

CABINET Agenda

Date Monday 18 October 2021

Time 6.00 pm

Venue Crompton Suite, Civic Centre, Oldham, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1NL

- Notes
1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST- If a Member requires any advice on any item involving a possible declaration of interest which could affect his/her ability to speak and/or vote he/she is advised to contact Paul Entwistle or Liz Drogan in advance of the meeting.
 2. CONTACT OFFICER for this Agenda is Liz Drogan Tel. 0161 770 5151 or email elizabeth.drogan@oldham.gov.uk
 3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – Any member of the public wishing to ask a question at the above meeting can do so only if a written copy of the question is submitted to the Contact officer by 12 Noon on Wednesday, 13 October 2021.
 4. FILMING – This meeting will be recorded for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website. The whole of the meeting will be recorded, except where there are confidential or exempt items and the footage will be on our website. This activity promotes democratic engagement in accordance with section 100A(9) of the Local Government Act 1972. The cameras will focus on the proceedings of the meeting. As far as possible, this will avoid areas specifically designated for members of the public who prefer not to be filmed. Disruptive and anti social behaviour will always be filmed.

Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed for the Council's broadcast should advise the Constitutional Services Officer who will instruct that they are not included in the filming.

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Recording and reporting the Council's meetings is subject to the law including the law of defamation, the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Act and the law on public order offences.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE CABINET IS AS FOLLOWS:

Councillors Akhtar, Chadderton, Chauhan, Jabbar, Moores, Mushtaq, Roberts, Shah and Stretton

Item No

- 1 Apologies For Absence
- 2 Urgent Business
Urgent business, if any, introduced by the Chair
- 3 Declarations of Interest
To Receive Declarations of Interest in any Contract or matter to be discussed at the meeting.
- 4 Public Question Time
To receive Questions from the Public, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.
- 5 Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 20th September 2021 (Pages 1 - 8)
- 6 Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26 (Pages 9 - 86)
- 7 Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2021-24 (Pages 87 - 106)
- 8 Waste Collection Vehicles (Pages 107 - 112)
- 9 Exclusion of the Press and Public
That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they contain exempt information under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and it would not, on balance, be in the public interest to disclose the reports.
- 10 Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2021-24 (Pages 113 - 132)
- 11 Waste Collection Vehicles (Pages 133 - 138)

Present: Councillor Shah (Chair)
Councillors Akhtar, Chadderton, Chauhan, Jabbar, Moores,
Mushtaq, Roberts and Stretton

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received.

2 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Jabbar and Mushtaq declared a personal interest at Item of the agenda by virtue of relatives attending North Chadderton School.

4 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

5 **MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 23RD AUGUST 2021**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on XXX be approved as a correct record.

6 **ALEXANDRA PARK DEPOT CONTRACT - CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT AND FINAL BUSINESS CASE APPROVAL**

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Deputy Chief Executive, People and Place which sought approval to proceed with the construction of the new depot and energy sources in Alexandra Park Eco Centre, as an early phase of the wider Eco Centre masterplan.

On 25th January 2021, Cabinet approved Phase 1 of the Alexandra Park Eco Centre, comprising a new office building that was heated by an air source heat pump/mains electricity power system, with a new substation, and new CCTV and external lighting over the car park and landscaping areas.

On 18th May 2021, the main contract for the project was put out to tender, with three contractors submitting prices for the construction element of the project. A robust assessment and evaluation process, and a preferred contractor identified – refer to the details in part b paper.

Options/ alternatives considered

The options would be considered at Item 15 of the agenda.

RESOLVED – That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information as detailed at 15 of the of the agenda before making decision.

7 **OTHER PROTECTED OPEN LAND INTERIM PLANNING PAPER**

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Deputy Chief Executive, People and Place which sought approval to adopt and publish the Other Protected Open Land Interim Planning Paper.

The new national planning policy, review of existing OPOL sites, The paper says not all current sites meet the new criteria for local green space, suggesting the current OPOL sites that do meet the criteria, two sites that no longer meet the green space criteria, using the local green space designation gives protection to OPOL sites

The Interim Planning Paper set out how the council would consider Other Protected Open Land (OPOL) when assessing planning applications for development that may impact on the OPOL. The paper needed to be read in conjunction with the Policy 22 'Protecting Open Land' of the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) that was adopted 9 November 2011 by the council.

Options/alternatives considered

Option 1 -To adopt and publish the Other Protected Open Land Interim Planning Paper. The Interim Planning Paper should be used as a material consideration to assess the significance of each OPOL..

Option 2:- To not adopt and publish the Other Protected Open Land Interim Planning Paper. Development Management would be unable to use the Interim Planning Paper in determining planning applications regarding OPOL..

RESOLVED – That the Other Protected Open Land Interim Planning Paper be adopted. The Interim Planning Paper would be used as a material consideration to assess the significance of each Other Protected Open Land.

8

EDUCATION CONTRIBUTIONS INTERIM PLANNING POSITION PAPER

The Cabinet gave consideration to report of the Deputy Chief Executive, People and Place which sought approval of and publication of the Education Contributions Interim Planning Position Paper.

This Interim Planning Position Paper set out how the Council would deal with education contributions for the Borough when determining planning applications for relevant developments that may impact on education provision, such as school places. The document would be read alongside Policy 2 'Communities' which included education and skills provision, and Policy 25 'Developer Contributions' of the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) that was adopted 9 November 2011 by the council.

The Interim Planning Position Paper was in line with the government guidance 'Securing Developer Contributions for Education' which was published to assist local authorities in planning for education to support housing growth and seeking associated developer contributions.

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 - To approve and publish the Education Contributions Interim Planning Position Paper. The Interim Planning Position

Paper should be used The Education Contributions position paper

Advantages – The publication of the Interim Planning Position Paper will provide clarity and guidance to Development Management and applicants, setting out the council's approach to gathering education contributions as part of relevant developments.

Option 2 – To not approve and publish the Education Contributions Interim Planning Position Paper.

Advantages – there are no advantages in not publishing the Interim Planning Position Paper.

Disadvantages – Development Management will be unable to use the Interim Planning Position Paper in gathering education contributions for relevant planning applications. Contributions towards education will continue to be sought on an ad-hoc basis.

RESOLVED – That the Education Contributions Interim Planning Position Paper be approved so it can be used as a material consideration for planning applications in gathering education contributions to be delivered as part of relevant developments, in line with national planning policy and regulations.

9

EXPANSION OF NORTH CHADDERTON SCHOOL

Councillors Jabbar and Mushtaq declared a personal interest at this Item of the agenda by virtue of relatives attending North Chadderton School.

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Director of Education and Early Years which sought approval to allocate Basic Needs Funding previously identified to facilitate a one form entry (1FE) expansion at North Chadderton School. This will enable a new - 3 storey, six classroom science block, sports changing and teaching pavilion, library classroom, parking and hard play extension- all of which are necessary to the scheme. The proposed works had been retendered in accordance with the Council's procurement rules through a 2 Stage Design and Build procurement strategy. A professional team was appointed to complete the new tender package and Kier were also appointed under a Pre-Construction Services Agreement. It was agreed at CIPB that confirmation of the additional requirement for Basic Need Funds would be reported to Cabinet on completion.

Subject to Cabinet approval of the recommendations in this report, Kier would be issued a contract award. This would be based on the final price which would be reviewed and verified by the Council's consultant cost estimator.

There continued to be a pressing need for additional places in secondary schools within the borough. North Chadderton is one of the boroughs highest performing and over-subscribed schools. North Chadderton agreed a temporary increase in the school PAN from 240- 270 at the request of the LA in order to secure sufficient school places in the borough.

Options/alternatives considered

Option 1 - Approve the cost for a 1 FE expansion to North Chadderton School.

Option 2 - Do not approve the cost of expansion by 1 FE for North Chadderton School. This would not fulfill the Local Authority's a statutory obligation to provide the necessary additional places in East Oldham by 2020.

RESOLVED – That the Cabinet would give consideration to the commercially sensitive recommendations as contained at Item 16 of the agenda.

10

FIR BANK PRIMARY SCHOOL - 30 PLACE NURSERY CLASS

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Director of Economy which sought approval to allocate Basic Need Funding to establish a 30-place nursery class, housed in a new extension to the school building. This would extend the education offer to pupils between the ages of 3 and 11.

The Oak Trust submitted a proposal to establish a nursery class to meet demand for pre-school places. The proposal had received support from both the Cabinet portfolio holder for Children and Young People and the Education Provision Group (Sept 20).

A RIBA Stage 2 design and feasibility study, (supported by CIPB Jan 21) had now concluded and this had facilitated the production of a robust cost estimate for the classroom extension at a cost of £1,089m. A client technical team would need to be procured to take the project forward through the remaining RIBA Stages.

Following the completion of a RIBA Stage 2 feasibility the Council's cost consultant has confirmed a budget cost estimate of £1.089m.

Should Option 1 be agreed then the scheme would progress through a grant agreement to the Oak Trust, who would commission its own professional team and contractor to deliver the scheme.

Options/alternatives considered

Option 1 - Approve a funding award of up to £1.089m from Basic Need Funding to establish a 30-place nursery class.

Option 2 - Do not approve a funding award of up to £1.089m from Basic Need Funding to establish a 30-place nursery class. This option will not meet the identified need for nursery places.

RESOLVED – That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information contained at Item 17 of the agenda.

11

GM STREETS FOR ALL STRATEGY

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Deputy Chief Executive, People and Place which provided details of a Greater Manchester Streets for All Strategy which had been prepared by Transport for Greater Manchester in partnership with the 10 GM local authorities and other stakeholders as a sub-strategy of the GM2040 Transport Strategy.

Streets for All supported the place-based agenda as well as achieving the ambition for **Page 4** travel by walking, cycling and

public transport, which would help Greater Manchester to tackle the most pressing economic, environmental, quality of life and innovation challenges.

The ambition was to design more welcoming and greener streets which would enable people to incorporate more physical activity into their daily lives; which have clean air; which were safe and secure for everyone; which provide good access to public transport; and which are accessible for those with mobility impairments.

The Streets for All approach involved working at three levels to ensure that Greater Manchester's roads can transition to deliver Streets for All:

- 1) Spatial Planning;
- 2) Network Planning; and
- 3) Street Design & Management.

Options/alternatives considered

Option 1 – To recommend the Streets for All Strategy to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

Option 2 – Not to recommend the Streets for All Strategy to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

RESOLVED – That Greater Manchester Streets for All Strategy is recommended for approval by the GM Combined Authority.

12

REQUEST TO EXTEND AND VARY THE CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF OLDHAM AND ROCHDALE COLLABORATIVE SUBSTANCE MISUSE TREATMENT AND RECOVERY SERVICE

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Director of Public Health, which sought approval of an option to extend the contract for the provision of an integrated substance misuse service to Turning Point Services Ltd until 31st March 2023. On 22nd June 2021 Cabinet extended the contract for 1 year until 31st March 2022.

The contract was a collaborative commission with Rochdale Council. An Inter-Authority Collaboration Agreement has been signed by both Councils which agrees that Oldham Council is the lead contract authority. Rochdale Council has given delegated authority for Oldham Council to extend the contract on its behalf.

Option 1 - At contract completion on the 31st March 2022, the service is discontinued with no provision to Oldham residents for substance misuse treatment and recovery.

This was not a viable option as this would mean that specialist substance misuse support is not available to the borough's residents and we would not meet our obligations under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This could also have an adverse impact on commissioning plans and service delivery in Rochdale.

Option 2 - Proceed to market for a full tender process for a new service to be in place by 1st April 2022.

Due to the unforeseen and unprecedented situation as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is not tenable to complete a full tender process this financial year due to restricted capacity from both commissioners and the substance misuse providers. A tendering exercise would potentially destabilise the system

and disrupt service provision for those already accessing the service, at a time when there are already considerable changes to service delivery due to guidance issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

There was also provision within the current contract for an extension of 1 more year and there are no performance issues with the current provider that would prompt the need to commence to an open tendering process at this time.

Option 3 - Approve the extension of the Adult Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Service for a period of one year from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

RESOLVED – That:

1. The extension of the contract with Turning Point Services Ltd for a further one year commencing 1st April 2022 until 31st March 2023 be approved.
2. A contract variation be agreed to allow Turning Point Services Ltd to deliver services in relation to Section 31 local authority grant for additional drug treatment crime and harm reduction activity and the delivery of an Individual Placement and Support (IPS) employment programme for clients in community drug and alcohol treatment.
3. A further contract variation be agreed to allow Turning Point Services Ltd to deliver services in relation to Section 31 Rough sleeping drug and alcohol treatment grant (RSDATG) for Oldham Borough. Please note that at the time of writing we are awaiting formal confirmation from PHE in relation to this grant. However so as not to delay the pass through of the funding to providers, the paper has been written with the assumption that we will receive the full allocation requested.

13

CONTRACT EXTENSION REQUEST; PROVISION OF AN INTEGRATED COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT SERVICE

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Managing Director of Community Health and Social Care Services (DASS) which sought approval to extend a contract for the provision of an Integrated Community Equipment Service.

Cabinet awarded the contract on 19th June 2017, to commence 1st October 2017 and expire on 30th September 2020. The contract had an option for two one-year extensions; the first of these has been utilized, and the request was to approve the second and final extension permitted under the contract.

If approved, Council officers would work with Clinical Commissioning Group colleagues, and with officers from Tameside, to jointly re-tender the provision for a new service to be in place by 1st October 2022.

Options/alternatives considered

Option 1 – To approve the contract extension.

Option 2 - Not to approve the contract extension and allow the service to cease. This option was not recommended, as the provision of community equipment supports the wider health and care system by enabling people to remain at home for as long as possible, and to be discharged from hospital in a timely manner. Ceasing the service would impact negatively on service

user's quality of life and is likely to increase costs elsewhere in the system.

Not to extend the current contract and to retender the provision solely for Oldham.

RESOLVED – That the Cabinet would give consideration to the commercially sensitive information contained at Item 18 of the agenda before making a decision.

14 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they contain exempt information under paragraphs 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and it would not, on balance, be in the public interest to disclose the reports.

15 **ALEXANDRA PARK DEPOT CONTRACT -
CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT AND FINAL BUSINESS
CASE APPROVAL**

The Cabinet gave consideration to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 6 - Alexandra Park Depot Contract - Construction Contract and Final Business Case approval.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations as contained within the commercially sensitive report be approved.

16 **EXPANSION OF NORTH CHADDERTON SCHOOL**

Councillors Jabbar and Mushtaq declared a personal interest at Item of the agenda by virtue of relatives attending North Chadderton School.

The Cabinet gave consideration to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 9 - Expansion of North Chadderton School.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations as contained within the commercially sensitive report be approved.

17 **FIR BANK PRIMARY SCHOOL - 30 PLACE NURSERY
CLASS**

The Cabinet gave consideration to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 10 Fir Bank Primary School - 30 Place Nursery Class.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations as contained within the commercially sensitive report be approved.

18 **CONTRACT EXTENSION REQUEST; PROVISION OF AN
INTEGRATED COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT SERVICE**

The Cabinet gave consideration to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 13 - Contract extension request; provision of an Integrated Community Equipment Service.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations as contained within the commercially sensitive report be approved

The meeting started at 6.00pm and finished at 6.16pm





Report to CABINET

Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Hannah Roberts, Cabinet Member for Housing

Officer Contact: Emma Barton, Director of Economy

Report Author: Fiona Carr, Principal Homelessness Strategy Officer

Ext. 5163

Cabinet 18th October 2021

Reason for Decision

All Local Authorities are required to publish a new Homelessness Strategy as a minimum of every five years based on a review of homelessness in the district. Our current Strategy covers the period 2016-21. This report seeks approval for the new Homelessness Strategy 2021-26.

Executive Summary

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a statutory requirement on local authorities to publish a Homelessness Strategy based on a Review of homelessness in their district. These strategies must be published at least every 5 years, with Oldham's most recent Strategy running from 2016-2021.

Oldham's new Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26 has been developed in consultation with residents, stakeholders and Elected Members, and informed by a comprehensive Review of homelessness between 2016-2020. The Review particularly focuses on the period since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act between 2018-2020, including an in-depth analysis of customer groups presenting to the Housing Options service, their support needs and the reasons why they came to be homeless.

The Strategy Delivery Plan takes a pragmatic approach to tackling homelessness in Oldham, acknowledging that resources are finite, and the effects of austerity and the Covid-19 pandemic will have a lasting impact on communities. Its focus is on making best

use of what we have, demonstrating an effective business case for further investment and working in partnership to deliver the following priorities:

- Advice and information
- Early identification
- Pre-crisis intervention
- Prevent recurring homelessness
- Partnership arrangements

Recommendations

1. To note the contents of the Oldham Homelessness Review 2016-20
2. To approve the contents of the Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26

Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26

1 Background

- 1.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 places a statutory duty on local authorities to carry out a homelessness review for their district and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review. A further review, and new strategy, must be published within a period of 5 years.
- 1.2 Oldham's first Strategy was published in 2003. This is Oldham's sixth Strategy, and like its predecessor it once again focuses on homelessness prevention – but also reduction.
- 1.3 Homelessness reduction is cited in the title of this Strategy because it is acknowledged that due to a combination of factors such as ongoing austerity, economic downturn and more recently the Covid-19 pandemic homelessness applications have risen in Oldham in the past two years. Oldham Council wants its new strategy to acknowledge the visibility of homelessness and focus on both those in crisis / stuck in a 'revolving door' as well as looking to prevent homelessness in the future.
- 1.4 As with our wider Corporate Plan, the Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26 will be delivered by working together in partnership. The Strategy Delivery Plan will be reviewed annually and monitored via the Oldham Homelessness Forum, a long-established multi-agency group, as well as the Oldham Strategic Housing Partnership.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 The Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26 has been developed in consultation with residents, stakeholders and Elected Members, and informed by a comprehensive Review of homelessness between 2016-2020. The Review particularly focuses on the period since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act between 2018-2020, including in-depth analysis of support needs and customer groups presenting to the Housing Options service.
- 2.2 Applications for assistance from people who stated to be homeless or threatened or homelessness increased by 38% between April 2018 and April 2020. By April 2020, more households were approaching the Housing Options service at the point they had already become homeless (52%) than when it could still be prevented (48%).
- 2.3 What is known about homeless households has grown with the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act. One fifth of homeless households in Oldham state to have mental health issues, and almost 15% have physical health issues. 24% of homeless households stated to have no support needs at all in the data analysed in the Review, but in contrast 27% had three or more suggesting large numbers of increasingly complex households. This may go some way to explaining why these households are presenting at crisis point, rather than at an earlier stage where homelessness may be prevented.
- 2.4 There are significant financial, social and emotional costs associated with homelessness – the new Strategy therefore needs to focus on reversing this trend. It needs to do this however in a time of limited resources and continuing austerity, particularly brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.5 The Strategy Delivery Plan takes a pragmatic approach to tackling homelessness in Oldham, acknowledging that resources are finite, and the effects of austerity and the Covid-19 pandemic will have a lasting impact on communities. Its focus is on making best use of what we have, making an effective business case for further investment and working in partnership to deliver the following priorities:

- Advice and information
- Early identification
- Pre-crisis intervention
- Prevent recurring homelessness
- Partnership arrangements

3 **Options/Alternatives**

3.1 Approve the contents of the Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26

(Recommended: This will ensure that the Council is legally compliant in terms of the Homelessness Act 2002 and has a Homelessness Strategy that meets current support needs and groups in Oldham)

3.2 Retain the priorities from the previous Homelessness Strategy 2016-21

(Not Recommended: These priorities were last consulted on in 2016 and no longer reflect current trends in homelessness)

4 **Preferred Option**

4.1 Approve the contents of the new approve the contents of the Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26

This will ensure that the Council is legally compliant in terms of the Homelessness Act 2002 and has a Homelessness Strategy that meets current support needs and groups in Oldham.

5 **Consultation**

5.1 Consultation has been an integral part of the development of the Homelessness Strategy and a detailed overview of responses can be found within the Homelessness Review document. This includes:

- Residents
- Stakeholders / partner organisations
- Elected Members

5.1 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic consultation was primarily undertaken electronically via web-based surveys, but residents who required additional support to take part were able to access this via the Council's Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) Team.

6 **Financial Implications**

6.1 The decision to formally approve the Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26 will not in itself incur a financial cost. As the practicalities of implementing the strategy become known, additional reports/business cases will be required and at this point any financial implication will be commented on further in-depth.

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- 6.2 However it is acknowledged within the report that the Strategy Delivery Plan is taking a pragmatic approach to tackling homelessness in Oldham, acknowledging that resources are finite. The Council has recently had funding confirmation for 2021/22 of £179,000 as part of the Government's Rough Sleeping Initiative and also an allocation of £531,774 as part of the Government's Homelessness Prevention Grant. It is hoped that the Council will supplement these existing financial resources by maximizing results through better partnership working and by exploring the potential to increase external funding.

(John Hoskins, Finance Manager – Corporate Control)

7 **Legal Services Comments**

- 7.1 The recommended Option, (3.1) is supported. As the report has outlined. Under the Homelessness Act 2002 it is a legislative requirement that all LA's must have a homelessness strategy and it must be renewed at least every 5 years i.e. up to date with the latest homelessness / housing requirements in the borough. Simply recycling the same policy every 5 years would likely lead to legal challenge. (Alex Bougatef -Group Lawyer litigation)

8. **Co-operative Agenda**

- 8.1 Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26 particularly promotes the cooperative value of Working Together throughout its Delivery Plan, seeking to achieve a common goal of preventing and reducing homelessness as a partnership.

9 **Human Resources Comments**

- 9.1 There are no direct staffing implications at this stage, if however, this changes going forwards, the appropriate policies and procedures will be followed. (Emma Gilmartin, Strategic HR Business Partner)

10 **Risk Assessments**

- 10.1 The production of the Strategy satisfies a statutory obligation mitigating that risk. In setting a five-year Strategy which commits the Council to support certain standards for five years there is a risk over time as financial pressures increase that the ability to resource is challenged. (Mark Stenson)

11 **IT Implications**

- 11.1 None

12 **Property Implications**

- 12.1 None

13 **Procurement Implications**

- 13.1 There are no current procurement implications however if as a result of the Strategy any purchasing requirements arise the Commercial Procurement Unit will support the service area in ensuring the processes adhered to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Cabinet Office guidelines. (Emily Molden, Senior Category Manager)

14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

- 14.1 None

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- 15 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**
- 15.1 This Strategy is intended to support the development of more cohesive communities through a reduction in homelessness and its associated issues such as illegal eviction, harassment, antisocial behaviour and rough sleeping.
- 16 **Implications for Children and Young People**
- 16.1 None
- 17 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**
- 17.1 Yes
- 18 **Key Decision**
- 18.1 Yes
- 19 **Key Decision Reference**
- 19.1 HSG-09-21
- 20 **Background Papers**
- 20.1 None
- 21 **Appendices**
- 21.1 Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26
- 21.2 Oldham Homelessness Review 2016-20

Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2021-26

1. Foreword
2. Introduction
3. Partnership
4. Strategic Context
5. Priorities
 - Advice and information
 - Early identification
 - Pre-crisis intervention
 - Prevent recurring homelessness
 - Partnership arrangements
6. Homelessness in Oldham
7. Consultation
8. Monitoring
9. Delivery Plan
10. Contact

1. Foreword

As Cabinet Member for Housing I am pleased to introduce the Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy for 2021-26.

We are living in some of the most challenging times in our recent history due to the long-term effects of welfare reform, precarious public sector funding and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Homeless people are already amongst the most disadvantaged in society, with groups in Oldham particularly affected by poor mental and physical health and the need for tenancy and financial support being a common theme raised throughout consultation for the Strategy.

Oldham and the UK more widely, has a housing crisis. The pandemic has highlighted problems caused by a lack of social housing, an unregulated private sector, rising house prices putting homes out of the reach of many, cutting levels of Housing Benefit and the continuing impact of Right to Buy.

Change has been a theme throughout the lifetime of our last strategy – our homelessness and allocations services are once again directly delivered by the Council – and we need to harness the opportunities that change brings. Flexibility, control, new tools at our disposal and new relationships to explore and build.

The new strategy is the result of several months of consultation with key stakeholders in Oldham, who will work together in partnership to ensure the actions in its Delivery Plan are brought to fruition, preventing and reducing homelessness.

2. Introduction

Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy has been developed following a comprehensive review of homelessness in the borough between 2016 and 2020, particularly focusing on the latter two years since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) brought about the biggest change in homelessness legislation for over a decade, placing a statutory requirement upon local authorities to provide universal housing advice and to take reasonable steps to try and prevent and relieve homelessness amongst eligible groups.

With the introduction of the HRA has come an increase in applications from households seeking homelessness assistance, which local authorities must find appropriate ways to respond to within limited resources. The Homelessness Review undertaken, including our consultation with stakeholders including people using our services, is particularly important in helping to set the direction of this Strategy moving forward and how these resources need to be targeted.

Policies, services and delivery have changed significantly since the last Preventing Homelessness Strategy was published Oldham Council's partnership approach has yielded successes including:

- Thanks to the launch of 'A Bed Every Night' across Greater Manchester, Oldham now has dedicated outreach and accommodation provision for rough sleepers running 365 days a year
- A pledge is in place for Oldham care leavers up to the age of 25 that if they find themselves homeless they will be considered automatically in priority need and not intentionally homeless
- Initiatives such as 'Homeless Friendly' and 'Real Change' have launched across Oldham to help embed organisational change and raise funds for people experiencing homelessness and struggling to access necessities
- Strategic Housing at Oldham Council have delivered homelessness training to multiple partner agencies across voluntary, community and public sectors, helping to upskill colleagues to better assist the people they support.

Our previous Strategy has therefore provided us with strong foundations in building relationships across sectors, and creating services where gaps used to exist. However, we still have some way to go, particularly in tackling the root causes of homelessness and providing support at an earlier stage – that is why this Strategy in 2021 is about both Homelessness Prevention and Reduction, and plans to deliver:

- An increase in the number of households achieving a positive outcome after approaching services for help – for example, being able to remain in their accommodation or securing a new place to live;
- A decrease in households becoming homeless overall.

3. Our partnership

A theme running throughout our Review and our consultation is partnership working, something which Oldham embraces strongly as a cooperative borough. This Strategy has been developed in consultation with and will continue to be monitored by:

- Oldham Homelessness Forum, with multi-agency and lived experience representation from across the voluntary, faith, social enterprise and statutory sectors
- Oldham Strategic Housing Partnership, representing social housing providers developing and managing social housing in Oldham.

Our Delivery Plan has been developed in consultation with all Directorates across the local authority, who will help to drive forward implementation alongside the Strategic Housing team.

In delivering our Strategy, and our statutory housing services, we also work together with Oldham Safeguarding Adults and Children's Boards, a partnership of agencies and organisations whose aim is to safeguard adults and children who are vulnerable to, at risk of or are experiencing abuse and neglect.

4. Strategic Context

Oldham's Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy sits within a wider local, regional and national strategic context which aims to support the health, housing and other socioeconomic factors affecting our residents.

Year	Strategy / Framework	Implications
2017	The Oldham Plan 2017-22	Empowering people and communities: 1. Inclusive Economy 2. Cooperative Services 3. Thriving Communities
2017	Oldham Domestic Violence Strategy	Tackling domestic violence is a priority for Oldham Community Safety Partnership. This strategy is currently under review taking into account the new Domestic Abuse Act due to come into place in 2021
2018	UK Strategy for our Veterans	Sets the intent for the delivery of public services to veterans across the UK so that by 2028 every veteran feels even more valued, supported and empowered and will never be disadvantaged as a result of their service
2019	Oldham Allocations Scheme	Introduced reasonable preference applicable to prevention, relief and other homelessness duties in line with changes brought about by the Homelessness Reduction Act
2019	Oldham Housing Strategy	Commitment to meet Greater Manchester Housing Provider Homelessness Pledges and develop a Temporary Accommodation Strategy

2019	Oldham's Corporate Parenting Strategy	Sets out a vision for improving the life chances of children looked after and care leavers, our shared approach for making this happen, and how we will know we are getting it right
2019	GM Housing & Mental Health Strategy	Introduced a commitment to supporting the role housing, health and social care provision has in addressing the needs of service users.
2019	GM Drug & Alcohol Strategy	Introduced a vision is to make Greater Manchester a place where everyone can have the best start in life, live well and age well, safe from the harms caused by drugs and alcohol.
2020	GM Integrated Health & Justice Strategy	Introduced to address the typically very poor physical and mental health of people, both victims and offenders, who come through the criminal justice system. Including a focus on earlier identification of health and support needs, more responsive interventions, and providing health and care services, which are equal to those available to people living in the wider community.
2021	Domestic Abuse Act	Introduced a new duty to provide support in safe accommodation and applied priority need to all victims of domestic abuse, amongst other measures

Moving forward into the lifetime of this Strategy we will continue to align with local, regional and national strategies – including the forthcoming Greater Manchester Homelessness Prevention Strategy – to ensure integration of support and maximisation of resources, as part of our Strategic Priorities.

5. Priorities

The priorities for the Oldham Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy are framed by our statutory duties to homeless residents. The rationale behind this is to provide a clear and transparent focus in the Council's mission to prevent and relieve homelessness.

- Advice and information
 - How we promote our services to residents in Oldham and ensure they have access to services to prevent them from becoming homeless
- Early identification
 - Ensuring everyone is aware of the 'Duty to Refer' people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness
 - How we develop local protocols to deliver more effective partnership working
- Pre-crisis intervention

- Delivering homelessness prevention activity – particularly through effective partnership working
- Prevent recurring homelessness
 - Using our Review data to identify groups who need additional support, such as rough sleepers, victims of domestic abuse and care leavers
- Partnership arrangements
 - Working together as a Cooperative Borough to prevent and reduce homelessness through shared resources, information, understanding and goals.

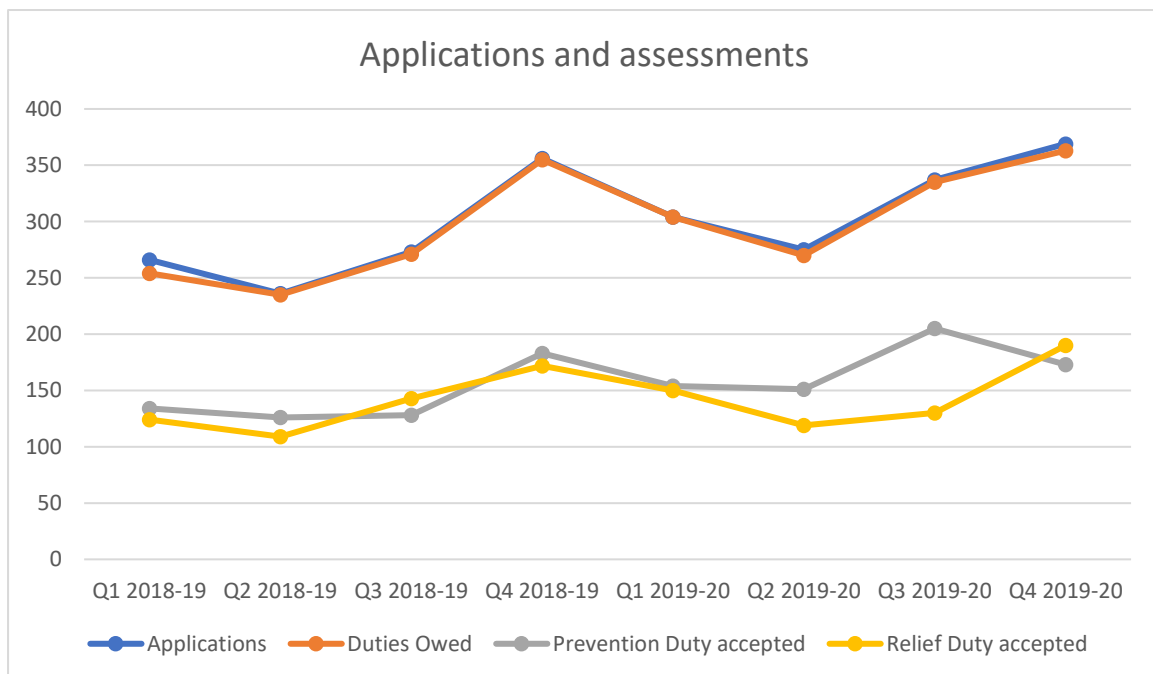
6. Homelessness in Oldham

The following provides a brief overview of the key statistical data from the Oldham Homelessness Review 2016-2020 which has been used to inform the Delivery Plan behind the Homelessness Prevention and Reductions Strategy 2021-26.

6.1 Applications and assessments

The Homelessness Review takes provides an in-depth analysis of trends in homelessness in Oldham between 2016-2020, with a particular focus on the period since the introduction of the HRA.

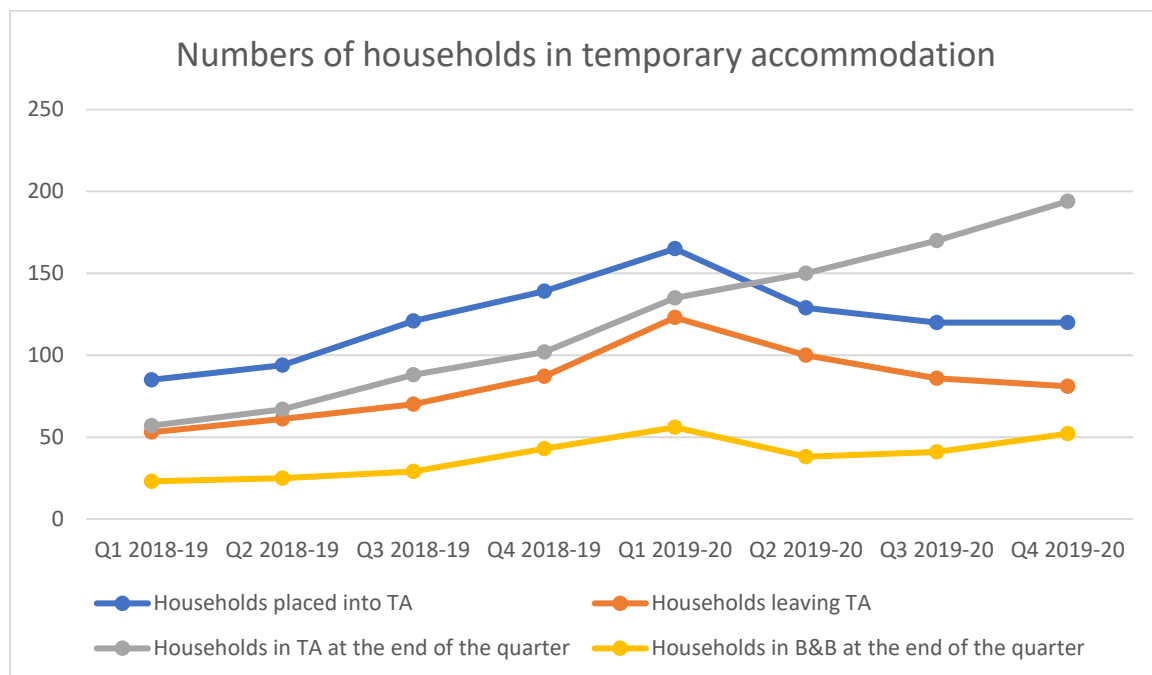
Applications to the local authority for homelessness assistance have been subject to seasonal increase and decline, but overall have risen across the Review period. Alongside this there has started to be a slight rise in the number of households approaching the local authority once already homeless – and subsequently owed the Relief Duty – rather than at a stage where homelessness can still be prevented. Our goal for the new Strategy is to try and reverse this trend through effective advice and pre-crisis intervention, as outlined in our priorities.



6.2 Temporary Accommodation

Establishing why this crisis point has been reached, and what can be done to avoid it occurring, needs to be a focus of the new Strategy – not least to reduce the number of households needing temporary accommodation, which have also increased.

Oldham Council has focused considerable efforts on reducing the use of bed and breakfast accommodation since these numbers were last reported, with numbers on a downward trajectory thanks to a new Temporary Accommodation Strategy in development. This will be supported by the Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy, including sourcing appropriate support for households in Temporary Accommodation to prevent recurring homelessness, as outlined in our priorities.

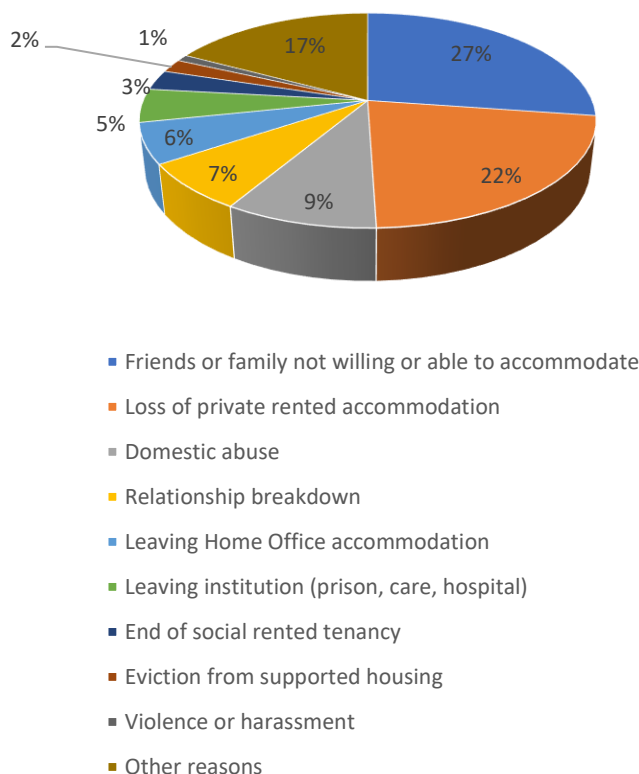


6.3 Reasons for Homelessness

The main reasons for homelessness in Oldham have remain largely unchanged since the previous Homelessness Strategy was published in 2016. These reasons are not dissimilar to the rest of the country, but the numbers may be exacerbated by local issues such as overcrowding, health inequalities and the local housing market. For example:

- Oldham has a higher level of households asked to leave by family and friends
- Oldham has a higher level of people given a notice to leave their private rented accommodation (although not necessarily becoming homeless from this)
- Oldham has a higher level of people leaving Home Office accommodation than the national average

Reasons for homelessness: 2018-20

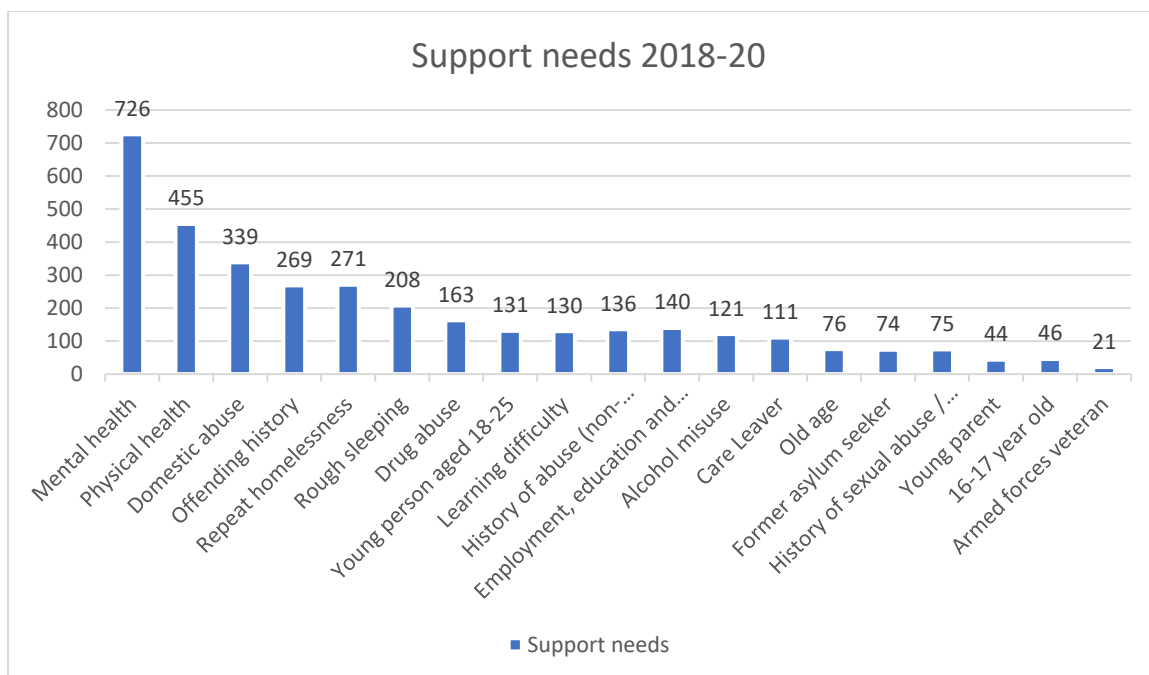


6.4 Support needs

The introduction of the HRA introduced Personal Housing Plans, and a requirement for Local Authorities to consider the support needs of applicants in helping them to secure suitable accommodation.

The data on support needs is self-declared and may not, therefore, reflect diagnosed conditions within datasets such as the JSNA (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment) or Social Care records. However, combined with feedback from consultation it provides valuable insight into how to tailor future services and address unmet need, and will be used to formulate the Strategy delivery plan.

Reflecting the main reasons for homelessness, Oldham is not unique in finding that mental and physical health issues feature prominently alongside domestic abuse, substance misuse and rough sleeping – all prominent issues intertwined with homelessness. However, self-declared learning difficulties and historical abuse are higher than the national average, and there are relatively high levels of applicants stating to have experienced repeat homelessness and rough sleeping. As part of our priorities we will set out actions to prevent recurring homelessness and put in place partnership arrangements to ensure those with support needs are access a suitable service.



7. Consultation

The Homelessness Review consulted our key partners including service users, Elected Members and stakeholders from across a range of sectors to establish what they saw as the key issues and priorities to address. Despite consultation having to take place remotely due to the Covid-19 Pandemic there was a great deal of synergy between the responses, which have been used to drive forward the priorities in this Strategy:

Services needed		
Members	Stakeholders	Service users
Tenancy Support	Tenancy Support	Tenancy support/Pre tenancy training
Domestic Abuse	Rough sleeping	Financial help
Mental Health	Mental Health	Mental health
Mediation/Counselling service		Mediation
Supported accommodation	Supported accommodation	Advocacy

Key Priorities		
Members	Stakeholders	Service users
Domestic Abuse	Mental Health support	Rough sleeping
Rent arrears/Termination of AST	Tenancy Support	Rent arrears
Family breakdown	Affordable housing	Family Breakdown
Affordable housing		Relationship breakdown

8. Monitoring

Sitting beneath these priorities will be a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, , Realistic, Time-Bound) delivery plan that is reviewed annually by our partners:

- Oldham Homelessness Forum
- Oldham Strategic Housing Partnership

Responsibility for day-to-day monitoring, including of financial resources allocated to the Strategy and the Housing Options Team, will be the responsibility of the Strategic Housing service at Oldham Council.

The initial Delivery Plan below will be a live document reflecting changing needs and demand amongst homeless households. An annual update will be produced reporting against completion, removal, or addition of actions.

9. Delivery Plan

Advice and information				
Aims	Promote housing advice services to residents in Oldham to ensure they can access appropriate information and resources to prevent them from becoming homeless			
Actions	Resources Required	Partners	Timescale	Progress
Improve advice and options available to departing partners in instances of relationship breakdown, including on legal rights, mediation and relationship counselling	Staff	VCSE; GP surgeries;	Year 3	
Ensure housing advice is promoted to emerging communities to ensure awareness of housing rights and increase prevention vs. relief	Staff	Emerging Communities; SERCO; VCSE; GP surgeries	Year 2	
Increase the availability of self-service advice online such as web chat with Housing Advisors so applicants can seek early advice more easily	Staff; budgetary; ICT	Unity (IT)	Year 5	
Investigate the delivery of new digital inclusion signposting services to such as social media campaigns, stakeholder e-resources, web links etc.	Staff; budgetary; ICT	Communications	Ongoing	

Early identification				
Aims	Work together as a partnership to identify groups who might be vulnerable to homelessness at the earliest possible stage and put appropriate interventions and referral pathways in place to offer them the help they need			
Actions	Resources Required	Partners	Timescale	Progress
Ensure staff in homelessness and related services are equipped to respond to vulnerable applicants in a psychologically informed way via delivering appropriate training	Staff; budgetary	Pennine Care; IDVA; Oldham Safeguarding Adults Board	Year 3	
Review accommodation pathways for offenders leaving custody in light of changes to Probation arrangements	Staff	Probation; GMCA; Greater Manchester Prison Service; Shelter	Year 2	
Undertake promotion of referrals to local housing authority to landlords following the easing of evictions following the Covid-19 pandemic	Staff	Oldham Strategic Housing Partnership	Year 1	
Review transitions process for Children Looked After reaching 17 th Birthday to plan move-on options at earliest opportunity	Staff	Children's Services	Year 2	
Deliver training to partner agencies to promote early identification and referrals for housing advice	Staff	All partners	Ongoing	

Pre-crisis intervention				
Aims	Proactive engagement with groups who might be affected by homelessness in the future, and ensuring it isn't left too late			
Actions	Resources Required	Partners	Timescale	Progress
Review the current young person's mediation scheme to ensure it meets demand and need	Staff; budgetary	Children's Services; Procurement	Year 2	
Review structure of the Housing Options Service to ensure it is sufficiently prevention focused within resources available, including capacity for home visits and co-location	Staff	Human Resources	Year 1	
Ensure housing options for older people are sufficiently explored and well presented, and meet the needs of those with more complex needs e.g. substance misuse	Staff; budgetary	Adult Social Care; Oldham Strategic Housing Partnership; Turning Point; Pennine Care	Year 4	
Increase options available via the Bond Scheme targeted at single households, e.g. en-suite rooms in shared houses / studio apartments	Staff; budgetary	PRS Landlords; Environmental Health	Ongoing	
Review and promote financial relief funds available to clear arrears and help applicants to access and sustain housing	Staff; budgetary	VCSE; Welfare Rights	Year 4	

Review current debt and money management provision and promote availability	Staff; budgetary	Welfare Rights; VCSE	Year 4	
Participate in MASH and Adult Social Care front door review to consider potential future housing links	Staff; budgetary	Adult Social Care	Year 2	

Prevent recurring homelessness				
Aims	Identify groups who need additional support, such as rough sleepers, victims of domestic abuse and care leavers			
Actions	Resources Required	Partners	Timescale	Progress
Carry out a review of domestic abuse services in the borough and commission an appropriate response in line with the new Domestic Abuse Act	Staff; budgetary	IDVAs; Refuge; Early Help; VCSE; Adult Social Care; Children's Services; Police; Domestic Abuse Partnership	Year 1	
Undertake a peer review to establish why repeat homelessness occurs, and put measures in place to prevent this happening	Staff; budgetary	VCSE; GMCA	Year 5	
Together with Children's Services, develop young people's housing strategy with a particular focus on sufficiency for 16-17 year olds and care leavers	Staff; budgetary	Children's Services; Procurement	Year 2	
Review current commissioned services and ensure preparations are	Staff; budgetary	GMCA; Emerging Communities; Adult Social Care; Children's Services	Year 1	

made for the closure of the EU Settlement Scheme				
Source funding to extend the RSI Team or other service to support 'sofa surfers' to more proactively intervene given their transient nature and focus on more proactive interventions	Staff; budgetary	VCSE; GMCA	Year 1	
Review sources of resettlement support for rough sleepers to prevent return to the streets	Staff; budgetary	VCSE; GMCA	Year 1	
Source longer term funding to provide stability for current rough sleeping services, including RSI Team and A Bed Every Night	Staff; budgetary	VCSE; GMCA	Year 1	
Publish temporary accommodation strategy including procurement for temporary accommodation services to achieve value for money and sustainable move-on	Staff; budgetary	Procurement	Year 2	
Proactively monitor and review people being released from prison or discharged from approved premises to prevent them being released without an	Staff	Probation; Greater Manchester Prison Service	Ongoing	

address or appropriate support in place				
Seek longer term funding to continue co-locating a housing officer within Oldham Hospital	Staff; budgetary	Adult Social Care; GMCA	Year 1	

Partnership arrangements				
Impact	Working together as a Cooperative Borough to Prevent and Reduce Homelessness through shared resources, information, understanding and goals			
Actions	Resources Required	Partners	Timescale	Progress
Work to improve landlord / tenant relations through education and information on rights and responsibilities	Staff	PRS landlords; Environmental Health	Year 3	
Work together with registered providers to develop 'right-sizing' initiatives	Staff	Oldham Strategic Housing Partnership	Year 4	
Ensure homeless applicants have fair access to GP and other primary care treatment, and effective pathways into vaccination and other programmes	Staff	Homeless Friendly; Adult Social Care; Pennine Care	Year 2	
Continue to develop the role of the Local Authority Asylum Support Officers (LAASLOs) or similar service to support the integration of refugees and migrants and	Staff	Emerging Communities	Year 2	

deliver early intervention to prevent homelessness				
Work with partners to support applicants into employment to ensure they can better access and sustain housing	Staff	DWP; Get Oldham Working	Year 3	
Consider co-locating the Housing Options service within place-based integration initiatives, or upskilling relevant colleagues	Staff	Communities; Strategic Housing Partnership	Year 4	
Review protocols with and streamline access to services to promote move-on from Temporary and Supported Accommodation and access to services such as Local Welfare Provision, Jobcentre Plus and Discretionary Housing Payments	Staff	DWP; Welfare Rights; VCSE	Year 2	
Continue to lobby for long-term revenue and capital funding from bodies such as MHCLG	Staff	MHCLG; GMCA	Ongoing	
Work together with Oldham Strategic Housing Partnership to secure capital and revenue funding for long-term accommodation	Staff	Oldham Strategic Housing Partnership	Ongoing	

Review the supported accommodation gateway process in line with an updated needs assessment	Staff	Internal gateway partners; Registered providers	Ongoing	
Encourage, promote and support where required voluntary, faith & charitable sector organisations to submit relevant funding applications which enhance and support our local offer to homeless households	Staff	VCSE	Ongoing	

10. Glossary

DHP: Discretionary Housing Payment

DWP: Department of Work and Pensions

GM: Greater Manchester

GMCA: Greater Manchester Combined Authority

IDVA: Independent Domestic Violence Advocate

JCP: Job Centre Plus

MOPP: Move-On Planned Protocol/Partnership

NASS: National Asylum Support Service

PRS: Private Rented Sector

VCSE: Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise

11. Contact

Oldham Council Strategic Housing

Housing.options@oldham.gov.uk

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Oldham Homelessness Review

2016-2020

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1. Introduction

Oldham's current homelessness strategy – Working Together to Prevent Homelessness in Oldham – was introduced in 2016. Local authorities in England have a duty to undertake a review of homelessness in their borough at least every five years and produce a homelessness strategy based on the finding of that review.

This Oldham Homelessness Review covers the period 2016-2020, and mainly focuses on the two years since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) in April 2018. The HRA not only changed the way local authorities administer homelessness applications, but introduced much more comprehensive data gathering which, based on this review, will support the develop of an insightful and responsive new homelessness strategy for Oldham.

The Review considers not only local homelessness data, but also Oldham's economical and housing market data which may influence people seeking housing advice from the local authority. It also takes into account developments across Greater Manchester and the wider country, and the impact these have had in relation to homelessness in Oldham.

2. Legislative and strategic context

The HRA was arguably the biggest change in homelessness legislation since the introduction of the 2002 Homelessness Act. It introduced new duties on local authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness, as well as reinforcing duties to provide universal and targeted advice.

The following timeline gives an overview of the progress of the HRA, and other developments in homelessness legislation, case law and related statutory guidance and provisions since 2016.

Table 1: Timeline of legal developments

Year	Development	Implications
2017	Children and Social Care Act 2017	Entitlement to Personal Advisor support for Care Leavers extended to age 25, but homelessness legislation was not extended in line with this. However, in Oldham a decision was later taken to apply automatic priority need to all Oldham care leavers until age 25
2018	Implementation of HRA 3 rd April 2018, accompanied by revised Code of Guidance	New duties on local authorities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide advice to anyone in the district - Assess the circumstances, housing and support needs of homeless applicants and agree a Personal Housing Plan - Take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness for those at risk within 56 days - Take reasonable steps to relieve homelessness for eligible applicants for 56 days
	Data Protection Act May 2018	Data protection laws updated to include informed consent and the right to erasure
	Implementation of Duty to Refer 1 st October 2018	Legal duty placed upon specified public bodies – such as Social Care, hospitals, Jobcentres and Probation – to refer anyone who is homeless or threatened with homelessness to the local housing authority
	Implementation of retaliatory eviction provisions contained within Deregulation Act 2015 1 st October 2018	Provisions made preventing landlords from progressing eviction in circumstances where the tenant has unresolved complaints such as disrepair. Expectation on local authorities to provide advice and take enforcement action in line with this legislation
2019	Tenant Fees Act June 2019	Ban on tenant fees for new or renewed tenancy agreements on or after 1st June 2019
	Samuels v Birmingham City Council June 2019	Supreme Court ruling on criteria for affordability and intentional homelessness
	Haringey XY v London Borough of Haringey July 2019	Reinforcement of requirement to keep Personal Housing Plans under review in line with notifications issued to the applicant such as changes in decision or circumstances

2020	Coronavirus Act March 2020	Protection from eviction for residential tenants, and introduction of mortgage holidays for homeowners
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Alongside developments in legislation there have been several local, regional and national strategies and frameworks introduced and updated which have wide ranging impacts on homelessness in the borough.

Table 2: Timeline of Local, Regional and National Strategies

Year	Strategy / Framework	Implications
2016	Ending violence against women and girls Strategy	Aims to increase reporting of often hidden crimes, to overhaul the criminal justice response to vulnerable victims and to bring more perpetrators to justice – complements, and will be supported by, wider Government work to tackle modern slavery, prevent child sexual abuse and protect girls from exploitation by gangs.
2016	Oldham Work & Skills Strategy	Sets out plans to work with local employers, training providers, schools, residents and other partners to improve the prospects of our residents and provide them with high quality and relevant skills training.
2017	The Oldham Plan	Empowering people and communities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inclusive Economy 2. Cooperative Services 3. Thriving Communities
2017	Oldham Domestic Violence Strategy	Tackling domestic violence is a priority for Oldham Community Safety Partnership. This strategy is currently under review considering the new Domestic Abuse Act due to come into place in 2021
2018	GM Serious & Organised Crime Strategy	Sets out how, through the ground-breaking Programme Challenger, GM intend to tackle serious and organised crime in all its forms in Greater Manchester.
2018	UK Strategy for our Veterans	Sets the intent for the delivery of public services to veterans across the UK so that by 2028 every veteran feels even more valued, supported and empowered and will never be disadvantaged as a result of their service
2019	Oldham Allocations Scheme	Introduced reasonable preference applicable to prevention, relief and other homelessness duties in line with changes

		brought about by the Homelessness Reduction Act
2019	Oldham Housing Strategy	Commitment to meet Greater Manchester Housing Provider Homelessness Pledges and develop a Temporary Accommodation Strategy
2019	Oldham's Corporate Parenting Strategy	Sets out a vision for improving the life chances of children looked after and care leavers, our shared approach for making this happen, and how we will know we are getting it right.
2019	GM Housing & Mental Health Strategy	Introduced a commitment to supporting the role housing, health and social care provision has in addressing the needs of service users.
2019	GM Drug & Alcohol Strategy	Introduced a vision is to make Greater Manchester a place where everyone can have the best start in life, live well and age well, safe from the harms caused by drugs and alcohol.
2020	Oldham Local Offer for Care Leavers	Accommodation pathways reviewed between Aftercare and Housing services, including introduction of joint housing assessments and literature for care leavers, and 'fast track' processing of housing register applications with reasonable preference awarded
2020	National Mental Health Foundation Strategy: Making Prevention Happen	Affirms a commitment to making prevention of poor mental health happen so that people across the UK can live mentally healthier lives.
2020	GM Integrated Health & Justice Strategy	Introduced to address the typically very poor physical and mental health of people, both victims and offenders, who come through the criminal justice system. Including a focus on earlier identification of health and support needs, more responsive interventions, and providing health and care services, which are equal to those available to people living in the wider community.
2021	Greater Manchester Homelessness Prevention Strategy	Continued joint working across the 10 Greater Manchester local authorities and wider Homelessness Action Network to develop and support initiatives to prevent and relieve homelessness

3. Working Together to Prevent Homelessness in Oldham 2016-21: Highlights

The 2016 Homelessness Strategy was reviewed annually with an action plan created each year based on its priorities and trends emerging within each year. The following table provides some highlights of developments which have taken place over the past 5 years.

Table 3: Highlights from previous Strategy

July 2016	Training was provided to staff and partner agencies in respect of debt advice, support and welfare reform - conditionality, sanctions, processes for alternative payments and advance payments of benefits so that they can support customers in navigating the changes to the welfare benefits system.
April 2017	A review of the Councils Allocations Scheme was commenced to ensure it meets the borough's housing needs
June 2017	The number of dispersed temporary accommodation units was increased in order to attempt to meet growing demand and minimise the use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation
December 2017	GM Entrenched Rough Sleeper SIB launched for referrals
March 2018	Joint training events with colleagues from Offending and Substance Misuse services were held to improve access to services and promote better joint working arrangements
October 2018	Phase 1 of 'A Bed Every Night' (ABEN), a GM-wide rough sleeping accommodation project, launches with 177 people accommodated. This was the first time Oldham had an ongoing dedicated winter shelter provision
April 2019	'Supporting Homeless People Better' training launched by the Housing Strategy Team, offering a half day overview of homelessness processes and legislation to partner agencies across all sectors
	Housing First launched across Greater Manchester, offering intensive support to a number of individuals experiencing multiple disadvantage including homelessness
July 2019	The Oldham Housing Advice Service – renamed Housing Options Oldham – was re-located back in house to the Council following a number of years being delivered by an external provider. This service comprised both the statutory

	homelessness and allocations functions of the Council
	The Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) was launched, which saw a team comprised of a Coordinator and Outreach Workers provided dedicated support to rough sleepers
	Oldham's Councils new Allocations Policy was launched on 1 st July 2019
October 2019	Phase 2 of ABEN launched working in partnership with Oldham Community Night Shelter. The provision included dedicated spaces for women / couples
	Real Change Oldham was launched by Oldham Council Leader Councillor Fielding and Lead member for Housing Councillor Roberts on World Homelessness Day. Real Change Oldham raises funds via donations from local businesses and the public to support people in the local area who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.
November 2019	Commitment made at Cabinet that Oldham Council would become a 'Homeless Friendly' Council, pledging to meet commitments around ensuring services are accessible to the needs of people experiencing homelessness
December 2019	Commitment made at Cabinet that all Oldham care leavers under the age of 25 would be considered in priority need and unintentionally homeless
March 2020	'Everyone In' response initiated following outbreak of COVID-19, offering accommodation to any known rough sleepers

4. Homelessness: analysis and trends

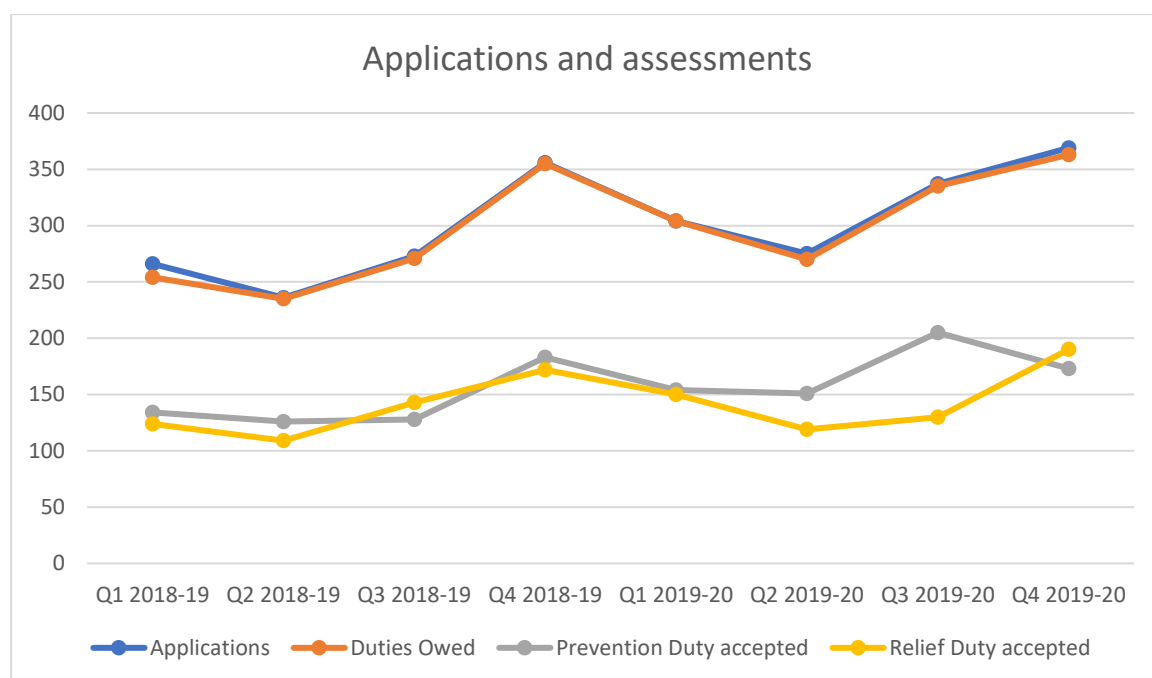
4.1 Applications and assessments

There has been a steady increase in the number of households making homeless applications over the past two years since the Homelessness Reduction Act was introduced. This trend is not exclusive to Oldham, with homelessness increasing across the country – Relief duties increased by 15% in 2019-20.

The chart below shows the total number of homeless applications made and, of those:

- The number that were owed a subsequent duty – where they were not, this was due to the household either being found not homeless or not eligible for assistance
- The number of those owed a duty where this was a ‘Prevention Duty’ – to take steps to prevent the applicant from becoming homeless
- The number of those owed a duty where this was a ‘Relief Duty’ – to take steps to relieve the applicant’s homelessness where this had already occurred.

Figure 1: Applications and Assessments



Oldham opened a comparative number of Relief duties to the national average in 2019/20, and a higher number of prevention duties – demonstrating a commitment to early intervention.

Table 4: Applications and Assessments: National comparison

	2018/19		2019/20	
	Oldham	National	Oldham	National
Applications taken	1131	287,880	1,285	304,290
Duties owed	99%	92%	99%	94.8%
Prevention duties accepted	51%	55%	54%	43.3%
Relief duties accepted	49%	45%	46%	45.3%

4.2 Homelessness prevention

Homelessness prevention is often the most positive course of action for applicants and is also the most cost effective for the Council. Prevention activity to involve helping a household to remain in their existing home or securing new accommodation for them to move to.

However, prevention activity is also resource intensive in terms of staff time and available housing options. Since the service has come back in-house to the Council it has been gradually building and

strengthening its staffing and other resources in an environment of increasing demand, so prevention performance has seen a decline. A review of the Housing Options service and its prevention options will be key in developing the 2021 Homelessness Strategy.

Table 5: Prevention Duties

	Closed prevention duties	% Successfully prevented
Q1 2018-19	32	53%
Q2 2018-19	95	49%
Q3 2018-19	141	46%
Q4 2018-19	132	48%
Q1 2019-20	138	32%
Q2 2019-20	197	40%
Q3 2019-20	179	34%
Q4 2019-20	179	34%

4.3 Homelessness relief

When households due become homeless Oldham Council acts appropriately and has historically had good performance in securing alternative accommodation for these households. However, the figures below clearly show that with the disruption caused by the service returning in house, relief activity has begun to reduce. Measures to address this will also need to be considered as part of the 2021 Homelessness Strategy.

Table 6: Relief Duties

	Closed relief duties	% Successfully relieved
Q1 2018-19	44	39%
Q2 2018-19	104	63%
Q3 2018-19	140	54%
Q4 2018-19	151	52%
Q1 2019-20	118	51%
Q2 2019-20	281	41%
Q3 2019-20	179	35%
Q4 2019-20	200	24%

Learning Point:

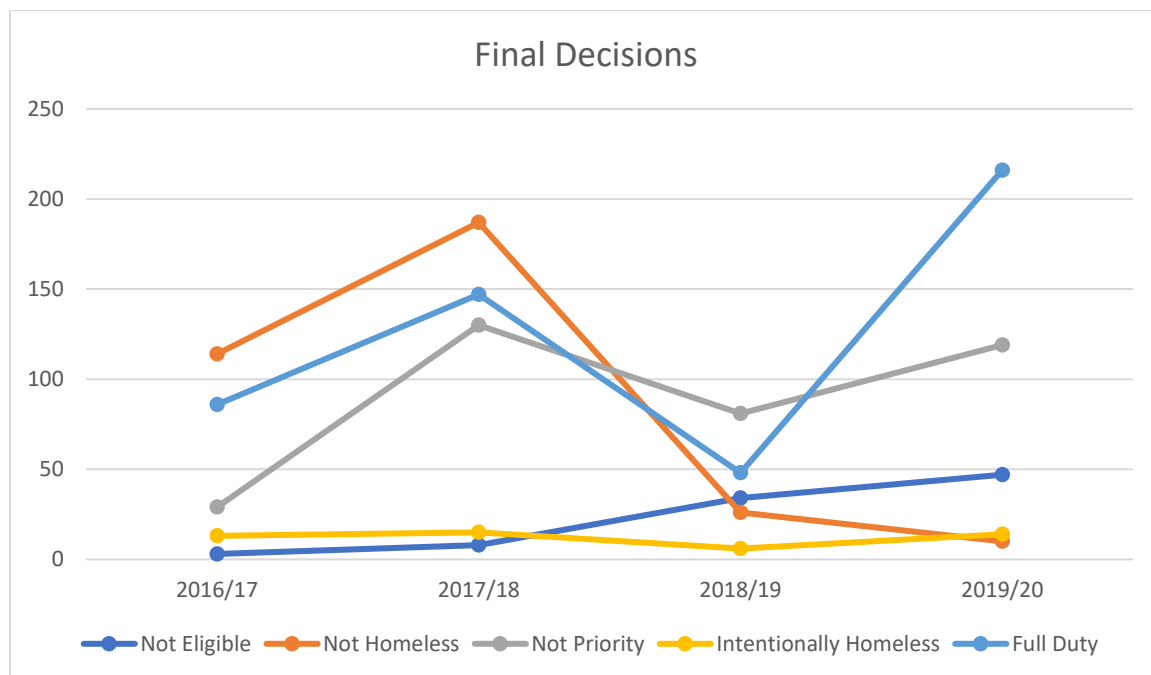
- As approaches and demand upon resources have increased, successful prevention and relief outcomes within 56 days have reduced. There needs to be greater focus on where resources are targeted – such as ensuring Prevention Duties are opened and monitored to the same level as more visible households living in temporary accommodation

4.4 Final decisions

Prior to the HRA a decision would have been reached on a homeless application almost immediately; now it is usually reached – or at least only enacted – if the Relief Duty has been ongoing for 56 days the local authority has not been able to help the applicant successfully resolve their homelessness.

Some decisions can be reached sooner; for example, a decision that the applicant is not eligible for assistance due to immigration status or is not homeless. There has been an increase in the former decisions during this review period and a decrease in the latter – potentially because of the increased assistance available through the Prevention Duty and general advice services.

Figure 2: Final Decisions



As discussed, unfortunately not all Relief Duties end with a positive outcome:

- Some households withdraw their application or lose contact with the Council during this period
- The Relief Duty only lasts for 56 days, after which the Council does not have an ongoing duty to keep taking reasonable steps for some households, e.g. those not in priority need or intentionally homeless.

After this 56-day period some of these households will still be owed an ongoing accommodation duty by the Council – the ‘full’ housing duty. The Homelessness Reduction Act was introduced in part to try and reduce the number of households moving into this duty, by focusing on earlier prevention and relief.

Table 7: Full Housing Duties Owed

	Closed relief duties	Full Duty owed	% Owed a full duty
Q1 2018-19	44	13	30%
Q2 2018-19	104	10	10%
Q3 2018-19	140	10	7%
Q4 2018-19	151	15	10%
Q1 2019-20	118	12	9%
Q2 2019-20	281	65	23%
Q3 2019-20	179	59	33%

Q4 2019-20	200	80	40%
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This therefore leaves the following proportion of households for whom no accommodation was secured within 56 days, and no ongoing duty owed; these are the households outlined in the bullet points above. This is a significant proportion of Oldham's homelessness cohort, suggesting where resources may need to be directed by the 2021 Homelessness Strategy.

Table 8: Households not successfully relieved or owed a full housing duty

	% Not successfully relieved or owed a full housing duty
Q1 2018-19	31%
Q2 2018-19	27%
Q3 2018-19	39%
Q4 2018-19	38%
Q1 2019-20	40%
Q2 2019-20	36%
Q3 2019-20	32%
Q4 2019-20	36%

4.5 Reasons for homelessness

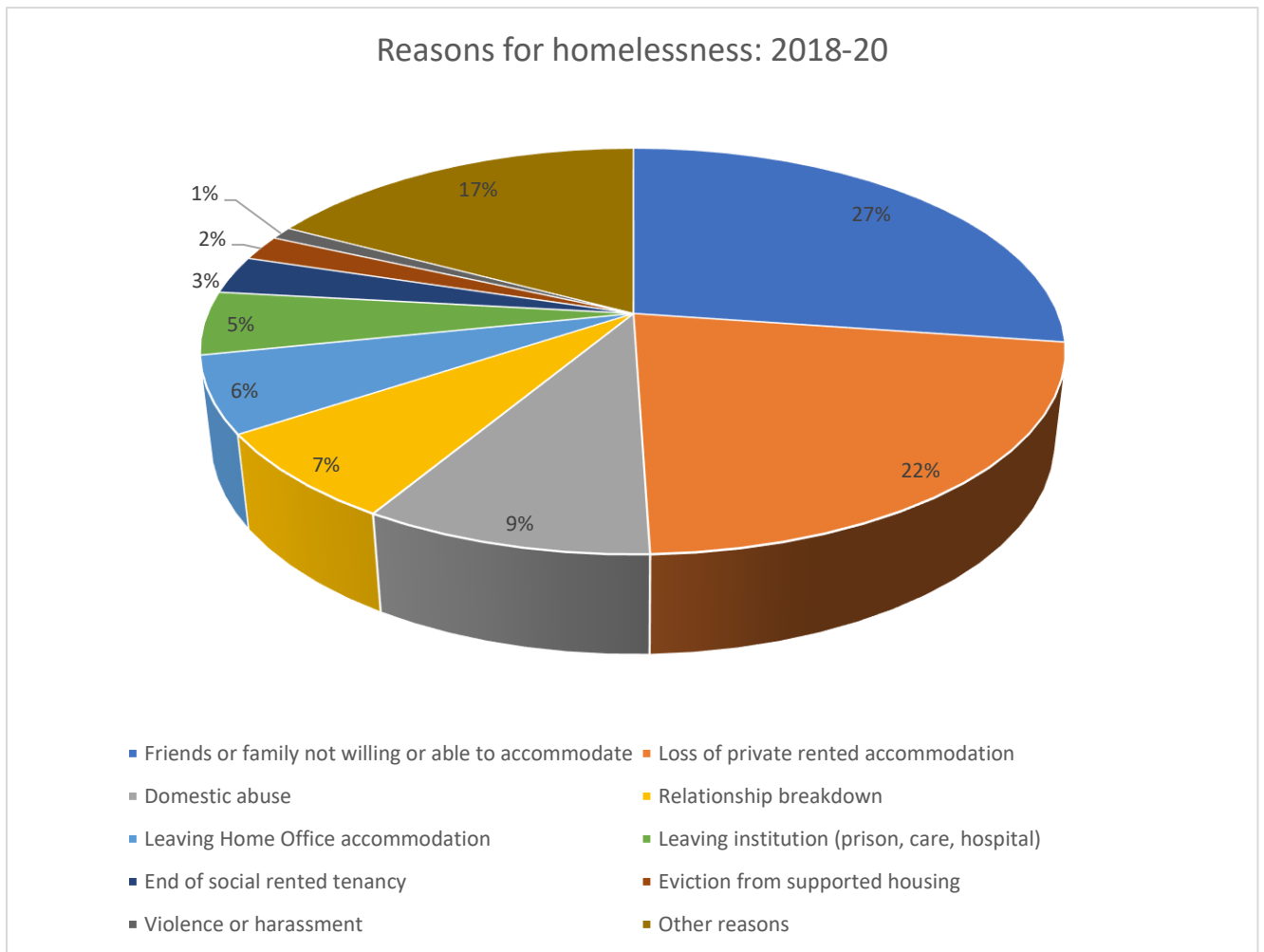
Understanding the main reasons why people present as homeless or threatened with homelessness gives the Council a better idea of how to target its resources in the 2021 Homelessness Strategy. For example, the main reason for homelessness – which continues to rise – is applicants being asked to leave by friends or family. This is an area where the Council needs to strengthen and target its prevention activity; however, it is also indicative of the issues faced across the borough in terms of affordable housing supply and demand.

The following table does not include information pre-HRA because the statistical returns at the time did not record reasons for homelessness amongst 'non-priority' households, which would therefore lead to heavily skewed information e.g. towards families rather than single person households. As can be seen from below however, trends remain broadly the same for the past two years.

Table 9: Main reasons for homelessness

	2018/19	2019/20
Asked to leave by friends or family	25%	29%
Loss of private sector accommodation	23%	21%
Domestic abuse	8%	10%
Relationship breakdown	7%	8%
Required to leave accommodation provided by the Home Office as asylum support	5%	8%
Left an institution e.g. prison, hospital, care	4%	6%
Eviction from social rented accommodation	2%	3%
Eviction from supported accommodation	1%	3%
Other forms of violence or harassment	1%	2%
All other reasons	24%	10%

Figure 3: Main reasons for homelessness



Learning Points:

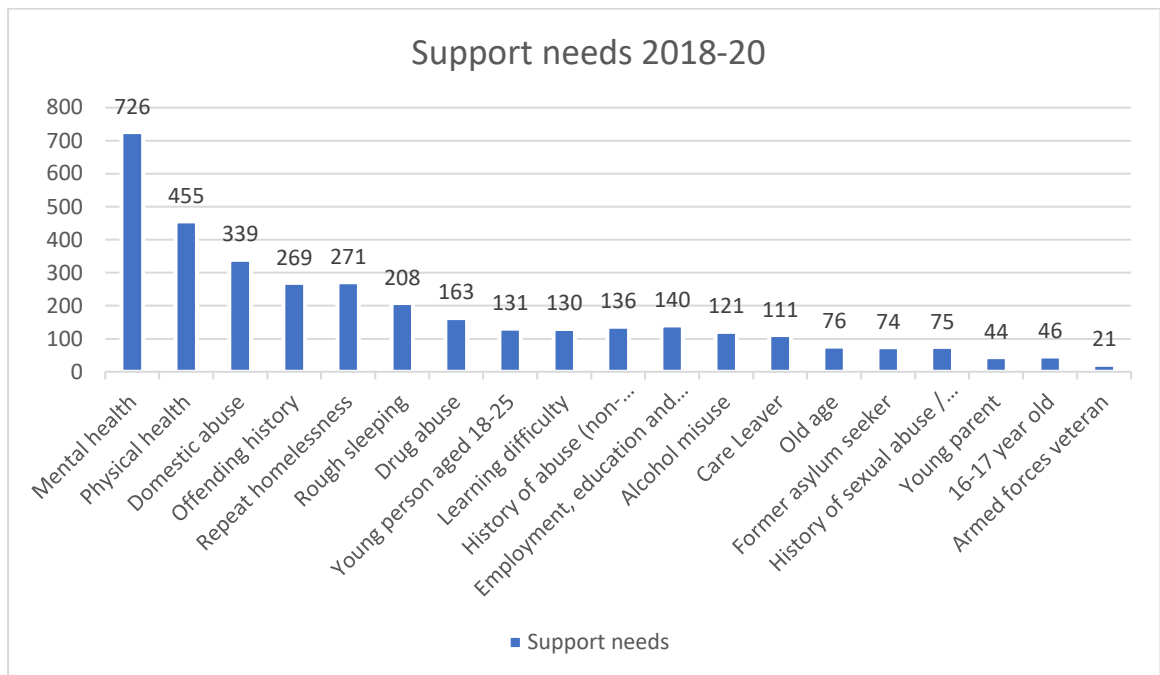
- Exclusions by friends and family are increasing; are enough resources being committed to preventing this, for example mediation and early intervention
- Domestic abuse continues to rise – how will the new Domestic Abuse Bill affect this, and how can we improve prevention options
- Loss of private rented sector accommodation remains a leading cause of homelessness nationally, but also remains a much-needed source of prevention on relief. How do we grow and retain good landlords and improve tenancy relations
- Relationship breakdowns are increasing as a cause of homelessness; how can we improve the advice and options available to departing partners prior to homelessness occurring, including education and support

4.6 Support needs

As well as understanding why applicants present as homeless, it is also important to understand what needs they have other than housing to plan responses accordingly.

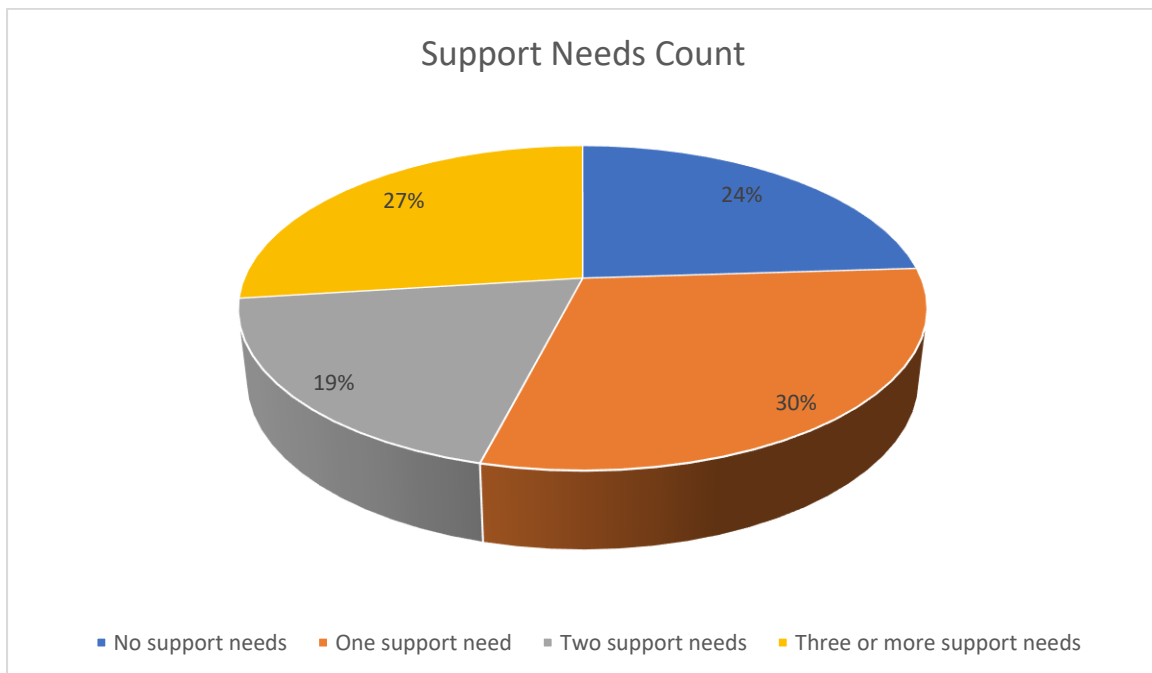
Over the past two years applicants who were homeless or threatened with homelessness were identified as having the following support needs.

Figure 4: Support Needs



Applicants often had multiple and complex needs, as is evident from the chart below. Less than a quarter of homeless applicants stated to have no support needs at all in their household:

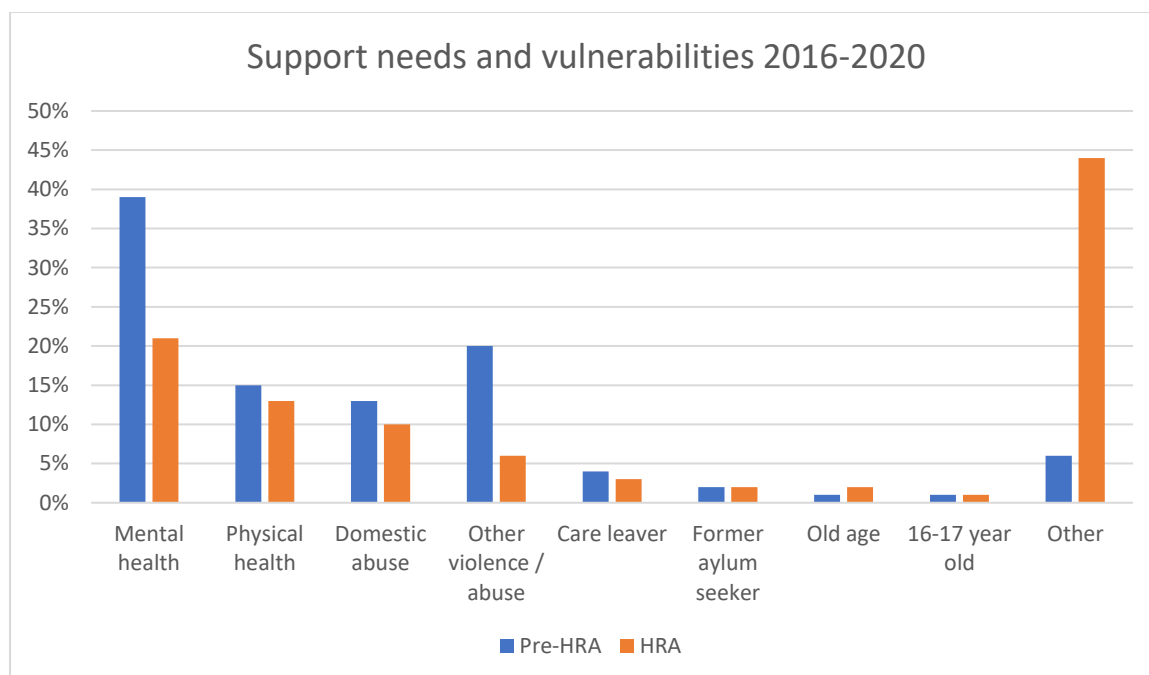
Figure 5: Count of support needs



Prior to the introduction of the HRA Councils did not record the support needs of applicants, although it was used to determine whether single applicants were 'vulnerable' under homelessness legislation where they did not meet these criteria under other categories e.g. dependent children.

The following chart gives the percentage of applicants who declared to have the following support needs across the full period. The 'other' category increased with the introduction of more detailed information collection under the HRA, whilst some other categories such as mental health have reduced because information collected is spread across all applicants, not just those found to be 'vulnerable' / in priority need.

Figure 6: Support needs and vulnerabilities 2016-20



Oldham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) found that levels of people living with depression were above the national average – 12% to 10.7% - so to find high levels of applicants self-declaring mental ill-health is in line with this data.

Learning points:

- One fifth of homeless applicants state to have mental health issues, with a significant proportion having co-morbidities such as substance misuse and a history of rough sleeping in the 'other' category
- Almost 15% of homeless applicants state to have physical health issues, in line with the national average. The Covid-19 has particularly brought to light 'hidden' conditions such as asthma, COPD and diabetes, and the need for effective treatment, testing and vaccination pathways for groups such as rough sleepers
- The Domestic Abuse Bill will in effect treat all people fleeing domestic abuse as being in priority need; however, in Oldham the evidence suggests that the majority of applicants already are. The Bill may however have implications for demand upon services, especially because there does appear to be evidence of repeat homelessness presentations amongst applicants who have experienced domestic abuse

- Offending history is the fourth highest identified support need amongst homeless applicants in Oldham. This could be in part because Probation and Prisons make the highest number of referrals under the Duty to Refer, but this group also appear to be over-represented in programmes such as A Bed Every Night (ABEN) and supported accommodation. Access to suitable and sustainable accommodation and support for ex-offenders therefore needs further exploration in the 2021 homelessness strategy
- Repeat homelessness and rough sleeping is a concerningly prevalent support need and has a significant rate of co-morbidity amongst other support needs such as domestic abuse, offending history and substance misuse. This points towards a need for further investigation into what will work to stop tenancies breaking down – is it pre-tenancy training, loneliness, the type of accommodation, the area, the support or something else?
- Care leavers unfortunately continue to feature amongst homeless applicants, although numbers are decreasing as measures are put in place to prepare them for adulthood at an earlier stage. The 2021 Strategy needs to consider what further steps can be taken between Aftercare, housing and support services to put in place resources to support young people in Oldham to keep reducing this number further
- Former asylum seeker numbers continue to be stubbornly high, and to a certain extent something outside of the local authority’s control. Oldham benefits from a strong third sector which is committed to supporting the integration of people who have been granted refugee status, but the backlog of households waiting to move on following the suspension of evictions during the Covid-19 pandemic will continue to present challenges into 2021 and beyond
- Old age is presenting a new challenge in homelessness, with numbers in this age group increasing from the time of the last homelessness strategy. Oldham does benefit from a range of sheltered and extra care accommodation – but is it sufficient to meet the needs of some of the older population, such as rough sleepers and ex-offenders?

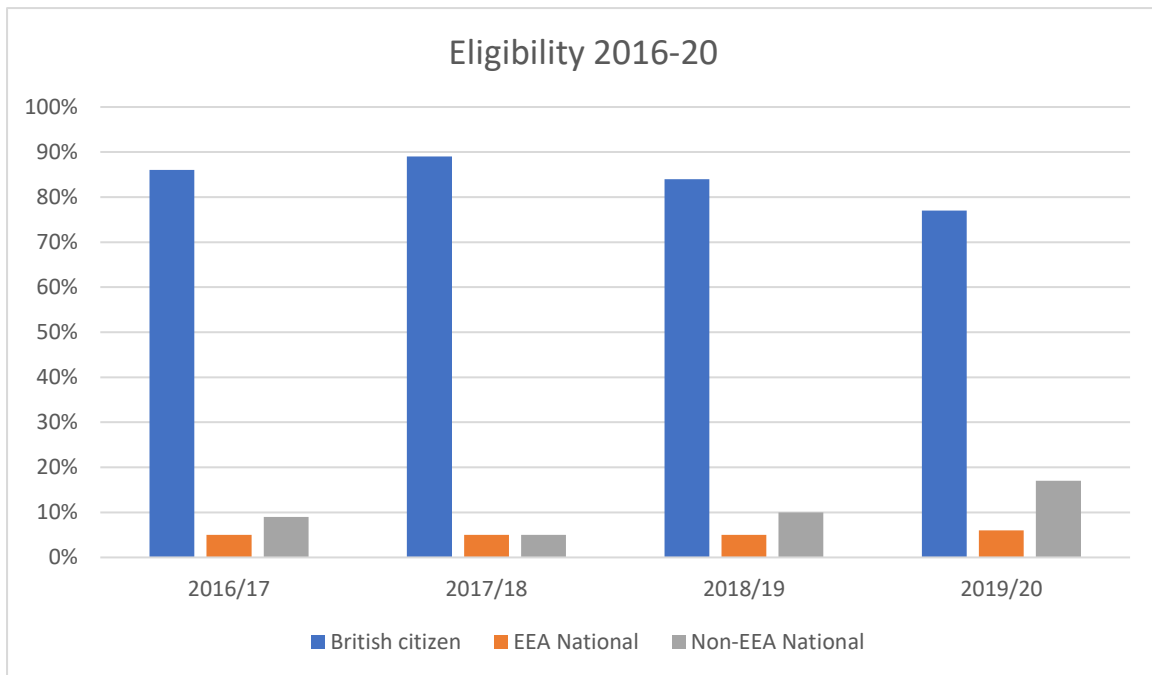
4.7 Eligibility

Local authorities must make housing advice available free of charge to anyone in the district but can only provide homelessness assistance – such as accepting prevention and relief duties – to eligible groups. These are set out in homelessness legislation and exclude households such as those who have no recourse to public funds conditions applied to their visas.

Habitually resident British or Irish citizens are the main eligible group who apply for homelessness assistance in Oldham, but there has been an increase in applications from other groups in recent years. The increase is biggest amongst EEA workers and people granted refugee status – correlating with an increase in applications from people becoming homeless after being asked to leave accommodation provided by the Home Office as asylum support.

As with other figures below, the pre-HRA figures are not directly transferable as the Prevention Duty did not exist – the 2016-18 figures reflect only households who were found to be homeless, i.e. who would nowadays be owed the Relief Duty.

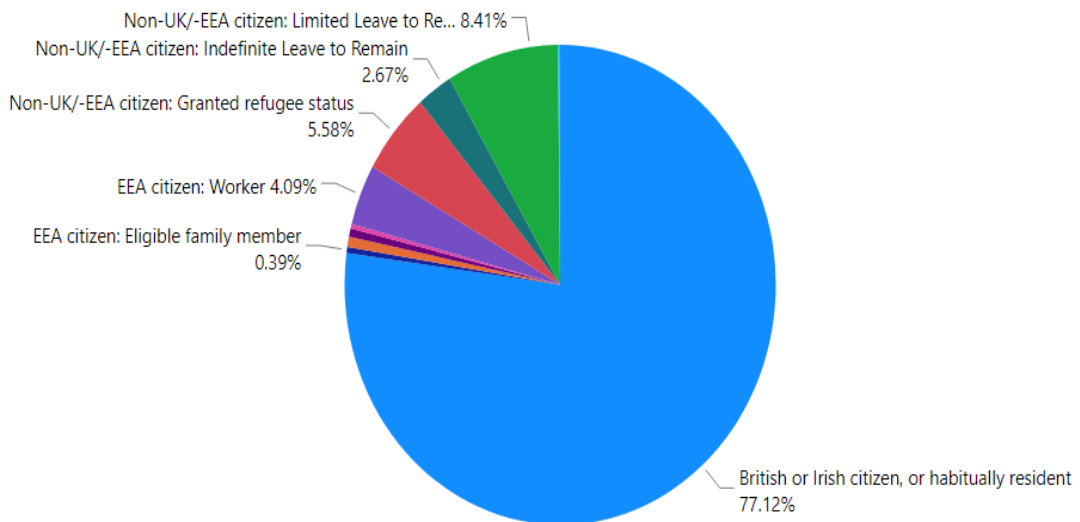
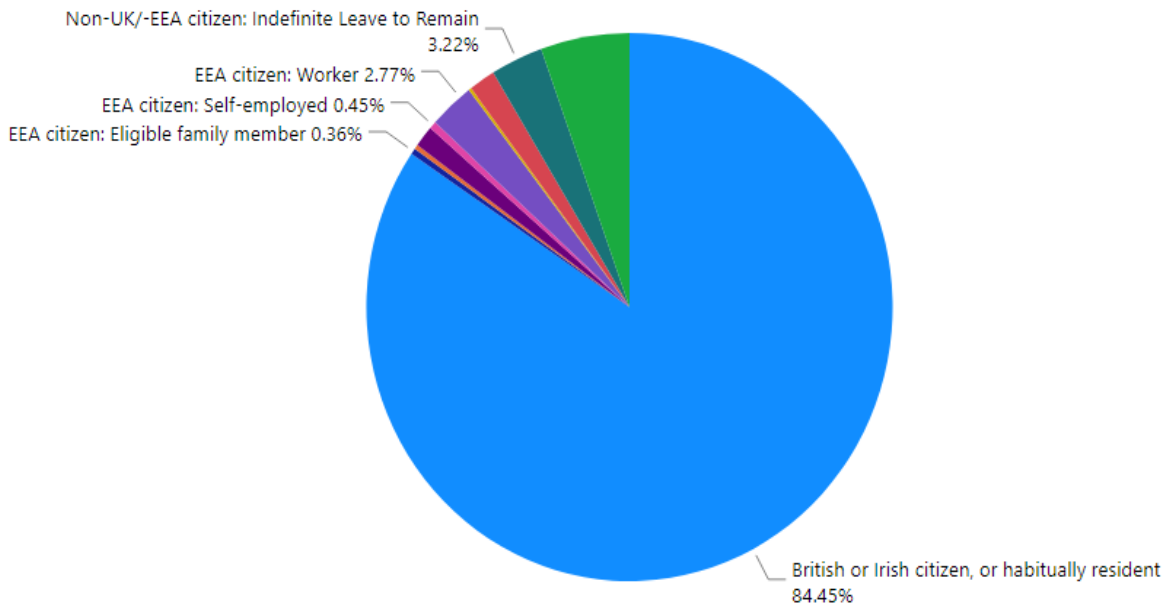
Figure 7: Eligibility 2016-20



The following charts show the change over the course of a year from 2018-19 to 2019-20 in the groups presenting as homeless – with a 5% increase in applications from those granted refugee status and 2% increase in EEA workers.

Figure 8: Eligibility breakdown 2018-20

British or Irish citizen, or habitually resident
Non-UK/-EEA citizen: Indefinite Leave to Remain
EEA citizen: Worker
Non-UK/-EEA citizen: Limited Leave to Remain
Non-UK/-EEA citizen: Granted refugee status
EEA citizen: Permanent right to reside
EEA citizen: Other
Non-UK/-EEA citizen: Other protection (e.g. humanitarian, discretionary)
EEA citizen: Eligible family member
Non-UK/-EEA citizen: Exceptional Leave to Remain
EEA citizen: Self-employed



Learning Points:

- Continue to develop the role of the Local Authority Asylum Support Officers (LAASLOs) – a time-limited service – to support the integration of refugees and deliver early intervention to prevent homelessness amongst those given leave to remain
- Ensure housing advice is promoted to emerging communities to ensure awareness of housing rights and prevent crisis situations

4.8 Demographics

4.8.1 Ethnicity

Homeless applicants are asked to provide information on their ethnicity on a voluntary basis, which can be used to establish whether any groups are disproportionately affected or not being reached by services despite being represented in Oldham.

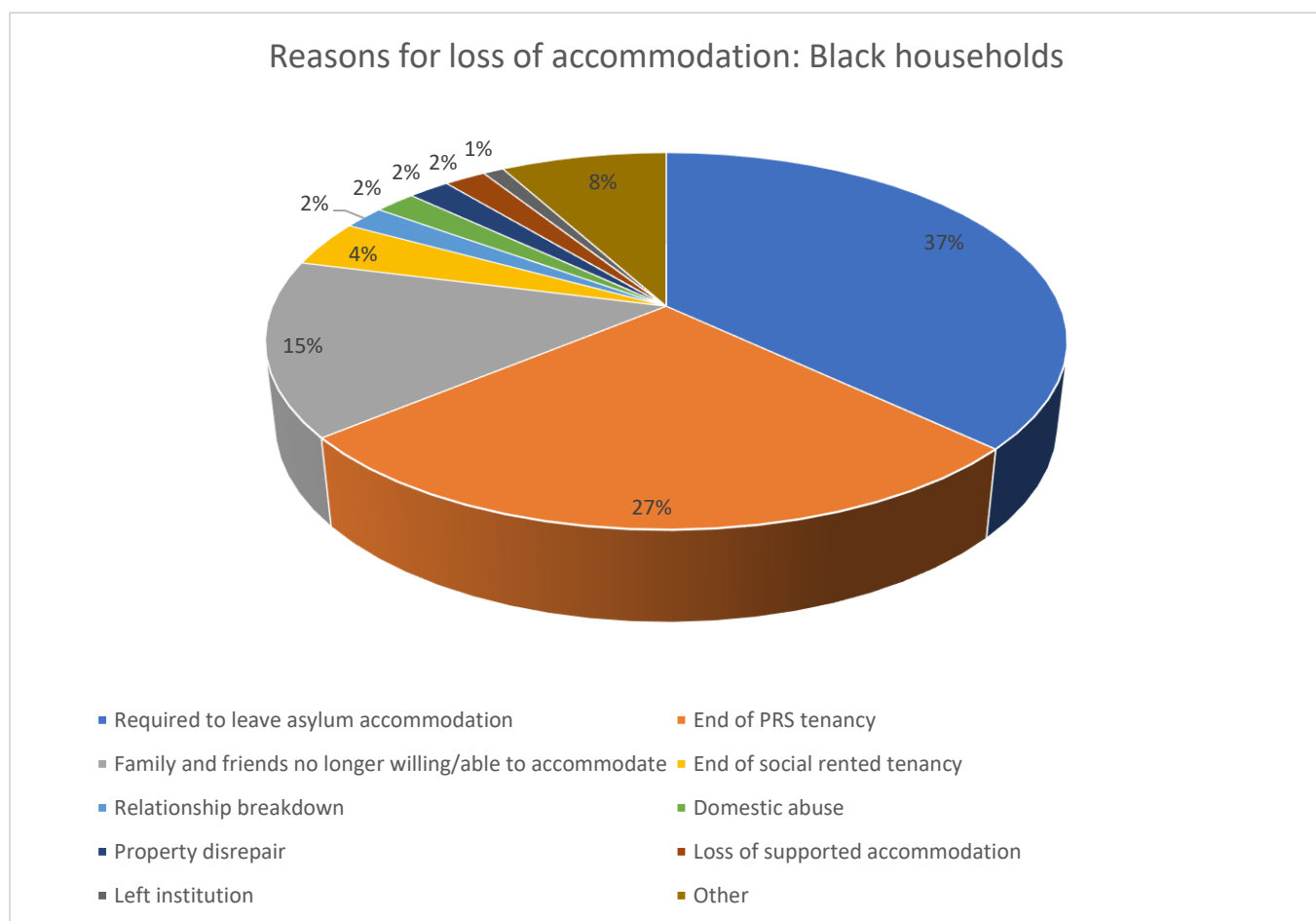
The following sets out applications under the HRA compared with UK Census Data. Whilst the last Census was in 2011 and is set to be reviewed, it does highlight some potential inequalities which require investigation through the 2021 Homelessness Strategy.

Table 10: Ethnicity

Ethnic Group	Census	HRA applications 2018-2020
White	77.5%	65.3%
Pakistani	10.1%	7.6%
Bangladeshi	7.3%	5.2%
Indian	0.7%	0.3%
Black	1.2%	9%
Mixed	1.8%	2.6%
Other	1.4%	10%

The biggest disparity between HRA applications and Census information is Black households; this is in part due to representation amongst those granted refugee status, but other reasons for loss of accommodation were in line with overall trends for all applicants, such as loss of private rented sector accommodation and exclusions by friends and family.

Figure 9: Reason for loss of accommodation: Black households



4.8.2 Age

Applications amongst different age groups have remained broadly the same during the past two years, and reflect data previously recorded for ‘main housing duty’ applicants under previous statutory data recording mechanisms. There has been a slight increase in presentations from over 65-year olds – which is reflected in the increase in people declaring support needs due to old age.

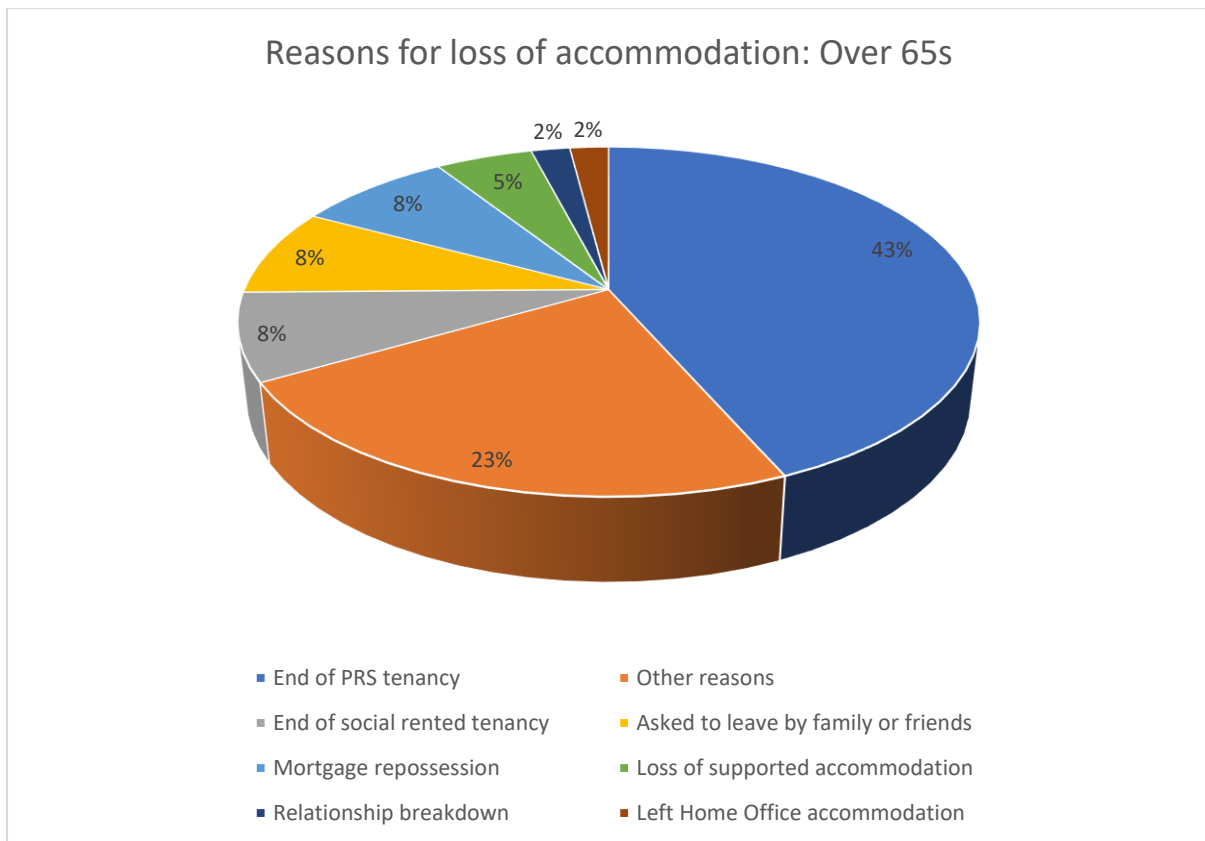
Table 11: Age

	2018/19	2019/20
16-17	9 (<1%)	12 (1%)
18-24	243 (22%)	260 (20%)
25-34	361 (32%)	430 (34%)
35-44	252 (23%)	311 (24%)
45-54	182 (16%)	185 (15%)
55-64	53 (5%)	51 (4%)
65-74	13 (1%)	21 (2%)
75+	6 (<1%)	1
Not known	0	1

The majority of over 65s became homeless due to the loss of private rented sector tenancies, in line with the main cause of homelessness. Loss of social rented and mortgaged properties were also slightly higher amongst this age group than some others, which may indicate a particular need for financial or other support to retain their properties or make a planned move to avoid homelessness.

Oldham’s JSNA data found that life expectancy is 17.2 years lower for males, and 19.6 lower for females than the national average – showing clear inequalities in the borough which may unfortunately be further impacted by housing issues. There is a real need therefore to ensure there are appropriate early intervention and prevention options available for this group.

Figure 10: Reason for loss of accommodation: Over 65s



Presentations from 16-17-year olds look to have had a modest increase, but this may be deceptive due to the way figures are reported. If we look at support needs declared, applicants stating to be a 16-17-year old in need of support have risen from 11 to 19 between 2018/19 and 2019/20; almost double. This may relate to other young people in a household led by another applicant, but still demonstrates a potential increasing need. This is supported by an increase in overall approaches for advice from this age group to the Housing Options service increasing from 44 to 63 in the same time period.

4.8.3 Household type

The past two years have seen changing trends in presentations under HRA, particularly:

- More females with dependent children approaching under the Relief Duty rather than the Prevention duty

- Conversely, single females without children seeking advice at an earlier stage
- An increasing number of single males seeking assistance under both duties

The following also demonstrates demand from household type on the Housing Options service and suggests how it could be tailored in the future to meet the needs of applicants in Oldham. For example, 59% of HRA applications are from single applicants, and 65% from all-adult households who may require a different service to families.

Figure 12: Households Types

	2018/19	2019/20	2018/19	2019/20
	Relief Duty		Prevention Duty	
Single male plus dependents	15 (3%)	15 (3%)	12 (2%)	17 (2%)
Single female plus dependents	98 (18%)	114 (19%)	182 (32%)	156 (23%)
Single male	246 (45%)	282 (48%)	153 (27%)	238 (35%)
Single female	134 (24%)	104 (18%)	78 (14%)	123 (18%)
Single – other	0	0	0	1 (<1%)
Couple plus dependents	27 (5%)	32 (5%)	82 (14%)	92 (13%)
Couple	23 (4%)	34 (6%)	35 (6%)	34 (5%)
3+ adults plus dependents	4 (1%)	3 (1%)	15 (3%)	15 (2%)
All adult household	1 (<1%)	4 (1%)	14 (2%)	4 (1%)
Not known	0	1 (<1%)	0	3 (1%)

Learning points:

- How can we increase housing options available to single males – for example through expanding the Bond Scheme and shared accommodation options for under 35s
- What support do single females with dependents require to encourage them to seek help at an earlier point and reduce presentations at Relief Duty stage
- A significant proportion of households become homeless from the private rented sector, and trends can be seen amongst BME and older households. How do we better reach these groups, for example through the voluntary sector, to provide advice at an earlier stage?
- How do we support an ageing population who may be struggling to maintain their homes – for example through financial support or promoting early help to avoid homelessness
- On the other hand, how do we prevent young people from reaching crisis point and better prepare them for independence – as an increasing number are presenting to the Housing Options service

4.8.4 Economic status

Oldham has a significant proportion of wards within the most deprived 10% or 20% in England on almost all of the measures within Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Whilst its employment rank has improved slightly from 2015 to 2019, its education, training and skills rank has worsened.

The following table shows the economic status of HRA applicants over the past two years; this information was not recorded pre-HRA. As can be seen, the number of applicants in employment had declined over the past two years and those actively job-seeking significantly increased in line with changes to Universal Credit.

Table 13: Economic Status

	2018/19	2019/20
Full-time employment	148 (13%)	126 (10%)
Part-time employment	125 (11%)	134 (10%)
Student / in training	11 (<1%)	20 (2%)
Registered unemployed	309 (28%)	615 (48%)
Not registered unemployed but seeking work	123 (11%)	53 (4%)
At home and not seeking work	77 (7%)	64 (5%)
Long term sick	227 (20%)	198 (16%)
Retired	15 (1%)	17 (1%)
Other	80 (7%)	31 (2%)
Not known	4 (<1%)	14 (1%)

According to the Oldham JSNA in 2017/18, 68.1% in Oldham were in employment which is significantly below both the North West and England averages. Youth unemployment was highlighted as a particular issue, which presents challenges in terms of securing accommodation that is compounded by the lack of accommodation available within the boundaries of the shared room rate.

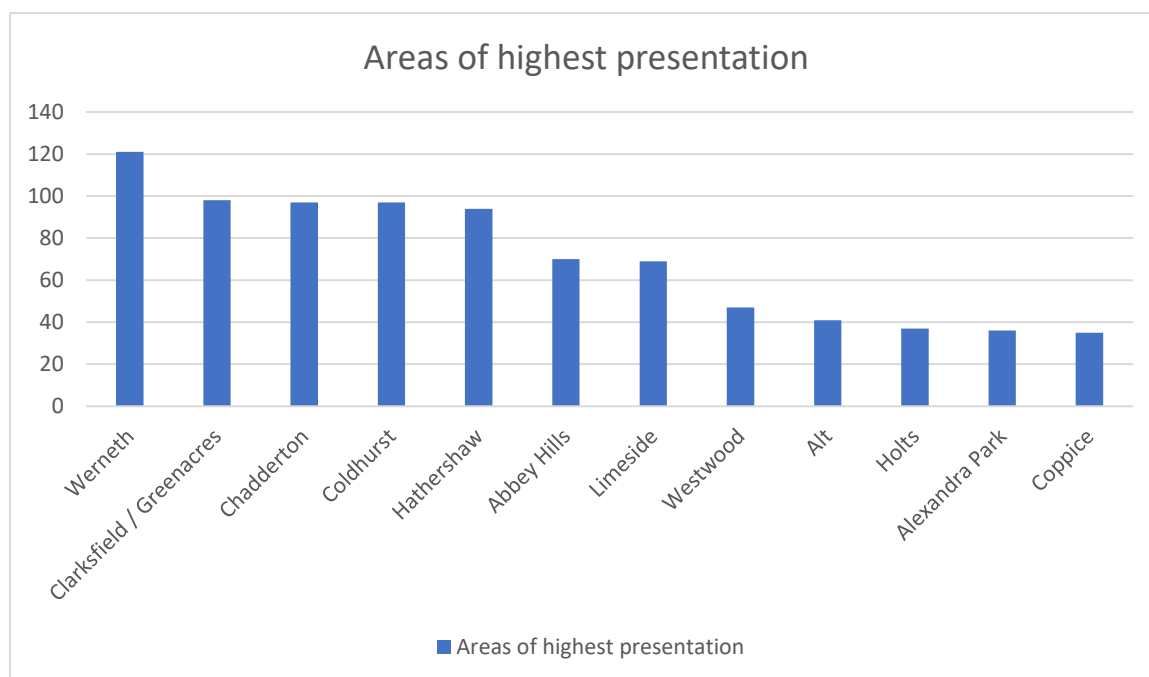
Learning Points:

- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is yet to be fully seen, but will have a significant impact on people in part-time and self-employment, as well as limited employment for jobseekers
- Partners in Oldham such as the Housing Authority, DWP and Get Oldham Working must work closely together to support HRA applicants into employment opportunities to ensure they can access and sustain housing
- Partners should promote whatever financial relief funds are available to clear arrears and help applicants to access housing

4.9 Geographical trends

The following chart utilises postcode data provided at the point of application to determine the most common areas HRA applicants stated to have been homeless or threatened with homelessness from in the past two years:

Figure 11: Homelessness presentations by area



The areas above include those with high concentrations of private rented sector accommodation (Clarksfield, Greenacres, Coldhurst, Hathershaw) corresponding with high numbers of presentations from households leaving assured shorthold tenancies. These areas also feature in the bottom 10% of neighbourhoods in the national indices of deprivation. In contrast, the areas seeing the lowest levels of presentation are those with lower levels of deprivation such as the Saddleworth villages and outer parts of Royton and Failsworth.

Learning Points

- How can the Housing Options service embed itself more closely within place-based integration initiatives, or upskill colleagues in the community?

4.10 Customer groups

As part of the Housing Authorities duty to provide or secure the provision of advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness, section 179(2) of the 1996 Housing Act states that housing authorities must design advice and information services to meet the needs of people within their district including, in particular, the needs of the following groups:

- people released from prison or youth detention accommodation;
- care leavers;
- former members of the regular armed forces;
- victims of domestic abuse;
- people leaving hospital;

(f) people suffering from a mental illness or impairment; and,

(g) any other group that the authority identify as being at particular risk of homelessness in their district.

The data on support needs already outlined in this Review has highlighted that several of these groups are at particular risk of homelessness, and this section explores this – and the services currently available to them – further.

4.10.1 People released from prison or youth detention accommodation

Numbers presenting under HRA 2018-20	152 ¹ / 269 (count of support needs)
Developments under 2016-21 Strategy	<p>Probation funding introduced at start of Covid-19 Pandemic to provide accommodation to non-priority groups upon discharge</p> <p>Probation part-funded the Greater Manchester Mayor’s ‘A Bed Every Night’ rough sleeping accommodation programme</p> <p>Together with the other 9 Greater Manchester housing authorities, Oldham Council part-funds a dedicated Housing Advisor within Forest Bank prison who works alongside the Through the Gate service delivered by housing charity Shelter</p>
Current services	<p>Fornightly partnership meetings between housing and Probation in place to monitor active caseloads</p> <p>Duty to refer working well, including two-way information sharing on risk between Probation and the housing authority</p> <p>Funding provided through Covid-19 continues on a temporary basis supporting non-priority households not qualifying for temporary accommodation</p>
Gaps identified	<p>Specialist supported accommodation for ex-offenders excluded from other provisions</p> <p>Direct access provision for non-priority applicants discharged from prison where duty to refer not made prior to release</p>

¹ Estimate based on Duty to Refer from prisons and Probation due to HCLIC only reporting on applicants leaving all institutions including prisons, hospitals and care homes

4.10.2 Care leavers

Numbers presenting under HRA 2018-20	75 ² / 111 (count of support needs)
Developments under 2016-21 Strategy	<p>Pledge signed by Council Cabinet committing to applying priority need and not making intentionally homeless decisions to Oldham care leavers up to the age of 25</p> <p>New housing pathway interviews and literature put in place to ensure young people leaving care have better awareness of their housing options, rights and responsibilities upon turning 18</p>
Current services	<p>Fortnightly partnership meetings between aftercare and housing to monitor active caseloads and plan for young people moving on</p> <p>Joint assessments in place for young people leaving care and those presenting as homeless</p> <p>Referral mechanisms in place for young people aged over 21 presenting as homeless who want to be reconnected to Personal Advisor support</p> <p>Tailored information is available on Oldham Council's website</p>
Gaps identified	Joint commissioning of accommodation services to be explored

4.10.3 Former members of the regular armed forces

Numbers presenting under HRA 2018-20	25*
Developments under 2016-21 Strategy	N/A
Current services	<p>Oldham Council, as part of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, signed up to the Armed Forces Community Covenant in October 2013</p> <p>Tailored information is available on Oldham Council's website</p>
Gaps identified	Due to low numbers of presentations and responses via consultation this group have not been identified as a priority for further service development, but this will be kept under review as part of the Strategy's annual updates

² Estimate using locally held data due to above previously cited HCLIC limitations

4.10.4 Victims of domestic abuse

Numbers presenting under HRA 2018-20	225 (339 declared support needs)
Developments under 2016-21 Strategy	<p>Domestic abuse Housing First project launched across Oldham, Tameside and Stockport</p> <p>Virtual waiting pool introduced for Oldham refuge to ensure local residents were able to be prioritised for vacancies / make planned moves into a safe space</p>
Current services	<p>Ongoing joint working between IDVA service, Housing Options and housing providers to support applicants experiencing domestic abuse</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Partnership includes representation from Housing Authority and housing providers</p> <p>Oldham benefits from a specialist honour-based violence service, Project Choice – although this is at risk of discontinuation in 2021 due to funding issues</p>
Gaps identified	<p>NRPF provision continues to pose challenges in Oldham</p> <p>IDVA capacity is strained alongside that of the Housing Options service, and there is a need for joint expertise with the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Bill in 2021</p>

4.10.5 People leaving hospital

Numbers presenting under HRA 2018-20	35 ³
Developments under 2016-21 Strategy	The Oldham Hospital Discharge Protocol was reviewed in 2018, with e-learning on the Duty to Refer provided to NHS staff and ongoing relationship building undertaken by the housing authority
Current services	First Choice Homes Oldham (FCHO), a registered housing provider who were contracted to deliver homelessness and allocations services on behalf of the council up

³ Estimate based on duty to refer due to HCLIC only reporting on applicants leaving all institutions including prisons, care homes etc.

	to July 2019, employ a Hospital 2 Home officer part-funded by Oldham CCG. This officer provides housing advice to patients at Oldham Hospital and completes referrals to the housing authority where homelessness assistance is needed
Gaps identified	Since FCHO no longer deliver the statutory housing options service, consideration could be given as to whether such a role as Hospital 2 Home would benefit from being based within the current Housing Options team

4.10.6 People suffering from a mental illness or impairment

Numbers presenting under HRA 2018-20	726
Developments under 2016-21 Strategy	Services including Housing First and the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Team include Dual Diagnosis provision to support applicants to navigate mental health services
Current services	A bi-weekly Adults with Multiple Complex Needs Group meets to take a case conference approach to applicants at risk of safeguarding issues Free counselling is available via Talk, Listen, Change and Groundwork in Oldham
Gaps identified	Services continue to struggle to meet the volume of need from applicants with mental health issues. Aside from specialist provision within the Housing Options team, appropriate psychologically informed training could be an option to pursue through the 2021 Strategy

4.10.7 Any other group that the authority identifies as being at particular risk of homelessness in their district.

This review has identified that the following support needs and groups of individuals have a particularly significant representation in Oldham which requires an appropriate response in the 2021 Strategy:

- Refugees and other persons from abroad
- Persons with substance misuse issues
- Jobseekers

A review by the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Team jointly commissioned by Oldham and Rochdale Councils also identified a need for support for single people who were ‘sofa surfing’ and at risk of rough sleeping. The RSI Team found that only 31% of people referred to its service were found to be actively rough sleeping; the rest were either could not be located or were in these unstable lodging arrangements.

Learning Points

- How can services better prevent single applicants who are currently ‘sofa surfing’ or leaving Home Office accommodation from becoming future rough sleepers

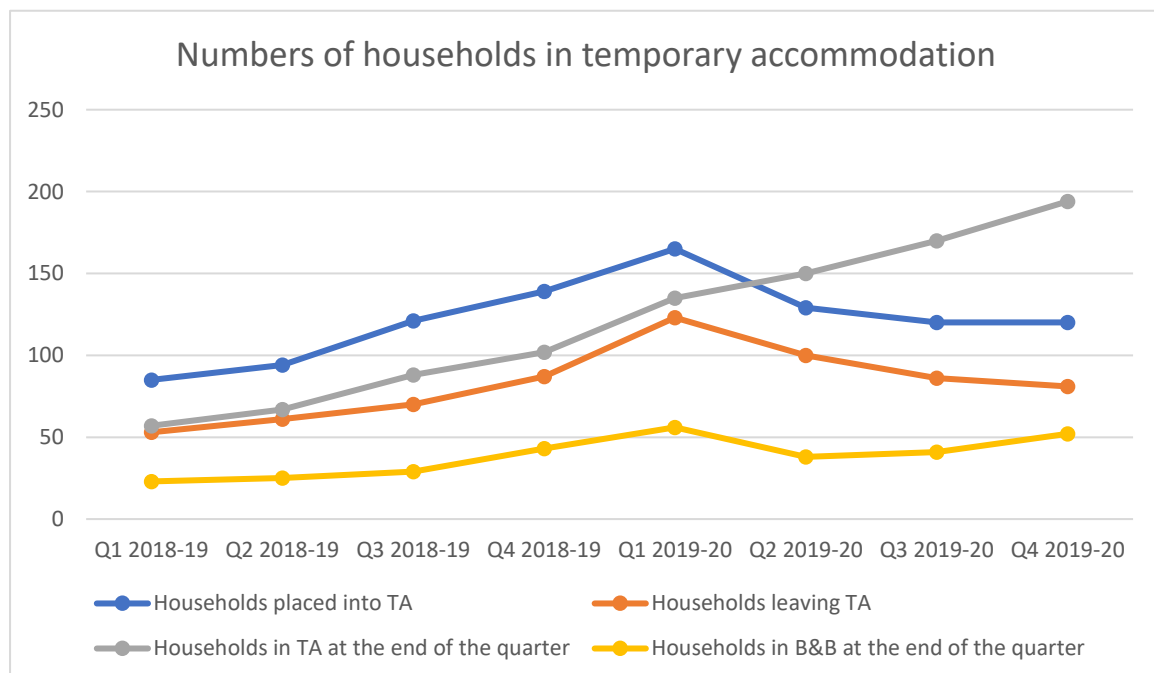
5. Temporary accommodation

5.1 Numbers in temporary accommodation

As homelessness applications have increased, so have temporary accommodation placements. Positively however the Council has proactively been reducing its use of bed and breakfast placements, with these now only being used in an emergency and for short a period as possible.

There was a slight spike in Bed and Breakfast placements at the end of March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Government’s ‘Everyone In’ directive which requested that local authorities accommodate all known rough sleepers and move any residents from shared sleep spaces to more self-contained options such as Bed and Breakfast. A dedicated accommodation scheme was procured for this group in April 2020, and as of the end of June 2020 numbers in Bed and Breakfast placements had dropped to 13.

Figure 12: Numbers of households in temporary accommodation



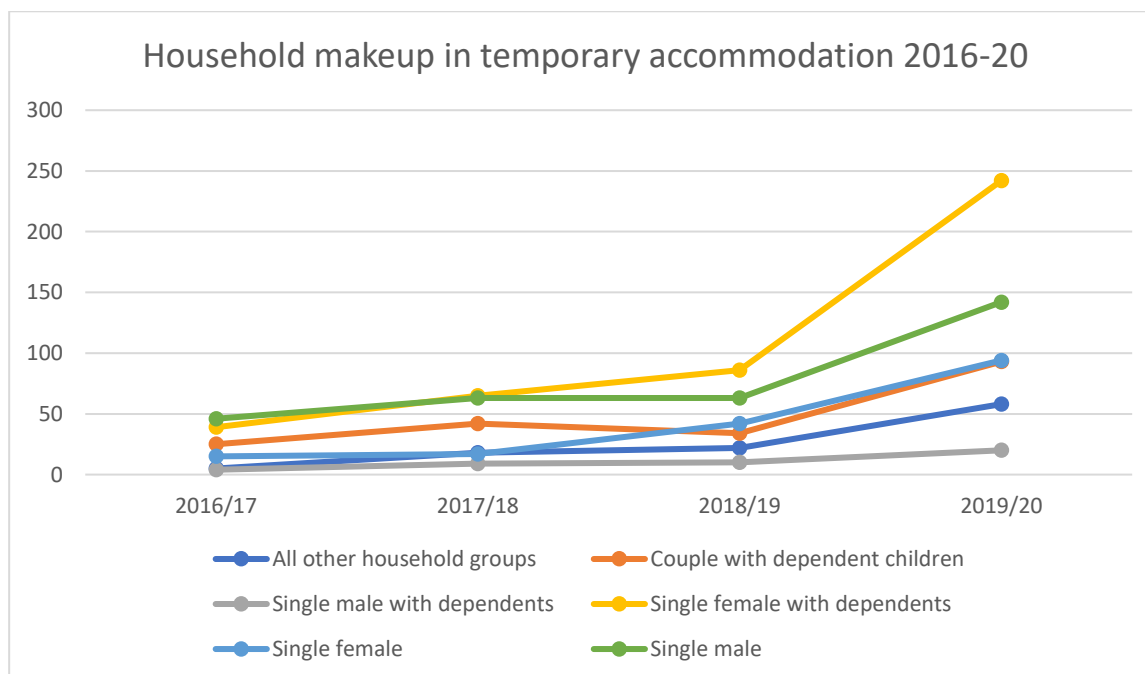
5.2 Household makeup in temporary accommodation

As with Relief Duties overall, there has been an increase in lone female parents and single males residing in temporary accommodation over the past two years. The main reasons for households entering temporary accommodation are domestic abuse and family / friends no longer willing or able to accommodate. Households leaving private rented sector accommodation are less likely to require temporary accommodation because of the longer time available to prevent homelessness – further emphasising the importance of early intervention.

Table 14: Household makeup in temporary accommodation

Household Type		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Total	%
Couple with dependent children*		25	42	34	93	194	15.47%
Lone parent household with dependent children	Male Applicant	4	9	10	20	43	3.43%
	Female Applicant*	39	65	86	242	432	34.45%
One person household	Male Applicant	46	63	63	142	314	25.04%
	Female Applicant	15	17	42	94	168	13.40%
All other household groups		5	18	22	58	103	8.21%

Figure 13: Household makeup in temporary accommodation



6. Duty to Refer

The Homelessness Reduction Act introduced a new Duty to Refer which applies to specified public bodies – although other non-specified organisations can choose to refer on a voluntary basis as well. Under this duty these bodies must refer, with consent, any applicant who is homeless or threatened with homelessness to the local housing authority. These public bodies are as follows, including the number of referrals received in the 2018-20 period:

Table 15: Referral received under the Duty to Refer

Prisons	74
Youth offender institutions	0
Secure training centres	0
Secure colleges	0
Youth offending teams	0
Probation services (including community rehabilitation companies)	78
Jobcentre Plus	58
Social Services Authorities	63
Emergency departments	33
Urgent treatment centres	0
Hospitals in their function of providing in-patient care	2

The lack of referrals from youth offending agencies could be because referrals for such young people are typically made by Social Workers from the Aftercare Team under existing protocols in Oldham and would therefore be captured under Social Services Authorities figures.

Hospital and in-patient referrals may also be artificially low due to some referrals being diverted through the FCHO Hospital 2 Home Officer.

E-Learning on the Duty to Refer and a half day HRA training course were developed by the Housing Authority in 2018 for partner agencies wanting to develop their knowledge of this subject, and promotion is ongoing via the Oldham Homelessness Forum.

7. Reviews

The HRA introduced several new points of legislation where applicants could ask for a review; as a result, the number of reviews undertaken by senior officers in Oldham has increased over the Review period.

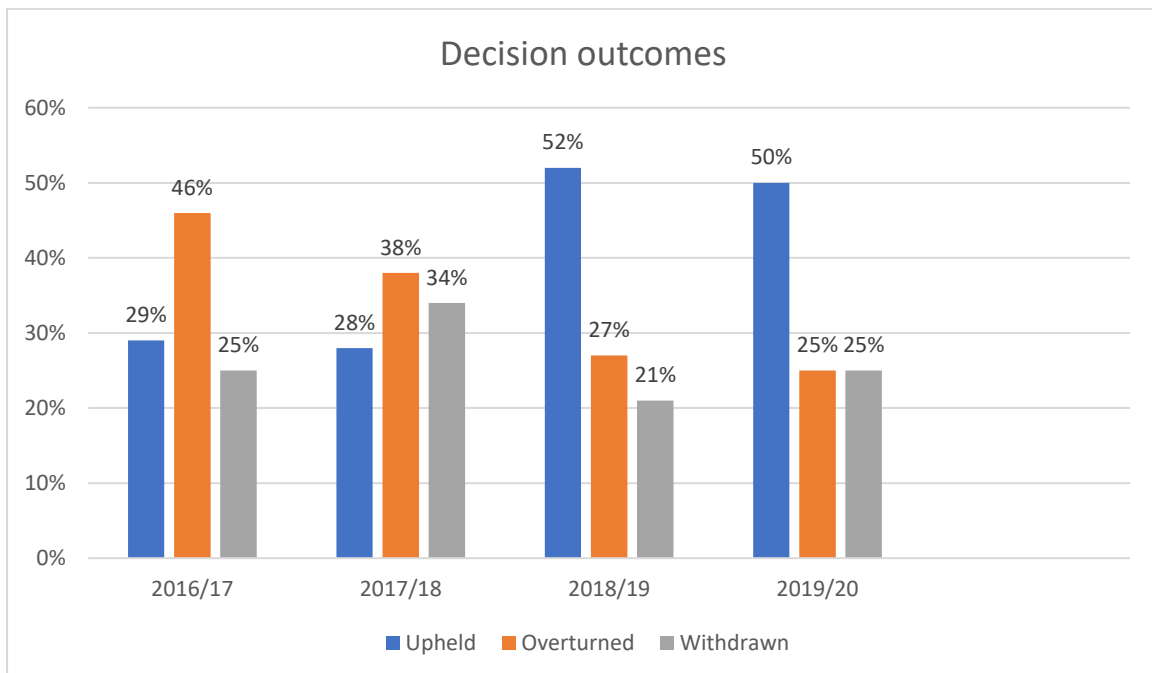
Figure 14: Reviews requested



Whilst reviews requested have increased, decision making has become more robust as review outcomes have increasingly been upheld. This is positive for ensuring resources and applicant expectations are well managed.

There have been no court appeals during this Review period.

Figure 15: Review outcomes



8. Economic factors and housing market data

8.1 Welfare Reform

The 2016 Preventing Homelessness Strategy was introduced during the time of some of the most radical welfare reforms in modern history. Whilst the pace of these changes has slowed in recent years, their effects continue to be felt, namely:

- Benefit cap, and its effects on affordability of accommodation – particularly for larger families;
- Universal Credit, including long-term claimants transitioning from legacy benefits and the effects of sanctions;
- Reduction in support available through schemes such as Support for Mortgage Interest and Free School Meals
- Child Benefit / Tax Credit limitations

Whilst perhaps not being directly attributable to homelessness, debt and affordability is certainly linked – which is something which came through strongly in the consultation for the new Homelessness Strategy.

8.2 Local Housing Allowance

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is the rate of housing benefit – although usually paid via Universal Credit – that can be claimed against a private rented sector property, depending on household size. From 1st April 2020 the government increased rates to match the ‘30th percentile’ of rents in each area, which did lead to an increase in financial support available. This news was welcomed but rates in Oldham remain low – although are higher in Failsworth, where the Manchester LHA rate is applicable – and many tenants solely reliant on LHA to pay their rent will often need to top-up their rent from other income. Maximising incomes, such as through employment, or where possible negotiating lower rents from landlords will be a crucial element of the forthcoming Homelessness Strategy.

An accommodation option which has been growing throughout the Covid-19 pandemic in Oldham is HMO accommodation with en-suite facilities. This is not only more appealing to prospective tenants who may have concerns about shared accommodation, but more affordable than fully self-contained flats. The Council will continue to work with landlords to develop options such as these to open up suitable, affordable options for households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness throughout the lifetime of the new Strategy.

Table 15: Local Housing Allowance Rates, Oldham

Oldham and Rochdale LHA rates	
Number of rooms	Rate
Share room or bedsit	£66.39
1 bedroom	£90.90
2 bedrooms	£103.85
3 bedrooms	£126.58
4 bedrooms	£159.95

8.3 Housing Market Data

A comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment for Oldham was carried out in 2019 and used to inform the Housing Strategy. Key findings were that whilst house prices were below the national average, there was – as with many areas – a significant shortfall in the annual dwelling need in the area. The borough also faces challenges with respect to housing its ageing population, particularly with regards to adapting terraced style stock for those with physical disabilities, and housing larger families.

The Housing Needs Assessment also incorporated a household survey which found that approximately 45% of households stated to have a repair problem in their property. Problems with affordability – a theme running throughout this review – were cited as one of the main reasons for not addressing the repair problem, or not being able to move to a different property. The Council is continuing to explore options such as Selective Licensing and making grants available where possible to help drive up standards.

8.4 Social housing

Oldham Council resumed management of its housing allocations service on 1st July 2019. With this came the implementation of a revised Allocations Policy which prioritised those in housing need. Previously Oldham was a borough which had experienced several years of low demand; however, this is now no longer the case and social housing is now an extremely scarce resource.

Due to this change in policy data is difficult to compare between periods, but the following provides an overview of Allocations activity between 1st April 2020 and 31st January 2021.

What the data tells us is that only 787 properties were advertised in the first 3 quarters of 2020/21, but there were 5,906 households registered for rehousing. Larger, family size homes were particularly scarce, with demand far outstripping supply and overcrowding a particular issue in Oldham.

Table 16: Social Housing Properties Advertised via Choice Based Lettings

Bed size	Number received
1 bed	362
2 bed	288
3bed	105
4 bed	12
5 bed	20
6 bed	0
Total	787

Table 17: Live Housing Register applications as at 31/01/2021

Bed size	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4
1 bed	1031	1395	25	31
2 bed	671	776	29	21
3 bed	537	800	24	18
4 bed	237	220	5	5
5 bed	52	18	0	0
6 bed	9	0	0	0
7 bed	2	0	0	0
Total	2539	3209	83	75

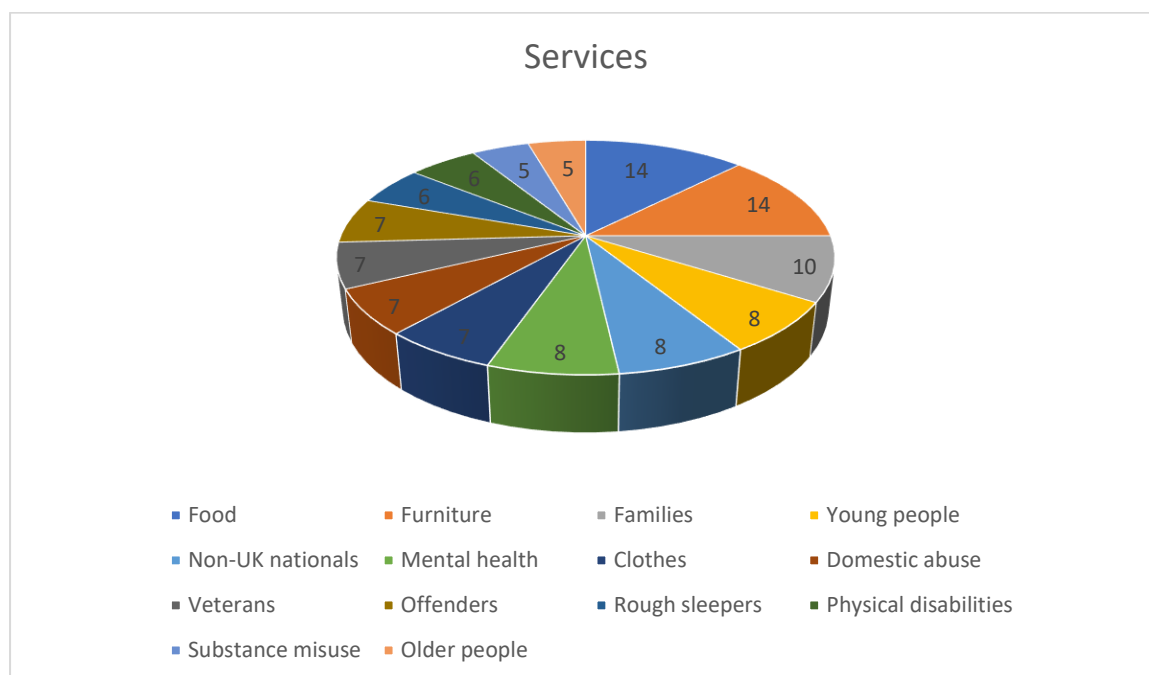
9. Service mapping

9.1 Service provision

Oldham benefits from a strong voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector backed by registered charity Action Together who provide free training, funding advice and other support. The Council, other statutory services and housing providers also provide a range of services within local communities.

Service mapping undertaken in December 2020 identified the following provision available within the borough:

Figure 16: Service mapping



9.2 Tools to prevent and relieve homelessness

The Housing Options Team utilises several tools to prevent and relieve homelessness, as well as referring to partners mapped out above to provide help to applicants. The Council also has wider tools at its disposal, such as Discretionary Housing Payments assistance provided through Children’s and Social Care Acts, which all form part of a preventative toolkit.

The following provides an overview of specific schemes commissioned or delivered by the Housing Options Team and their cost effectiveness for consideration of expansion or redevelopment under the new Homelessness Strategy.

Table 18: Tools to prevent and relieve homelessness

Scheme	Focus	Positive outcomes per annum	Average cost per applicant
Spend to Save	Prevention / Relief	42	£361
Bond Scheme	Prevention / Relief	15	£481
Mediation	Prevention	55	£430
Nightstop	Prevention	49	£224
A Bed Every Night	Relief	60	£1,150
Rough Sleeping Initiative	Prevention / Relief	240	£167
EEA Homelessness Prevention Service	Prevention / Relief	64	£31

Learning Points:

- Whilst ABEN does appear expensive, it is an accommodation-based service so likely to have higher costs – and is mainly grant funded
- Greater use needs to be made of Spend to Save, as with previous years, because it remains a relatively low-cost options to prevent and relieve homelessness. Discretionary Housing Payments are always sought first where possible, but this fund is still a good way of opening up private rented sector options – especially where landlords are reluctant to accept paper bonds
- Mediation and Nightstop are bespoke service for young people aged 16-25. Nightstop is a short-term crisis service, which means that the cost per client is relatively high. Consideration should be given as to whether these services could be more closely aligned, and brought together with the Young People’s Pathway in Oldham to ensure there is no duplication between services and young people only have to go through one ‘front door’
- The EEA Homelessness Prevention Service will clearly be much needed in 2021 with Brexit and the EU Settlement Scheme closing in June but will need to be reviewed after this point as may no longer be required in its current form.

9.3 Gap analysis

Given some of the issues identified throughout the review, some of the gaps emerging could include:

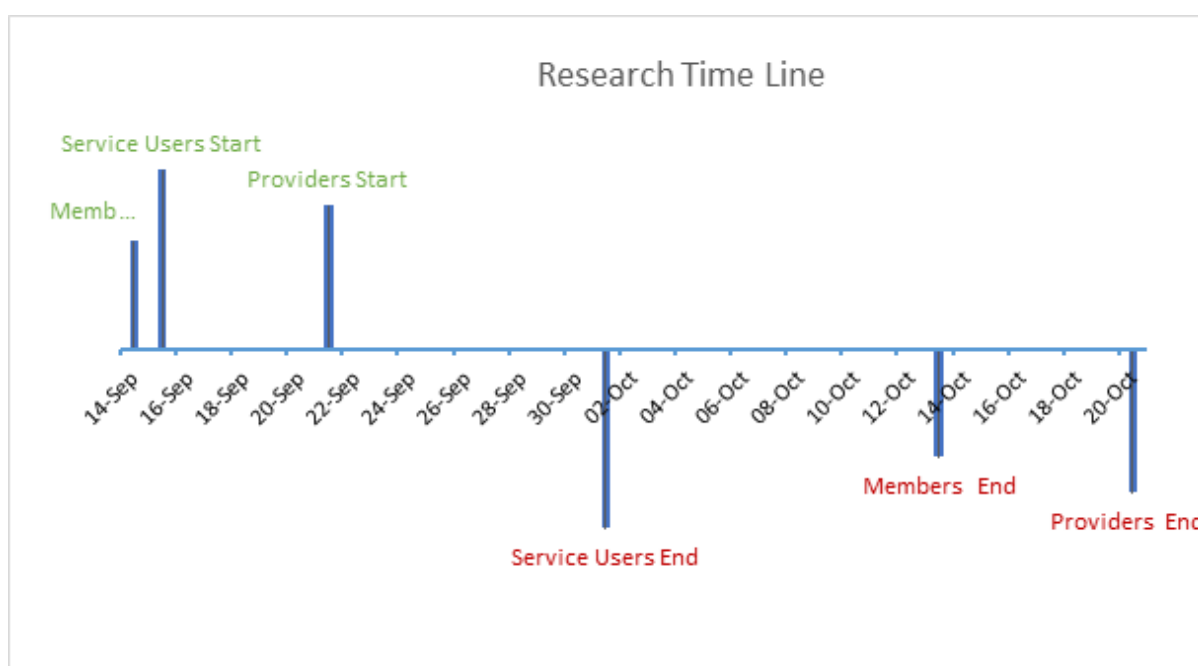
- Debt advice and money management
- Employment, training and skills
- Duplication of provision for young people – should services be more joined up
- Provision of accommodation and day centres – although this may have ceased or been suspended at the time the consultation and mapping was undertaken due to the Covid-19 Pandemic

10. Consultation

10.1 Overview

To support the development of the 2021 Homeless Strategy Oldham Council undertook a month-long period of three simultaneously running consultations promoted via a web survey link to members, stakeholders, and customers and distributed via e-mail, Oldham Homelessness Forum and Social media.

Figure 17: Consultation timeline



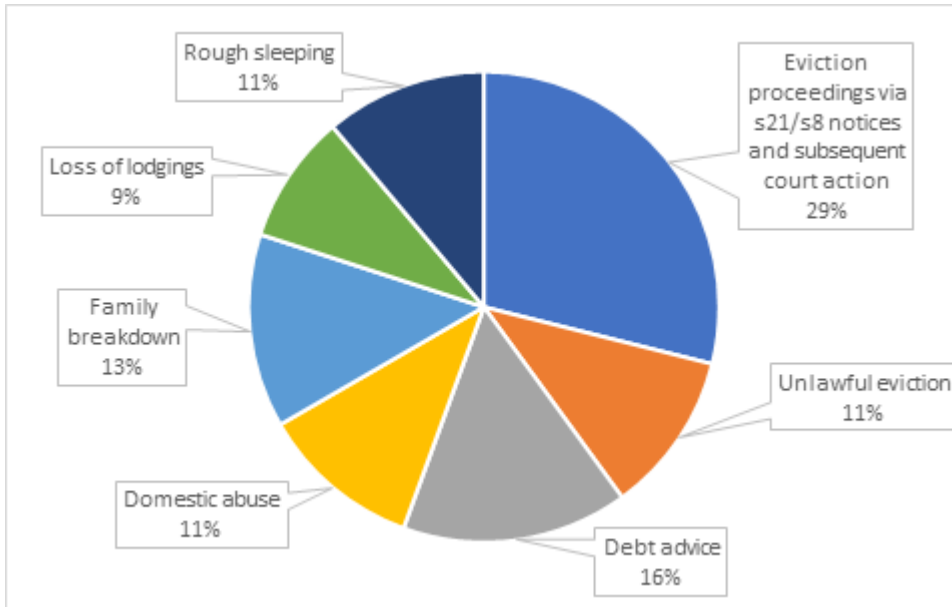
A total of 58 responses were received:

- Service users: 29
- Stakeholders: 15
- Members: 15

10.2 Members

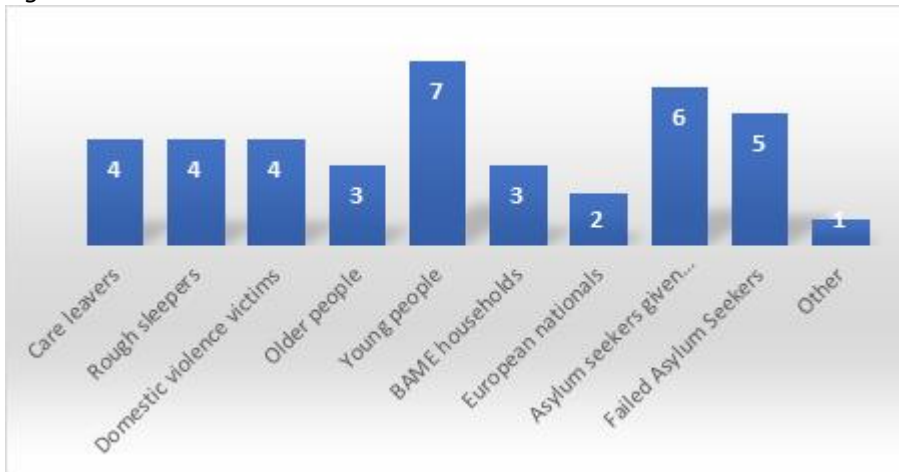
Members were asked what were the main reasons that their constituents approached them for housing advice and responded accordingly:

Figure 18: Member consultation responses



Next, Members were asked which if any of the following groups of homeless or threatened with homelessness people have you seen any increase in enquiries?

Figure 19



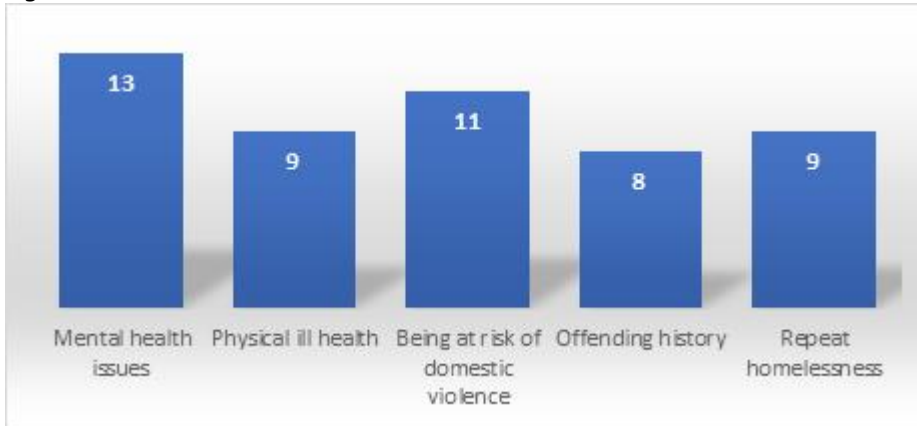
Members were asked more broadly what they thought needed to be done to address the main reasons for homelessness within Oldham. Across all five main reasons for homelessness consistent answers included:

- The need for more Affordable/Social Housing
- The need for better systems in relation to the ending of a private sector tenancy, NASS leavers and being asked to leave by friends or family
- The need to provide better support and advice in relation to the main reasons for homelessness

92% of members strongly agreed that a multi-agency approach is required to find appropriate housing and support solutions.

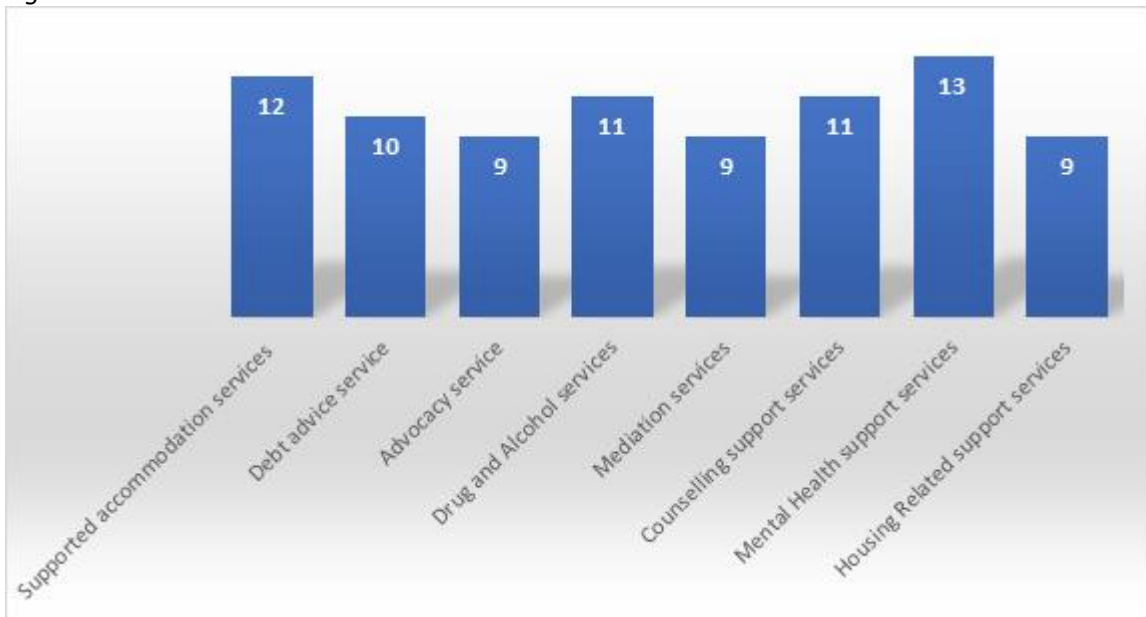
In support of this, members were asked what support they thought was needed in Oldham to meet these support needs and prevent or relieve homelessness.

Figure 20



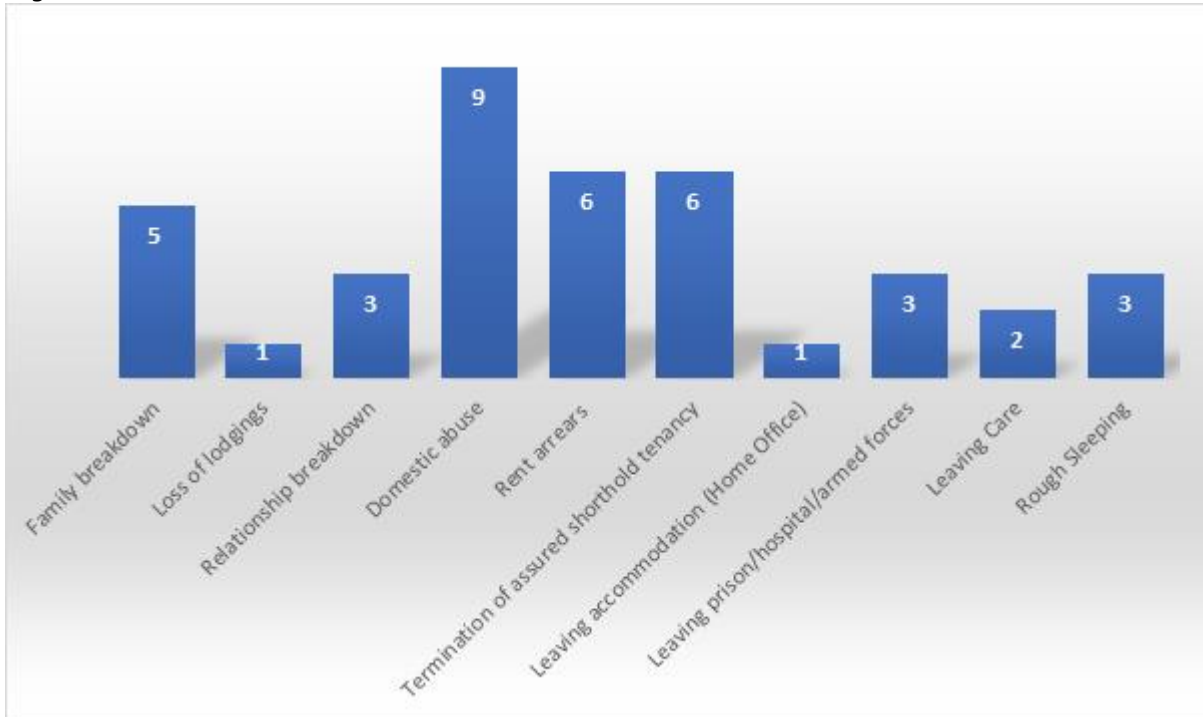
Which if any of the following services below would help to improve the services provided to those homeless or at risk of homelessness?

Figure 21



What 3 things should the new Homelessness strategy prioritise to address homelessness over the next 3-5 years? Members

Figure 22



Finally, members were asked what more we can do to help prevent homelessness in Oldham, which provoked a range of comments:

'Rethink how all elements of services work together, make service accessible with more flexibility to resolve homeless problems'

'I would like to see this included as part of the poverty truth commission, as homelessness is primarily a result of poverty and people's inability to cushion themselves from loss of income/ or their inability to save money to protect against this happening'

'Be aware that some people struggle to seek help so more outreach will be needed. Make sure advice is available in all the necessary languages'

32% suggested 'Building new/refurbishing homes'

16% each reflected on 'Providing supported/specific accommodation' and 'Financial challenges'

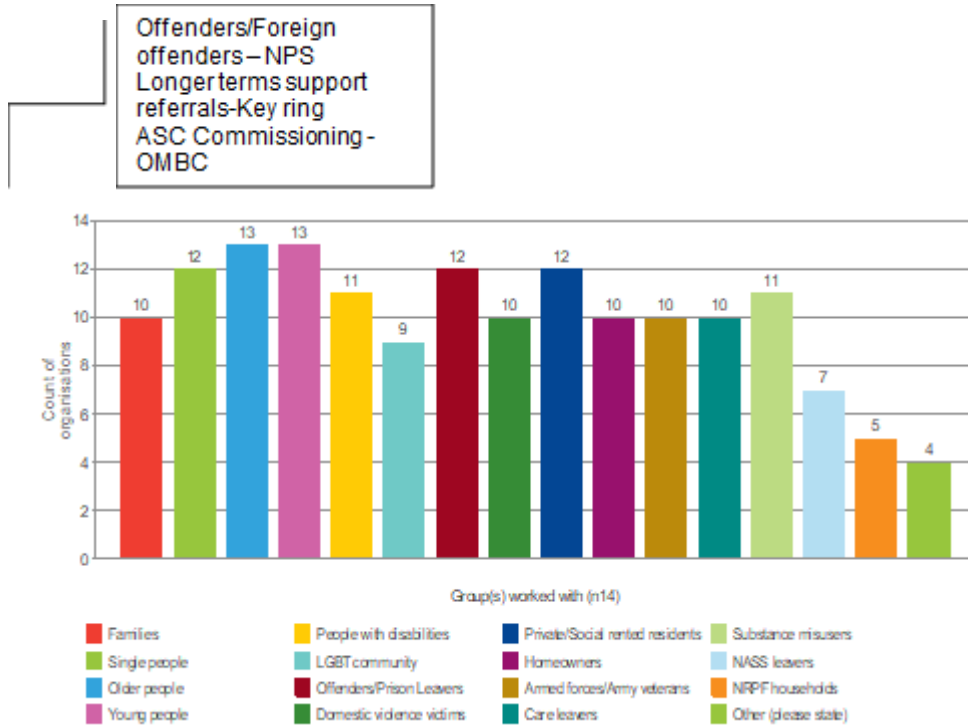
Learning Points:

- Members commented on the main causes of homelessness, particularly the end of private rented sector tenancies and domestic abuse
- There was a particular focus on 'asylum seekers' – whilst the Housing Authority is limited in its ability to assist this group, it is able to support those with refugee status and this review has identified a growing need in this area, alongside other eligible non-UK nationals
- Poverty is a thread running throughout the Review and the consultation, along with the need to help people 'cushion' themselves from loss of income

10.3 Stakeholders

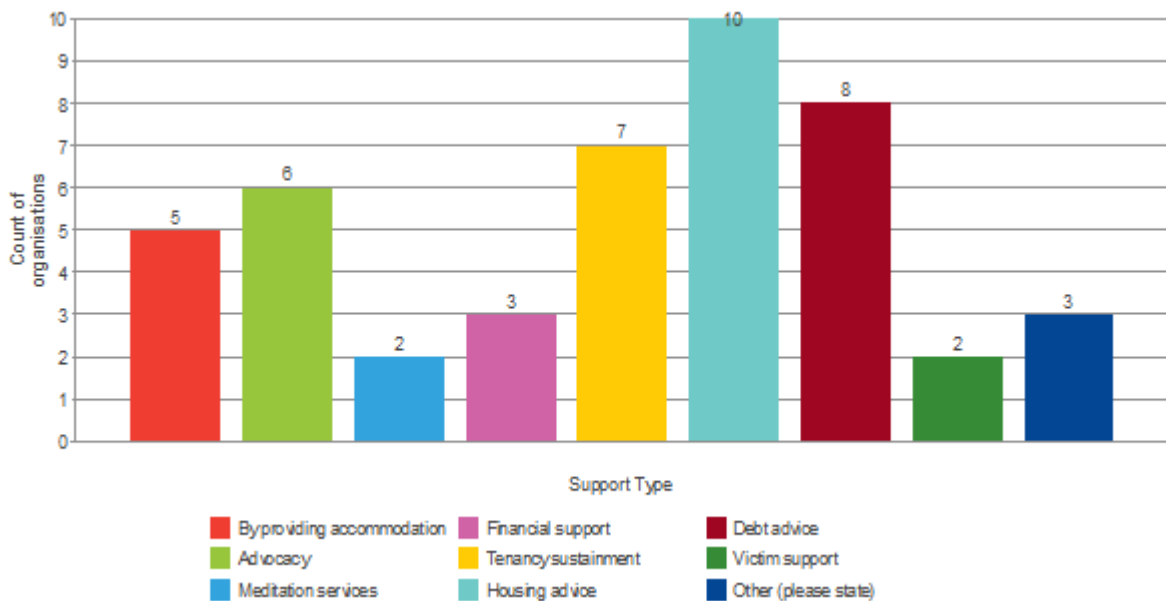
Responses were received from a wide range of stakeholders, recognising the depth and diversity of provision available across all sectors in Oldham.

Figure 23: Stakeholder consultation response



Stakeholders were asked how their organisation works to prevent and relieve homelessness and responded accordingly:

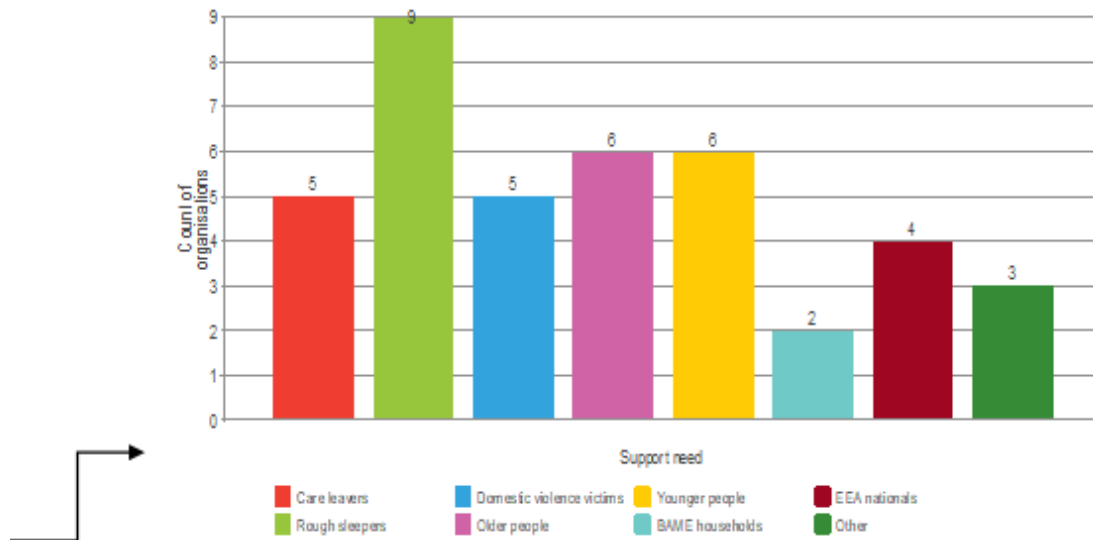
Figure 24



When asked about what further action could be taken to prevent homelessness in Oldham, most commonly respondents felt that organisations could take more actions to support those with higher needs including those with care packages, victims of domestic abuse and those with drug and or alcohol issues.

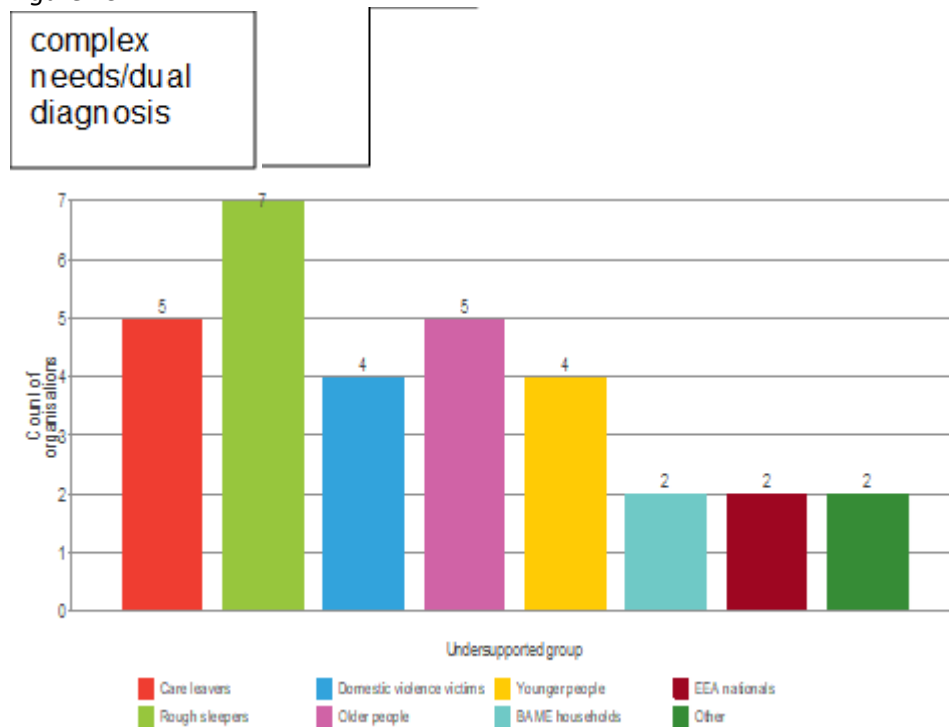
Most stakeholders said they had seen increased demand on their services, particularly from the following groups:

Figure 25



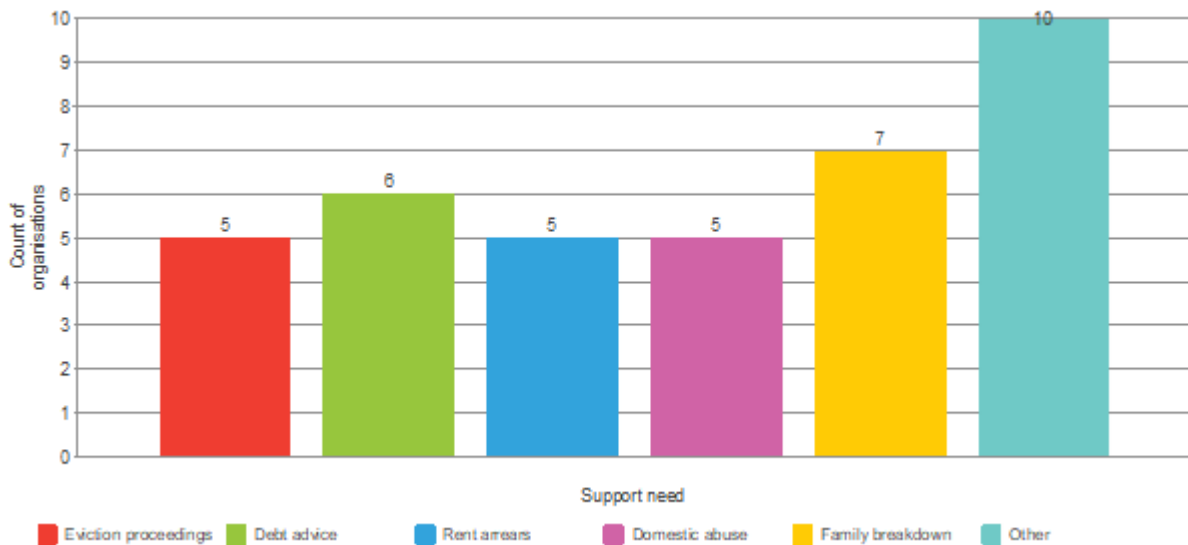
Stakeholders also highlighted these groups are requiring further support still, despite the current services available:

Figure 25



Stakeholders stated people sought help from their organisations for the following reasons:

Figure 26

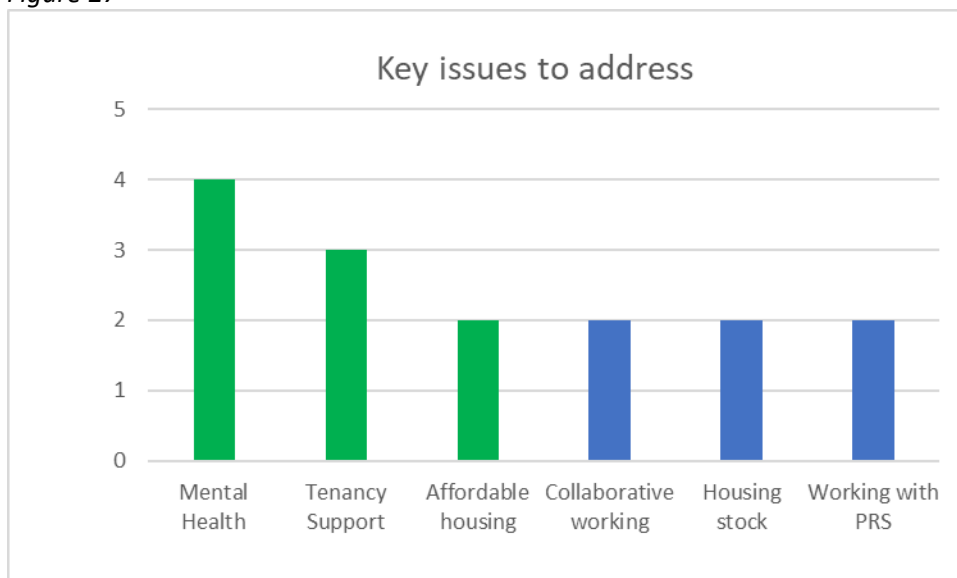


Other includes prison discharge, sofa surfing, rough sleeping and individuals with other support needs mental health, substance misuse.

Stakeholders felt these needs could be better met through increased accommodation supply and improved collaboration, customer service and communication.

What are the 3 key issues you feel that the new homeless strategy needs to address in order to holistically tackle homelessness in Oldham over the next 3-5 years?

Figure 27



The following issues were raised as being potential gaps:

Impact of welfare reform: UC, sanctions and association problems with Housing Benefit
More available accommodation, be it social or private rented or housing association

More cooperative working between agencies and the local authority
Local authority assessment of risk of those who are convicted and involved with the criminal justice system. More attention and exploration of the circumstances associated with risk posed to the public, and how these can be addressed within the current housing stock
Access to interpreters for services across Oldham
Supported accommodation
More support for those rough sleepers with complex issues – securing and sourcing longer term accommodation
Suitable move on accommodation with floating support to manage tenancy issues
Supported accommodation options for young people and care leavers. Enough resources to support people in Oldham when facing homelessness
Advocacy workers

Learning Points:

- Stakeholder responses highlighted the range of support available across Oldham, particularly with regards to housing and debt advice – something Members stated their constituents needed. An opportunity therefore arises to connect the two, and ensure people get the support they need to build their ‘cushion’
- There does however appear to be a lack of services providing mediation and victim support, which would respond to leading causes of homelessness such as domestic abuse and exclusion by friends and family
- Stakeholders reported increasing demand from young people and rough sleepers, which differed from Members – highlighting how different groups have different support networks, and how the 2021 Strategy needs to ensure housing advice services are appropriately targeted

10.4 Service Users

The survey was sent out via email, advertised on social media and particularly promoted in staffed temporary accommodation schemes such as A Bed Every Night in order to gain feedback from people with lived experience of homelessness services. Respondents stated to be from a range of ethnic and national backgrounds – reflecting Oldham’s diverse homelessness population – and has support needs including mental health problems (22%), drug dependency (16%) and offending history (12%).

Respondents were asked why did they become homeless or threatened with homelessness:

Table 19: Service user reasons for homelessness

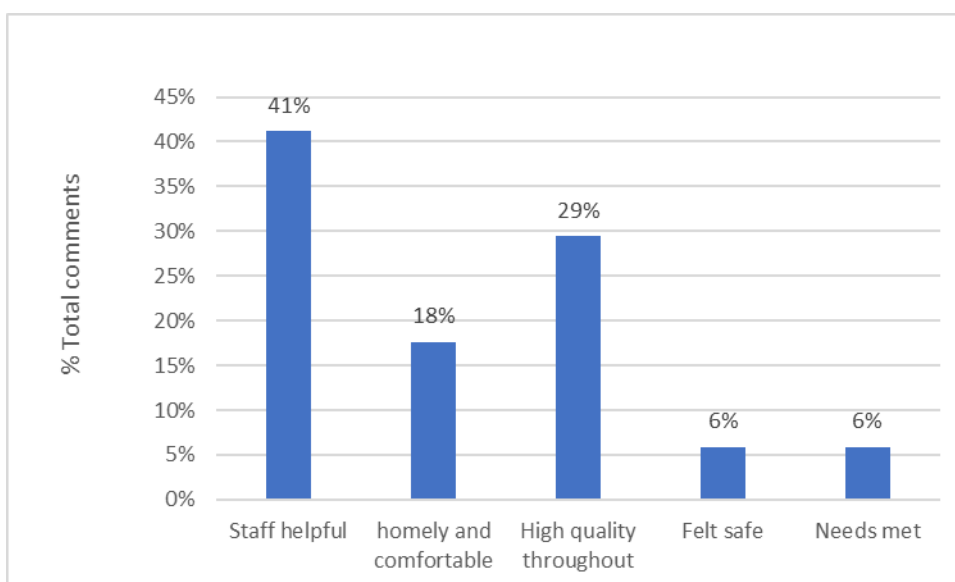
Reason	% Total	Count
Relationship breakdown with a partner	24%	7
Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate	10%	3
Other relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	10%	3
Having to leave a rented property for other reasons	10%	3
Other (e.g. homeless in emergency, sleeping rough or in hostel, returned from abroad)	10%	3
Domestic abuse	7%	2
Violence from other associates (e.g. family or friends)	7%	2

Other form of violence – please state	7%	2
Rent arrears in council tenancy	7%	2
Rent arrears in Private sector tenancy	7%	2
Left prison/on remand	7%	2
Left other institution or care (e.g. turning 18 after being looked after by the Council)	7%	2
Other forms of harassment	3%	1
Mortgage arrears (repossession or other loss of home)	3%	1
Required to leave accommodation provided by Home Office as asylum support	3%	1

Respondents living in temporary accommodation were asked questions specifically about this:

- Overall, 79% (23 of 29) respondents reported that they had been provided with temporary accommodation
- 96% stated that they did understand the temporary nature of this accommodation
- 91% stated that this accommodation was in Oldham
- Most commonly respondents reported that they had been in temporary accommodation for 1-2 months (39%)
- Three quarters of respondents stated that they understand the options available to them to find a new home
- 87% were either slightly or extremely satisfied with the standard of their accommodation

Figure 28: Service user comments about temporary accommodation



When asked what barriers they felt had prevented them to find a new home, the following findings emerged

Table 20: Service user barriers to finding a new home

	% Total	count
--	---------	-------

Something else (see below)	22%	10
Social housing application	20%	9
Rent in advance	15%	7
Rent arrears/housing related debt	13%	6
Offending history	11%	5
Support needs	9%	4
History of ASB	4%	2
No suitably adapted property	4%	2
Tenancy references	2%	1
Total	100%	46

How easy or not was it to access the information and advice and assistance you required to resolve your homelessness or threat of homelessness?

Table 21: Service user ease of accessing information and advice

	Count	Percentage
Easy or very easy	14	48
Neither	8	27
Difficult or very difficult	7	24
Total	29	100

When asked why they had found it difficult to access advice and assistance, the following reasons emerged:

Table 22: Service user ease of accessing information and advice

	Count	Percentage
Not able to get through on telephone lines	9	32
Other	9	32
Unsatisfactory response to electronic communications	8	29
Waiting times in Access Oldham	6	21
Accessibility to Access Oldham	2	7
Service opening times not suitable	1	4
Total	33	100

Although participants highlighted that they had issues in getting through on telephone lines, they also indicated that most commonly they preferred to contact the Housing option centre by telephone.

Table 23: Service user preferred channels of contact

	Count	Percentage
Telephone	23	79
In person	9	31
Social media	3	10
Third party	3	10

E-Mail	2	7
Total	39	

What service do you think are needed to meet your support needs to prevent or relieve your homelessness?

- Pre tenancy training 28%
- Mental health support 21%
- Mediation Services 10%
- Employment, education training 10%
- Advocacy services 7%

Finally, service users were asked their top three priorities for the new homelessness strategy to focus on to address homelessness in Oldham over the next three to five years

A total of 84 votes were cast across 15 potential options with the following emerging:

Table 24: Service user Homelessness Strategy Priorities

		Count	% Total
1	Rough Sleeping/Sleepers	18	21%
2	Family Breakdown	11	13%
	Relationship breakdown	11	13%
3	Rent Arrears	10	12%

Learning Points:

- Debt continues to be a theme, with rent arrears this time presenting a particular – and very real – barrier for people with lived experience of homelessness in Oldham
- The most visible form of homelessness, rough sleeping, also continues to be a top priority. This may have been slightly skewed in the service user consultation because it was heavily promoted to ABEN residents, but nevertheless this was supported by stakeholders also
- Employment and education – and the link to that ‘cushion’ – is a recurring theme again
- The main causes of homelessness are also reflected, particularly amongst single males – solutions needed for relationship breakdown and exclusion by friends and family, such as mediation, advocacy and mental health support

10.5 Common Themes from consultation

Services needed		
Members	Stakeholders	Customers
Tenancy Support	Tenancy Support	Tenancy support/Pre tenancy training
Domestic Abuse	Rough sleeping	Financial help
Mental Health	Mental Health	Mental health

Mediation/Counselling service		Mediation
Supported accommodation	Supported accommodation	Advocacy

Key Priorities		
Members	Stakeholders	Customer
Domestic Abuse	Mental Health support	Rough sleeping
Rent arrears/Termination of AST	Tenancy Support	Rent arrears
Family breakdown	Affordable housing	Family Breakdown
Affordable housing		Relationship breakdown

11. Emerging themes

The following brings together emerging themes that have come from the data, desktop analysis and consultation throughout this review – which will be used to develop the priorities and action plan for the new Homelessness Strategy

Emerging theme	Proposed response
Increasing exclusions by friends and family	Strengthened mediation resources, including reviewing the current mediation scheme
Increasing domestic abuse presentations	Carry out a review of domestic abuse services in the borough and commission an appropriate response in line with the new Domestic Abuse Bill
Increasing presentations due to loss of private rented sector accommodation	Work to improve landlord / tenant relations through education and information on rights and responsibilities
Increasing presentations due to relationship breakdown	Improve advice and options available to departing partners, including on legal rights, mediation and relationship counselling
High levels of co-morbidities of need amongst homeless applicants, such as rough sleeping, mental ill-health and substance misuse	Ensure staff in homelessness and related services are trained and equipped to respond in a psychologically informed way
Almost 15% of homeless applicants state to have physical health issues, in line with the national average. The Covid-19 has particularly brought to light 'hidden' conditions such as asthma, COPD and diabetes	Ensure homeless applicants have fair access to GP and other primary care treatment, and effective pathways into vaccination and other programmes
Offending history is the fourth highest identified support need amongst homeless applicants in Oldham, and highly over-represented in programmed such as ABEN and supported accommodation	Review accommodation options for ex-offenders with a particular focus on prevention prior to leaving custody / approved premises
Repeat homelessness and rough sleeping is a concerningly prevalent support need and has a significant rate of co-morbidity amongst other support needs such as domestic abuse, offending history and substance misuse	Undertake a peer review to establish why repeat homelessness occurs, and put measures in place to prevent this happening

Care leaver homelessness is decreasing, but continues to occur	Consider what further steps can be taken to prepare young people for adulthood and prevent future homelessness
Presentations from households leaving Home Office accommodation / former asylum seekers remain stubbornly high, and partly outside the local authority's control	Work together with partners to support early integration and intervention to prevent homelessness, especially in managing the easing of evictions following the Covid-19 pandemic
	Continue to develop the role of the Local Authority Asylum Support Officers (LAASLOs) – a time-limited service – to support the integration of refugees and deliver early intervention to prevent homelessness amongst those given leave to remain
	Ensure housing advice is promoted to emerging communities to ensure awareness of housing rights and prevent crisis situations
Presentations from older applicants is increasing, particularly from the private rented / homeowner sector	Ensure housing options for older people are sufficiently explored and well presented by housing advisors, and meet the needs of those with more complex needs e.g. ex-offenders
Presentations from 16-17-year olds are increasing	Review the current mediation service, as well as options for those who cannot remain at home
Numbers of single males, and single females with dependents in temporary accommodation is increasing	Increase options available via the Bond Scheme targeted at single households, e.g. en-suite rooms in shared houses / studio apartments
	Increase the availability of self-service advice online such as web chat with Housing Advisors so applicants can seek early advice more easily
Increasing numbers of homeless applicants are unemployed and likely to be further impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic	Work with partners to support applicants into employment to ensure they can better access and sustain housing
	Promote whatever financial relief funds are available to clear arrears and help applicants to access and sustain housing
Homelessness is disproportionately affecting certain geographical areas, particularly those already experiencing high levels of deprivation	Consider co-locating the Housing Options service within place-based integration initiatives, or upskilling relevant colleagues
Some commissioned services such as those for young people appear to overlap which may cause duplication and confusion for applicants, rather than promote effective prevention	Review and streamline current commissioned services to promote a 'one front door' approach where possible
Services for EEA Nationals will be changing with Brexit, and approaches to homelessness and support services have increased in the past two years	Review current commissioned services and ensure preparations are made for the closure of the EU Settlement Scheme
Debt and poverty run as a thread throughout homelessness, and there are doubts about whether there is enough help available to 'cushion' people against the effect of this	Review current provision and promote availability

Numbers 'sofa surfing' are continuing to increase, including those leaving NASS accommodation and intermittently rough sleeping according to research by the RSI Team	Source funding to extend the RSI Team or other service to support this group to more proactively intervene given their transient nature and focus on more proactive interventions
Short-term, time-limited interventions make it difficult for services to plan and carry out ongoing effective work e.g. the RSI Navigator and Mediation	Continue to lobby for long-term funding from bodies such as MHCLG

12. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

The following section undertakes a wider SWOT analysis of the findings of this Review, and its emerging themes. As with the previous section this will be used to develop the priorities and action plan for the new Homelessness Strategy – particularly by identifying any considerations and limitations which need to be considered.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong VCSE sector • Housing Options service now 'in-house' at the Council with greater flexibility to make changes to service delivery • Funding for temporary Hospital Discharge worker recently secured (until March 2022) • Tenancy Relations Service – specialist private rented sector officer • Gateway Process for non-commissioned supported Housing • Rough sleeping services and non-statutory accommodation options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duplication of service provision, e.g. young people's services without information sharing • Relatively low volume of self-service / online advice available leading to increased frontline demand on Housing Options service • Lack of affordable housing options • Increased need for shared accommodation options • Low Local Housing Allowance rates meaning lack of options / choice available in the private rented sector
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated teams – more virtual working in a post-Covid world • Greater Manchester Prevention Strategy and joint funding bids • Rough Sleeper Programmes • Domestic Abuse Bill • Housing Options Service review • To increase private sector leasing arrangements • Joint commissioning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term grant funding: MHCLG core grants provided year by year and other projects reliant on re-application • Need to make internal savings within the Council due to financial pressures • Growing demand due to volume of applications received • Impact of Covid-19 increased unemployment, reduction in incomes and impact on affordability of accommodation

13. Resources

As with all local authorities, Oldham Council is faced with the challenge of managing increasing demand with limited resources. The Council has the following core staffing structure within its Housing Options Service committed to the support of households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness:

Role	Number of staff	Caseload
Housing Pathway Advisors	7	50-100
Temporary Accommodation Officers	3	40-60
Apprentices	2	
Senior Housing Need Officers	2	
Tenancy Relations Officer	1	30-40
Central Access Point Officer (Supported Accommodation Assessments)	1	

Caseloads clearly need to be lowered, but additional resources need to be drawn in to help with this. Unfortunately, central government grant levels in 2020/21 did not support with this, despite being fully committed to expenditure on the homelessness service. A Housing Pathway Advisor (HPA) salary with on-costs would typically equate to £42,000; the team was uplifted by two HPAs when the funding was last increased, but a further increase in 'burdens' funding is needed to match the ongoing increase in demand which far outstrips Oldham's current grant level below:

Flexible Homelessness Support Grant	£193,534
New Burdens:	£62,418

The service has made a number of changes however to help manage caseloads, speed up assessments and provide a good service to applicants, such as utilising web-based portals, forms and letters, as well as social media apps such as 'Whatsapp' to communicate with customers. Apprenticeships have also been a valuable development opportunity as well as an affordable staffing resource – which should be developed further as part of the new Strategy. The Housing Options service should also look at whether the current 'generic' structure remains fit for purpose, or whether changes are needed such as introducing more specialisms should appropriate funding become available.

14. Next steps

The information in this Review will be used to formulate the new Homelessness Strategy for 2021-2026, with a focus on:

- Preventing homelessness in the district;
- Securing that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in the district who are or may become homeless; and,
- Securing the satisfactory provision of support for people in the district who are or may become homeless or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.

Appendix A: List of tables and figures

Table 1: Timeline of legal developments

Table 2: Timeline of Local, Regional and National Strategies

Table 3: Highlights from previous Strategy

Figure 1: Applications and Assessments

Table 4: Applications and Assessments: National comparison

Table 5: Prevention Duties

Table 6: Relief Duties

Figure 2: Final Decisions

Table 7: Full Housing Duties Owed

Table 8: Households not successfully relieved or owed a full housing duty

Table 9: Main reasons for homelessness

Figure 3: Main reasons for homelessness

Figure 4: Support Needs 2018-20

Figure 5: Count of support needs

Figure 6: Support needs and vulnerabilities 2016-20

Figure 7: Eligibility 2016-20

Figure 8: Eligibility breakdown 2018-20

British or Irish citizen, or habitually resident
Non-UK/-EEA citizen: Indefinite Leave to Remain
EEA citizen: Worker
Non-UK/-EEA citizen: Limited Leave to Remain
Non-UK/-EEA citizen: Granted refugee status
EEA citizen: Permanent right to reside
EEA citizen: Other
Non-UK/-EEA citizen: Other protection (e.g. humanitarian, discretionary)
EEA citizen: Eligible family member
Non-UK/-EEA citizen: Exceptional Leave to Remain
EEA citizen: Self-employed

Table 10: Ethnicity

Figure 9: Reason for loss of accommodation: Black households

Table 11: Age

Figure 10: Reason for loss of accommodation: Over 65s

Table 12: Households Types

Table 13: Economic Status

Figure 11: Homelessness presentations by area

Figure 12: Numbers of households in temporary accommodation

Table 14: Household makeup in temporary accommodation

Figure 13: Household makeup in temporary accommodation

Table 15: Referral received under the Duty to Refer

Figure 14: Reviews requested

Figure 15: Review outcomes

Table 15: Local Housing Allowance Rates, Oldham

Table 16: Social Housing Properties Advertised via Choice Based Lettings

Table 17: Live Housing Register applications as at 31/01/2021

Figure 16: Service mapping

Table 18: Tools to prevent and relieve homelessness

Figure 17: Consultation timeline

Figures 18-22: Member consultation responses

Figures 23-27: Stakeholder consultation responses

Table 19: Service user reasons for homelessness

Figure 28: Service user comments about temporary accommodation

Table 20: Service user barriers to finding a new home

Table 21-22: Service user ease of accessing information and advice

Table 23: Service user preferred channels of contact

Table 24: Service user Homelessness Strategy Priorities

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Report to CABINET

Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2021-24

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Hannah Roberts, Cabinet Member for Housing

SRO:

Helen Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive – People and Place

Officer Contact: Emma Barton, Director of Economy

Report Author:

Albert Margai, Principal Housing Market Intervention Officer

18th October 2021

Reason for Decision

The report seeks approval of the new Temporary Accommodation Strategy and accompanying delivery plan, setting out how the Council will deliver efficiency and sustainment of temporary accommodation options pursuant to its statutory obligations.

Executive Summary

The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act coupled with the Council's statutory housing advice service coming back in-house are notable contributors to the development of the Council's Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2021-24.

The approach outlined in the Strategy will ensure the Council is able to withstand forthcoming homelessness pressures that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic namely, the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and moratorium on bailiff evictions.

The Strategy and Delivery Plan outline a programme for delivery of temporary accommodation that would help reduce budgetary pressures, meet suitability and legal compliance standards and improve sustainability in the light of anticipated challenges.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet;

- Approve the Temporary Accommodation Strategy and accompanying delivery plan
- Authorise a procurement exercise allowing Housing Strategy to work with Procurement for the purpose of developing a bespoke temporary accommodation provider framework

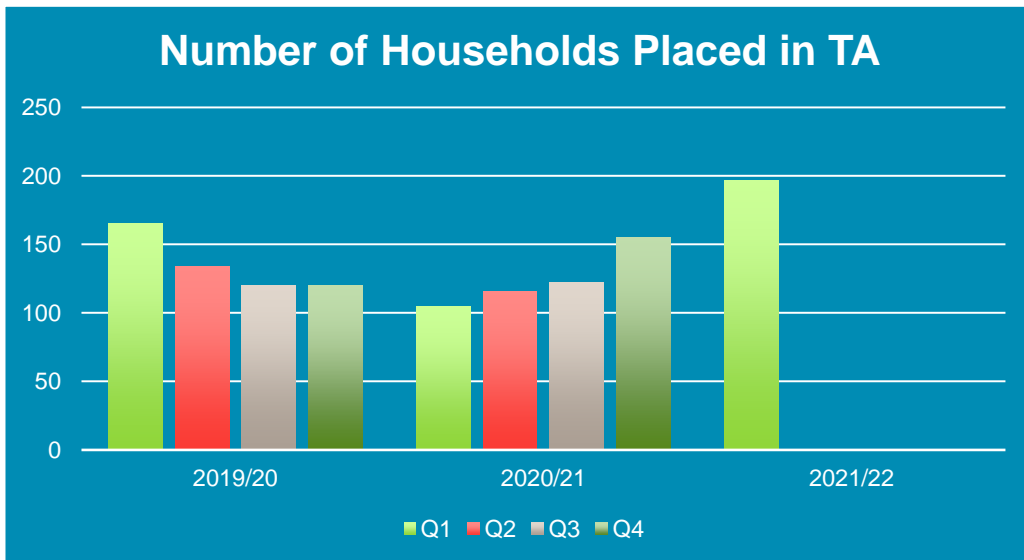
Temporary Accommodation Strategy

1 Background

- 1.1 The Introduction of Oldham Councils inaugural Temporary Accommodation (TA) Strategy sets out how the Council plans to deliver and sustain TA for the next three years, in order to meet its statutory obligations.
- 1.2 Change in legislation coupled with the local pressures pointed to need for the Council to develop a TA Strategy that would set out how the Council would respond to the groundbreaking changes. Hence, the commitment to bring forth a strategy was made in the Council's Housing Strategy 2019.
- 1.3 The development of a TA Strategy was also been motivated by the Council's Housing Options coming back in-house on 1st July 2019. The sudden transition of statutory functions coming back in-house has expedited the requirement for a TA Strategy.
- 1.3 Substantial efforts have already been dedicated to reshaping the outlook of the Council's TA portfolio. In Q1 of 2020/21, shortly after the pandemic struck, the Council managed to reduce hotel and B&B placements by an estimated 75%.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) in April 2018, placed additional statutory duties on Local Authority (LA) in the form of the new Prevention and Relief Duties.
- 2.2 The Prevention Duty requires the Council to accept a duty and take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness at an earlier stage, within 56 days. Where homelessness can't be prevented and a household becomes homeless, the Authority must award the Relief Duty and take reasonable steps to relieve homelessness; it is usually at this stage that interim accommodation is provided to a household.
- 2.3 Since the HRA came into force local authorities, including Oldham, have experienced annual increases in TA placements. Based on homelessness presentations and assessments, this upward trend is expected to continue in 2021/22.
- 2.4 At the end of Q1 2021/22 there were 197 households in the Council's TA, signifying an increase of 19% compared to Q2 2019/20 when Housing Options Oldham came back in-house, there were 165 placed in TA.



- 2.5 The gradual increase in the number of households entering TA consequently places additional pressure on existing limited budgets. Although 2020/21 was an abnormal year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost of providing TA is increasing across the region due to lack of available and cost-effective options.
- 2.6 Amid rising TA admittances, the Authority is also under significant pressure to identify suitable move on options in the social and private rented sectors to reduce time spent in TA.

3 Current Challenges

- 3.1 The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic placed additional pressures on the Council's TA options namely, the 'Everyone In' directive from Central Government. Under this directive Council's have also been asked to accommodate rough sleepers where there would not normally be a statutory duty to do so. There has been an increase in people and external organisations requesting accommodation under this pre-existing directive above and beyond the commissioned bed spaces the Council has available for this cohort.
- 3.2 As Everyone In gradually phases out it's believed the pressure from the private rented sector (PRS) and the new Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (DAA) will inflict additional pressure on statutory TA provision. Provisions within the DAA obligate Oldham to provide safe accommodation to victims of domestic abuse and renders the use of hotels/B&B unsuitable.
- 3.3 There was a significant increase in domestic abuse presentation in Oldham during the COVID-19 pandemic, this increase was reflected across the region and nationally. In the light of increasing presentations, efforts would have to be doubled down to bring online safe accommodation that meets the legal definition introduced under the Act.
- 3.4 It is important to emphasise that the end of the moratorium ban on bailiff eviction which came to an end on 31st May 2021 is expected to bring forth further challenges as homelessness presentations from the PRS are referred through the Housing and Advice Service as the courts work through their backlogs.

4 Options/Alternatives

-
- 4.1 One of the aims of Oldham Council's Housing Strategy 2019 was to develop a TA Strategy, and this document seeks to deliver on that priority.
 - 4.2 In addition to delivering on the Housing Strategy's ambition, the TA Strategy also delivers upon Oldham Council Economy Business Plan. The Business Plan includes a myriad of interconnected objectives, with successful delivery of some actions closely linked to the development and approval of the TA strategy.
 - 4.3 The inaugural Strategy and accompanying delivery plan succinctly set out how the Council plans to continue revamping its portfolio through a multitude of approaches and delivery methods as outlined in Appendix One
 - 4.4 Coinciding with overarching Central Government initiatives and local strategies for example, the emerging Homelessness Strategy, the TA delivery plan sets out Oldham Council's response to intensifying homelessness pressures.
 - 4.5 The options available to the Council are as follows.
 - 4.5.1 Option 1 – Do not approve the Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2021-24 and accompanying Delivery Plan. This is not the preferred option as it would delay the delivery of a much-needed strategy that would steer the Council towards cost-effective and sustainable delivery of TA.
 - 4.5.2 Option 2 – Approve the Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2021-24 and the accompanying delivery plan and commence a procurement exercise to create a TA Provider framework. This is the preferred options as this would enable Oldham Council to begin working towards the desired model for TA.
 - 4.5.3 Option 3 – Approve the Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2021-24 and accompanying delivery plan only. Whilst it is useful to have a TA Strategy and delivery plan without a route to procurement the Council would struggle to deliver the ambitions detailed in the document. Therefore, this option is not preferred.

5 **Preferred Option**

- 5.1 Option 2 is the preferred option.
- 5.2 It is recommended that the Strategy and accompanying delivery plan together with commencement of a procurement exercise, for the purpose of creating a bespoke framework of TA providers the Council is able to call-off to meet its statutory obligations are approved. This will enable the Council to mobilise the delivery plan at pace and scale to ensure statutory compliance and a cost-effective supply chain of TA to meet the needs of our residents.

6 **Consultation**

- 6.1 Following extensive consultation as part of the development of the Council's Housing Strategy, this document has built on this feedback from communities in further consultation with internal officers and the Lead Member for Housing.

7 **Financial Implications**

- 7.1 The decision to formally approve the Oldham Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2021-24 will not in itself incur a financial cost. As the practicalities of implementing the strategy become known, additional reports/business cases will be required and at this point any financial implication will be commented on further in-depth.
- 7.2 However it is acknowledged within the report that the Strategy Delivery Plan is taking a pragmatic approach to tackling temporary accommodation issues within Oldham, acknowledging that resources are finite. It is hoped that by way of a more focused Temporary Accommodation Strategy, the financial pressures in this area can be alleviated and the Council can benefit from more efficient and effective use of its resources
- 7.3 It is hoped that the Council will also supplement these existing financial resources by maximizing results through better partnership working and by exploring the potential to increase external funding.

(John Hoskins)

8 Legal Services Comments

- 8.1 The preferred option 2 is supported. It is important that the Council continues to abide by its statutory requirements in relation to temporary accommodation and of course in the most cost-effective manner as possible. Failure to comply with its requirements under the legislation or indeed not operate in the most cost-effective manner could render the Council open to legal challenge via Judicial review and / or negatively affect the reputation of the Council. (Alex Bougatef – Legal Services)

9. Co-operative Agenda

- 9.1 In addition to delivering on the Housing Strategy 2019, The new TA Strategy embodies the Authority’s corporate vision for improving lives and services in the borough by

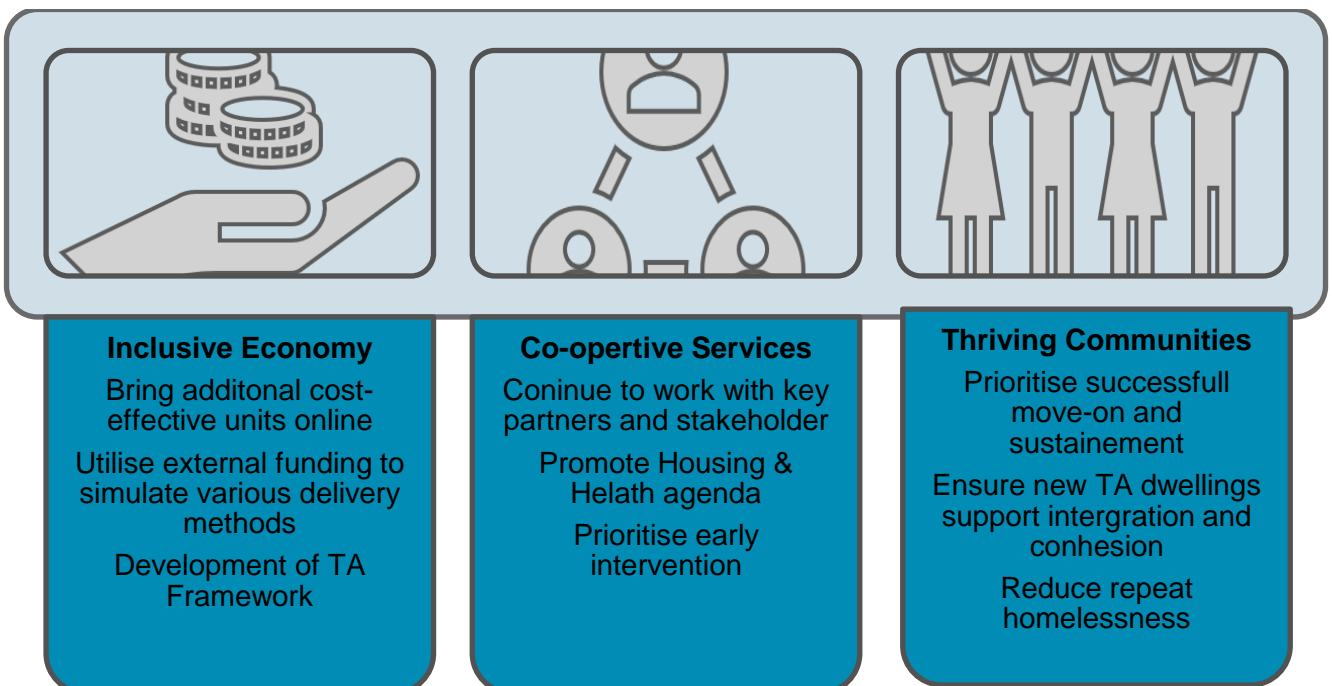


Fig1

-
- 9.2 The Strategy links seamlessly with the Co-operative values of the Council and each will be consistent throughout the delivery phase to ensure residents, especially those that experience homelessness benefit from the following outcomes:
- Improved health and wellbeing
 - Better quality of TA
 - New Opportunities to deliver additional services

10 **Human Resources Comments**

- 10.1 None

11 **Risk Assessments**

- 11.1 The longer-term risk to the Council around homelessness is affordability for a Statutory Service within its current financial envelope and long-term financial outlook. This policy is consistent with the present Housing Strategy and the financial/ operational implications will become clearer as it is implemented. (Mark Stenson)

12 **IT Implications**

- 12.1 None

13 **Property Implications**

- 13.1 As outlined in the main body of the report - Bryn Cooke

14 **Procurement Implications**

- 14.1 The Commercial Procurement Unit supports the recommendations outlined in the report and will work alongside the Housing Strategy Team to ensure the procurement process is undertaken in line with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. (Emily Molden).

15 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

- 15.1 None.

16 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

- 16.1 In meeting its statutory accommodation duties the Council will take all necessary steps in consultation with internal colleagues and elected members to minimise disruption when new accommodation is brought online.
- 16.2 Housing Strategy will continue to consult elected members on any new scheme in their wards and outline what, if any mitigation is in place. Existing data and information sharing processes will be utilised and reinforced to add value to this process.

17 **Implications for Children and Young People**

17.1 None. No significant implications beyond our existing statutory obligations.

18 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

18.1 No. The report and appended strategy set out how the Council plans to meet its statutory obligations efficiently and sustainably.

19 **Key Decision**

19.1 Yes

20 **Key Decision Reference**

20.1 HSG-13-21

21 **Background Papers**

21.1 None.

22 **Appendices**

22.1 The documents appended are:

Appendix One – Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2021-24
Appendix Two – Delivery Plan

Oldham Council Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2021-24

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Housing Act 1996, Oldham Council has a legal duty to offer interim accommodation to certain households seeking housing assistance. The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 which amended the Housing Act 1996, placed additional duties on Local Authorities (LA) to provide housing assistance and intervention at an earlier stage, including the offer of interim accommodation (also known as temporary accommodation)
- 1.2 Amongst a raft of other measures, the HRA which came into force in April 2018 introduced the Prevention and Relief Duties. The Prevention Duty applies to households that are threatened with homelessness within 56 days. Under the Prevention Duty, the Authority are obligated to take reasonable steps to prevent a household from becoming homeless, this may involve, negotiating for the household to remain in their existing accommodation or sourcing alternative accommodation for them.
- 1.3 Unlike the Prevention Duty, the Relief Duty is awarded when a household that is assessed under housing legislation as vulnerable becomes homeless. It is at that point that a LA is obligated to provide temporary accommodation.
- 1.4 In order to meet any interim accommodation duties owed to a homeless applicant, the Council would provide temporary accommodation via one of the following options:
- Emergency Bed & Breakfast (B&B) Placement
 - Nightly paid annexes and self-contained dwellings
 - Dispersed Council managed accommodation
 - Refuge Accommodation
- 1.5 In addition to providing TA to eligible households owed the Relief Duty, Oldham Council must meet strict suitability standards in accordance with the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 and the Homelessness Code of Guidance.
- 1.6 Besides the suitability criterion, the Council must also consider factors that influence the provision of temporary accommodation, not least the cost to Oldham Council of providing temporary accommodation that is not in a B&B setting.
- 1.7 The key priority for this document is to enable Oldham Council to continue meeting its statutory obligation to provide TA, but to ensure this is done in a cost-effective and sustainable manner.
- 1.8 The Council has a series of planned activities dedicated to maximising existing resources in the borough such as, working closely with partners namely, Registered Social Landlords and Private Landlords and continuing to offer bespoke housing related support to each household to ensure their housing needs are met during and beyond their TA placement. Ultimately, this approach will contribute to better tenancy sustainment and subsequently reduce repeat homelessness.

2.0 Local Context – Oldham’s Challenges

2.1 Oldham is one of ten boroughs located in Greater Manchester that forms part of the devolved Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). Since the introduction of the HRA, Oldham has seen a gradual increase in homelessness presentation which has subsequently resulted in an increase of admittances into TA, the highest percentage increase in GMCA during that period.

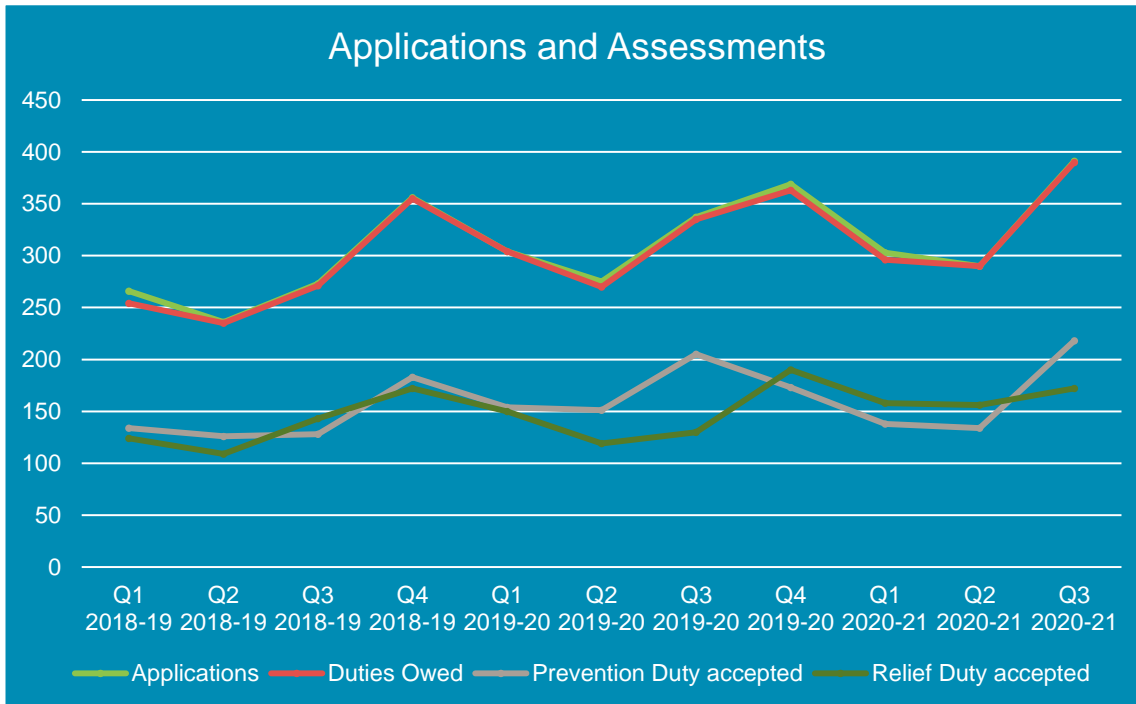


Fig 1.

2.2 The chart shown in Fig 1 clearly outlines the challenges caused by the rise in homelessness in Oldham. Unsurprisingly this trend is mirrored nationally, and this document sets out how the Council plans to sustainably address the growing demand for TA.

2.3 Between 2019-20 and 2020-21 the number of households placed in temporary accommodation increased by 11%. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic undoubtedly contributed to this increase, to what extent, is still unclear.

2.4 Homelessness and TA admittance were already trending upwards following the introduction of the HRA. The COVID-19 pandemic together with accompanying Central Government directive only compounded pressure on the Council to provide interim accommodation to a growing number of homeless households.

2.5 Number of Households in Temporary Accommodation

2.6 The impact of the HRA has been significant in respect to temporary accommodation admittance and since the Councils’ statutory Housing Advice came back in-house, Oldham has seen a gradual and consistent increase in the number of households in TA.

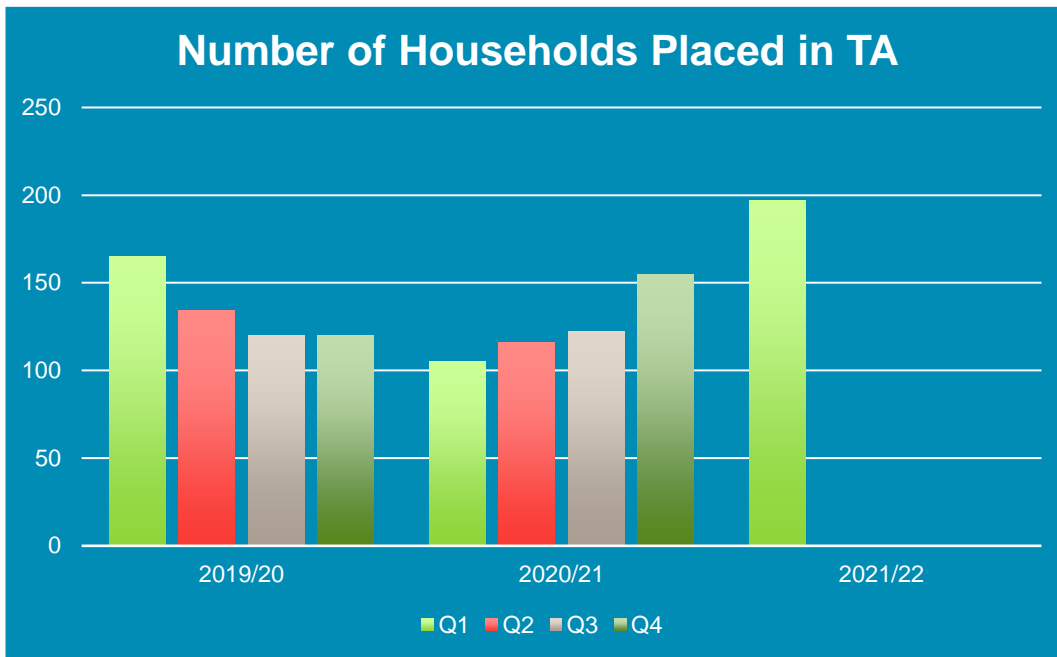


Fig 2

- 2.7 Based on the current trend illustrated in Fig 2 it's difficult to predict when this figure will plateau, so the priority of this strategy is to ensure that the Council is equipped to effectively meet the growing demand, through development of a robust and sustainable TA portfolio and procurement approach.
- 2.8 Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- 2.9 The introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 brings forth significant changes and placed additional duties on the LA not least, the requirement to award the priority need criterion to any domestic abuse (DA) victim and to proceed to offer safe accommodation. A thorough and extensive definition has been provided together with supplementary guidance notes and factsheets. However, the Act discourages the use of B&B accommodation for DA victims even on an emergency basis. Given the high demand for TA and limited supply of suitable and affordable self-contained options, the Council must work collaboratively to ensure it doesn't fall short of its statutory functions.
- 2.10 Private Rented Sector Evictions
- 2.11 The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic had a lasting influence on how homeless services are delivered and how LAs applied the legislation. Most notably, the announcement of 'Everyone In' directive saw Central Government calling for Authorities to accommodate anybody found to be rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping. The pandemic also put a halt on Bailiff Evictions which resulted in a 60% reduction on homeless presentations from the private rented sector (PRS).
- 2.12 It is anticipated that homelessness presentations from the PRS will revert to pre-pandemic levels as the courts work through the backlog of cases. Though figures are still unclear, it's anticipated that significant homeless presentations from the PRS are expected through this financial year.
- 2.13 Notwithstanding forthcoming challenges, the Temporary Accommodation Strategy will support the Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy to ensure Oldham is well positioned to deal with the fallout from the pandemic and the route to recovery.

3.0 Where Homelessness Households are Placed

3.1 The current blend of TA in Oldham is varied and flexible, allowing the Council to spread the risk across several provisions.

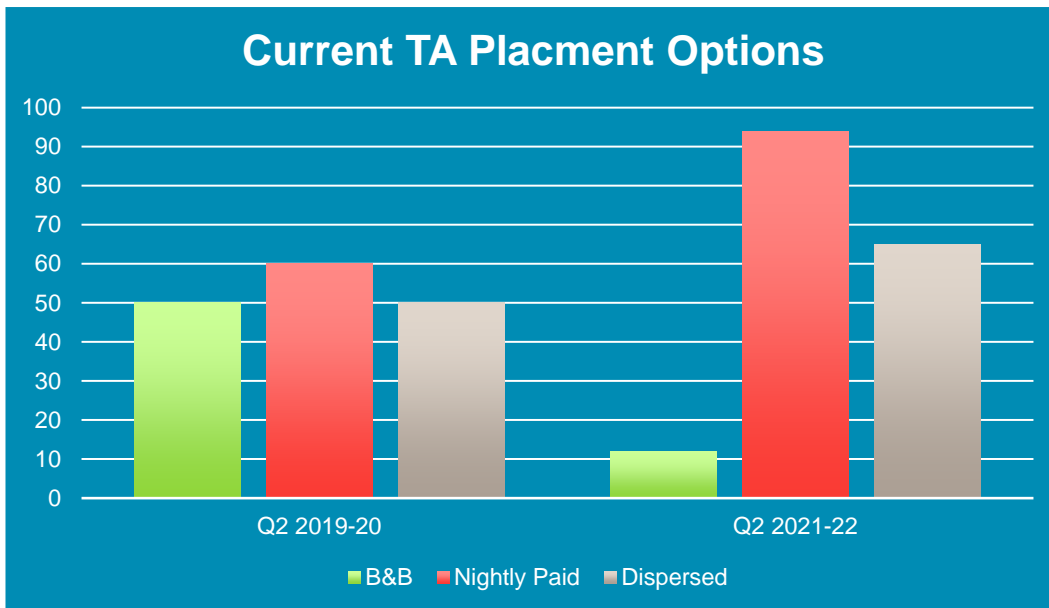


Fig 3

3.2 On-going efforts to reduce the number of households accommodated in B&B have resulted in a significant a reduction of B&B placements. As a result of making a substantial shift away from B&B placement, the risk of non-compliant B&B has subsequently reduced. Local Authorities that accommodate family households in B&B longer than six weeks face special measures from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) – Oldham Council recorded zero non-compliant cases in 2020/21.

4.0 Strategic Objectives for Oldham’s TA

4.1 A key priority of this strategy is overseeing a gradual and organic transition from nightly paid to more cost-effective methods of delivering TA, representing a planned step-down approach.

4.2 The table in Fig 3 illustrates the gradual move away from B&B over the previous two years. Consequently, the shift from high B&B usage was driven by the Council bringing online additional nightly paid units that are considerably cheaper than B&B, but crucially, allows the Council to meet its statutory requirements. Not least, ensuring family households were not placed in B&B for longer than 6 weeks as legislated in The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003 due to the long-term impact on the family’s health and wellbeing, especially the children.

4.3 Successful delivery of the strategy would enable the Council to make a significant improvement to the lives of Oldham residents, by providing better housing and support to improve people’s lives– a key priority that was highlighted in the Council’s Housing Strategy 2019.

5.0 Temporary Accommodation Delivery Methods

A range of delivery methods have been identified as part of gap and benchmark analysis. All the options outlined below support the development of a cost-effective and sustainable portfolio.

- 5.1 Leased/Council Managed Provision
- 5.2 During the lifespan of this strategy the Council intends to bring online more lease accommodation that the Council will manage. The properties will be in dispersed locations across the borough to cater to the growing demand boroughwide. Leased provision has proven to be suitable for homeless households, cost-effective for the Authority and more sustainable overall.
- 5.3 Housing Benefit (HB) subsidy claims from Government is also a notable justification for why additional lease provision is desirable. Compared to nightly paid accommodation, leased provision is an estimated 54% cheaper than nightly paid due to the funding gap between payments made to the provider and subsidy claims (income) from Central Government.
- 5.4 How will we Grow the Leased Portfolio
- 5.5 We understand the PRS plays a significant role in driving up housing supply across all tenures, including TA. Currently, 32% of the Council's dispersed leases are from private landlords, the other 68% are from social landlords.
- 5.6 As a co-operative borough Oldham is committed to collaboration and co-delivery. We continue to apply this ethos in our approach by growing our portfolio through public and private sector partnerships. We will seek more opportunities to work with Registered Social Landlords (RSL) and private rented sector (PRS) landlords to increase the supply of good quality single and family accommodation for TA use
- 5.7 In delivering this Strategy we'll undertake further market research to identify a range of lease options, such as income-strip lease arrangement, known to rapidly boost housing supply from the private sector. We'll commit to exploring available options on the market to understand if/how they can support the Council's TA growth.
- 5.8 Specified Exempt Accommodation – Temporary Accommodation with Support
- 5.9 Temporary Accommodation with support, otherwise known as 'Supported Accommodation' or 'Specified Exempt Accommodation' is an option Oldham has been exploring for several months. Supported Accommodation is defined as accommodation that is provided by a non-profit organisation for vulnerable individuals, where normal HB rules do not apply.
- 5.10 The majority of Single people who enter TA suffer from either, or a combination of, physical and mental health illness. In most cases their identified need or dependency means they will require additional support to sustain in TA and when they subsequently move on to live independently.
- 5.11 As shown in Fig 4 the type of support needs tenants require whilst in TA is varied hence, it is critical for the Council to ensure its TA delivery model meets the needs and requirements of the most vulnerable households.

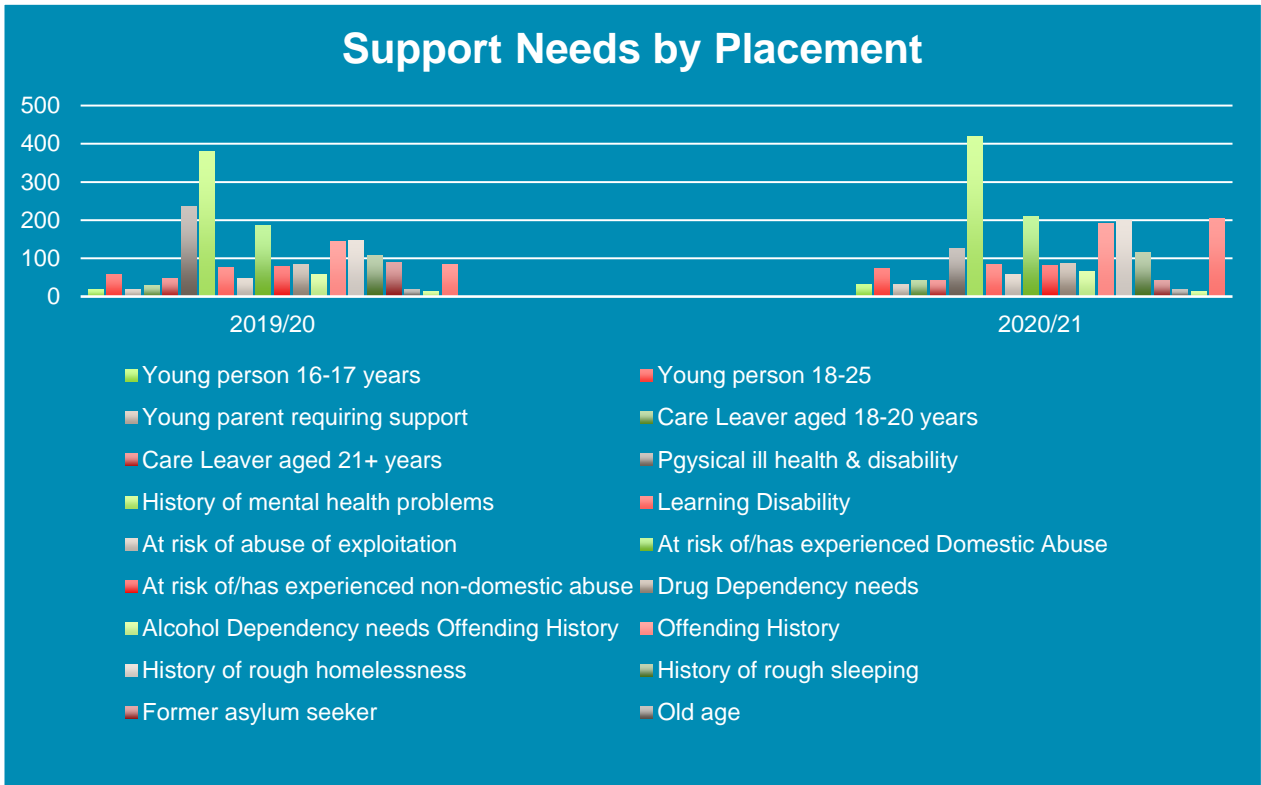


Fig 4

- 5.12 To ensure that we are catering to the needs of our most vulnerable residents, work is underway to bring forward a TA with support model. This type of provision comes with enhanced housing related support and is a step up from general TA in terms of the level of support on offer to individuals. Crucially, this option is considerably more cost-effective, sustainable and suitable than nightly paid provision and hotel/B&B. Consequently, it also forms an intricate part of the overall aims and objectives of the Strategy.
- 5.13 The Authority plans to undertake a procurement exercise to identify reputable partners to collaborate with, to incorporate this delivery model into its portfolio in pursuit of long-term sustainable delivery.
- 5.14 Council Owned Provision
- 5.15 In line with the step-down approach for TA this option is viewed as the final step in strategically growing the Council's TA portfolio. The Council owned delivery represents the ambitious approach of this strategy. The aim of the TA Strategy is to build the foundations to support a diverse, cost-effective and sustainable TA portfolio which benefits from lessons learned and strives for creativity and innovation.
- 5.16 We will collaborate with colleagues to identify strategic Council assets suitable for TA. In addition, we will work with Homes England and MHCLG to secure external grant funding to make projects and schemes more viable and deliverable.
- 5.17 Utilisation of existing Council owned assets that can be repurposed or reclassified to deliver TA is widely regarded as one of the best methods of delivery due to a myriad of benefits such as:
 - Revenue from HB subsidy/rent
 - Regeneration of obsolete assets

-
- Meeting Statutory obligation
- 5.19 Housing Strategy will prioritise this approach by working cooperatively with internal colleagues to redevelop existing sites for TA use.
- 5.19 Move-On Focus
- 5.20 The Authority is obligated to support individuals in TA with relevant actions that will contribute to resolving their homelessness problem. As detailed in the above graphic, the Authority's TA provides shelter for a number of extremely vulnerable households. The support they receive from the Council is paramount to their health, safety and wellbeing. It's vitally important that every effort is made to build upon this support offer to ensure the chance of repeat homelessness is significantly reduced.
- 5.21 We will work co-operatively with internal and external partners to increase capacity and dedicated resources to support vulnerable individuals that enter TA. The objective is to ensure the relevant level of housing related support is provided to individuals that cannot sustain without it.
- 6.0 Service Delivery
- 6.1 There are several aspects to delivering efficient TA that the Council will commit to developing during the lifetime of this strategy to ensure continued improvement to service delivery
- 6.2 Procurement of a Provider Framework
- 6.3 Housing Strategy will undertake a procurement exercise to create a framework of TA providers which the Council would be able to call-off. The framework would grant the Council much needed flexibility to mobilise its strategic objectives for TA, including housing management, competitive pricing, and the ability to develop and build upon existing relationships with local providers.
- 6.4 Service Charge Policy
- 6.5 As well as fulfilling the Council's statutory obligation to accommodate homeless households on an interim basis, additional steps are taken to support clients during their time in TA by imparting basic housing and tenancy management skills to prepare households for independent living.
- 6.6 It is in the Council's interest to equip homeless households with the requisite skills to manage their own tenancies including, paying bills, budgeting and managing basic housing affairs. It's for this reason that we will commit to extensively rolling out our service charge pilots across the majority of our TA provision. The details of Oldham Council's service charging pilot can be found in the Service Charge Policy.
- 7.0 The Oldham Plan
- 7.1 The TA Strategy underpins the Council's co-operative ethos and overarching three-pronged model, dedicated to improving lives and services in Oldham in partnership with key stakeholders.

7.2 While homelessness is high in specific areas of the borough, we know that homelessness is a broader issue that affects individuals from all backgrounds. It is important for Oldham’s residents to receive and experience the benefits of an Inclusive Economy, Co-operative Services, and Thriving Communities irrespective of their situation, especially at their time of need.

Inclusive Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to delivering high standards of TA • Create local opportunities by working with local partners and providers • Continue to identify and secure external funding to help deliver on the strategic priorities • Greater utilisation of Get Oldham Working to reduce the likelihood of repeat homelessness • Taking advantage of a procured TA framework of providers
Co-operative Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with key partners and stakeholders to ensure we support our most vulnerable residents • Continue promoting the Housing and Health agenda by working with organisations who are committed to improving the lives of vulnerable homeless residents in Oldham • Work with reputable providers in delivering TA dwellings and safeguarding vulnerable individuals • Prioritise early intervention in all cases, working cooperatively for benefit of households experiencing homelessness
Thriving Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise successful move on-on and sustainment from TA by drawing up effective move-on plans for homeless households. With a focusing on capturing and resolving issues that cause homelessness and hinder sustainment • Undertake regular survey and feedback to gauge customer satisfaction • Promote empowerment and resilience that would enable residents to take greater control of their circumstances • Promote ownership and accountability

Fig 5

7.3 The proposed delivery models are closely connected the Council’s specific corporate goals identified in the Oldham Plan themes detailed in Fig 5. The TA Strategy will work in-sync with the Council’s corporate and strategic objectives which aim to make a positive difference to the lives of Oldham residents:

- Improved health and wellbeing – through better support in TA, residents can gain the skills to sustain and live a healthier lifestyle. A tailored, person centered support model would help reduce repeat homelessness, promote healthier lifestyle that could lead positive outcomes for Oldham’s residents and services

-
- Better quality temporary accommodation – the proposed delivery models rely on maximising the use of the private sector; ensuring the standard of TA brought online supports the Council’s strategic aims of improving housing conditions in the private sector. Ultimately, this will deliver long lasting benefits to all residents, whether they are experiencing homelessness or not
 - Opportunities to deliver additional services – relieving pressure on the TA budget would provide greater flexibility for the Council to fund additional services that, could benefit residents in other ways, for example, fund the development of a tenancy training programme within TA

Appendix Two

Temporary Accommodation Delivery Plan				
Delivery Objective	Short-term Outcome (12 months)	Medium-term (12-24 months)Outcome	Lead Organisation/Department	Benefits
Bring online additional leased accommodation to meet growing demand	Relieve pressure on TA provision by increasing supply	Relieved pressure on TA budget as we will replace expensive TA with cheaper options	Housing Strategy, RSLs and Private Landlords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost efficiency and sustainability • Varied portfolio
Deliver Oldham's first Council owned hostel provision	A dedicated TA scheme to accommodate the most vulnerable individuals in the borough	Full understanding of a template to deliver similar schemes, supported by lessons learned to help the Council increase its stock of cost-efficient TA	Housing Strategy, Homes England, Housing Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TA Budget relief as Hostel will be funded via specified exempt funding under HB rules • Reduced cost that could help create opportunity and capacity elsewhere
Undertake desktop exercise to identify Council owned assets to potentially convert to TA use	Collaboratively working to take a strategic decision-making approach on Council assets	Useful information and data to inform bids and business cases	Housing Strategy, Asset Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Council revenue through utilisation of existing vacant sites potentially costing money • Bring long-term vacant assets

				back into use and improve neighborhoods
Undertake a procurement exercise to create a bespoke TA Framework consisting of suitable and reputable accommodation providers	Improving quality through standardising specification and service standards	Reduction in TA spend and greater control of providers and the market	Housing Strategy, Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service improvement through a streamlined selection process and • Improve standards of TA • Added social value providers
Rebalance the TA portfolio by reducing the number nightly paid TA currently in use	Gradual reduction in TA spends aided by the transition away from expensive nightly paid schemes	Significant reduction in TA spend	Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost efficiency and sustainability
Bolster the Housing Options' Move-On support offer through increased staffing resources	Reduction in existing officer caseload, ensuring clients receive higher standard of dedicated housing related support	Higher rates of Move-on from TA and decrease in repeat homelessness.	Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in time spent in TA would reduce length of TA admittance and spend • Promote independence, health and wellbeing
Introduce a tenancy training programme in TA that complements existing support and move on plans	Undertake benchmarking exercise informed by lived experience to find out what residents would benefit most from	Explore delivery and mobilisation through additional and existing funding streams	Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment and up-skilling to promote health and wellbeing, sustainment and reduction in

				repeat homelessness
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NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest to disclose the information because it relates to the commercial affairs of the Council and its contractors.



Report to CABINET

Waste Collection Vehicles (NC-21-12)

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Amanda Chadderton, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

Officer Contact: Helen Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive

Report Author: Mark Husdan – Op's Manager (Waste & Fleet)
Ext. 2144

18th October 2021

Reason for Decision

The waste management service (WMS) seek approval to purchase 5 new waste collection vehicles. The vehicles will replace 5 old vehicle (2012 plates) and allow the waste management service to maintain and appropriately manage its statutory duties around domestic and commercial waste collections.

Executive Summary

Oldham Council's Waste Management Service requires 5 new vehicles to maintain. After exploring all options available to us the service is seeking approval to purchase the new vehicle fleet through the procurement process outlined within the report.

Recommendations

To purchase 5 new waste collection vehicles via the ESPO framework for Specialist Vehicles.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and it is not in the public interest to disclose the information because it relates to the commercial affairs of the Council and its contractors.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Oldham Council's Waste Management Service require 5 new vehicles to maintain efficient and effective waste collections across the Borough.
- 1.2 The vehicles they will be replacing are over schedule on being replaced as waste vehicles are end life of after 7 years. After this point the cost of maintaining and repairing vehicles generally exceeds the borrowing costs of a new vehicle.

2.0 Current Position

- 2.1 The WMS currently operate a fleet of Dennis Eagle (narrow track) vehicles for all domestic and commercial waste collection activity. After a major purchase of new vehicle fleet in 2019 (18 vehicles) the WMS is looking to now replace the last 5 vehicles of its old 2012 vehicle fleet. The WMS has been using a narrow track Dennis Eagle vehicle due to access issues when collecting from terrace property and rural village areas. Standard fleet vehicles would significantly increase the amount of 'no access' missed collections we experience. The service has during the lifespan of the fleet trialed a number of vehicles and lifting machinery (different manufacturers) to challenge their current Dennis Eagle (vehicle) and Terberg (lifting machinery) option. However after considering all key factors (i.e. cost, vehicle reliability, fleet/repair experience, driver experience and maintaining efficient collections) and following the appropriate procurement process the service would like to proceed with its current vehicle model/option.
- 2.2 We continue to monitor the scope and potential for electric and hydrogen vehicles. A number of trials by other Councils are underway and we are keen to evaluate how their experience can support Oldham transition towards a zero-emission fleet. Transition to alternative fuels would require depot charging and recharging which we currently do not have but will investigate for future vehicle replacement across the council fleet.

3.0 Options/Alternatives

- 3.1 To award the purchase of 5 Refuse Collection Vehicles to Dennis Eagle Ltd. The vehicles offered match the specification and are the only vehicles available with a narrow track chassis which is crucial to the way Oldham operate within the borough.
- 3.2 **Delay replacing the vehicle fleet.** The advantages of this would be that we would not incur any costs this financial year on replacing the vehicle fleet. The main disadvantage would be an increased risk in vehicle break downs and a significant increase in repair costs as the vehicles get older. This has the potential to cause significant impact on waste collections due to vehicles becoming unavailable and cause increased costs through hiring replacement vehicles (approx. £1,000 per week).

4.0 Preferred Option

4.1 Option 1) To award the purchase of 5 Refuse Collection Vehicles to Dennis Eagle Ltd. The vehicles offered match the specification and are the only vehicles available with a narrow track chassis which is crucial to the way Oldham operate within the borough.

5.0 Consultation

5.1 N/A

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 This is a proposal to purchase five refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) from Dennis Eagle Ltd in 2021/22.

6.2 It is proposed that the acquisition is financed via capital receipts in lieu of utilising the Fleet Replacement reserve. The capital expenditure allocation will be taken from funds for emerging priorities which is included within the Council's approved Capital Strategy. Monies from the fleet reserve will instead be transferred to corporate reserves to support the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and underpin its financial resilience.

6.3 This request follows an appraisal of the long-term vehicle requirements of the Waste Management service by its operational management team. The review confirmed that the service requires a permanent fleet of 27 RCVs to meet its on-going waste collection obligations in a cost-efficient manner.

6.4 The vehicle requirement takes into account identified trends and growth in demand including:

- Seasonal customer demand (which peaks in the Spring and Summer months);
- Additional domestic waste collections caused by new property developments;
- Growth in the Trade Waste function (which continues to grow its customer base);
- The need to maintain adequate capacity to cover vehicle maintenance intervals and breakdowns.

6.5 The programme for renewing the RCV fleet is contained within the Fleet Replacement programme (and consolidated subsequently within the Council's approved Capital Programme).

6.6 The Council's most recent Fleet Replacement Programme was approved by Cabinet in 2019. In line with earlier programmes, this included the acquisition of 22 RCVs (as part of a 7-year rolling programme of vehicle acquisitions). This is 5 units fewer than the number required by the service (27 minus 22).

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- 6.7 Prior to 2019/20, the shortfall in RCVs was bridged by short term vehicle hiring financed from within the Waste Management revenue budget. The replacement of a significant element of the RCV fleet in 2019/20, however, allowed opportunity to cease the hiring of RCVs in the medium term by retaining five older vehicles which would otherwise have been sold. This initiative generated a saving which was approved as part of the 2019/20 Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (Reference: PPL-BR1-217).
- 6.8 As the report states above, these vehicles are now at least 9 years old (bought in 2012) and have become worn out. There are frequent breakdowns which is leading to more frequent and increased repair charges. More frequent breakdowns have an adverse impact on service delivery. As a further complicating factor, the GMCA is introducing Clean Air Zone charges for non-compliant heavy goods vehicles from May 2022. These older vehicles are non-compliant and will therefore incur a levy of £60 for each day they are used. If these vehicles are retained and used for 200 days per annum each, the Council would incur additional running costs.
- 6.9 The utilisation of an existing reserve seeks to address the identified funding gap in the current Fleet Replacement/ Capital programme (2019/20-2023/24). The acquisition of new, more efficient vehicles will also address the pollution / service-related issues referred to above.
- 6.10 This proposal will allow the identified structural gap within the next Fleet Replacement/Capital programme (2024/25-2028/29) to be addressed.
- 6.11 The forecast maintenance costs associated with the new RCVs will be met from within the existing revenue budget for the Waste Management Service.
- 6.12 A comparison between three alternative methods of acquiring the usage of these vehicles has been produced (information provided within the confidential approval report).
- 6.13 Whilst hiring is a reasonably efficient and effective short-term method of acquiring vehicle usage, the table shows that, over the long term, it is a relatively expensive option for high value vehicles such as RCVs.
- 6.14 The above table shows that the use of reserves is the most cost-effective option in this case. It is less expensive than borrowing because it negates the need to incur interest charges of £0.104m over the 7-year borrowing period.
- 6.15 The disadvantage of using reserves, however, is that they are a one-off funding source and although earmarked for the fleet replacement programme, their use reduces the financial resilience of the Authority. (Nigel Howard)

7.0 **Legal Services Comments**

- 7.1 Legal Services supports the recommendation outlined in the report. The procurement has been undertaken in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the YPO framework terms which is a compliant framework agreement that can be used by the Council. Sukie Kaur - Solicitor

8.0 **Co-operative Agenda**

8.1 This proposal is a commercial business decision based on service need and the continuation of delivery. The contract is being awarded through an approved commissioning process. Submissions from local companies and organisations should be reviewed from a social value standpoint and wherever possible benefit the Oldham economy.

Sarah Whittle – Policy Manager Ext 3480 20/8/21

9.0 **Human Resources Comments**

9.1 n/a

10.0 **Risk Assessments**

10.1 n/a

11.0 **IT Implications**

11.1 n/a

12.0 **Property Implications**

12.1 None

13.0 **Procurement Implications**

13.1 The Commercial Procurement Unit supports the recommendation outlined in the report. The procurement has been undertaken in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the YPO framework terms. (Emily Molden)

14.0 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

14.1 None

15.0 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

15.1 None

16.0 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

16.1 No – not required.

17.0 **Key Decision**

17.1 Yes

18.0 **Key Decision Reference**

18.1 NC-21-12

19.0 **Background Papers**

19.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act:

File Ref: DN557830

Name of File: Purchase of 5 Refuse Collection Vehicles

Records held on the Chest e-procurement portal (www.the-chest.org.uk).

Officer Name: Emily Molden

Contact No: 07515 187 975

20 **Appendices**

20.1 N/A

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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