

Briefing Note for Scrutiny Board 3rd June 2009

Temporary Accommodation

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this briefing note is to make members aware of the Council's statutory duty to secure temporary accommodation and proposals to commission the supply and management of temporary accommodation in the future.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Housing Act 1996 part VII requires all councils to secure that temporary accommodation is available to homeless households seeking assistance under the homeless legislation, and where a statutory duty is accepted that the provision of temporary accommodation continues until the homeless household is offered a long term tenancy.

2.2 Six emergency accommodation services are commissioned through the Supporting People Programme. These are as follows:

	Organisation	Service	Client group	Location	No. of units
1	Leeds Housing Concern	The Hollies	Single homeless women	Weetwood Lane LS16	31
2	Leeds Housing Concern	Pennington	Single Homeless men	Woodhouse LS6	21
3	Carr Gomm	Richmond Court	Homeless families	Richmond Hill LS9	20
4	English Churches	Ladybeck	Single homeless men, women and couples	Eastgate City Centre	42
5	Leeds Women's Aid	Emmeline Angelou	Refuge accommodation		29
6	Leeds Housing Concern	Sahara	Refuge accommodation		16
	Total				159

2.3 The Council currently commissions Cascade and Care Solutions through a framework contract to provide and manage temporary accommodation on behalf of the Council. At the point of drafting this report 166 households are placed in temporary accommodation. Safe Haven were also commissioned under this contract to provide temporary accommodation but have subsequently formally withdrawn.

2.4 The current breakdown by providers, including Jump/Green Investments is as follows:

	Organisation	Client group	No of Units
1	Care Solutions	Families and single homeless households	102
2	Cascade		47
3	Jump		15

2.5 The main concentration of homeless households placed in temporary accommodation is in the Nowells and East End Park area where there are 17 and 31 households currently placed in temporary accommodation . A detailed breakdown is attached in the table at the end of this Briefing Note.

2.6 The government has set all local authorities a target to half the number of households placed in temporary accommodation by the end of March 2010. The Council is therefore committed to reducing the temporary accommodation placements to **261** households per night by this date. This includes all those owned a statutory duty who are accommodated in the Supporting People funded emergency services detailed in paragraph 2.2 and private sector accommodation listed above.

2.7 The number of temporary accommodation units commissioned through private accommodation providers has reduced from 412 units in September 2008 to 166 (135 families and 31 singles) as at 29th May. The reduction is the result of more effective homeless case management and homeless prevention. The number of private units used as temporary accommodation is currently reducing at an average of 7/ 8 a month.

2.8 The current framework contract with Cascade and Care Solutions expired at the end of the financial year and approval was sought through the council's delegated decision process to extend the existing contractual arrangements with the two existing providers and also Jump/Green Investments following the withdrawal of Safe Haven. Approval is sought to extend the contract for a 12 month period whilst the temporary accommodation service is subject to a full competitive tender exercise.

2.9 The council is ceasing to use properties provided by Jump/Green Investments as matter of urgency and officers are confident that all households will be moved out of Jump/ Green Investments accommodation by the end of week commencing 1st June.

3.0 Commissioning of a new temporary accommodation service

3.1 A procurement exercise has commenced to tender for a new framework contract to supply and manage temporary accommodation. This new contract will be in place between March and June 2010. A maximum of 100 units will

be commissioned under the new contract in line with the target to reduce the number of households placed with private accommodation providers to no more than 100 households at any one time by the end of March next year. The level of emergency accommodation commissioned through the Supporting People programme will remain the same.

- 3.2 This reduction will enable the council to reduce the cost of temporary accommodation and adopt a more proactive approach to monitoring quality.
- 3.3 As part of this process a new service specification and terms and conditions are being developed to drive up the quality of the housing and service delivered to homeless households in the city.
- 3.4 The new contractual arrangements will require the provision of up to 100 properties at any one time for use as temporary accommodation within the Leeds boundary. It will be a requirement that these properties are more broadly distributed in all regions of the city to better meet the needs of homeless households.
- 3.5 The contractors will be required to be members of the Leeds Landlord Accreditation Scheme. In addition each property put forward for inclusion in the temporary accommodation scheme will be inspected to ensure it meets minimum requirements by officers from the council before being accepted as suitable. Properties will also be inspected periodically throughout the period of the contract.
- 3.6 The properties provided as part of this contracted services will be expected to meet the Decency Home Standard within 6 months of the new contract commencement. This means it will not be permissible to use properties with Category 1 hazards under the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHRS) or in serious disrepair until these are fully addressed. This means that back-to-back housing will not be used under the new contract.
- 3.7 The Council will require that the contractors have a legal interest in each property they make available under the temporary accommodation contract. In cases where properties are redeveloped or refurbished, planning and building control consents will be required, and these will be checked by council officers before properties are used in the temporary accommodation scheme.
- 3.8 The new contract will also ensure that the exterior of properties are kept clean and in good condition and that gardens are kept clear of any rubbish and overgrowth.

4.0 Interim contractual arrangements

- 4.1 The existing contractual arrangements will need to continue whilst the tender exercise is underway to enable the council to continue to meet its statutory duties. However the current contract has been strengthened to include the provisions in paragraph 3.4 above.

4.2 In addition this interim contract will be brought within in the contract management arrangements used for Supporting People services. This process has proved very successful at improving the quality and performance of housing support services commissioned by the Council through the Supporting People programme. The service delivered by Cascade and Care Solutions will be subject to a quarterly performance review process. This will include feedback from spot checks on the quality of the accommodation provided during the course of the quarter under review. Any issues of concern can then be raised with accommodation provider as part of the formal contract management process.

Summary

In summary the number of units required from private providers for temporary accommodation is decreasing and is expected to be no more than 100 by the end March next year. The new tendered service will require a wider dispersal of temporary accommodation units across the city, moving away as far as possible from high concentrations of units in a small number of inner city areas. There will be a strong focus on driving up the quality of the accommodation to Decency Standards, along with a stronger involvement of council officers in inspecting the properties and managing the contract to ensure it delivers the quality of accommodation and service set out in service specification.

Distribution of homeless households placed in temporary accommodation as at 28th May 2009.

Most used areas / streets (124 of 166) Main concentration on the Nowells. Also, 31 households around East End Park area.

Nowells	LS9	17	10%	
Glensdales	LS9	8	5%	
East Parks	LS9	7	4%	
Sandhurst	LS8	7	4%	
St Hildas	LS9	6	4%	
Florence	LS9	6	4%	
Cross Greens	LS9	5	3%	
Recreations	LS11	5	3%	
Conways	LS8	5	3%	
Temple view	LS9	5	3%	
Bayswater	LS8	5	3%	
Granges	LS7	5	3%	
Traffords	LS9	3	2%	
Darfield	LS8	3	2%	

Woodviews	LS11	3	2%
Kingsdale Court	LS14	3	2%
Marley Place (Jump)	LS11	3	2%
Linden Road	LS11	2	1%
Kitchener	LS9	2	1%
Ascot	LS9	2	1%
Clifton	LS9	2	1%
Ashton	LS8	2	1%
Bexley	LS8	2	1%
Stanley	LS9	2	1%
Chatsworth	LS8	2	1%
Clock	LS8	2	1%
Victoria	LS9	2	1%
Harehills Lane	LS8	2	1%
Harehills Lane	LS9	2	1%
Glenthorpe	LS9	2	1%
Edgeware	LS8	2	1%