B&B type accommodation, this has now reduced to 50 families & 238 singles. This has been achieved by implementing numerous new strategies and improved ways of working. The main change has been the change to the allocations policy enabling people to retain their Band 2 status on Manchester Move if they accept a PRS offer or if they are homeless from home (see section 4.0

above). There has been a change in approach by the Private Rented Sector team to move people on quickly to the right accommodation direct from their presenting accommodation or a B&B setting, thereby avoiding the need to use temporary accommodation. As mentioned above, there has also been a focus placed on prevention which has resulted in less people needing emergency accommodation.

- 7.2 The reduction in emergency accommodation placements has meant that those placed in accommodation are able to access more appropriate accommodation that is suitable to their needs. In January 2023 there were 44 families and 177 singles in emergency accommodation that was in Greater Manchester but not within the Manchester City boundary. At the end of May the numbers have reduced to 5 families (4 of which have an alternative solution identified), and 50 singles. This means that households are closer to their support networks and can access services in the area. It also means that the B&B support workers can provide more support as it has reduced the need for them to travel extensively across Greater Manchester.
- 7.3 Families are no longer accommodated in the same properties as singles in any of our framework hotels. In January 2023 there were 144 singles accommodated in B&B's where families were residing; this reduced to 13 in May 2023. Seven of the 13 have accessibility issues which has made finding alternative accommodation difficult. Officers are working through this on a case-by-case basis.
- 7.4 There has been significant work with hotel managers and owners to ensure the B&B's meet the standard required. The service has worked closely with the Neighbourhoods Compliance Service to undertake inspections covering all relevant matters of health & safety. Where the standards are not met, the accommodation is no longer utilised.

## **8.0 Family Leasing**

- 8.1 In order to reduce the number of households in bed and breakfast, the Council has negotiated the funding to develop a number of leasing schemes to provide good quality accommodation for families.
- 8.2 There are three leasing schemes which have been agreed and are at different stages of implementation.
- 200 family sized properties to be used as temporary accommodation, managed by the Council and let on non-secure tenancies have been approved, although it is likely to only need circa 100 to eliminate B&B.
  - 140 family sized properties to be used as longer-term accommodation, managed by a housing association and let on assured shorthold tenancies.
  - 50 one-bedroom properties for people who sleep rough managed by the Council and let on non-secure tenancies (see section 14.5 below).

8.3 Temporary Accommodation Leasing Scheme (200 approved properties)

8.4 The Leasing scheme is a contract between the Council and private providers to provide private rented properties as temporary accommodation as an alternative to bed and breakfast placements for families. The private providers are mainly landlords which the Homeless Service already works with through its Private Rented Access Scheme. The service has approval for up to 200 properties, although it is anticipated that circa 100 will be required to eliminate the use of Bed and Breakfast.

8.5 All properties provided will be inspected by the Council to HHSRS standard (Housing Health and Safety Rating System) before being let to Homeless applicants. The properties will be furnished and of a good standard, which will allow families to settle quickly. As the leases are for 5 years, it means the Council can offer a level of stability for the families until they are rehoused permanently.

8.6 Payments to providers will comprise of rent, repair, and furniture allowance. The Council will guarantee rent payments providing that the properties remain part of the lease agreement for the full five-year term, properties are maintained to a requisite standard and properties are available to re-let no more than 14 days after the previous tenant has moved out. The landlord services required by the private providers are as follows:

- Provision of accommodation
- Ensure the properties to a requisite standard of repair and maintenance
- Provide furnished accommodation
- Offer a move-in service comprising key handover and tour of property
- Ensure properties can be re-let within a 14-day period

8.7 Floating support is delivered to all households by the Council’s Floating Support Service.

8.8 The leasing scheme for families went live 24 March 2023, as of the 6<sup>th</sup> June, there have been 40 families who have moved out of B&B and into leasing properties. The table below highlights the size of properties tenanted.

2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	Adapted properties
9	21	7	2	1 (4 bed)

8.9 Longer-Term Tenancy Leasing Scheme (140 properties)

8.10 The longer-term tenancy leasing scheme for families is funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC) via a capital grant of £3.9m to GMCA, as part of a wider devolution deal for Greater Manchester. Manchester is one of three Local Authorities eligible for funding due to the number of families who were residing in bed and breakfast when the scheme was announced.

- 8.11 The funding will deliver 200 properties via GMCA, with Manchester set to deliver 140 units. The leasing scheme will offer longer-term accommodation as either a homeless prevention or temporary accommodation move-on option. The properties will be managed by a registered provider, offering the same rent, repair and furniture costs as the temporary accommodation leasing scheme.

## **9.0 Dispersed Temporary Accommodation**

### **9.1 Impact of the rental uplift**

- 9.2 Dispersed temporary accommodation provides families and singles with a safe, self-contained property where they can remain until a more permanent solution is found to end their homelessness. Over the previous 12 months, properties had been removed from the contract as the rental amounts did not match the amount of rent able to be claimed on the open market alongside an increase in mortgage payments, and increased costs of building materials and maintenance. This resulted in households remaining in bed and breakfast accommodation as there were insufficient dispersed properties for them to move into.

- 9.3 A key decision was made to increase the rents in January, to be implemented at the beginning of February. Between February and the end of May 2023 providers have brought 82 new properties onto the scheme which is helping to reduce the number of families in B&B type accommodation. The increase has also enabled a better working relationship with Manchester City Council as the providers have all stated that they feel listened to and that they are a valued partner. The maintenance, repairs and the speed that the properties are turned around has also increased as the providers have the capacity and funding to put a maintenance plan into place.

### **9.4 Improving Property Standards and Inspections**

- 9.5 The Homeless Service is working hard to ensure that properties used as temporary accommodation are free from damp, mould and disrepair issues. All dispersed temporary accommodation properties are inspected by the Homelessness Inspection Team ensuring compliance with the Housing Health & Safety Rating Standard (HHSRS) prior to let. A new Inspection App tool has been introduced to expedite the completion of inspection reports. This is assisting with reducing void periods and supports a quick delivery of available temporary accommodation for those that need it, further supporting the plans to eliminate use of B&B's for homeless families.

### **9.6 Floating Support Prototype – a new way of working to deliver better outcomes, better lives.**

- 9.7 As mentioned in January's scrutiny report, a new model of support for households living in dispersed temporary accommodation has been trialled. The pilot delivers an early intensive support model to households at the outset

of a temporary accommodation tenancy, followed by a tailored package of support based upon the needs of the household.

- 9.8 Intensive support workers confirm positive benefits with tenants receiving the best start to their tenancy. Evidence confirms that this model of support is delivering a better service, improved tenancy management and quicker access to relevant additional support. Intensive support has picked up many issues that under the existing model would not have been recognised until issues and problems had escalated:
- Benefits not in payment being addressed
  - School admissions being addressed to get children into school at pace minimising educational disruption
  - Improved discovery of property abandonments
  - Speedy establishment of monthly bills/direct debits minimising any arrears or debt
  - Early Help assessment being completed in a timely fashion
  - Rent payment plans (for working households) being established at outset of tenancy and avoidance of rent arrears accruing
  - Links established with other agencies where needed eg Social Care, Children's Services; Domestic Abuse Services; Drug and Alcohol support
  - Quicker identification and action on property issues/damp/mould/disrepair
  - Creation and amendment of accurate Manchester Move applications
  - Earlier conversations regarding private rented sector options with retention of Band 2 status to improve move on from temporary accommodation.
- 9.9 Re-assessment of families following the 3-month intensive support reveals that a larger proportion of cases require a lower level of support than had originally been expected as support needs have been well met. Of the cases deemed high needs, because interventions have been actualised quickly, these families will manage more independently with appropriate targeted intervention.
- 9.10 A significant outcome has been the number of households who have left dispersed temporary accommodation by the end of the 3-month intensive period of support. Fourteen households moved out of homelessness temporary accommodation to live independently in the initial 3-month period. This supports the commitment to reduce the time a family spends as homeless.
- 9.11 The service is now working to roll out the improved support model across all existing households living in dispersed temporary accommodation.
- 9.12 District Homes Pilot
- 9.13 District Homes provides a support and housing management function to 400 households living within dispersed temporary accommodation. It was originally set up to address the housing benefit subsidy shortfall. A review was undertaken in the spring on the standards and effectiveness of the contract, and the outcome was positive.

9.14 A key decision was subsequently requested to enable both an extension of the pilot for a further 2 years and the ability to add up to 200 additional properties to this arrangement. This decision was approved, with an extension commencing in June 2023 which will realise an additional £0.5M of savings through reduced housing benefit subsidy loss.

## **10.0 Move-on from Temporary Accommodation**

10.1 In order to help reduce the number of people in bed and breakfast, several Manchester Registered Providers agreed to allocate 90 lets to families who had been resident in dispersed temporary accommodation and who have housing applications registered prior to January 2020. Applicants have their housing application priority status placed in Band 1 for re-housing using their Band 2 priority date.

10.2 To date 75 households have been moved into this process. 37 families have been re-housed into social housing properties and 25 families are currently 'on offer'. The released dispersed temporary accommodation units freed up by the above approach are made available for families who are currently or would otherwise be placed in bed and breakfast accommodation.

## **11.0 Housing Related support**

11.1 There continues to be a renewed focus on move on from Housing Related Support Services. The rehousing applications for all residents in supported accommodation schemes have been reviewed and backdates have been applied to all relevant applications to decrease the length of time that residents will wait before receiving an offer of accommodation. Case panel review meetings are in place across each supported accommodation pathway to manage move on from support schemes by addressing barriers to move on and identifying opportunities and solutions. This is starting to result in increased levels of placements in supported accommodation schemes. New principles have been agreed as part of a wider move on strategy for commissioned housing related support services and these will be embedded in services with direct move on case panel meetings delivered at individual scheme level.

11.2 The volume of placements into the commissioned Housing Related Support accommodation services is increasing month on month. In the year-to-date (January – April 2023) a total of 127 placements have been made into the commissioned supported accommodation. The volume is increasing month on month, with 26 placements made in January 2023 raising to 35 placements made in April 2023. Placements into supported accommodation are now being prioritised for people who are moving on from B&B accommodation or emergency provision for people who have been sleeping rough, with 15 placements made from B&B or rough sleeping accommodation in March 2023 and 22 placements made in April 2023. The remaining 13 placements in April were from specialist substance misuse services into the drug and alcohol pathway or children's services placements into the young person's pathway.

## **12.0 Domestic Abuse**

- 12.1 Since the beginning of April 2023 there have been 137 presentations of people stating domestic abuse as the reason for losing their settled home. 135 of these have had homeless applications opened.
- 12.2 Collaboration with the Domestic Abuse Case Conferencing Team (DACC) has highlighted opportunities to further enhance outcomes for individuals experiencing domestic abuse who may be at risk of homelessness. The Housing Solutions Service are developing a toolkit of measures to share with the DACC which can be quickly accessed to prevent homelessness. The toolkit will be shared with DACC by the end of July.
- 12.3 The Domestic Abuse team have recommissioned all the Refuge and Support Services that are classed as Safe Accommodation until March 2025, to give stability and continuity to the Providers involved. These services include enhanced refuge provision for all 6 refuges, an extension for the Reach Service that provides support for victims/survivors living in temporary accommodation, and a further contract for The Children's Society to continue their work with children and young people who have witnessed domestic abuse. The team have also prioritised the funding of the LGBT Foundation, and the 8 accommodation units they provide for their clients, as well as a Children's worker in the Council's Oak Lodge provision.
- 12.4 The team have recently received outcome reports from the organisations who received small grants in 2022/23. The Pankhurst Trust, Saheli and The Children's Society received funding to be used as part of the Our Year project to help children recover from the pandemic. The reports detail that the children have been taken camping, on day trips to Blackpool, bowling, the pantomime, Inflatation and all sorts of trips and experiences that vulnerable children will undoubtedly benefit from.
- 12.5 Significant grants were also awarded to help victims move on from Refuge into permanent accommodation. The grants were used to purchase white goods, sofas and beds and install Wi-Fi in properties.
- 12.6 The Caribbean African Health Network (CAHN) have been commissioned to help the Council understand the 'Victims Voice' and the outcome of this work will help shape future domestic abuse services. Their first report is due in January 2024, and they are currently running a monthly panel to gather the views of victims/survivors.
- 12.7 Over the next 6 months, officers will be working with the IDVA team to better understand how the Sanctuary Scheme / target hardening can be utilised by the homeless service and the DACCs to help victims/survivors remain safe in their accommodation.

## **13.0 What has been undertaken to reduce the number of people sleeping rough**

13.1 A person is defined as sleeping rough if they are bedded down or about to bed down in the open air or in a place not designed or functioning as a place for residential living such as a car or a derelict building.

### 13.2 Current Numbers

13.3 As shown in the data section of the report (2.11), the count figures demonstrate continued progress in reducing the number of people sleeping rough in Manchester and helping support people into appropriate accommodation. This reduction has been achieved through several different approaches over the previous 12 months:

### 13.4 Cold Weather

13.5 Cold weather was a success with 890 offers of accommodation from the streets. There were 3 incidences where the temperature fell below zero. A new approach was trialled whereby instead of the focus being on accommodating people through the day centres, the focus was on outreach during the night and ensuring that people who were on the streets were moved immediately into accommodation. This helped develop our new outreach approach as detailed below.

### 13.6 Outreach approach

13.7 The outreach team has refocused its approach to partnership working with other services over the last seven months in how they provide support and accommodation options to people sleeping on the streets. The team has increased their presence within indoor provision to support people identified on outreach who have previously declined offers of support and accommodation. The times they conduct outreach have been amended and moved from early evening outreach to provide more early morning outreach. As mentioned above, during the winter night-time outreach was focused between 12-4am during periods of cold weather.

### 13.8 Verification

13.9 The Homeless Service is co-producing an agreed approach to identifying people who are sleeping rough with organisations in the Homeless Partnership. This is in response to high numbers of people on the periphery of rough sleeping, or in unstable accommodation, presenting to outreach services self-verifying as rough sleeping. The introduction of verification during the cold weather period resulted in a better targeted approach focused upon people who were in priority need. This tested process is to be developed and agreed with partners and will subsequently be used as the standard approach as well as during the cold weather period.

### 13.10 Etrop Grange – off the street accommodation offer

13.11 Etrop Grange was opened at the beginning of October 2022, initially to increase the availability of accommodation during the winter period. It provides



64 single unit rooms to people who are sleeping rough on the streets. Referrals are made via outreach services for people who are confirmed and verified as sleeping on the streets. It is situated in an area of the city that does not have a high number of temporary accommodation units. Since opening Etrop Grange has taken 418 bookings. To date, 184 people have had positive move-ons into supported accommodation, longer term settled accommodation or reconnected with friends and family. Due to the success of Etrop, officers are looking to continue the accommodation until March 2024, providing an off the street offer over the winter period. Additional staff are being recruited to provide 24-hour cover, meals and intense move on support to increase the throughput of the service, alongside independent living skills sessions. Engagement activities have started which include a garden project, wellbeing activities and reflective practice sessions. Outreach assessment officers are also based on site to conduct homeless assessments in a timely manner.

#### **14.0 Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP)**

14.1 The Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP) provides capital funding to acquire or refurbish accommodation specifically for individuals with a history of rough sleeping. The properties must be additional to the support accommodation already provided in the city.

14.2 The Council and Registered Provider partners have been successful in securing four rounds of funding through RSAP. In addition, GMCA has successfully secured two lots of funding. The table below details acquisitions to date across the city.

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Number of Acquisitions</b>
Manchester City Council	32
One Manchester	29
Moss Care St Vincents	16
Wythenshawe Community Housing Group	7
Irwell Valley	2
Great Places	2
Southway	3
Stepping Stone	30
GMCA	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>135</b>

14.3 In addition, there are several RSAP schemes currently under development, details of which are provided below.

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Number of Planned Acquisitions / Refurbishments</b>
MCC Housing Services	11 (Refurb)
Mosscaire St Vincents	8
WISH/Manchester Women's Aid	24

GMCA	10
TOTAL	53

14.4 Alongside the accommodation funding, there is revenue funding to provide support to the people accommodated in the RSAP properties. This support is currently being provided through a mixture of commissioned, registered provider in-house and Manchester City Council Officers.

14.5 Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP) Leasing Scheme

14.6 The Council has received a £1.1m capital grant from the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities to part fund a leasing scheme for 50 one-bed self-contained properties to be used as a move-on option from Etrop Grange. The scheme will provide temporary accommodation for people who have previously slept rough who are now ready to live independently and require support for low to medium needs.

14.7 Rather than purchasing or refurbishing properties, as per the above RSAP schemes, the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme Leasing Scheme works on the same basis as the family temporary accommodation leasing scheme in section 8.0. The leasing contract will be for 5 years, with payments to providers covering furniture, rents and repair costs. The properties will be used as temporary accommodation, managed by the Council and let on non-secure tenancies as all tenants will be owed a homelessness temporary accommodation duty. The support will be provided by support workers within the Council's outreach team.

**15.0 Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP)**

15.1 The Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP) was announced in September 2022 by the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC) as part of the Government's ending rough sleeping strategy. The aim of SHAP is to increase the supply of high-quality supported accommodation and to address gaps in current provision.

15.2 Whilst the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP) will bring on-line over 200 additional homes, much of this is dispersed housing with low to medium levels of support, leaving a gap for people needing high levels of support or specialist provision. SHAP will help fill this gap, providing longer term supported housing.

15.3 There are two target groups:

- Adults with a history of rough sleeping and needing high levels of support to help them recover from rough sleeping and its associated traumas
- Young people aged 18-25 who may be at risk of or experiencing homelessness or rough sleeping.

- 15.4 There is over £200million of funding available for both capital delivery and revenue support, with 3 years revenue funding from completion of accommodation. The latest completion date is by March 2025.
- 15.5 Working with Registered Providers, charities, and working collaboratively with colleagues in Strategic Housing, Planning, and Growth and Development, officers are in the process of developing potential proposals. Our ambitions are to:
- Continue to reduce the number of people sleeping rough in Manchester.
  - Offer a new service to those with a long-term history of sleeping rough, many of whom have been in existing hostels and temporary accommodation numerous times.
  - Maximise the use of SHAP capital and revenue funding available to provide long-term, high quality supported housing.
  - Identify and meet the gaps in current provision both in terms of capacity and type of scheme.
  - Provide more fully accessible accommodation for those with limited mobility.
  - Develop a support model based on psychologically informed ways of working and a strengths-based approach, helping people recover and develop the skills and confidence needed to live independently longer term.
  - Better collaborative working, with SHAP support staff working closely with the Council's Outreach Inreach and Adult Social Care Teams, and with specialists in substance misuse, Mental Health, and Domestic Violence.
- 15.6 The SHAP accommodation will be focused in areas of the city that do not currently have large numbers of temporary accommodation.

## **16.0 Partnership working**

- 16.1 One of the main barriers to helping people who are entrenched in a street lifestyle move from the streets into accommodation is the support they require from other services being in place to help them sustain accommodation. The Council is working with the Combined Authority to help address some of these barriers. The Director of the Mayor's Office, alongside the Homeless Outreach Team, Adult Social Care and GMP jointly conduct monthly 4am outreach sessions. Everyone identified is discussed at a multi-disciplinary meeting to identify practical solutions to help them into sustainable accommodation, with the strategic barriers subsequently identified and presented at a follow up meeting with senior managers. Services then work together to address overarching systematic barriers, reviewing the cases two weeks later to track their progress.
- 16.2 There continues to be open and honest conversation across the Homeless Partnership with regards to how the service continues to develop. Verification, accommodation, how the service operates during cold weather all continue to be discussed, with lessons learnt agreed and practice changed on an ongoing basis. Key issues such as safeguarding, affordable accommodation, mental

health and social care are the subjects of deep dives at the monthly strategic advisory group. A move to include more organisations who work with families at the Partnership Board is in progress.

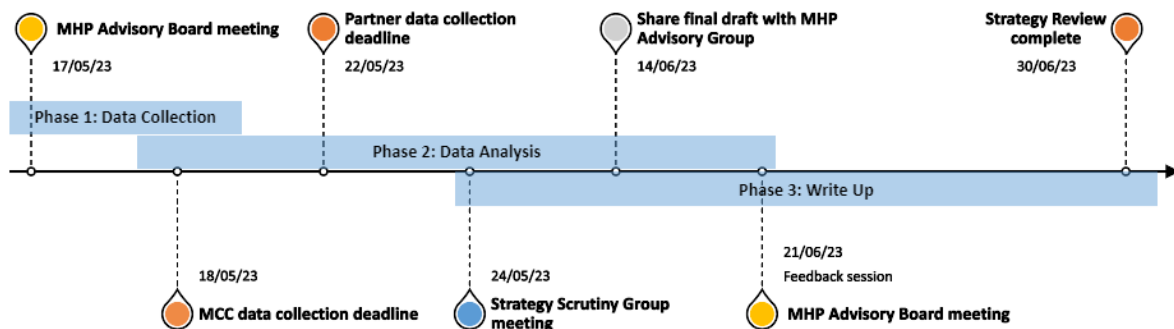
## 17.0 Rough Sleeping Initiative and A Bed Every Night (ABEN)

17.1 The work through the Rough Sleeping Initiative funding and ABEN remains constant. These funding streams have provided the support to enable Etrop and other initiatives to move people from the streets into stable accommodation. Officers will be reviewing and recommissioning ABEN in the next 12 months in order to maximise value for money.

## 18.0 Homelessness Strategy Review

18.1 Manchester's existing homelessness strategy covers the period 2018-2023. The Council intends to work with the Manchester Homelessness Partnership to develop a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for the city for 2024 - 2027. This strategy will be co-produced and have an increased focus on including lived experience from homeless families as well as singles. Following from the good practice in the previous strategy, this strategy will also be a strategy for the city, with an action plan that sits below it including actions for all organisations to progress.

18.2 The Council has started the process for reviewing the current Strategy, which is an important requirement in the development of the Council's new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The timeline below highlights the key milestones that are to be undertaken to ensure that the Review is concluded by end of June 2023.



18.3 Reviewing data and key performance measures that the Council has access to is a fundamental part of the review. The Council is keen to ensure the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is co-produced and the review is not just focused on the Council's data but also includes our Partners data. Officers have asked members of the Manchester Homelessness Partnership and wider services to input into the Review, particularly those services that work with families. The timeframe of data covers January 2018 – March 2023.

18.4 The review will be evidence/data led and will include:

- The levels, and likely future levels, of homelessness in the city,

- The activities that are carried out to prevent homelessness
- The activities carried out to secure accommodation for households who experience homelessness,
- The provision of support for households who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- The resources that are available to the authority and partners to deliver these activities.

18.5 The aims of the new Strategy will continue to focus on making homelessness Rare, Brief and Non-recurrent and will place a greater emphasis on families. Work that has already been identified as areas of focus are:

- Continuing to ensure there are no families in B&Bs
- Reducing the use of B&B for single people
- Minimising the use of temporary accommodation placements made outside of Manchester
- Pathways into accommodation for people who are assessed as having no priority need.

18.6 The document will be reviewed, updated and signed off by the Manchester Homelessness Partnership Strategy Scrutiny Group in June 2023 and the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be signed off by the Deputy Leader in December 2023.

## **19.0 Conclusion**

19.1 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 and to ensure residents have A Place to Call Home.

19.2 The Transformation programme continues to operate in a challenging context, with the cumulative impact of austerity, covid, the cost-of-living crisis and the impact of national decisions on the asylum and migration process continuing to adversely impact the housing market and exacerbate hardship for local communities, more often those with the least resources.

19.3 That said, the service's intense focus on prevention, commitment to reduce the use of bed and breakfast and the continued focus on helping to support people who sleep rough is having a positive impact on households who are at risk of, or who are, homeless in the city.