

HOUSING TASK GROUP UPDATE

Executive Summary

Councillor Ian Johnson, Chairman of the Housing Task Group, provided an update from the Housing Task Group:

“The Task Group met on 28 November. The Homelessness Reduction Act had been in operation for six months and while the number of clients had not grown, the intensity of the support with them had resulted in heavier workloads. The team was not yet fully staffed and help had been received from other internal resources.

The Home Independence team was about to trial a ‘paid for’ scheme to assist vulnerable people, who did not have the capability of looking after their existing property, to relocate. The team were conscious of the need to ensure safeguarding and avoid conflicts of interest. The team also operates the Handyperson scheme on behalf of Woking, Runnymede and Spelthorne which was proving very popular. Finally, the team had established a new Home from Help service where hospital discharge cases could get help for up to six weeks. This involved follow up visits and home support.

The need to bring empty homes back into use was raised and members are asked to let officers know of any houses which appear to be unoccupied. It was sometimes difficult to know if properties were second homes or the occupant had health issues but officers could check. The Chairman drew attention to the poor state of the temporary accommodation in Claremont Avenue which needs redevelopment sooner rather than later and officers were asked to look at setting up a redevelopment project. Temporary accommodation in St Johns Road and Chertsey Road also needed urgent attention. Members noted that budgets were inadequate for major works, including demolition, and yet the cost of works would be uneconomic.

The process for recruiting a Director of Housing was underway.”

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the update be noted

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation set out above.
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Background Papers: None.

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