

# Agenda item 9

## Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Temporary Accommodation Joint Work: Options Development

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**Lead Member: Andrew Williams, Leader, Dacorum Borough Council**

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### 1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress made developing the recommended options available to local authorities in Hertfordshire to better meet the housing needs for people living in Temporary Accommodation (TA), whilst achieving quality and value for money.

### 2 Background

- 2.1 The strategic programme outcomes below, guide the work:
- Develop a coordinated county wide framework for provision to improve outcomes and life chances for households who are temporarily homeless
  - Secure, sustainable long-term improvements in accommodation arrangements that meets the minimum standards
  - Develop an approach to temporary accommodation across the county that can respond to local issues
  - Build on existing activity to utilise publicly owned land and assets to support delivery of homes
  - Be an exemplar county in managing use of temporary accommodation, building social and economic benefits for Hertfordshire

The principle that local authorities are able to engage with the options that most fit with local need is maintained.

- 2.2 Collective work with stakeholders from all Hertfordshire local authorities and other partner organisations has continued in support of progressing work on the options outlined below. Engagement by stakeholders continues to be positive on developing new approaches to resolving accommodation challenges faced across the county. Activity is supported through briefings to the leader reference group.

Shortlist of original options for further development	
Option	Description
1	Development of a Hertfordshire TA Predictive Model to better understand and manage future demand
2	Development of a Hertfordshire wide procedure for setting maximum rates for private sector TA – now discounted, previous paper refers
3	Development of options for the joint procurement and management of Private Rented Sector accommodation to prevent homelessness and for move on from TA
4	Development of a multi-district or Hertfordshire wide Complex Needs accommodation provision service
5	Collaborative development of new build accommodation to let as PRS, TA or supported housing
6	Development or commissioning of Hospital Stepdown accommodation to aid the recovery of patients without accommodation

### 3 Progress made and next steps

3.1 The current focus of activity is on:

- a) Development of a Hertfordshire TA Predictive Model to better understand and manage future demand (original option 1)
- b) Development of a multi-district or Hertfordshire complex needs/Housing First service, building on lessons from existing practice (original option 4)
- c) Development or commissioning of Hospital Stepdown accommodation to aid the recovery of patients without accommodation (original option 6)

Multi-district working groups were put in place to take these items forward, with programme and consultant support over 2022.

#### 3.1.1 Development of a Hertfordshire TA Predictive Model to better understand and manage future demand (demand model)

As a result of further research and to better reflect functionality, this option has been renamed as Development of a Hertfordshire TA Predictive, Monitoring and Control Toolset.

##### **Objective:**

The model will enable better control of TA demand (into TA) and supply (out of TA) and be able to be used as a 'live performance tool' by local authorities. The model will help focus effort through targeted interventions for managing or reducing TA numbers.

**Progress Made:**

The model has been developed based on best practice and use of targeted interventions by other authorities and piloted with housing managers across the county. Training in its use has been delivered to all district and borough housing staff.

Work to develop a data capture mechanism enabling better understanding of demand and the actual numbers of people who are in TA across the county is now complete.

The business case for this operational improvement has been signed off by the Lead Chief Executive Officer and both elements of this option will be implemented from 1 January 2023.

**Next Steps:**

- Support the final implementation of the elements described above
- Conduct an evaluation of the impact with the aim of delivering an interim evaluation report by April 2023

### 3.1.2 **Development of a multi-district or Hertfordshire wide Complex Needs Accommodation provision**

As indicated in the previous update, the focus for this option has shifted slightly to working to resolve the accommodation provision for the cohort of homeless people having an ultra-high level of complex needs. Whilst the numbers are small the impact of providing effective accommodation and provision of care needs in one place is both complex and costly.

**Objective:**

To understand why current accommodation arrangements are unable to support homeless people with ultra-high needs.

To determine the most effective model of accommodation provision through which delivery of interventions to resolve complex needs can be made.

**Progress Made:**

- Work continues to scope a new model, confirming demand and building the specification required to deliver an effective accommodation solution, building on existing work to support those with complex needs across the county. Interest in this option is maintained.
- The prospectus for the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP) funding opportunity, operated by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, was released in December. Regular meetings are in place with fund advisors and Homes England to establish how an effective bid can

be made for Hertfordshire, ensuring that the needs of North Herts District Council, the district within Hertfordshire targeted by the fund due to the number of 18-25yr old homeless people, are met.

**Next Steps:**

- Develop further the model for delivering an integrated accommodation and support solution to meet the defined and quantified need
- Determine the most pragmatic approach to submitting a bid to SHAP, ensuring Hertfordshire benefits from the funding available
- Continue work to identify alternate sources of funding
- Keep under review the identified level of need across Hertfordshire, and develop further understanding of the whole-system cost to Hertfordshire of this cohort
- Explore delivery options with a range of potential partners and potential sites
- Develop the business case for this option with a clearly defined specification, alongside development of a funding bid

**3.1.3 Development or commissioning of Hospital Stepdown accommodation to aid the recovery of patients without accommodation**

Focus is on responding to the need for appropriate Hospital Stepdown accommodation for homeless people, to reduce the delayed discharge from hospital.

**Progress:**

- Engagement with system stakeholders culminated in a ‘mini-conference’ in November last year, attended by 50 people representing organisations having an interest in this issue. Participants heard from example sites from around the country and from the London School of Economics who are involved in evaluating such provision on behalf of central Government.
- Continued engagement with sites operating similar schemes and national researchers to align with good practice.

**Next Steps:**

- Finalise data collection across all acute sites
- Develop a profile for how benefits would accrue across the system
- Develop a specification, identification of a suitable site and identify funding opportunities through Homes England, One Public Estate and the Department for Health & Social Care.

## **4 Implications**

- 4.1 There are no adverse legal, financial, equalities, environmental, sustainability or other implications associated with this report.
- 4.2 A business case for each option under consideration will be developed and set out the legal, financial, environmental and sustainability implications to be considered.

## **5 Recommendations**

- 5.1 That the Hertfordshire Growth Board notes the progress made across the three workstreams.