

# Crawley Borough Council

## Report to Overview and Scrutiny Commission 8 March 2021

## Report to Cabinet 10 March 2021

### West Sussex Health and Care in Housing Memorandum of Understanding

Report of the Head of Strategic Housing Services – SHAP/80

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#### 1. Purpose

- 1.1. Building on partnership working across the county in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and in recognition of the key role that housing plays in long-term population health and well-being, a key opportunity has presented to bring greater involvement from local health partners in addressing local needs.
- 1.2. The West Sussex Health and Care Partnership has endorsed a proposal for local NHS partners to work together with West Sussex Local Authorities to develop a local agreement in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU would form a statement of ambition and intent for future working and collaboration between health, housing and social care in planning for and meeting need at a local level.
- 1.3. All partner organisations within the local health, housing and social care sectors have been asked to formally endorse the development of a local MOU through their democratic processes.

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

That the Commission consider the report and decide what comments, if any, it wishes to submit to the Cabinet.

- 2.2. To the Cabinet

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Endorse and agree the development of a local health, housing and social care MOU based on the priorities for action set out in 6.5 drawn from existing Council strategies.
- b) Delegate authority to the Head of Strategic Housing Services to act as signatory to the MOU and any associated protocols arising from it on the Council's behalf and to approve any revisions required to ensure it continues to reflect the Council's priorities. (*Generic Delegation 3 will be used to enact this recommendation*).

### **3. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 3.1. Historically achieving the effective engagement of health service partners in addressing the often complex needs of those trying either to access accommodation or to sustain their existing accommodation has proved challenging.
- 3.2. A clear and shared understanding of a set of key commitments by health, social care and housing partners to address the greatest needs across local communities would complement, support and work alongside existing strategies, including the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy, in delivering improved outcomes and preventing and relieving homelessness.
- 3.3 The development of a local Health, Social Care and Housing MOU provides a reset opportunity for our relationship with health partners and a platform for improved engagement.

### **4. Background**

- 4.1. Historically it has proved challenging to achieve effective and sustained engagement with health services both in planning for future housing and in meeting the needs of those currently housed or in need of housing. This engagement is critical if the Council is to build on the successful outcomes achieved in supporting rough sleepers into housing and to prevent and relieve rising levels of homelessness.
- 4.2. The West Sussex Health and Care Partnership was formed last year and comprises senior leaders from health and social care working together to deliver change and develop partnership arrangements. In recognition of the key role housing plays in the long-term health and well-being of communities the Partnership endorsed a proposal for local NHS partners to work together with all West Sussex Local Authorities to develop an MOU.
- 4.3. This provides an opportunity to build on the work undertaken in 2019 to understand the needs of people accessing housing and related support services across the county and to co-design and commission services to meet these needs. It also builds on the on-going joint response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 4.4. Initial work has been taken forward with the aim of developing a clear and shared understanding of a set of priorities to address the greatest needs across local communities to form the basis of a local MOU.
- 4.5. In order to move this work forward, partner organisations within the local health, housing and social care sectors have been asked to formally endorse the development of a local MOU through their democratic processes.

### **5. Description of Issue to be Resolved**

- 5.1. Demand for strategic housing services continues to rise, further fuelled by the impact of the pandemic. In these challenging times inter-agency collaboration is key in achieving the objectives of the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy and delivering improved outcomes for local people in housing need.
- 5.2 Achieving effective and sustained engagement with local health partners in working to improve outcomes for those in housing need remains a challenge for the Council.

- 5.3 The development of a health, social care and housing MOU provides a reset opportunity for our relationship with health partners and a platform for improved engagement.

## **6. Information & Analysis Supporting Recommendation**

- 6.1 An inter-agency approach is key in identifying and planning for the future housing needs of our communities and in designing and funding services to best meet their existing needs.
- 6.2 Effective and sustained engagement with health services in improving housing related outcomes for local people remains a key challenge and a priority to address.
- 6.3 As a co-developer of an MOU between health, social care and housing partners the Council has an opportunity to shape joint working arrangements in a way that ensures that local needs are identified and addressed.
- 6.4 Successfully securing Government grant funding is increasingly dependent on ability to evidence inter-agency collaboration. The MOU would be a key document in the Council's evidence base.
- 6.5 Based on the needs assessment work embodied in existing strategies, the focus for the MOU will be:
- The needs of an ageing population
  - Responding to the increase in occurrences of long-term mental illness
  - Improving outcomes for people with physical and mental disability
  - Preventing and relieving homelessness
  - Supporting children and families
  - Tackling rough sleeping

These are all current priority areas for the Council in addressing housing need and are included within existing Council strategies.

## **7. Implications**

- 7.1. There are no additional staffing or financial implications for the Council in becoming a co-developer of, and co-signatory to the MOU.
- 7.2 Any legal implications arising will be addressed as part of the sign-up process.
- 7.3 Due to the nature and needs of those that the MOU is designed to assist, Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty will apply. However, these implications have already been considered as part of the development of the existing Council strategies from which the priorities referenced within the MOU are drawn. There are no further implications to be addressed within this report.

## **8. Background Papers**

None

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