
To: Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5)

Date: 17th October 2018

Subject: Update on Recommendations from the Task and Finish Group on Improving the Quality of Housing and the Health and Wellbeing of Coventry Residents

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) of the progression of the six recommendations identified through the evidence submitted to the Task and Finish Group.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) are recommended to:
- 2.1.1 Note the work carried out to date on the recommendations identified through the Task and Finish Group.
- 2.1.2 Approve progression of the actions carried out to date and further work to meet the six recommendations.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) set up a Task and Finish Group to look at improving the Quality of Housing and the Health and Wellbeing of Coventry Residents at their meeting on 19th July 2017. The Group met five times and heard evidence from Citizens Advice Coventry (who participated in all subsequent meetings of the Task and Finish Group), Whitefriars Housing, West Midlands Fire Service, the City Council's Housing Enforcement Team and Public Health. The six recommendations were approved at Cabinet on 10th April 2018.
- 3.2 Recommendation 1

To authorise that discussions are progressed with the Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group to look at hosting advice outreach in GP surgeries, with the discussions and any outcomes to be overseen by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport.

Work has taken place with the CCG exploring this opportunity, although it has been confirmed that without funding, the majority of GP Surgeries would be unable to accommodate a third party holding an advice surgery. Similarly, investigation has shown that advice agencies are unlikely to have capacity to provide staffing for outreach surgeries (for example, Citizens Advice confirmed that they are not in the financial position to be able to offer free advice sessions at GP surgeries).

Public Health have explored alternative options to reach the desired outcome of ensuring patients attending GP appointments are given appropriate advice if it is apparent that there are housing issues as the root cause of medical issues. The CCG are piloting a Coventry Social Prescribing Service covering Sowe Valley (which covers 11 Practices) and are currently initiating working with Go West Cluster (which has 7 Practices). The Social Prescribing work remains open to referrals from all Practices and is delivered by Age UK as the lead provider, who liaise with The Carers Trust, Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre, Arty Folks and Foleshill Women's Training (where appropriate on a case by case basis). The Social Prescribing service is for those who are 18 years and above who are high users of Primary Care Services, but whose underlying need is primarily social, environment or practical, rather than solely medical). The service offers short term, one to one, support to engage with the patient and help them to identify personal goals, social links, activities, networks and practical support which may improve their mental and physical wellbeing. The possibility of including support around poor quality housing (as an environment need), where appropriate, in this Social Prescribing Service is being explored.

3.3 Recommendation 2

To endorse the work of Citizen's Advice Frontline Network and other advice agencies to look at the co-ordination of grant and charity resources to assist tenants to create easier access to funds for tenants in need of support, overseen by the Cabinet Member for Community Development.

To increase the success of the Citizen's Advice Frontline Network, the work from this Task and Finish Group has included ensuring relevant organisations that were not already involved in the Citizen's Advice Frontline signed up as members of this Network, increasing the opportunity for frontline housing and homelessness workers across Coventry to share experience and expertise, leading to frontline workers reaching better outcomes for their clients. This will include, when tenants first sign a tenancy and move into a property, ensuring they have the correct support, access to appropriate funds and furniture to provide a safe and healthy home environment.

3.4 Recommendation 3

To note the continued work of the West Midlands Fire Service on the Health Agenda, including working with partners to evaluate the impact and then, if appropriate, explore funding options for the Back Home Safe and Well initiative, overseen by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport and the Cabinet Member for Adult Services.

West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) have reported that the Back Home Safe and Well initiative was being delivered outside of their Service Delivery Model under alternative arrangements to support the proof of concept. Although this arrangement has been effective and feedback from both service users and stakeholders has been positive, WMFS is committed to delivering services that are aligned to their Service Delivery Model and therefore they have been unable to continue with the Back Home Safe and Well work since June 2018.

The Patient Transport Service (provided by West Midlands Ambulance Service) will continue as normal. This service is commissioned by the CCG until 2020.

3.5 Recommendation 4

To endorse work with city partners to consider opportunities for information sharing, which could lead to the identification of vulnerable people who may benefit from services or support through community resources, such as from Citizen's Advice, Coventry Independent Advice Services and the Fire Service Safe and Well check,

overseen by the Cabinet Member for Adult Services and the Cabinet Member for Community Development.

A series of workshops and meetings was held with a variety of partners (both CCC departments and third party organisations) that work with vulnerable people in Coventry. This identified links that were working successfully and where links could be made (or improved) in regard to ensuring that vulnerable people were identified and receive the appropriate support through community resources, with a particular focus around poor quality housing. The departments and organisations involved and the work are included in Appendix A. This list includes work that has been happening independently to this Task and Finish Group work, but will contribute to recommendation 4 and has therefore been referenced in Appendix A.

Although this work showed that there were already many strong relationships in place between a variety of organisations, Council Departments and community resources, this work has also highlighted some of the barriers.

3.6 Recommendation 5

To delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (People) in consultation with the Director of Public Health to undertake the necessary work required to define and promote Healthy Homes, overseen by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport.

Coventry City Council's Public Health Team are supporting Public Health England in the development of a Housing and Health resource for the West Midlands. The emerging product will be a summary of what makes a healthy home, incorporating a variety of infographics and visual data presentations to make the pack accessible to as many people as possible. For consistency across the West Midlands area, it is suggested that, upon completion, this resource is reviewed and considered for use as part of the definition and promotion of Healthy Homes in Coventry, if appropriate.

3.7 Recommendation 6

To note the proposal to continue to develop Selective Licensing in the City, overseen by the Cabinet Member for Community Development.

As part of the Selective Licensing proposal, more than 650 local people were consulted in St Michael's Ward. The consultation results and proposals to widen a scheme for the private rented sector are still being worked on. This work will include investigating either the potential for a city-wide scheme or at least introducing a scheme which covers a fifth of the city.

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Appendix A

Organisation/Department	Work
Planning and Housing Policy Team	The draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy action plan is currently in development. This will include actions regarding identifying poor quality housing and actions to improve it.
Housing Enforcement Team	<p>The work acknowledged that some other departments and organisations might not give the correct advice on when to contact the Housing Enforcement Team. This is due to the fact that some departments and organisations were not aware of the areas and topics that are covered by the Housing Enforcement team. The Housing Enforcement Team are looking to revise the website information which will help eliminate this issue, ensuring that residents get the support and advice they need without avoidable, inappropriate contact to the Housing Enforcement Team. Residents will also have clarity from the website for when it is appropriate to contact the Housing Enforcement Team. Other channels of communication will still be available for those who are unable to use the internet.</p> <p>There is the intention to introduce a Landlord Accreditation Scheme which will enable the Council to educate, advise and support landlords and managing agents.</p> <p>There is new, emerging policy to enforce standards in private sector. The policy will enable the Council to issue civil penalties against landlords who have acted irresponsibly against tenants, or have failed in maintaining legal standards in housing. If adopted, this policy will contribute toward improving the health and wellbeing of local residents through housing.</p>
Family Hubs	<p>There was positive recognition of Family Hubs being key as they are in the community and can act early when there is a risk of vulnerability. Family Hubs have created many useful partnerships already (including areas directly impacting the quality of housing such as National Energy Action), but there is the potential for more such as links between all pharmacies falling within a Family Hub's geographical area, which is currently being explored.</p> <p>In addition, further work is being carried out to strengthen the relationship between Family Hubs and All Age Disability, GPs, District Nurses and Health Visitors</p>
Coventry Law Centre and Ignite	The positive work of Ignite was recognised and community resources felt that there could be learning from the Ignite Programme (currently exploring new ways of working with people who cost the state most and to demonstrate that when the public sector acts earlier it can save money in the long term) that might be appropriate to apply to other areas. The progress of the Ignite work is being followed.
Housing Options Team	West Midland Fire Service and the Housing Options Team are now connected and WMFS are due to deliver training to the Housing Options Team on the Safe and Well check, allowing the Housing Options Team to identify people who may benefit from a Safe and Well Check and to refer them.
Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre	This organisation provides a well-rounded service to its clients, although it has reported that it has good links with organisations such as CGL, the Drug and Alcohol Treatment providers, when

	<p>specialist support is needed for a client. The Centre is well informed on housing enforcement issues and provides information sessions to clients, advising them of their rights and also ensuring that they are being realistic about their expectations. These sessions also aim to inform clients how to keep their house safe from hazards.</p> <p>In addition, the Centre is recruiting a Lettings Officer who will be working with landlords to ensure that properties are suitable and that the tenants and landlords are matched well</p>
Whitefriars	<p>Work is currently being carried out on their website to promote the health and wellbeing of their tenants.</p> <p>Scope for improvement around how they have prioritised repairs has been identified and work on this is being initiated.</p>
Foodbanks	<p>Resilience is a project between Coventry foodbank and Coventry Citizens Advice, aiming to respond to the projected increase in footfall into the foodbanks due to the arrival of Universal Credit in Coventry. The project aims to build client confidence in making monthly payments, budgeting, banking, staying informed and getting online. The projects ambition is to improve the health and wellbeing of clients by giving clients the skills they need to manage their Universal Credit claim successfully. Public Health are linking in with Trussell Trust (who run the Coventry Foodbanks) to ensure that the training for staff working with clients in the Resilience project have knowledge of other community resources that may benefit individual clients, with particular reference to support around the quality of their housing if necessary.</p> <p>WMFS are due to refresh training to Foodbank volunteers on the Safe and Well Check</p>
Pharmacies	<p>The opportunity for training for pharmacy staff by WMFS on referring customers to Safe and Well Check is being explored in addition to the potential for Fire Service to base themselves at different pharmacies for a few hours to provide advice to those coming in to use the pharmacy.</p>
Coventry Independent Advice Services (CIAS)	<p>There was recognition that there were particularly good links between CIAS, Coventry Citizens Advice and Coventry Law Centre and that they do refer to each other (following an initial triage to ensure the person is suitable to be referred) to make use of specialist knowledge for different scenarios.</p> <p>Links have now been made with Adult Social Care and clarification of the type of advice service CIAS provides will be given in a briefing by CIAS at an Adult Social Care team meeting.</p> <p>West Midland Fire Service and CIAS are now connected and WMFS are due to delivery training to CIAS on the Safe and Well check, allowing CIAS to identify people who may benefit from a Safe and Well Check and to refer them.</p>
Coventry Citizens Advice	<p>Coventry Citizens Advice has positive links with many other organisations, including community resources and Council departments.</p>
Adult Social Care	<p>Coventry Information Directory (showing, amongst other community resources, activities in the community, advice and support services) is maintained and used by Adult Social Care. Adult Social Care is also referenced, where appropriate, against work with other organisations in this table.</p>

Children's Services	Children's Services reported that links with relevant partners were good and therefore vulnerable people benefited from the community support they needed. Investigation with Children's Services also highlighted the positive impact of the work from Family Hubs and the use of the Family Directory by themselves and partners.
Coventry and Warwickshire Mind	<p>The Housing Options Team have been trained by CW Mind on the services they provide and to help identify those that may benefit from support due to their Mental Health.</p> <p>Mind already provide a service to those whose mental health causes them difficulties in maintaining a tenancy.</p> <p>There are many existing relationships that work successfully to provide support to vulnerable people. However areas where new relationships are currently being formed and existing ones built upon to work together to identify vulnerable people who could benefit from services in the community include Family Hubs and the West Midlands Fire Service</p>
West Midlands Fire Service	<p>WMFS is continuing to promote their health agenda and engaging in opportunities to train frontline staff in all areas on the Safe and Well Check to encourage the use of the service.</p> <p>This includes refresher training for organisations that have previously used the service (e.g. Adult Social Care) and training in organisations that have not previously used the Safe and Well Check service (e.g. Pharmacies) They are also currently redeveloping their referral process for the Safe and Well Check – allowing individuals or professionals to use a simple online method to book a Safe and Well check appointment for a client.</p>