

## HOMELESSNESS PROJECT GROUP - TASK LIST

Since the last meeting the main points of progress to note are:

- \* 11 tasks have been completed, bringing the total to 18;
- \* three are partially completed; and
- \* three are on-going.
- \* a comprehensive Internal Audit review has been commissioned and has started, in order to ensure that the service is operating optimally.

Outcomes of the completed tasks include:

- \* an improved computer system making it easier for our customers to engage with Options staff to comply with the new duties of the Homelessness Reduction Act.
- \* over £60k income generated from service charge invoices, easing the pressures on the General Fund;
- \* reduction in nightly costs in our top 4 B&B providers, again easing General Fund pressures.
- \* Tenant incentive scheme now live and has resulted in three households downsizing to date

For details of individual tasks see the table below.

Homelessness Project Group - Task List				Updated:	03 April 2018
Ref:	Tasks	RAG Status	Owner	Target Completion Date	Comments
	<b><u>Statistical Review / Data Analysis</u></b>				
1	Develop KPIs for PAG Group reporting and undertake regular performance benchmarking against other LHAs	<b>G</b>	ET/PM	On-going	A new set of KPI's has been produced. Please refer to the performance report.
	<b><u>Prevention of Homelessness / Homelessness Acceptance Processes</u></b>				

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9	Review ICT options - Better use of Locata - Better use of spreadsheets - Better use of tasks / calendar for reminders - Other?	G	PM	31/03/18	This action is partially completed. The contract was awarded to Locata. The new HPA2 system (which incorporates all the changes of the Homeless Reduction Act) is currently being tested by staff and it is going well. The system will be reviewed following the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act.
	<b><u>Case Management and Cost Recovery</u></b>				
11	Finance Project - Appoint to post - Scope project - Review all existing cases - Consider review of previous cases - Undertake process review & implement changes	G	BW	On-going	Officer in post. Work proceeding. As at 22/3/18 over £60k income generated from service charge invoices. Now working on UC income. Project ongoing
	<b><u>Access to alternative, lower cost interim accommodation eg properties leased from other landlords, charities etc</u></b>				
15	Contact local letting agents - Establish working relationships - Discuss tenant options - Understand landlord issues	G	ET	On-going	The Housing Options Officers wil continue to visit local estate agents in order to develop relationships and procure private rented properties. A landlord's forum was held on 7 February 2018 to discuss closer working. A presentation on the Homeless Reduction Act was made.
16	Review use of nightly paid accommodation - Costs vs B&B - Impact on private rental availability - Reduce / cease use? - Contact landlords directly?	G	ET/PM	31/12/17	This action is partially completed. A meeting was held with Paramount to discuss the future of temporary accommodation. A cost calculator was created. A meeting has been schedueld with the DWP to discussand assess each case to decide whether they are better off on UC or HB when the changes come in on 11 April 2018.
	<b><u>Completed Tasks</u></b>				
	Undertake statistical analysis of homeless stats for several years across all Kent Districts to identify outliers and areas where we may learn.	G			Initial benchmarking exercise completed <b>Completed</b>

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	Reduce the support service charge no longer being paid through HB for Oak Housing leased properties	G			Agreement reached with Oak that they will restructure their rents so that the full rent is eligible for HB <b>Completed</b>
	Explore potential lease of accommodation from Emmaus	G	PM		Meeting with Emmaus. No suitable accommodation available for lease. <b>Completed</b>
2	Walk through homelessness process from presentation to acceptance and rehousing.	G	ET		Training workshop for staff facilitated by specialist consultant - Andy Gale <b>Completed</b>
3	Visit and / or Invite peer review from a "low acceptance" authority.	G	ET		Visit taken place to Gravesham Council. They use their own stock as temporary accommodation thereby significantly reducing the cost of B&B. DCLG Housing and Support Team (HAST) will be visiting Dover on 15 December 2017 to review our processes and to offer support, where required. <b>Completed</b>
4	Review current processes & procedures, comparing to Southwark and implementing changes where appropriate. - Update procedure manuals - Introduce process flowchart	G	PM		All our policies, procedures and process maps are being updated to take on board the changes due to the Homeless Reduction Act legislation coming in on 2 April 2018. <b>Completed</b>
5	Review allocations policy / procedure - Consider joint applications to register for friends / under 35s	G	PM		This action was considered but it is not a viable option. <b>Completed</b>
6	Review staffing & structure. Consider options for specialist roles / utilising strengths / etc.	G	ET		Staff roles reviewed and specialist advice obtained. Generic role assessed as being most appropriate model for smaller team. <b>Completed</b>
7	Consider options for advertising a lodgers scheme - Contact other LAs for examples - Discuss with Legal any risks - Develop proposal	G	PM		A proposal was drafted but our legal team have pointed out that it may have legal ramifications. A Government lodger information pack will be uploaded to our website as a link to a suite of useful information. <b>Completed</b>
8	Review options for discouraging parental evictions - Dartford model - Other options?	G	PM		The Dartford model (paying £60 to parents to keep their young people at home) was considered but it is not a viable option. Staff are carrying out home visits on all parental evictions in order to work with them via mediation, behaviour agreement plans, etc. <b>Completed</b>

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10	Review DHP options - Can Housing Options hold some of the DHP budget? - Review procedures with EKS	G	ET		EKS has been approached regarding holding some of the DHP pot but this is not a popular proposal and it is still being discussed. The main issue is around a consistent approach. <b>Completed</b>
12	Develop Personal Housing Plan	G	PM		An electronic Personal Housing Plan has been drafted and is with staff for comment. Once the IT procurement process has ended the plan will be to upload this to the system. <b>Completed</b>
13	Cease storage and kennelling fees (except in exceptional circumstances) with immediate effect - Produce new factsheets for info	G	PM		New procedures developed and implemented <b>Completed</b>
14	Review UC procedures - Monitor income - Challenge rejections	G	PM	31/12/17	The link person at DWP is working well with DDC. A UC flyer has been produced for clients and a process map has also been developed for staff. <b>Completed</b>
17	Negotiate better rates with TA providers - Work with Emma / Dean - Approach new providers	G	ET/PM	31/12/17	A meeting was held with our top four providers and a reduction in costs was agreed. It was decided that we would not approach new providers. <b>Completed</b>
18	Prepare for landlord forum - Advise changes - Agree working way forward - Develop relationships	G	PM		The Landord Forum date has been set and a flyer is being drafted. This will go out to all our current and prospective landlords. <b>Completed</b>
20	Introduce process for reviewing void HRA units to consider for interim use	G	ET		This happens at the moment, it has been agreed that this process would take into account many more voids. <b>Completed</b>
21	Implement shared tenancies on purchased properties	G	PM		Waiting for legal to finalise licence/non secure tenancy agreement <b>Completed</b>
22	Tenant incentive scheme - Review current scheme - Work with EKH to market scheme	G	PM		TIS reviewed and new scheme developed. Finalising leaflet and marketing arrangements <b>Completed</b>