



Shropshire Council
Legal and Democratic Services
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

Date: Tuesday, 19 April 2016

**Committee:
Cabinet**

Date: Wednesday, 27 April 2016

Time: 12.30 pm

Venue: Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

You are requested to attend the above meeting.
The Agenda is attached

Claire Porter
Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Members of Cabinet

Malcolm Pate (Leader)
Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader)
Karen Calder
Lee Chapman
Simon Jones
David Minnery
Cecilia Motley
Malcolm Price
Stuart West
Michael Wood

Deputy Members of Cabinet

Peter Adams
Tim Barker
Nicholas Bardsley
Gwilym Butler
Dean Carroll
Robert Macey
Peter Nutting
Robert Tindall

Your Committee Officer is:

Jane Palmer Senior Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01743 257712

Email: jane.palmer@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Members are reminded that they must not participate in the discussion or voting on any matter in which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

3 Minutes (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 6 April 2016. Attached, marked 3.

Contact: Amanda Holyoak 01743 257714

4 Public Questions

To receive any public questions or petitions from the public, notice of which has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 14. The deadline for this meeting is 5.00 pm on Friday 22 April 2016.

Contact: Amanda Holyoak 01743 257714

5 Matters referred from Scrutiny/Council

6 Proposed new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire for 2015-17 (Pages 5 - 62)

Lead Member – Mr Malcolm Price – Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing, Regulatory Services and Environment.

Report of the Director of Adult Services is attached, marked 6.

Contact: Andy Begley 01743 252421

7 Social Care System Replacement (Pages 63 - 76)

Lead Member – Mr Lee Chapman – Portfolio Holder for Adults.

Report of the Director of Adult Services is attached, marked: 7

Contact: Andy Begley 01743 252421

8 Exclusion of Press and Public

To resolve that in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and Paragraph 10.2 of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded during consideration of the remaining item.

9 Exempt Minutes (Pages 77 - 78)

To approve as a correct record and sign the Exempt Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held

on 6 April 2016. Attached, marked 9.

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Committee and Date

Cabinet

27 April 2016

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2016

In the Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

12.30 pm – 1.09 pm

Responsible Officer: Amanda Holyoak

Email: amanda.holyoak@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257714

Present

Councillor Malcolm Pate (Chairman)

Councillors Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader), Karen Calder, Lee Chapman, Simon Jones, David Minnery, Cecilia Motley, Malcolm Price, Stuart West and Michael Wood

145 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

146 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

No declarations of pecuniary interest were made.

147 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 16 March 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

148 Public Questions

Mr Bernard Wills representing the Quarry Swimming and Fitness Forum had submitted a question related to public health, exercise and access to a swimming pool. A written reply was tabled at the meeting and a copy of the full question and response is attached to the signed minutes. Dr N Richards read out a supplementary question on behalf of Mr Wills. The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture agreed to provide a response to this question outside of the meeting.

149 Matters referred from Scrutiny/Council

There were no matters referred from Scrutiny or Council.

150 Membership of West Midlands Combined Authority

The Leader presented a report by the Chief Executive, outlining the rationale for Shropshire Council to become a non constituent member of the West Midlands Combined

Authority (WMCA), and the potential long term economic growth benefits to the County in doing so. It was confirmed that as a non-constituent member, the Council would remain independent, retaining all of its current powers.

RESOLVED:

- i) That Shropshire Council become a non-constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority.
- ii) That authority be given for the Chief Executive, in liaison with the Leader of the Council and the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Business and Economy, to carry out the necessary arrangements for becoming a non-constituent member and to represent Shropshire Council on the West Midlands Combined Authority in discussions and negotiations in the run up to mayoral elections in 2017.
- iii) That Cabinet receive a progress report on devolution developments at regional and national level at a timely future date, at which point further recommendations may be tabled.

151 A Partnership Approach In Designing The Future Of Our Local Services

The Portfolio Holder for Rural Services and Communities presented a report by the Director of Commissioning, seeking approval on the principles and approaches for the Council to use to engage and work with partners to try and secure a sustainable future for local services and community based assets. It was intended that all solutions would be agreed on as local a basis as possible. Work was underway with Shropshire Association of Local Councils to create hubs through which the capacity of small and rural parish councils would be enhanced through working together.

In response to questions and comments the Leader reiterated that this was not a course of action the Council wished to take. He had been heartened by the response from Parish and Town Councils and thanked them for their willingness to meet the challenge.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the proposed principles and partnership approaches described within the report be approved.
- ii) That the connections between the activity described in the report and the potential role of town and parish councils and the voluntary and community sector in the wider design and delivery of the council's future Highways Maintenance and Operating Model be noted.
- iii) That authority be delegated to the Director of Commissioning in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Rural Services and Communities and the relevant Portfolio Holders (depending on the service under consideration) to take any further decisions relating to the delivery of these recommendations to a successful conclusion.

152 Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and Paragraph 10.2 of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items.

153 Shropshire Council Adult Social Care Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations detailed in the exempt report be approved.

154 Four Rivers Nursing Home Business Case Options

RESOLVED:

That the recommendation detailed in the exempt report be approved.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

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<u>Committee</u> Shropshire Council Cabinet 27 th April 2016

<u>Item</u> Proposed new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire for 2015-17 <u>Public</u>

Proposed new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire for 2015-17

Responsible Officer Andy Begley, Director of Adult Services
e-mail: andy.begley@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 252421

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on Local Authorities to develop and publish a Homelessness Strategy and to renew this at least every five years.
- 1.2 Despite the increasing financial challenges faced by all public sector services, Shropshire Council remains committed to working towards the prevention of homelessness across the County.
- 1.3 The proposed new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire provides a working document indicating how the Council intends to achieve the above aim through early intervention, working together with key partner organisations as well as members of the public whom may become threatened with homelessness.
- 1.4 Shropshire Council's Housing Options team currently receives approximately 1000 new homeless presentations each year. Also, the Council's Housing Options team additionally handle over 1500 enquiries each year from households whom have not yet become homeless but are experiencing housing-related issues or difficulties.
- 1.5 Almost all English Local Authorities are now signed up to work toward achieving the Government's 'gold standard' level of service for housing options. The new Homelessness Strategy Action Plan has been developed based on Shropshire working toward this goal through addressing each of the ten 'local challenges' to achieve the 'gold standard'.
- 1.6 The new Homelessness Strategy proposes as its overarching keys aims:-
 - an increase in the prevention of homelessness; and
 - improving outcomes for households impacted by homelessness.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That members adopt the new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire for 2015-17 and the document is made public via the Council website at the earliest opportunity;
- 2.2 That members note the new Strategy will make public Shropshire Council's corporate commitment to adopting a joint approach to preventing homelessness, based on early intervention and continuous improvement, as set out in the proposed Portfolio Holder for Housing's Foreword to the new Homelessness Strategy (thus achieving the first of the ten 'local challenges' toward a 'gold standard' housing options service for Shropshire);
- 2.3 The new Homelessness Strategy sets out the Council's Housing Options team's commitment to work towards achieving the nationally recognised 'gold standard' level of service for our customers, and introduces the re-commencement of a Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group, to be chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Housing or their Deputy, with the aim of encouraging sector-wide participation and responsibility for the effective implementation of the new Homelessness Strategy Action Plan;
- 2.5 That members note the new Homelessness Strategy recommends the implementation of the powers introduced in section 148 of the Localism Act 2011, to enable the Council's Housing Options team to discharge its accommodation duty, owed toward statutorily homeless households (under sections 193 or 195 of the Housing Act 1996), through the provision of a private rented sector accommodation offer of a suitable assured shorthold tenancy which is for a fixed term of at least twelve months.

REPORT

3. Background

- 3.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on Local Authorities to develop and publish a Homelessness Strategy and to renew this at least every five years. The Homelessness Strategy is intended to be an active working document with an emphasis on the prevention of homelessness, through the provision of relevant advice and support, and on the provision of suitable accommodation for households where homelessness cannot be prevented.
- 3.2 The new Homelessness Strategy includes a review of homelessness reported for Shropshire to the Department of Communities and Local Government every quarter during the lifespan of the previous document (2011-15).
- 3.3 In keeping with the overall national trend the homelessness review identified a 25% increase in homelessness presentations in Shropshire for the 2014/15 financial year. The numbers of new homeless presentations in Shropshire now appear to have stabilised just below the 2014/15 levels for the last financial year with approximately 1000 new homeless applications being received for the year.
- 3.4 The homelessness review has identified relationship breakdown, being asked to leave by family / relatives, and loss of assured shorthold tenancies as the three main reasons for homelessness amongst households accepted as owed a duty of accommodation by Shropshire Council throughout 2011-15 (where each reason is the cause in approximately one quarter of all homeless applications accepted). This is also representative of the national trends in homelessness.
- 3.5 In Shropshire the homelessness review has indicated there has been an increase in homelessness due to being asked to leave by family (in particular by parents) and due to assured shorthold tenancies being brought to an end over the last two financial years.
- 3.6 In 2011 the former Coalition Government published 'Making Every Contact Count', in which the Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness set out their vision for a joint approach to preventing homelessness based on early intervention with everyone at risk of losing their home. In the report the government set out their commitment to make sure that every contact a vulnerable household makes with a local agency really counts to: tackle troubled childhoods and adolescence; improve health; reduce involvement in crime; improve skills, employment and financial advice; and to pioneer social funding for homelessness. These commitments provide the context for local authorities and their partners to provide a gold standard level of service rooted in 10 local challenges:
1. Adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services
 2. Actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
 3. Offer a Housing Options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients
 4. Adopt a *No Second Night Out* model or an effective local alternative

5. Have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that includes appropriate accommodation and support
 6. Develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both clients and landlords
 7. Actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
 8. Have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs
 9. Not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation
 10. Not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks
- 3.7 Through delivery of this new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire the Council's Housing Services is aiming to achieve the gold standard level of service detailed above and to receive recognition of this through accreditation awarded via the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) funded National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS).
- 3.8 The homelessness review combined with stakeholder consultation, government policy and legislative changes have all influenced the proposed new Homelessness Strategy's keys aims, which are:-
- an increase in the prevention of homelessness; and
 - improving outcomes for households impacted by homelessness.

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1 An Equality and Social Impact Inclusion Assessment (ESIIA) has been completed for the proposed Homelessness Strategy and is included in the appendices to this document.
- 4.2 It is not anticipated there will be any negative impact as a result of the proposed new Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan. To the contrary, the ESIIA identifies potential for a positive impact on households threatened with or affected by homelessness through the successful implementation of the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.
- 4.3 A Homelessness Strategy consultation event was held with the Council's stakeholder partners on 14th July 2015. There was common consensus amongst the twenty two delegates whom attended on behalf of stakeholder partners of the need for earlier intervention, improved joint working and more timely and relevant information sharing between agencies. There was substantial interest amongst the stakeholder partners in recommencing a Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group meeting quarterly to review and continuously develop the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan. A pictorial summary of participant's feedback during this event is provided in the appendices of the Homelessness Strategy.
- 4.4 The draft Homelessness Strategy was made available for public consultation via Shropshire Council's website for six weeks from 1st October 2015. The response was very limited with the only feedback being a couple of constructive e-mail reminders for needs of all service user groups to be addressed. All feedback has been given due consideration in developing the proposed new Homelessness Strategy attached.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The new Homelessness Strategy has been designed to be delivered within existing Council budgets and in accordance with the Local Authority's Financial Plan, there are no additional expenditure requirements anticipated.
- 5.2 As identified in the proposed Homelessness Strategy document successful implementation of the new Strategy has the potential to deliver financial savings for the Council through its focus on the prevention of homelessness and the recognised and proven cost benefits of this approach to tackling homelessness issues.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on Local Authorities to develop and publish a Homelessness Strategy and to renew this at least every five years.
- 6.2 Despite the increasing financial challenges faced by all public sector services, Shropshire Council remains committed to working towards the prevention of homelessness across the County.
- 6.3 The proposed new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire provides a working document indicating how the Council intends to achieve the above aim through early intervention, working together with key partner organisations as well as members of the public whom may become threatened with homelessness.
- 6.4 Almost all English Local Authorities are now signed up to work toward achieving the Government's 'gold standard' level of service for housing options. The new Homelessness Strategy Action Plan has been developed based on Shropshire working toward this goal through addressing each of the ten 'local challenges' to achieve the 'gold standard'.
- 6.5 The new Homelessness Strategy proposes as its overarching keys aims:-
 - an increase in the prevention of homelessness; and
 - improving outcomes for households impacted by homelessness.
- 6.6 Successful implementation of the new Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan, including members endorsement and the implementation of the recommendations detailed above in section 2, has the potential to deliver financial savings for the Council through its focus on the prevention of homelessness and the recognised and proven cost benefits of this approach to tackling homelessness issues.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Making every contact count: A joint approach to preventing homelessness

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7597/200459.pdf

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Councillor Mal Price

Local Member

All – this is a County wide matter

Appendices

Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire 2015-17

Equality and Social Impact Inclusion Assessment (ESIIA)

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Shropshire Council Homelessness Strategy 2015-2017

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10. Equality & Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

Appendix 1. Homelessness Review 2015 Data

Appendix 2. Homelessness Strategy 2015-17 Action Plan (working document)

Appendix 3. Some key Welfare Reform changes

Appendix 4. Equality & Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

1. Foreword

Despite the increasing financial challenges faced by all public sector services, Shropshire Council remains committed to working towards the prevention of homelessness across the County. This new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire provides a working document indicating how the Council intends to achieve the above aim through early intervention, working together with key partner organisations as well as members of the public whom may become threatened with homelessness.

Local Authorities throughout England and Wales have been reporting an increase in levels of homelessness and I am very concerned there appears to be a similar increase in the number of Shropshire residents experiencing housing difficulties. For this reason the Action Plan in this new Strategy focuses on tackling the main causes of homelessness in Shropshire i.e. being asked to leave home by family, relationship breakdown, and being served notice to leave private rented accommodation, whilst also addressing key factors impacting on sustainability of housing including Welfare Reform.

Shropshire Council recognises it is essential for all the relevant agencies to work together in order to address and begin to reverse the worrying trend of increasing numbers of households reporting housing difficulties. To this end the Council's Housing Services intend to continue and build upon the collaborative work they are already engaged in with statutory partners, local housing providers and all relevant private and voluntary sector organisations in order to address the County's housing needs.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed towards the development of this new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire. Whilst the challenges ahead may be great, I look forward to the Council working together with our stakeholder partners to strive to make homelessness in Shropshire an issue from the past.

Councillor Malcolm Price
Shropshire Council Member for Battlefield Division
Portfolio Holder for Regulatory Services, Housing and Commissioning (Central)

2. Executive Summary

Whilst the environment within which Housing Services operate has undergone significant change since the publication in 2011 of Shropshire Council's previous Homelessness Strategy, the key principle remains of providing early intervention with an emphasis on the prevention of homelessness.

This document clearly sets out the vital importance, in light of key legislative changes and increased demand on services, of adopting an early preventative approach in homelessness services in order to successfully address the needs of customers facing housing difficulties now and in the future. Homelessness prevention means a better outcome for households in housing need, with less disruption to family life. This approach also provides a financially more effective way of working for Housing Services, meaning services can be targeted where the needs are greatest.

The keys reasons for homelessness in Shropshire identified through the recent Homelessness Review remain the same: they are parental or family exclusions, relationship breakdowns and the loss of private rented accommodation. Unfortunately, in keeping with the trend nationally, Shropshire Council has seen a substantial increase in homelessness presentations over the last two financial years. This new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire aims to address these key issues through adopting an action plan focused on enabling those in housing need to seek out their own sustainable housing solutions and to ensure better outcomes for households when homelessness cannot be prevented.

PART ONE: STRATEGIC CONTEXT

3. Introduction

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on Local Authorities to develop and publish a Homelessness Strategy and to renew this at least every five years. The Homelessness Strategy is intended to be an active working document with an emphasis on the prevention of homelessness, through the provision of relevant advice and support, and on the provision of suitable accommodation for households where homelessness cannot be prevented.

In 2011 the former Coalition Government published 'Making Every Contact Count', in which the Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness set out their vision for a joint approach to preventing homelessness based on early intervention with everyone at risk of losing their home. In the report the government set out their commitment to make sure that every contact a vulnerable household makes with a local agency really counts to: tackle troubled childhoods and adolescence; improve health; reduce involvement in crime; improve skills, employment and financial advice; and to pioneer social funding for homelessness. These commitments provide the context for local authorities and their partners to provide a gold standard level of service rooted in 10 local challenges:

1. Adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services
2. Actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
3. Offer a Housing Options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients
4. Adopt a *No Second Night Out* model or an effective local alternative
5. Have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that includes appropriate accommodation and support
6. Develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both clients and landlords
7. Actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
8. Have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs
9. Not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation
10. Not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks

Through delivery of this new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire the Council's Housing Services is aiming to achieve the gold standard level of service detailed above and to receive recognition of this through accreditation awarded via the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) funded National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS). Councillor Malcolm Price's foreword to this new Homelessness Strategy provides a corporate commitment by Shropshire Council towards delivering the 'gold standard' in Housing Services.

The Council's homelessness services operate within a 'Housing Options' model. This approach provides a comprehensive range of advice and assistance for people at risk of homelessness. The aim is to, wherever possible, prevent homelessness from occurring. When homelessness cannot be prevented, the Housing Options approach ensures options for re-housing are fully explored. The Housing Options team sits within the Shropshire Council Adult Social Care and Housing Services, and as such is embedded within broader advice and prevention services.

Similarly, there is now an emphasis on preventative work by Local Authorities Social Services departments under the new Care Act 2014 which has introduced a new duty for Social Services, Housing, and Health departments to work together to jointly assess individuals needs in certain circumstances. This, combined with anticipated increased demand and diminishing resources to both Housing and Social Services, reinforces the need for effective joint-working between Housing Services and our stakeholder partners. The Council is seeking to address this issue in relation to the services it provides for young people and care leavers through the development of Children's Services new Early Help Strategy for the county.

The sub-regional Herefordshire and Shropshire Housing Strategy (2012 – 2015) acts as the over-arching document to the Homelessness Strategy. It identifies three main priorities, one of which identifies the importance of homelessness prevention through ensuring "appropriate, timely housing support and advice is available". Shropshire Council is presently engaged in developing a new Housing Strategy for the county. However the need for preventative action through early intervention, to provide timely and appropriate advice and assistance, remains the guiding principle of services working to address housing needs and homelessness issues across the county.

Notable achievements from the previous Homelessness Strategy include the continued development and implementation of accommodation pathway plans for vulnerable groups most likely to be affected by homelessness. For example Shropshire continues to provide (single occupancy) supported accommodation referral schemes for mental health service users, 16- and 17-year-olds, homeless persons whom have been 'sleeping rough', ex-offenders with a housing need and individuals at risk of homelessness whom are

recovering from former drug or alcohol misuse. This has been complemented through Shropshire Council's work as the lead Authority in delivering cross-boundary joint working with Telford and Wrekin Council and South Staffordshire Housing Authorities to address rough sleeping under the Government's 'No Second Night Out' principles.

'No Second Night Out', or NSNO, was introduced by the Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness in 2011 as the Government's vision for ending rough sleeping nationwide through Local Authorities and their partners delivering the following 'gold standard' principles:

- Any new rough sleepers to be identified and helped off the streets immediately;
- Public to be enabled to report rough sleepers and refer them for help;
- Rough sleepers to be helped quickly to a safe place for timely needs assessment and options advice;
- Rough sleepers enabled to access emergency accommodation and other services, e.g. healthcare, as required;
- Rough sleepers to be reconnected with their area or country where they have connections unless there is a good reason why they cannot return.

Section 5 below provides more information regarding delivery of NSNO across Shropshire and neighbouring Authority areas.

In 2010 Prime Minister David Cameron introduced his then Coalition Government's new ideology referred to at the time as the 'Big Society', now referred to as 'Community and Society', aimed at giving members of the public more power and opportunity based on five precepts which include giving communities more powers and encouraging people to take an active role in their communities. In response to this Shropshire Council has developed and piloted a new team of multi-disciplinary staff predominantly from Adult Social Care and the Housing Options team, now entitled 'Your Community', which has been based since October last year in Craven Arms.

Since the last Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire was published in 2011, a key achievement in the Council's preventative work and towards improving public empowerment has been the introduction and development of an internet based self-help toolkit for anyone seeking housing advice: the 'Enhanced Housing Options Wizard', which has been available for public usage via the Shropshire HomePoint website since March 2014.

4. National & Current Context

In their budget statement for July 2015 the recently elected Conservative Government made clear their intention to continue implementing significant changes to the Welfare State as instigated under the previous Coalition Government. Consequently, reduced public sector expenditure and legislative changes introduced through the Welfare Reform Act 2012 have necessitated serious consideration in developing this new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire.

Through successive governments in recent years there has been a shift toward increasing and ensuring the independence and resilience of the more vulnerable and marginalised individuals in our society. This can be traced from the beginning of the 'personalisation' agenda aimed at those receiving care in the community to the more recent Welfare Reform changes affecting eligibility for and the administration of working age state benefits. There is now a significant emphasis on the individual recipient of services taking greater responsibility, including managing their own financial affairs. For example working age state benefits are moving towards single monthly payments (called Universal Credit) with housing costs paid direct to the applicant included amongst other benefit elements intended for the costs of daily living. This combined with the reductions in the benefits amounts paid, including for housing costs, represents a new and potentially significant challenge to all housing related services in their efforts to help customers sustain their own accommodation or find suitable alternative options. Consequently, in developing this strategy careful consideration has been given to the possible ramifications of the changes introduced through the Welfare Reform Act. See Appendix 3 for details of some key changes introduced or to be implemented via the Welfare Reform Act 2012 which are likely to impact on housing services.

Other key legislative changes have been introduced through the Localism Act 2011, which has provided Local Housing Authorities the power to determine which households can be included on the housing register. This has also provided Local Authorities the power to discharge their duty to accommodate households accepted as statutorily homeless, under section 193 of the Housing Act 1996, through an offer of a suitable private rented sector tenancy with a minimum twelve-month fixed term. Besides this, the Localism Act has provided Registered (Accommodation) Providers (previously referred to as Housing Associations) and Local Housing Authorities the opportunity to grant fixed-term tenancies with limited security of tenure. To complement this, the Localism Act has introduced a requirement for Local Authorities to produce a Tenancy Strategy. The Tenancy Strategy is intended to provide guidance for Registered Providers working within Shropshire when developing their tenancy policies and is available for members of the public to view via the Shropshire Council website.

Shropshire Council's overall vision for the county, as described in its Sustainable Communities Strategy 2010-2020 is of a 'flourishing Shropshire' which sets out as its three priorities: enterprise and growth, with strong market towns and rebalanced rural settlements; responding to climate change and enhancing our natural and built environment; and, healthy, safe and confident people and communities.

These aims are reinforced in the Council's Business Plan and Financial Strategy, where the Council's three priorities are identified as:

- Strive to keep people from harm (in a way that doesn't compromise their choices)
- Help people, communities and businesses to help themselves (in a way that helps them to make the most of the choices available to them)
- Help to manage our environment (in a way that helps Shropshire to thrive)

This Homelessness Strategy has been developed based on the findings of the review of homelessness figures 2011-2015, please see Appendix 1, and using feedback from the Council's stakeholders and partners gathered during a Homelessness Strategy consultation event held on 14th July 2015. The key themes identified from the desk-top review of homelessness figures are a large increase (approximately 25% in the last financial year) in homeless applications and increased numbers of households accepted as statutorily homeless due to parents or other relatives excluding them. The review has also identified a significant decrease in the number of homelessness preventions achieved in the last financial year, in particular there has been significantly less new accommodation secured via the private rented sector. To fully understand the reasons behind this last alarming trend more detailed research and analysis is required. However, the Council's stakeholder partners have indicated local private sector landlords may be seeking to reduce their portfolios of properties through open market sales in the face of impending Welfare Reform changes and their potential financial impact on rental income.

There was common consensus amongst the Council's stakeholder partners attending the Homelessness Strategy consultation event of the need for earlier intervention, improved joint working and more timely and relevant information sharing between agencies. In view of this and Shropshire Council's key priorities referred to above the Council has identified as its over-arching aims for this Homelessness Strategy:-

1. To increase prevention of homelessness, with a focus on helping more people facing housing issues to help themselves;
2. To improve outcomes for, and protect persons, where homelessness cannot be prevented.

The needs and objectives associated with the aims of this Strategy are discussed below and provided in full in the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan in Appendix 2.

This Strategy supports Shropshire Council's Business Plan, the Empty Homes Strategy 2014-2017, the recently published new Domestic Violence Strategy and the Housing Strategy and links with the Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) and Local Investment Plans (LIPs).

5. Regional and Sub-regional Partnerships

In the past ten years Shropshire has worked sub-regionally with Hereford to complete a SMART Action Plan under the West Midlands Regional Homelessness Strategy and more recently to produce the shared Housing Strategy 2012-2015.

The previous Coalition Government allocated £563K of DCLG funding for single homelessness services to be delivered across the sub-region. Shropshire was nominated lead authority of the sub-regional group, including Staffordshire borough/district housing authorities, Stoke on Trent and Telford & Wrekin. The funds have been used to bolster provision of frontline services for rough sleeping across the area, with a focus on addressing rough sleeping implementation of the No Second Night Out (NSNO) principles described in section 3 above. A large number of rough sleepers have been supported into accommodation since the rough sleeper outreach began in May 2013, and more focused casework is on-going to support long-term rough sleepers with complex needs to exit rough sleeping. Funding was won from the Homelessness Transition Fund (HTF) to continue the rough sleeper outreach beyond the period funded by the initial single homelessness fund. Other projects commissioned with the sub-regional single homelessness monies include; schemes improving access to shared accommodation in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) for under 35s, homelessness education projects, prison in-reach for prevention of homelessness.

6. Progress since the Homelessness Strategy 2011-2015 Action Plan review in 2013

Shropshire Council's Homelessness Strategy for 2011-2015 identified as its four main aims:-

1. Focus on early intervention that prevents homelessness from occurring and allows for planned solutions to housing needs (to deliver a more effective and enhanced housing options service);
2. Provide appropriate support to vulnerable people to enable them to develop the skills needed to sustain their accommodation (to support vulnerable people to stay in their own homes);
3. Ensure that there is a joined-up approach to tackling homelessness (to strengthen partnerships to meet the needs of people affected by homelessness);
4. Promote a wider range of tenure options and choices to help meet housing needs (to understand and meet the needs of the diverse range of groups with a housing need).

All of the actions associated with each of the above aims detailed in the previous Homelessness Strategy Action Plan, or identified in the 2013 Action Plan review, have now been progressed with only two notable exceptions:-

- Evidence indicates an increasing and urgent need for the implementation of a fully operational Hospital to Home Protocol. This will ensure closer, more effective joint working between Housing, Health and Social Services colleagues to address hospital patients' housing needs in a timely manner, and will provide an important accommodation pathway for a particularly vulnerable group of customers whilst ensuring all services meet the requirements in the new Care Act;
- The desk-top Homelessness Review has identified a growing need to focus on increasing opportunities for re-housing via the private rented sector for both statutory and non-statutory homeless households. This along with actions to improve advice and support for both housing applicants and landlords should ensure the Council's Housing Services delivery of the 'gold standard' local challenge 6 provided above.

PART TWO: THE STRATEGY

7. The Aims, Outcomes and Difference We Want To Make

Aims of the Strategy

Shropshire's Homelessness Strategy has been developed in consultation with a broad number of stakeholders, partners, service users and service providers.

The primary aim of the Strategy is to address both the causes of homelessness in Shropshire, and, provide a response to those affected by homelessness and those in housing need.

In order to continue to actively prevent homelessness there must be an on-going development of a high quality, accessible and responsive service to address 'housing options', that is available to the people of Shropshire, regardless of their geographical location. This will ensure delivery of a gold standard service against the ten local challenges identified by DCLG and detailed above.

Long-term Aims

As already described in section 4 above the over-arching aims for Housing Services in Shropshire are:-

1. To increase the prevention of homelessness, with a focus on helping more people facing housing issues to help themselves;
2. To improve outcomes for, and protect persons, where homelessness cannot be prevented.

To ensure successful delivery of this Homelessness Strategy against the above identified aims Shropshire Council will utilise the SMART Action Plan below, which has been initially produced in light of key trends identified through the Homelessness Review and shall be monitored and developed periodically through the Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group (HSIG).

Prevention of homelessness is a fundamental preventative service integral to the effective operation and delivery of a wide range of services.

The National Practitioner Support Service's value for money exercise looking at Shropshire Council's General Fund Revenue Outturn* for Housing Services in 2014/15 (*reported annually to the Department for Communities and Local Government) demonstrates a financial saving of almost one thousand pounds for every household where homelessness has successfully been prevented as opposed to providing temporary accommodation for households whom become homeless.

Where homelessness occurs, we aim to support people who do become homeless more effectively, in order for them to settle into sustainable accommodation and minimise the future risk of homelessness.

Shropshire Council is presently carrying out a full review of all the Housing Support Services it has commissioned across the county since 2011. The Homelessness Review data provided below identifies a need for targeted rapid response Housing Support as a potential means of increasing the prevention of homelessness in the county.

Examples of medium and short term aims that will help to fulfil the long-term aims;

Short-term/Medium-term Aims will involve;

- Temporary Accommodation Action Plan
- Landlord Incentive/Accreditation Scheme
- Move-on from supported housing
- Rough Sleeping estimates
- HSIG Meetings

PART THREE: DELIVERY OF THE STRATEGY

8. Action Plan

The Action Plan details how we aim to deliver the strategy over the next two years. An Action Plan for the first 12 months of the Strategy (2015-16) has been developed throughout the consultation period, please see Appendix 2 for the initial version of the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2015-17.

9. Monitoring Arrangements

To ensure work being carried out is relevant and effective the Homelessness Strategy objectives and Action Plan are to be reviewed at least annually through the multi-agency Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group (HSIG). Following a recent strategy consultation event with stakeholders and partners interest has been secured in recommencing the work of HSIG and plans are to hold quarterly meetings to review progress and continuously develop the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan. This should provide a valuable reassurance against the backdrop of uncertainty given the economic, funding and policy situation in the current political climate. Performance will be mainly monitored through the Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group (HSIG) examining and analysing the Council's quarterly P1E homelessness statistical return to Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

10. Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment

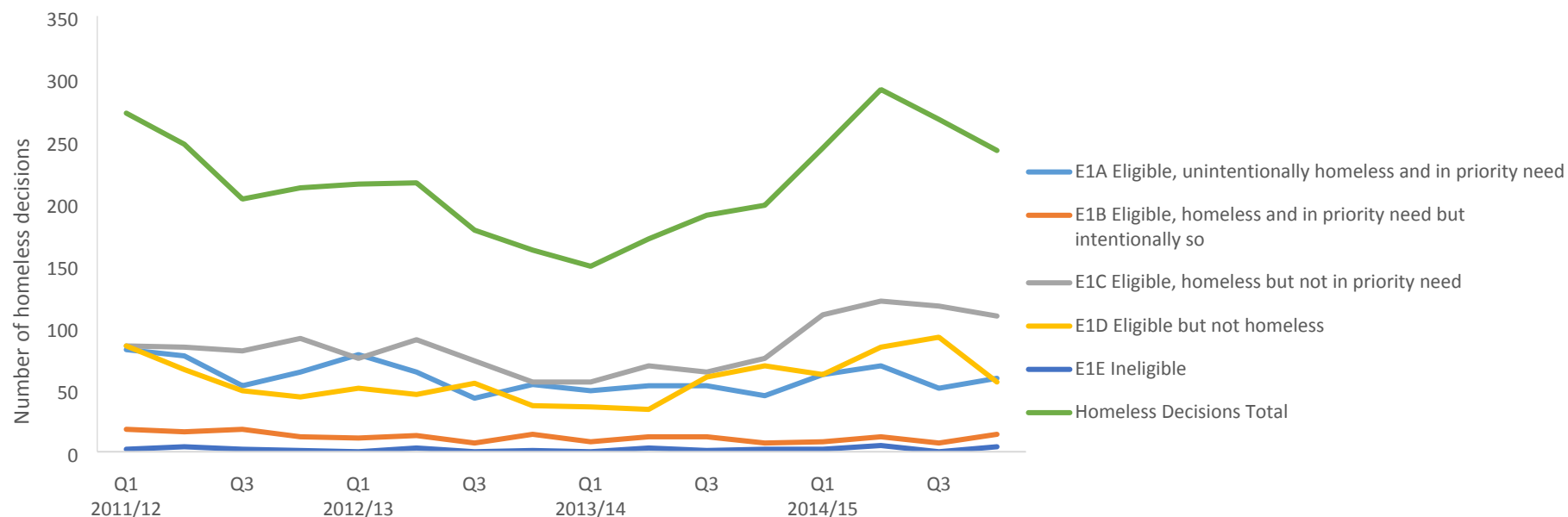
To comply with the Local Authority's equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 a Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment of this strategy and any proposed actions contained herein has been completed before the Strategy has been adopted by Shropshire Council. Any actions proposed in this new Homelessness Strategy are considered to advance equality of opportunity for vulnerable groups affected by homelessness issues who share a protected characteristic as defined in section 4 of the above Act.

SHROPSHIRE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY APPENDIX 1

Homelessness Strategy Review Data

The following information provided on pages 18 to 26 is taken from the Homelessness statistical data reported to DCLG quarterly through the P1E statistical returns over the last four complete financial years.

Homeless decisions by quarter



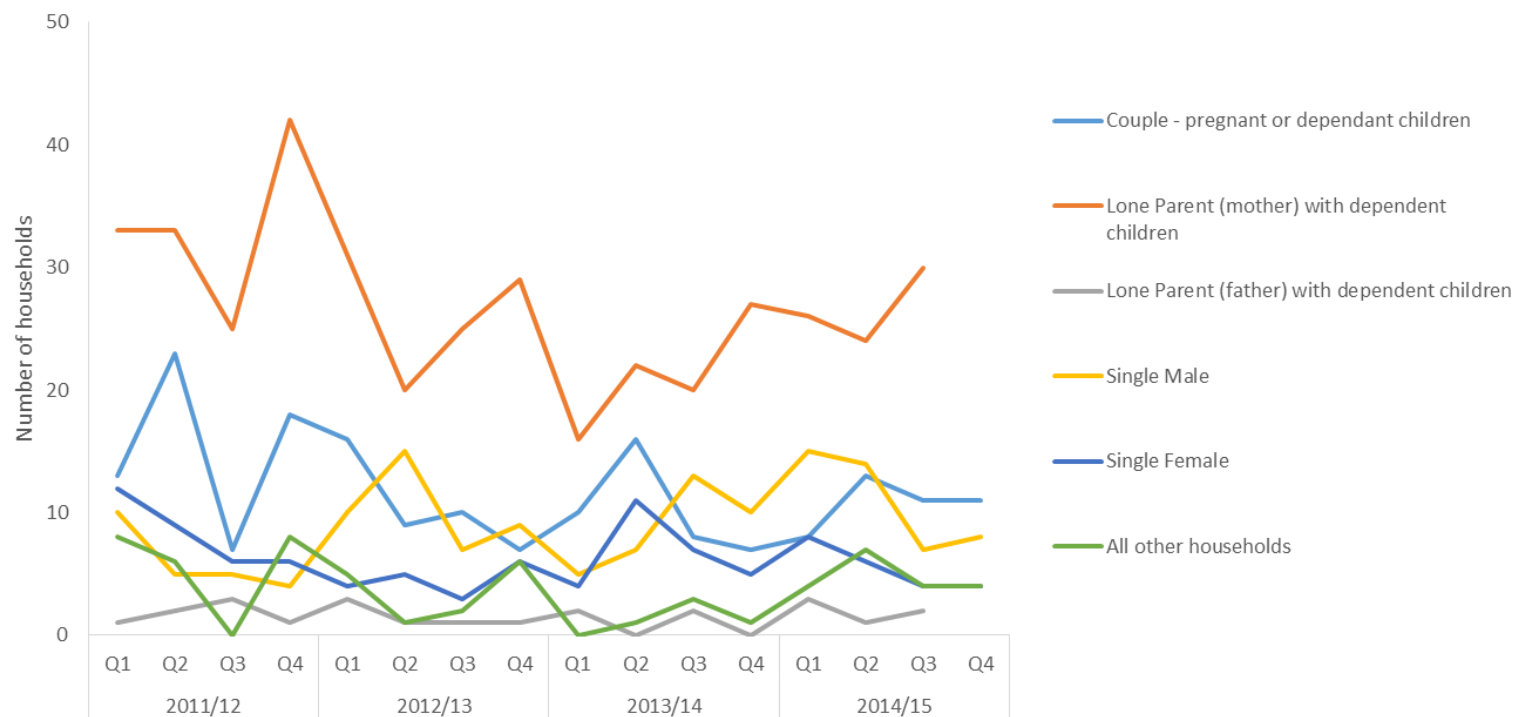
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Homeless decisions, by quarter from 2011/12 to 2015/15

When a homeless household approaches their local authority they are assessed under housing law (Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Localism Act 2012) as to whether the local authority has a duty to provide assistance. This assessment is a Homeless Application, the outcome of which is termed a Homeless Decision. Where a household are deemed to be ‘E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need’ the local authority has a duty to provide one suitable offer of accommodation. Where a household is deemed to be ‘E1B Eligible, homeless and in priority need but intentionally so’, the local authority have a duty to provide temporary accommodation and advice and assistance to secure their own settled accommodation. Where an ‘E1C Eligible, homeless but not in priority need’ decision is made, the local authority do not need to provide accommodation, but have a duty to provide advice and assistance. Where an ‘E1D Eligible but not homeless’ or ‘E1E Ineligible’ decision is made, the local authority have no duty to provide the household with any form of homeless assistance.

The 25% increase in homeless applications received in the last financial year is in keeping with the trend nationally.

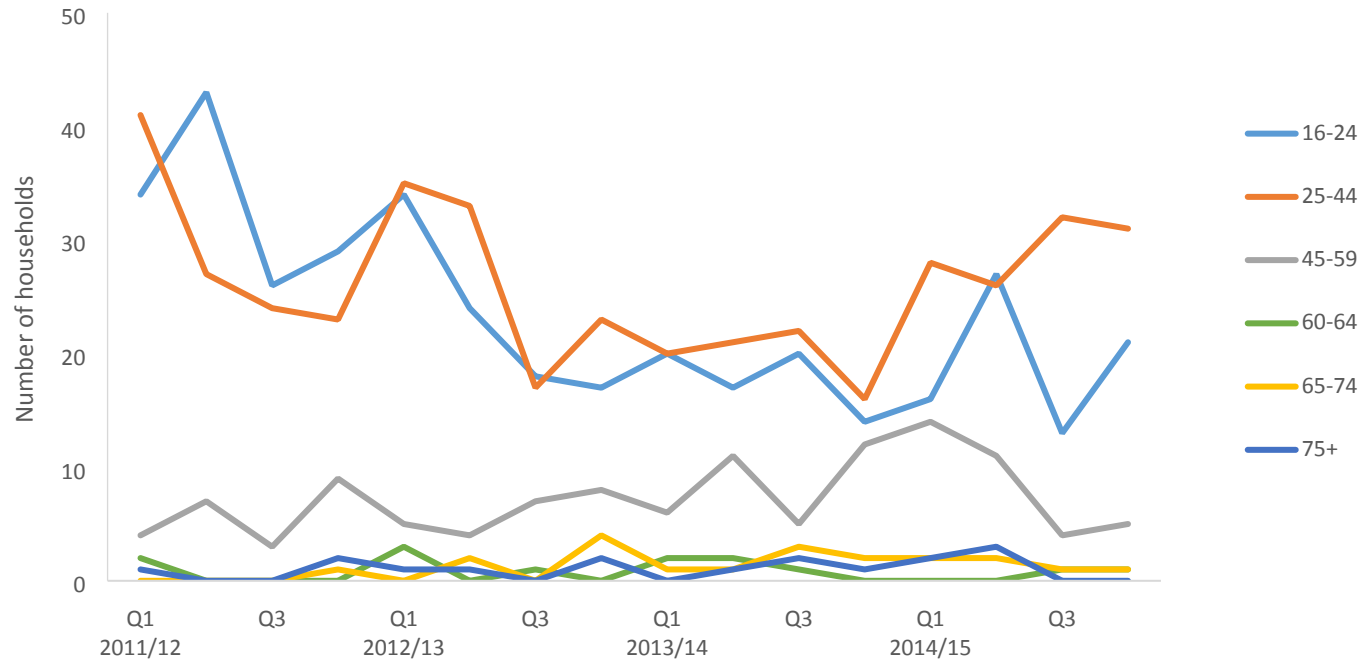
Households with an 'E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need' decision, by household type



Households with an ‘E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless, an in priority need’ decision, by household type, by quarter 2011/12 – 2014/15

Where a household makes a homeless application and are deemed to be ‘E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need’ the local authority has a duty to provide one suitable offer of accommodation. This chart shows these households by household type.

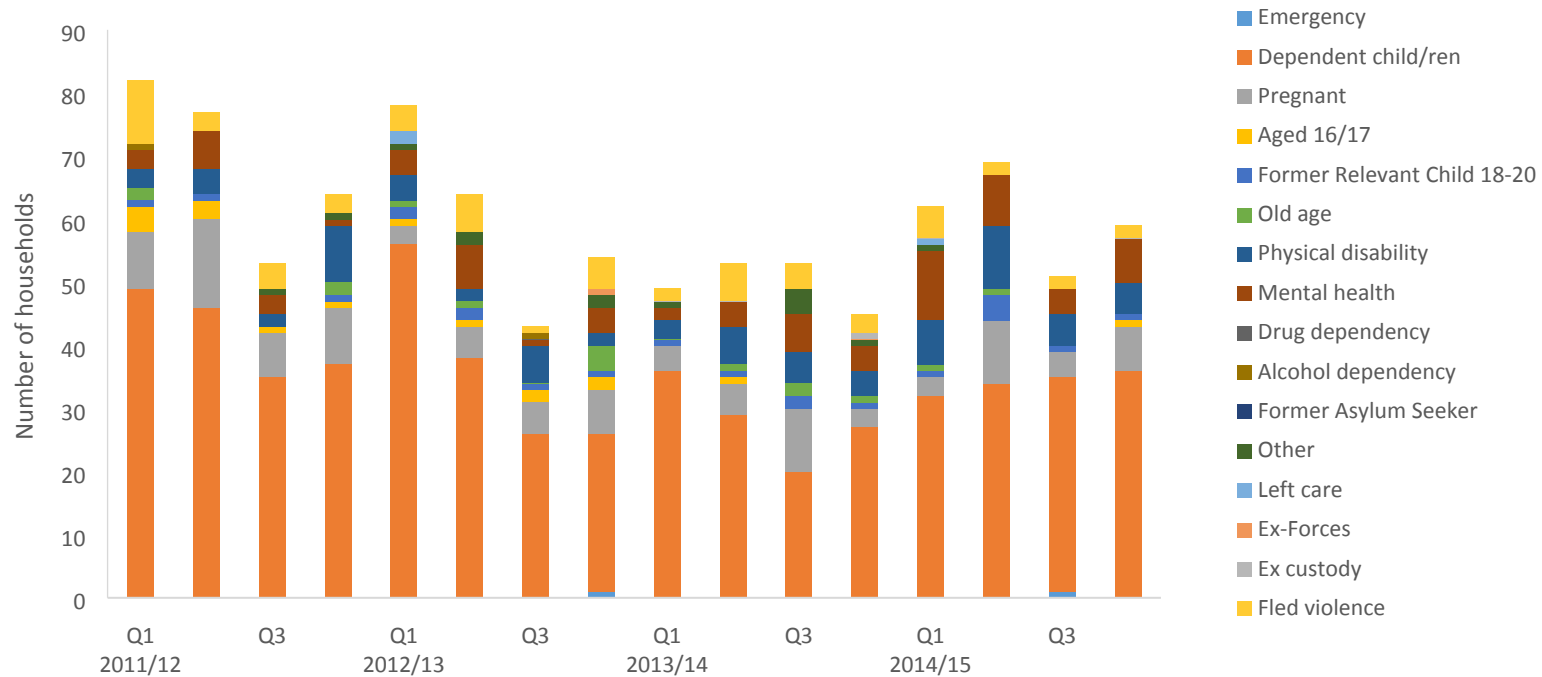
Households with an 'E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need' decision, by age of primary applicant



Households with an 'E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless, an in priority need' decision, by age of primary applicant, by quarter 2011/12 – 2014/15

Where a household makes a homeless application and are deemed to be 'E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need' the local authority has a duty to provide one suitable offer of accommodation. This chart shows these households by age of primary applicant.

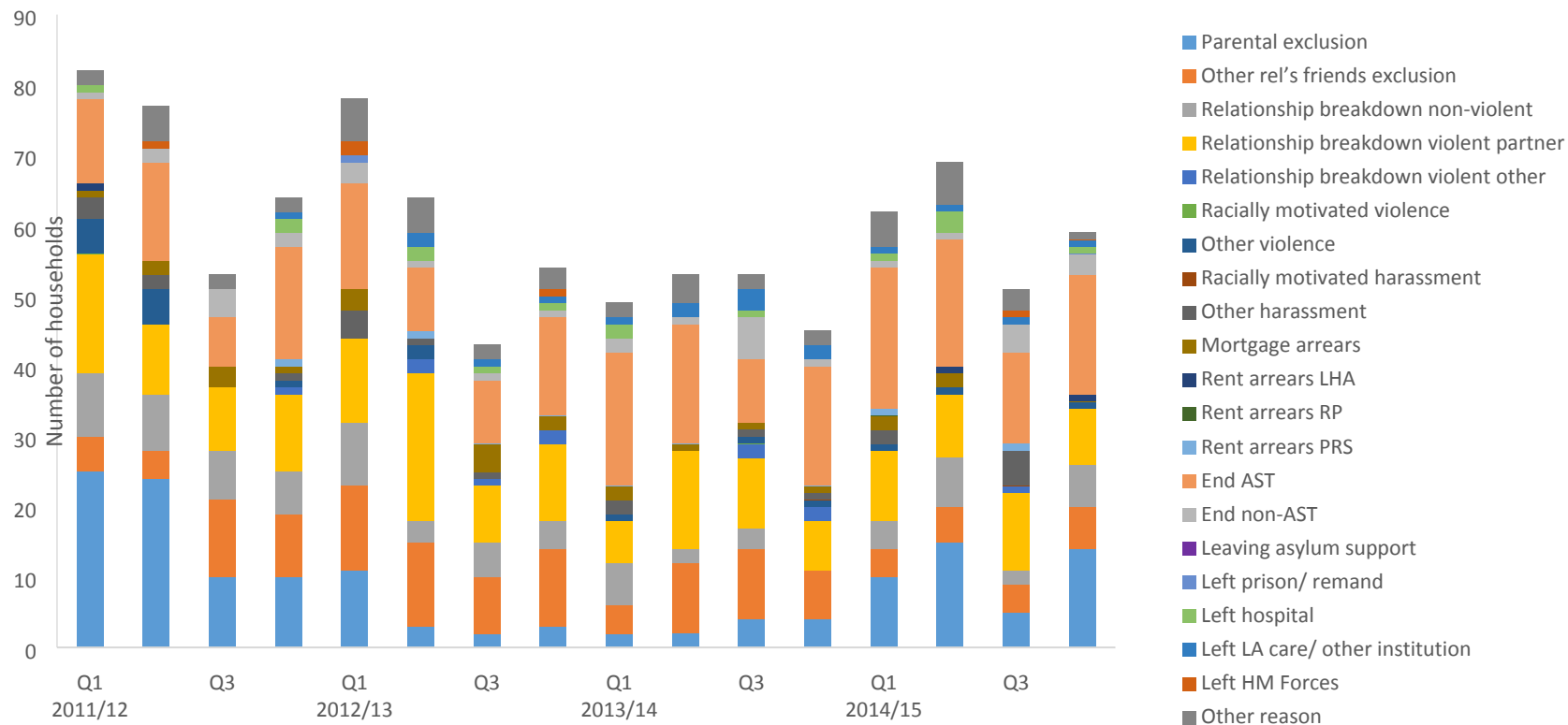
Households with an 'E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need' decision, by reason for priority need



Households with an 'E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless, an in priority need' decision, by priority need category, by quarter 2011/12 – 2014/15

Where a household makes a homeless application and are deemed to be 'E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need' the local authority has a duty to provide one suitable offer of accommodation. This chart shows these households by reason for priority need e.g. physical disability, household has dependent children

Households with an 'E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need' decision, by reason for loss of last settled accommodation

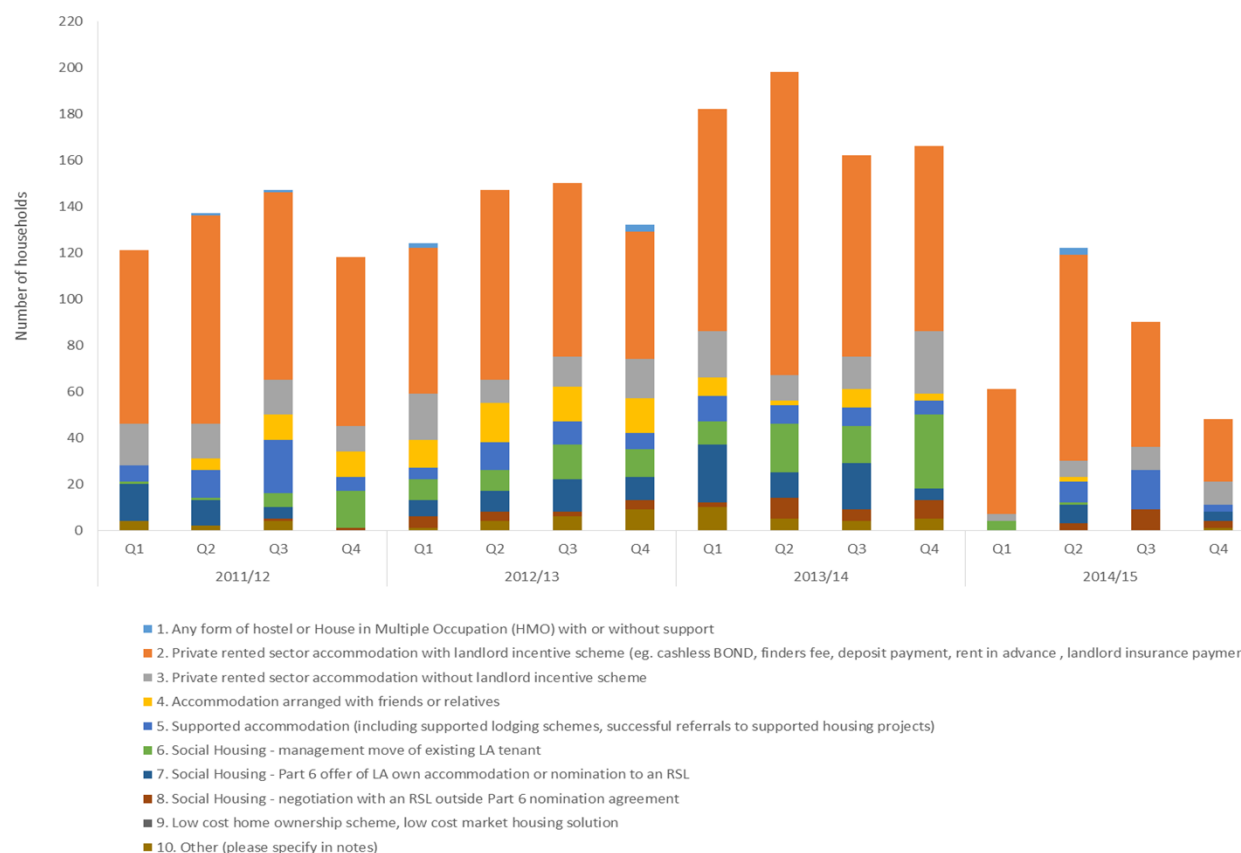


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Households with an 'E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need' decision, reason for loss of last settled accommodation by quarter 2011/12 – 2014/15

Where a household makes a homeless application and are deemed to be 'E1A Eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need' the local authority has a duty to provide one suitable offer of accommodation. This chart shows these households by reason for loss of last settled accommodation. The chart indicates a significant

Cases where prevention was successful in preventing homelessness, and households were assisted to obtain alternative accommodation, by prevention activity.

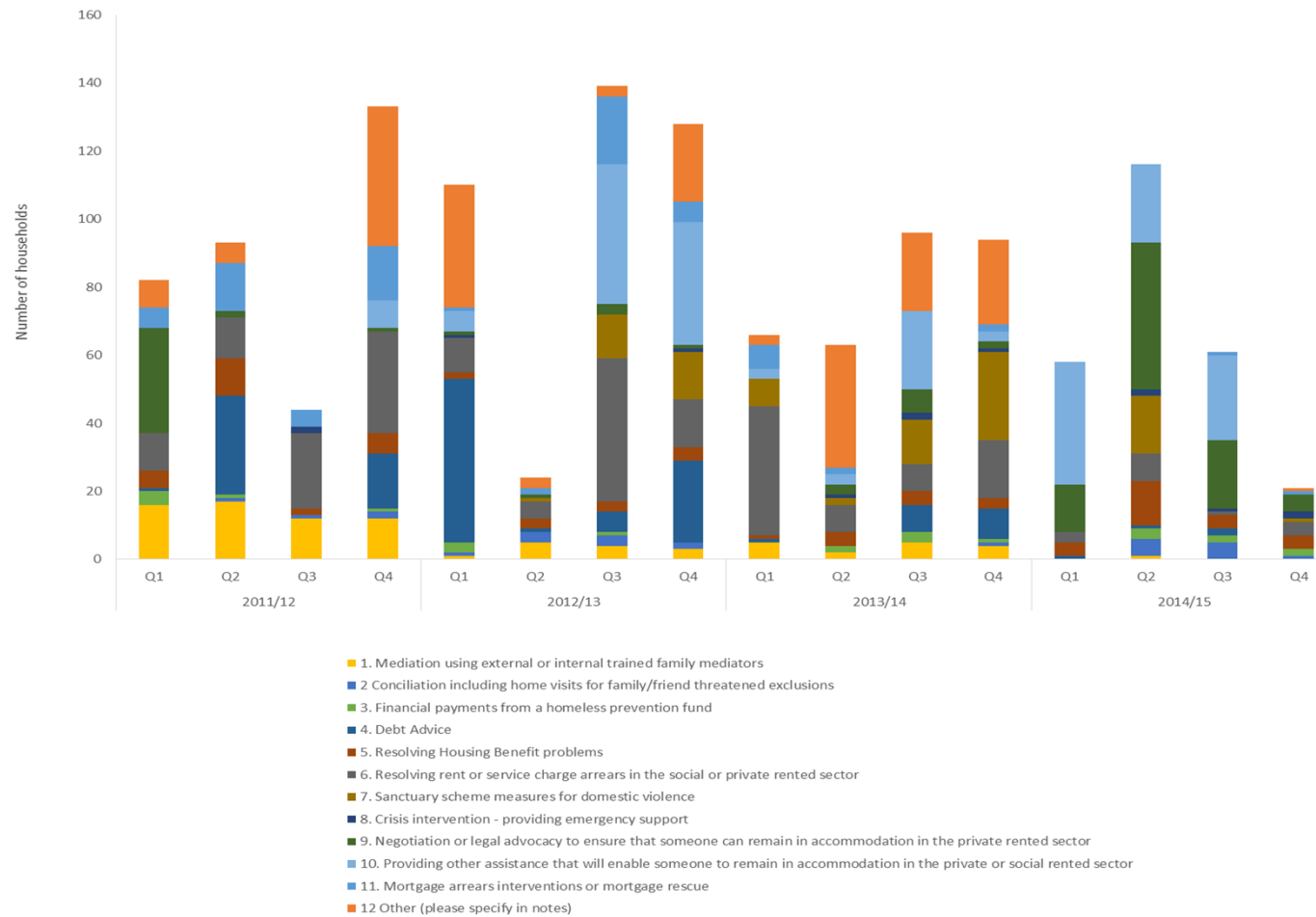


increase back to previous levels of homelessness resulting from exclusion by parents amongst statutorily homeless households.

The Council is required to record and periodically report the total numbers of households threatened with homelessness which it assists to obtain alternative accommodation and consequently to avoid being made homeless.

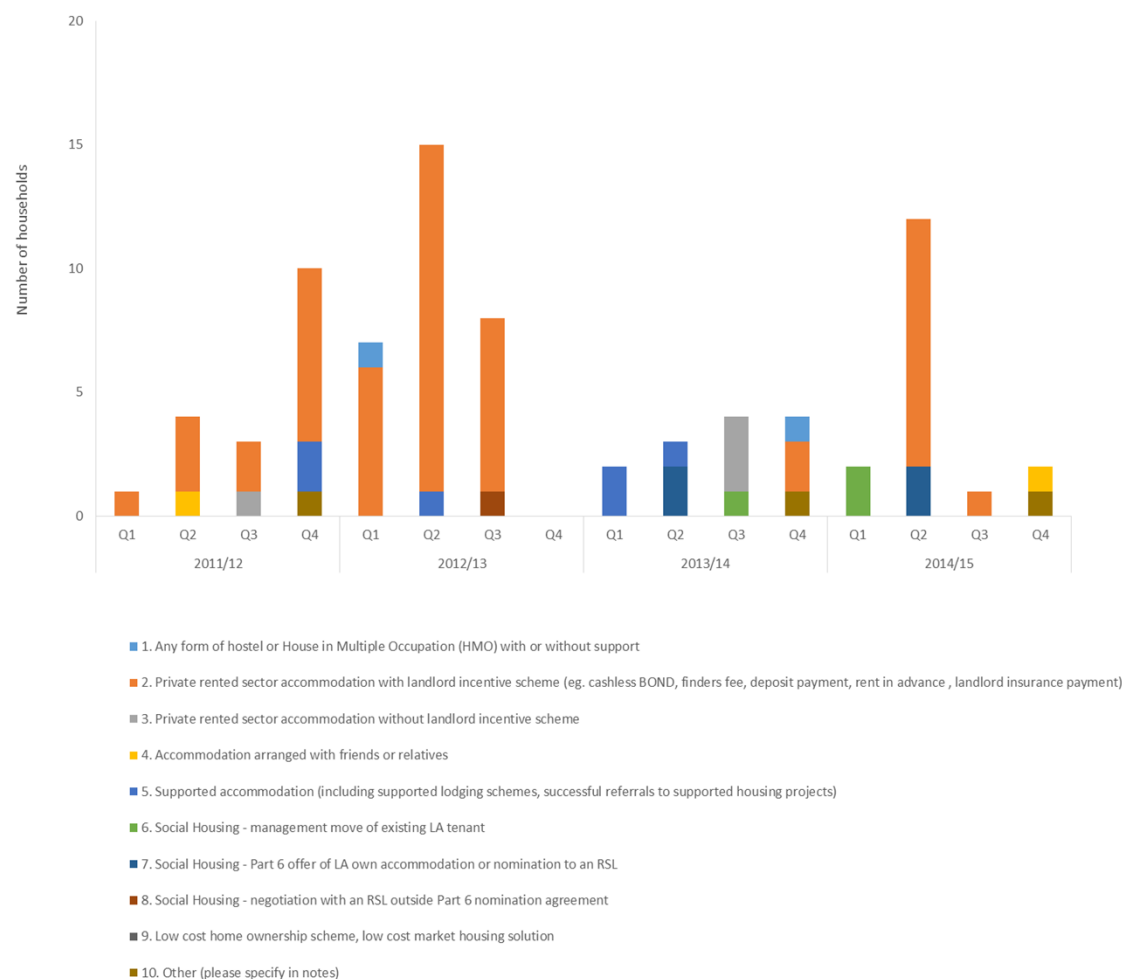
The above chart indicates a significant reduction in homelessness prevention achieved through assisting customers to secure alternative accommodation in the last complete financial year, whilst also indicating a significant reduction in new accommodation commencements secured via the private rented sector. Potential influencing factors include reduction in Local Housing Allowance rates since they are now calculated based on the 30th percentile of market rents.

Cases where prevention was successful in preventing homelessness, and households were able to remain in their existing home, by prevention activity.



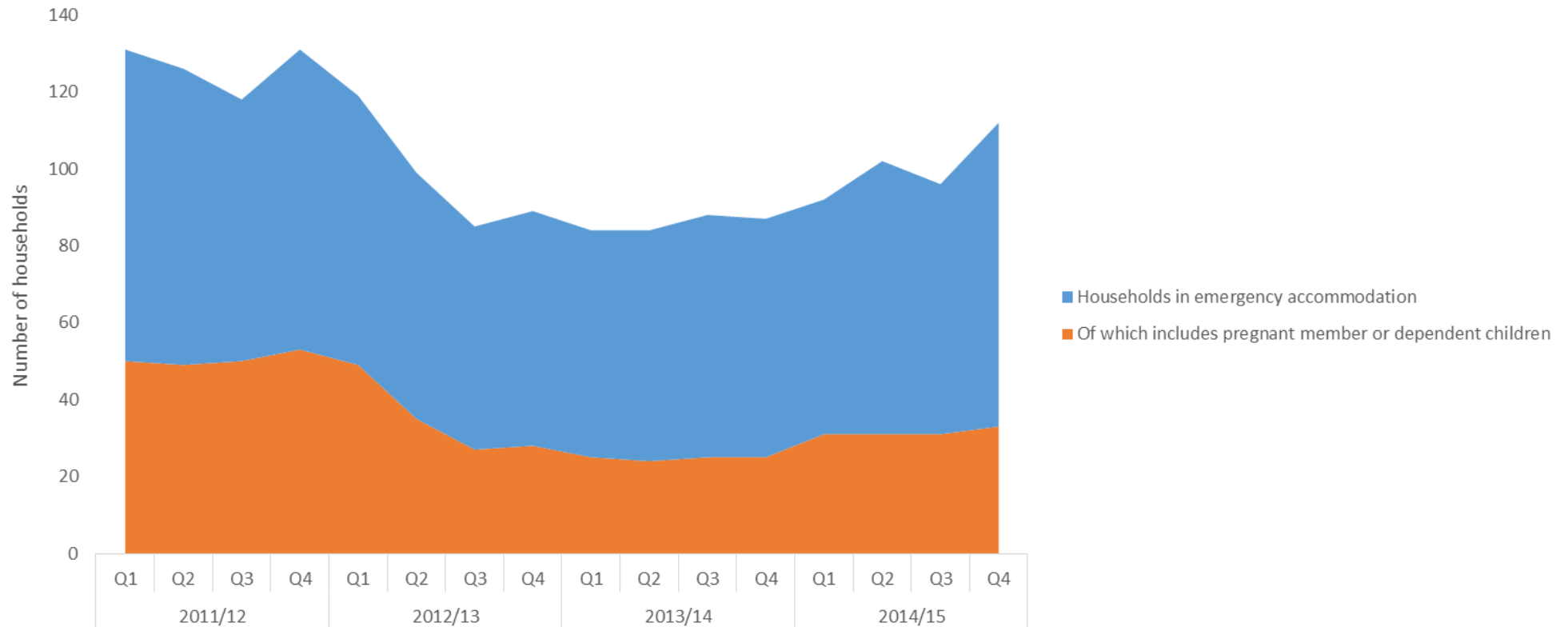
The Council is required to record and periodically report the total numbers of households threatened with homelessness which it assists to remain in their existing accommodation and consequently to avoid being made homeless.

Cases where homelessness was successfully relieved and households were assisted to obtain alternative accommodation, by prevention activity.



The chart above indicates a reduction in homelessness prevention achieved through enabling or assisting customers to return home to live with family.

Households in emergency accommodation at the end of each quarter



The Council is required to record and periodically report the total numbers of non-statutory homeless households which it assists to remain in their existing accommodation and consequently to avoid being made homeless.

The Council is required to report the total number of households it is providing emergency accommodation for on the last day of each financial quarter along with a breakdown of the numbers with children or expectant mothers included in the household.

In 2014 Shropshire Council commissioned independent consultants, arc⁴ Limited, to undertake a new Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment for the county pursuant with section 225 of the Housing Act 2004. The assessment was updated and completed in January 2015 and through detailed consultation, review and analysis arc⁴ Limited's final report concludes that existing pitch provision and likely turnover of pitches is anticipated to adequately provide for all projected accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers within Shropshire over the next five years. The only outstanding action from this assessment of need is the necessity for the Council to identify suitable alternative provision for Travelling Showpeople currently living in Shropshire.

Shropshire Council's Housing Options team invited stakeholder partners to attend a Homelessness Strategy consultation event held on 14th July 2015. There was common consensus amongst the twenty two delegates whom attended on behalf of stakeholder partners of the need for earlier intervention, improved joint working and more timely and relevant information sharing between agencies. There was substantial interest amongst the stakeholder partners in recommencing a Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group meeting quarterly to review and continuously develop the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan. The consultation event included 'world café' style workshops where delegates were asked to discuss six key issues faced by homelessness services in Shropshire, i.e. domestic violence, ending of Assured Shorthold Tenancies, independent living, parental / family exclusions, rough sleeping, and welfare reform, and in particular delegates were asked to provide suggestions of how each issue may be addressed. A pictorial summary of key things identified in participant's feedback during this event has been created using 'Wordle' and is provided overleaf.

Appendix 2: Action Plan for the Homelessness Strategy (2015-17) is provided in draft format below:

Needs	Aims	Objectives	Method	Implementation	Evaluation
<p>25% increase in homeless applications;</p> <p>1/3rd increase in homelessness due to parental / family exclusions;</p> <p>Continuous increase in homelessness due to section 21 notices;</p> <p>More homeless households vulnerable due to physical disability or mental illness;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions halved and preventions via PRS lettings almost halved;</p>	<p>To increase prevention of homelessness, with a focus on helping more people facing housing issues to help themselves.</p> <p>To improve outcomes for, and protect persons, where homelessness cannot be prevented.</p>	<p>Shropshire Council have adopted a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services (Gold Standard local challenge one)</p>	<p>Commitment made explicit in new Homelessness Strategy lead elected member foreword;</p> <p>Convene a Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group (HSIG);</p> <p>Continued joint working with Benefits colleagues and DWP;</p> <p>County support service to be targeted towards early intervention to prevent homelessness;</p>	<p>New Homelessness Strategy to be published before April 2016.</p> <p>Periodic HSIG meeting to review and update Homelessness Strategy Action Plan (HSAP);</p> <p>Re-commissioning of support services in Shropshire to be completed in 2016;</p>	<p>Shropshire Council awarded Gold Standard for local challenge one by National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) before end 2016;</p> <p>Increase in homelessness preventions achieved;</p>

Needs	Aims	Objectives	Method	Implementation	Evaluation
<p>25% increase in homeless applications;</p> <p>1/3rd increase in homelessness due to parental / family exclusions;</p> <p>Continuous increase in homelessness due to section 21 notices;</p> <p>More homeless households vulnerable due to physical disability or mental illness;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions halved;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions via PRS lettings almost halved;</p>	<p>To increase prevention of homelessness, with a focus on helping more people facing housing issues to help themselves.</p> <p>To improve outcomes for, and protect persons, where homelessness cannot be prevented.</p>	<p>Shropshire Council actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs (Gold Standard local challenge two)</p>	<p>Carry out service mapping including details of all Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCO) in the county;</p> <p>Improve digital inclusion across county;</p> <p>Named / Lead homelessness / rough sleeping contacts within LHA departments, statutory services, RAP's & VCO's to be invited onto HSIG;</p> <p>SLA for partner agencies to provide P1E homeless prevention data;</p>	<p>ASC;</p> <p>Ongoing – Registered Accommodation Providers;</p> <p>HSIG – in place before April 2016;</p> <p>SLAs & recommissioning of support services;</p>	<p>Shropshire Council awarded Gold Standard for local challenge two by National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) before end 2016;</p>

Needs	Aims	Objectives	Method	Implementation	Evaluation
<p>25% increase in homeless applications;</p> <p>1/3rd increase in homelessness due to parental / family exclusions;</p> <p>Continuous increase in homelessness due to section 21 notices;</p> <p>More homeless households vulnerable due to physical disability or mental illness;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions halved;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions via PRS lettings almost halved;</p>	<p>To increase prevention of homelessness, with a focus on helping more people facing housing issues to help themselves.</p> <p>To improve outcomes for, and protect persons, where homelessness cannot be prevented.</p>	<p>Shropshire Council offer a Housing Options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients (Gold Standard local challenge three)</p>	<p>Diagnostic Peer Review (DPR) of Shropshire Council Housing Options service by neighbouring Local Authority to be completed before Council can commence applications for Gold Standard awards via NPSS;</p> <p>Review, develop & advertise Enhanced Housing Options Wizard self-help online toolkit for Shropshire;</p> <p>Written confirmation of advice provided to all clients within five working days;</p>	<p>NPSS lead-practitioner for West Midlands to arrange DPR by neighbouring LA before April 2016;</p> <p>Housing Services & Abritas – ongoing;</p> <p>Update Housing Options procedural manual & develop advice template letter;</p>	<p>Shropshire Council awarded Gold Standard for local challenge three by National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) before end 2016;</p> <p>Customer satisfaction monitoring – ongoing;</p>

Needs	Aims	Objectives	Method	Implementation	Evaluation
<p>25% increase in homeless applications;</p> <p>1/3rd increase in homelessness due to parental / family exclusions;</p> <p>Continuous increase in homelessness due to section 21 notices;</p> <p>More homeless households vulnerable due to physical disability or mental illness;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions halved;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions via PRS lettings almost halved;</p>	<p>To increase prevention of homelessness, with a focus on helping more people facing housing issues to help themselves.</p> <p>To improve outcomes for, and protect persons, where homelessness cannot be prevented.</p>	<p>Shropshire Council adopt a <i>No Second Night Out</i> model or an effective local alternative (Gold Standard local challenge four)</p>	<p>Develop and implement effective local alternative to <i>No Second Night Out</i> model;</p> <p>Preventing & tackling rough sleeping on HSIAG agenda;</p> <p>SWEP & CWP protocols in place, operation monitored and reviewed;</p>	<p>'Single service offer' collaboration with key partners to include relocation protocol, advice and assistance offer and signpost to healthcare and other relevant services;</p> <p>HSIAG;</p> <p>Rough Sleeper Task Force (RSTF) meetings held every month;</p>	<p>Shropshire Council awarded Gold Standard for local challenge four by National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) before end 2016;</p> <p>Local alternative to <i>No Second Night Out</i> (with emphasis on prevention) developed & implemented in 2016;</p> <p>Reduction in rough sleeping throughout Shropshire – evidenced via yearly 'headcount' completed each quarter 3.</p>

Needs	Aims	Objectives	Method	Implementation	Evaluation
<p>25% increase in homeless applications;</p> <p>1/3rd increase in homelessness due to parental / family exclusions;</p> <p>Continuous increase in homelessness due to section 21 notices;</p> <p>More homeless households vulnerable due to physical disability or mental illness;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions halved;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions via PRS lettings almost halved;</p>	<p>To increase prevention of homelessness, with a focus on helping more people facing housing issues to help themselves.</p> <p>To improve outcomes for, and protect persons, where homelessness cannot be prevented.</p>	<p>Shropshire Council have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that includes appropriate accommodation and support (Gold Standard local challenge five)</p>	<p>Increase joint working to develop housing pathways for each key client group to provide appropriate accommodation and support;</p> <p>Utilise Shropshire HomePoint database to streamline existing pathways and to expedite housing solutions;</p> <p>Recommissioning to consider 'payment by results' as a tool to effect more sustainable housing solutions & reduce repeat homelessness presentations;</p>	<p>Housing Options to work with partner agencies & Shropshire HomePoint;</p> <p>Commissioning Services;</p>	<p>Shropshire Council awarded Gold Standard for local challenge five by National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) before end 2016;</p> <p>No customers discharged following stay in hospital placed into B&B emergency accommodation in 2016/17;</p>

Needs	Aims	Objectives	Method	Implementation	Evaluation
<p>25% increase in homeless applications;</p> <p>1/3rd increase in homelessness due to parental / family exclusions;</p> <p>Continuous increase in homelessness due to section 21 notices;</p> <p>More homeless households vulnerable due to physical disability or mental illness;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions halved;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions via PRS lettings almost halved;</p>	<p>To increase prevention of homelessness, with a focus on helping more people facing housing issues to help themselves.</p> <p>To improve outcomes for, and protect persons, where homelessness cannot be prevented.</p>	<p>Shropshire Council provide a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both clients and landlords (Gold Standard local challenge six)</p>	<p>Develop and implement a private rented sector offer for all Housing Options customers including support for landlords;</p>	<p>March 2017; Landlord Forum & joint working groups; Utilise Spend to Save fund;</p> <p>Implement powers from section 148 of the Localism Act 2011, to enable the Council's Housing Options team to discharge its statutory homeless duty through the provision of a private rented sector accommodation offer of a suitable assured shorthold tenancy with a minimum fixed term of twelve months.</p>	<p>Shropshire Council awarded Gold Standard for local challenge six by National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) before end 2017;</p>

Needs	Aims	Objectives	Method	Implementation	Evaluation
<p>25% increase in homeless applications;</p> <p>1/3rd increase in homelessness due to parental / family exclusions;</p> <p>Continuous increase in homelessness due to section 21 notices;</p> <p>More homeless households vulnerable due to physical disability or mental illness;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions halved;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions via PRS lettings almost halved;</p>	<p>To increase prevention of homelessness, with a focus on helping more people facing housing issues to help themselves.</p> <p>To improve outcomes for, and protect persons, where homelessness cannot be prevented.</p>	<p>Shropshire Council actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions (Gold Standard local challenge seven)</p>	<p>Encourage participation in HSIG by high-street lenders 'Champion' contacts with local presence in Shropshire;</p> <p>Develop housing options toolkit for customers with mortgage difficulties with emphasis on homelessness prevention;</p>	<p>HSIG;</p> <p>EHO Wizard & Shropshire HomePoint database;</p> <p>Include referral process for Housing Possession Duty Court Desk;</p>	<p>Shropshire Council awarded Gold Standard for local challenge seven by National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) before end 2016;</p>

Needs	Aims	Objectives	Method	Implementation	Evaluation
<p>25% increase in homeless applications;</p> <p>1/3rd increase in homelessness due to parental / family exclusions;</p> <p>Continuous increase in homelessness due to section 21 notices;</p> <p>More homeless households vulnerable due to physical disability or mental illness;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions halved;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions via PRS lettings almost halved;</p>	<p>To increase prevention of homelessness, with a focus on helping more people facing housing issues to help themselves.</p> <p>To improve outcomes for, and protect persons, where homelessness cannot be prevented.</p>	<p>Shropshire Council's Homelessness Strategy sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs (Gold Standard local challenge eight)</p>	<p>'SMART' HSAP regularly reviewed and updated;</p> <p>Action Plan to address impacts of Welfare Reform & include joint-working with Health colleagues;</p>	<p>NPSS Gold Standard & HSIG;</p>	<p>Shropshire Council awarded Gold Standard for local challenge eight by National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) before end 2016;</p>

Needs	Aims	Objectives	Method	Implementation	Evaluation
<p>25% increase in homeless applications;</p> <p>1/3rd increase in homelessness due to parental / family exclusions;</p> <p>Continuous increase in homelessness due to section 21 notices;</p> <p>More homeless households vulnerable due to physical disability or mental illness;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions halved;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions via PRS lettings almost halved;</p>	<p>To increase prevention of homelessness, with a focus on helping more people facing housing issues to help themselves.</p> <p>To improve outcomes for, and protect persons, where homelessness cannot be prevented.</p>	<p>Shropshire Council does not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation (Gold Standard local challenge nine)</p>	<p>Joint Protocol between Housing & Children's Services – monitor & review as appropriate;</p> <p>Emergency intervention by Early Help Team targeted at preventing parental/family exclusions for 16/17 year olds;</p> <p>Develop accommodation pathway for under 25's in housing need;</p>	<p>Joint Protocol re 16/17 & Care Leavers already operational;</p> <p>Early Help Strategy;</p> <p>Re-commissioning of support services – include payment by results?</p>	<p>Shropshire Council awarded Gold Standard for local challenge nine by National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) before end 2016;</p> <p>No 16/17 year olds placed in B&B accommodation at end of quarter for four consecutive returns to DCLG – by end quarter 2 in 2016/17;</p>

Needs	Aims	Objectives	Method	Implementation	Evaluation
<p>25% increase in homeless applications;</p> <p>1/3rd increase in homelessness due to parental / family exclusions;</p> <p>Continuous increase in homelessness due to section 21 notices;</p> <p>More homeless households vulnerable due to physical disability or mental illness;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions halved;</p> <p>Homelessness preventions via PRS lettings almost halved;</p>	<p>To increase prevention of homelessness, with a focus on helping more people facing housing issues to help themselves.</p> <p>To improve outcomes for, and protect persons, where homelessness cannot be prevented.</p>	<p>Shropshire Council does not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks (Gold Standard local challenge ten)</p>	<p>Temporary Accommodation Action Plan to be developed to include targeted use of Spend to Save Fund to prevent use of B&B accommodation for families & arrangements with ALMO & local RAP's for access to temporary accommodation units responsive to demand;</p>	<p>Housing Services, ST&R Housing & RAP's;</p>	<p>Shropshire Council awarded Gold Standard for local challenge ten by National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) before end 2016;</p> <p>No families placed in B&B at end of quarter for four consecutive returns to DCLG – by end quarter 1 in 2016/17;</p>

Appendix 3. Some key Welfare Reform changes:

The *Autumn 2015 Government Budget Statement* contained a lot of information about the longer-term funding of local government. Subsidy and administration grants will change significantly over the next few years. Some of the dates are as yet unknown, but below are some of the changes announced that will impact specifically on Housing Benefit.

Absence from home: this will end if a claimant leaves the UK for more than 4 weeks (starting from April 2016) thereby replacing the current 13 week rule.

Social sector rents will in future be limited to the maximum of the Local Housing Allowance rates. This means the shared rate for single claimants aged under 35 without dependent children will start to apply in this sector (and this may make it very difficult for social landlords to let to this group). The cap will apply from 1 April 2018 but only to tenancies signed after 1 April 2016. In other words, another “transitional protection scheme” will apply. The numbers of such schemes are building again...

The **funding of temporary accommodation** will be radically reformed; the additional amount paid by DWP to local authorities on each qualifying claim will end from 2017-18. Instead, there will be a new grant system.

Additional Discretionary Housing Payment funding will be made available to local authorities to “protect the most vulnerable including those in supported accommodation”. This suggests there will be no or few exceptions under the rules above.

There are plans for **Job centres** to be fully located in local authority buildings.

Consideration will be given to transferring the responsibility for funding the **administration of Housing Benefit for pensioners**. Where or how or to whom is as yet unclear and it might be that local authorities will have to fund the cost at some stage in the future. This seems to suggest that HB for those of pensionable age will continue to be administered by local authorities long-term.

The proposed **changes to tax credits** are being abandoned although the “two children” limit for new claimants (from 2017) will still apply.

Selling of **Housing Association** homes under new “right to buy” rules commenced from 26th November 2015 in some areas.

JSA claimants may be required to sign on every week in the first three months of their claim and there will be an extension of “conditionality”.

The **Fraud and Error Reduction Incentive Scheme** (FERIS) will be extended until the end of 2017-18.

The government is concerned about **levels of fraud and error** in the benefits system where it is not clear whether someone must make a joint, rather than single, claim. It will therefore consult shortly on ways to make the requirement clearer.

The **basic state pension** will increase by the 'triple lock', rising by £3.35 to £119.30; from April 2016, those reaching pensionable age will receive the 'single-tier' pension with a starting rate of £155.65.

The government will begin the **rollout of the Universal Credit (UC) Digital Service** in 2016, completing by 2021.

Welfare Reforms are changing and developing every day. Plans to locate Job Centres within the Local Authority Hubs may prove very useful for Housing Services customers - particularly those in receipt of UC.

Shropshire Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

Contextual Notes 2014

The What and the Why:

The Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA) tool replaces the Equality Impact Needs Assessment (EINA) tool previously in use by Shropshire Council. It is a tool to help us to identify whether or not any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions or projects, may have an adverse impact on a particular group of people, and whether the human rights of individuals may be affected.

What we are now doing is broadening out such assessments to consider social inclusion. This is so that we are thinking as carefully and completely as possible about all groups and communities in Shropshire, including people in rural areas and people we may describe as vulnerable, as well as people in what are described as the nine 'protected characteristics' of groups of people in our population, eg Age, eg Gender Reassignment. We demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in these groups and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views when developing and implementing policy and strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging or delivering services.

It is a legal requirement for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services, such as through a new policy or a change in procedure. Carrying out ESIIAs helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010 to have what is called *due regard* to the three equality aims in our decision making processes. These are: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.

The How:

The assessment comprises two parts: a screening part, and a full report part.

Screening (Part One) enables energies to be focussed on the service changes for which there are potentially important equalities and human rights implications. If screening indicates that the impact is likely to be positive overall, or is likely to have a medium or low negative or positive impact on certain groups of people, a full report is not required. Energies should instead focus on review and monitoring and ongoing evidence collection, enabling incremental improvements and adjustments that will lead to overall positive impacts for all groups in Shropshire.

A **full report (Part Two)** needs to be carried out where screening indicates that there are considered to be or likely to be significant negative impacts for certain groups of people, and/or where there are human rights implications. If you are not sure, a full report is recommended, as it enables more evidence to be collected that will help you to reach an informed opinion.

Shropshire Council Part 1 ESIIA: initial screening and assessment

Please note: prompt questions and guidance within boxes are in italics. You are welcome to type over them when completing this form. Please extend the boxes if you need more space for your commentary.

Name of service change

Proposed new Homelessness Strategy for Shropshire for 2015-17 including a new Homelessness Strategy Action Plan to follow the previous Homelessness Strategy for 2011-15 (as delivered to Cabinet on 14th December 2011).

Aims of the service change and description

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on Local Authorities to develop and publish a Homelessness Strategy and to renew this at least every five years. The Homelessness Strategy is intended to be an active working document with an emphasis on the prevention of homelessness, through the provision of relevant advice and support, and on the provision of suitable accommodation for households where homelessness cannot be prevented.

The new Homelessness Strategy includes a review of homelessness reported throughout the county during the lifespan of the previous document (2011-15). The data analysis combined with stakeholder consultation, government policy and legislative changes have all influenced the proposed Homelessness Strategy's key aims, which are:-

- an increase in the prevention of homelessness; and
- improving outcomes for households impacted by homelessness.

To achieve the key aims of increased prevention of homelessness and improving outcomes for homeless households, the new Strategy recommends as key objectives:-

- Shropshire Council's corporate commitment to adopting a joint approach to preventing homelessness based on early intervention and continuous improvement;
- Shropshire Council's Housing Options team commitment to work towards achieving the nationally recognised 'gold standard' level of service for our customers;
- recommencement of a Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group to encourage sector-wide participation and responsibility for the effective implementation of the new Homelessness Strategy Action Plan;

The Homelessness Strategy's working Action Plan identifies specific goals and targets in order to achieve the above aims and has been based on Shropshire Council Housing Options working towards achieving the 'gold standard' level of service: 'a joint approach to preventing homelessness based on early intervention and continuous improvement' endorsed by the current Conservative government (with accreditation assessed and awarded by the Department of Communities and Local Government's National Practitioner Support Service). The Action Plan will be monitored, reviewed and updated through quarterly multi-agency Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group (HSIG) meetings.

Finally, as a significant positive step toward achieving the key aims stated above, identified in the new Homelessness Strategy, it is also being recommended that Shropshire Council implement the powers introduced in section 148 of the Localism Act 2011. This is to enable the Council's Housing Options team to discharge its accommodation duty, owed toward

households under sections 193 or 195 of the Housing Act 1996, through the provision of a private rented sector accommodation offer of a suitable assured shorthold tenancy which is for a fixed term of at least twelve months.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

Shropshire-wide population
Service users
Shropshire Council
Employees
Housing-related support providers and organisations
Housing providers across Shropshire
Internal and external stakeholder partners, including Health and Criminal Justice services

Evidence used for screening of the service change

Knowledge of service including homelessness statistics and wider housing needs analysis informed new Strategy aims and SMART Action Plan (continued periodic reviews of statistics and housing needs will ensure Homelessness Strategy Action Plan remains relevant as an active working document for agencies county-wide to tackle homelessness and its effects)
Stakeholder and service user consultations carried out to inform Homelessness Review
Homelessness Strategy Action Plan to be managed via HSIIG meetings to be held every three months
Ongoing statistical reports and analysis to monitor and review service progress against Action Plan

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change

- DCLG's published 'P1E' quarterly reports of homelessness statistics for Shropshire and wider housing needs analysis utilising Council databases – confirmed wider national trend of increasing homeless presentations in last two years and continuing increase in homelessness due to parental/ family exclusions, private landlords ending tenancies and relationship breakdown involving domestic abuse;
- Stakeholder partner organisations consultation event held at Shirehall on 14th July 2015 – confirmed need for continuous improvement in working together and early intervention to prevent homelessness;
- Stakeholder organisations' service users questionnaire consultation between 21st and 31st July 2015 – very limited but positive response indicating high level of customer satisfaction amongst respondents;
- Public consultation via Shropshire Council website between 1st October and 13th November 2015 – again very limited response with a couple of constructive e-mail reminders for needs of all service user groups to be addressed.

Potential impact on Protected Characteristic groups and on social inclusion

Guidance notes on how to carry out the initial assessment

Using the results of evidence gathering and specific consultation and engagement, please consider how the service change as proposed may affect people within the nine Protected Characteristic groups and people at risk of social exclusion.

1. Have the intended audiences and target groups been consulted about:
 - their current needs and aspirations and what is important to them;
 - the potential impact of this service change on them, whether positive or negative, intended or unintended;
 - the potential barriers they may face.
2. If the intended audience and target groups have not been consulted directly, have representatives been consulted, or people with specialist knowledge, or research explored?
3. Have other stakeholder groups and secondary groups, for example carers of service users, been explored in terms of potential unintended impacts?
4. Are there systems set up to:
 - monitor the impact, positive or negative, intended or intended, for all the different groups;
 - enable open feedback and suggestions from a variety of audiences through a variety of methods.
5. Are there any Human Rights implications? For example, is there a breach of one or more of the human rights of an individual or group?
6. Will the service change as proposed have a positive or negative impact on fostering good relations?
7. Will the service change as proposed have a positive or negative impact on social inclusion?

Guidance on what a negative impact might look like

High Negative	Significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place or no evidence available: urgent need for consultation with customers, general public, workforce
Medium Negative	Some potential impact, some mitigating measures in place but no evidence available how effective they are: would be beneficial to consult with customers, general public, workforce
Low Negative	Almost bordering on non-relevance to the ESIIA process (heavily legislation led, very little discretion can be exercised, limited public facing aspect, national policy affecting degree of local impact possible)

Initial assessment for each group

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through inserting a tick in the relevant column.

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group eg young person with disability)		High – end use of inappropriate emergency accommodation for 16&17 year olds		
Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)				Low
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				Low
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				Low
Pregnancy and Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)		High - end use of inappropriate emergency accommodation for expectant mothers and households with dependent children		
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, gypsy, traveller)				Low
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				Low

Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				Low
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				Low
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people you consider to be vulnerable)		High – improved outcomes for households impacted by the threat of homelessness		

Decision, review and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?		
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		

If Part One, please now use the boxes below and sign off at the foot of the page. If Part Two, please move on to the full report stage.

Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change
<p>Stakeholder consultation was carried out as part of the Homelessness Review last year. The Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group will monitor and review the impact of the new Strategy Action Plan quarterly.</p> <p>In seeking to discharge the Council's statutory duty to accommodate homeless households, under section 193 of the Housing Act 1996, via an offer of private rented sector accommodation it is proposed:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> not to utilise any property which has given cause for a Shropshire Council Environmental Health Officer to write to the owner in the previous twelve months due to unsatisfactory property conditions following their assessment under the Housing Health & Safety Rating System from the Housing Act 2004; and not to utilise any property of a landlord whom, where it has been established by Shropshire Council Public Protection service, has in the past twelve months been responsible for harassment or illegal eviction of a tenant.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change

As above, also it is proposed that the Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group quarterly meetings will be chaired by the Deputy Portfolio Holder for Housing, presently Councillor Robert Macey – elected Conservative party member for Gobowen, Selattyn and Weston Rhyn division.

Activity at Part One screening stage

Names (list those involved in carrying out assessment)	Job titles	Contact details
Lucas Riley	Senior Housing Options Officer	lucas.riley@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: (01743) 258901
Date commenced		
Date updated		
Date transferred to ESIIA		
Internal Scrutiny by		

Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer carrying out the screening</i>		
<i>Any internal support</i>		
<i>Any external support</i>		
<i>Head of service</i>		

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer's name</i>		
<i>Head of service's name</i>		

Note for 2014 refresh of our corporate equality impact assessment approach: Shropshire Council has referred to good practice elsewhere in refreshing the EINA material and replacing it with this ESIIA material. The Council is grateful in particular to Leicestershire County Council, for graciously allowing use to be made of their Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments (EHRIsAs) material and associated documentation.

For further information on the use of ESIIAs: please contact your head of service or contact Mrs Lois Dale, Principal Rural Policy Officer and internal policy support on equality, via telephone 01743 255667, or email lois.dale@shropshire.gov.uk.



<u>Officer and Date</u>
Cabinet 27 th April 2016

<u>Item</u>
Public

1. Social Care System Replacement

Responsible Officer: Andy Begley

1.1 Summary

This report outlines and confirms the approach that Shropshire Council will adopt in replacing the current Adults and Children's Social Care IT System and details the costs and benefits associated with taking the recommended option forward.

The reasons for the project are:-

To ensure that the quality and delivery of social care services for the adults and children of Shropshire are provided in the most cost effective way.

To reduce the ongoing cost of running these services in line with the overall reduction of local authority budgets.

To provide the necessary systems and integration to manage a commissioning based business model.

To provide management information reporting tools which will provide the ability to drive greater efficiency from service and contract delivery.

From initial investigation and analysis of projects within the Digital Transformation Programme, it became evident that the Social Care Project warranted an accelerated path to deliver urgently needed system capability. This is required to inform better management decisions which will drive down the rising cost of providing social care to adults in Shropshire.

New system tools and workflow processes are urgently needed to replace a system that was designed for the way the social care service was operated in 2003. These changes will remove the significant manual effort which is currently required to provide better management visibility of wider health and social care services.

1.2 Recommendations

That Cabinet confirms and approves the approach described within this report to replace the current Adults and Children's Social Care IT System in line with the recommended option and that Cabinet confirms and approves funding from the sources identified to proceed with the system replacement. The funding for this project exceeds £1m and was not reflected in the Council's Budget approved on 25th February. Cabinet is therefore requested to recommend approval of the funding to full Council.

REPORT

2. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

2.1 Risks

There are currently very significant levels of operational risk resulting from the continued use of the current CareFirst system. These risks are highlighted below to illustrate the reasons which make it necessary to implement a replacement system.

The existing CareFirst system has been extended beyond a reliable lifetime (currently in its 12th year) and the incremental changes that have been made over the years will create a more inefficient and fragile system.

The limitations of the current system could expose the Council to a situation in which the existing duty of care to citizens may fail.

The separate Social Care and Financial systems create disjointed business functionality that prevents the opportunity to introduce efficiencies.

There is the increasing risk of failure of the Social Care systems that could jeopardise the ability of Social Workers to monitor and manage open cases.

There is an issue that the Ofsted review of Children's services has identified significant issues with the existing case management system. This issue would not be addressed without a plan to replace or significantly upgrade the current system.

2.2 Options Considered

From the analysis completed to date there are 4 options that have been considered:-

- 1. Do nothing option is included for comparison. This retains the current CareFirst social care system and does not introduce any system or process changes.**

This has been discounted as the current level of risk, highlighted above, is considered to be too high. It is therefore necessary for a new IT system and appropriate more efficient operational processes to be implemented.

- 2. Implement a new system to meet minimum current requirements installed and maintained on council operated infrastructure.**

This option has been discounted for two main reasons. It does not deliver the additional systems to enable digital self-service methods for citizens, clients and service providers. It also does not align with the strategy to move to cloud based systems.

- 3. Implement a new system to meet current and future requirements with possibility for further enhancement to meet commissioning roadmap. Externally hosted by new supplier. Data migration and training delivery are managed and delivered by internal resources.**

This option **does** deliver the additional systems to enable digital self-service methods for citizens, clients and service providers and aligns with the cloud based system strategy. This delivers the same system and process improvements as option 4, however Shropshire Council are responsible for the data migration and training programmes, which are two complex areas which require experienced specialist knowledge.

4. Implement a new system to meet current and future requirements and further enhancements to meet commissioning roadmap. Externally hosted by new supplier. Data migration and training delivery are managed and delivered by system provider.

This is the recommended option as it delivers the additional systems to enable digital self-service methods for citizens, clients and service providers and aligns with the cloud based system strategy. It also reduces the risks to Shropshire Council as the system provider is contracted to complete the data migration and training programmes.

2.3 Other Options considered and discounted

A partnership agreement with another local authority, to share the use of an existing social care system, has been considered.

It was discounted for operational business process reasons. The current Shropshire “new operating model” has demonstrated significant success in reducing the demand for “paid for” care services for adults.

If we were to adopt a system that had already reached maturity within another authority, then we would need to adopt their operational process in order to utilise their system workflow.

This is likely to cause a retrograde step for service provision and cost management.

2.4 Opportunities

2.4.1 IT system improvements will lead to efficiencies in staff resource that can be redirected towards processes and practices that result in the reduction in inappropriate expensive levels of care packages.

2.4.2 Improved data capture and quality features will not only provide for more accurate operational information but will also support efforts to predict service demand patterns and trends more accurately.

2.4.3 Existing IT system restrictions and inflexibility will be removed to provide opportunities for staff resources to be redirected to undertake other work which could generate greater cost reductions elsewhere within the service, such as reducing the overall purchasing budget costs through improved commissioning and brokerage activities.

2.4.4 Improved Social Care and Finance links at IT system and business process levels will reduce the current delays in issuing client invoices, which will in turn lead to

a reduction in outstanding debt. There is an estimated potential reduction of up to £500k per annum in aged debt avoidance. A modest estimate of £247k pa has been used for illustration.

2.4.5 Staff cost avoidance is achieved through a combination of IT system and business process improvements. The recommended option will ensure that growth in demand can be serviced through a more efficient complement of staff. Without these efficiencies it is anticipated that Adult Social Care and Children's Services overall would require annual increases.

2.5 Other considerations

Whilst this option includes supplier contracted data migration and training services there would still be a requirement for training management and scheduling on our side. We would also need data migration experts to work with internal teams, to ensure the correct data mapping and to collate various disparate data sources.

Initial investigation and analysis indicates that there is a broad range of current processes that involve daily time consuming manual workarounds, data re-entry and duplication. This leads to significant time inefficiency, risks around data entry error and inconsistent data held in multiple locations. Further analysis is likely to reveal an opportunity to make additional significant time efficiency savings as a result of combined system and business process rationalisation.

Estimated time efficiency savings equate to at least £1.9M per annum in staff time. This is currently not considered as recoverable or cashable due to the reasons outlined below.

There are several factors which are masking the ability to forecast a net time efficiency benefit which include;

A forecast increase in service demand

Areas of current under resourcing

System inefficiencies

Significant staff unrecorded overtime (unpaid)

Due to these factors obscuring the level of time savings that may be realised, a two stage approach is proposed. Firstly to eliminate system inefficiencies and to subsequently carry out an operational process review which will ensure that appropriate staffing levels are in place.

At this point it will be possible to evaluate whether the net effect of time savings, would be best utilised as a staff reduction cashable benefit. Alternatively the resource could be reallocated to better monitor and manage contracts, payments and the overall purchasing budget.

There will also be consideration given to implementing and enhancing initiatives to prevent or minimise the demand for social care.

3. Financial implications

On 25 February 2016 Council approved the Financial Strategy and Budget for 2016/17 which did not include the financial implications of the review of ICT across the Council, as this had not been calculated at that point. Included within the report was Recommendation G which stated: “Note the potential for investment and further savings proposals resulting from the review of the Council’s ICT requirements which are not reflected in this report.”

As a result of work undertaken in the intervening period, the business case for the Social Care System replacement has been produced and given the value of potential investment requires approval at Full Council level. It should be noted that such approval does not take into account the financial implications for other ICT requirements, which will require separate approval. In addition Full Council may need to consider and approve a Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy (should Shropshire Council wish to apply this additional power made available to Local Authorities) for the purposes of funding this or other ICT projects.

To implement the recommended option there is a requirement to fund one off expenditure of £3.318m in the first year, and a further one off expenditure in the second year of £1.591m, ongoing annual costs are forecast to be between £0.212m and £0.232m.

The recommended option, attracts total costs of £6.4 M (over 5 years) and non-cashable benefits of at least £6.6 M giving a return on investment by year 3, albeit that these benefits are considered at this point to be purely efficiency savings.

The one off costs include additional staffing resources required within the Council over the life of the implementation project in 2016/17 and 2017/18 and also include software licences for the new solution and implementation costs from the supplier.

Total ongoing costs of the project include an element of dual running costs of the existing system and the new solution for one year in 2017/18.

All financial figures are in £000s						
COST & BENEFIT CATEGORIES	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Totals
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/2021	
One off Costs						
Staffing Resources:						
Project Resources plan	1,084	1,446				£ 2,530
New System Costs:						
Software	691					£ 691
Contracts	1,434					£ 1,434
Other Costs:						£ -
Training						£ -
Decommissioning						£ -
Contingency (10% or Resources only)	108	145	-	-	-	£ 253
Total One-off Costs	£ 3,318	£ 1,591	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 4,909
On-going Costs						
New System Costs:						
Software						£ -
Contracts		212	219	225	232	£ 888
Dual Running of Old System						£ -
Software	174	174				£ 348
Other Licences, Support & Maintenance	6	6	6			£ 17
Hosting/DR	76	76	76			£ 229
Total On-going Costs	£ 256	£ 468	£ 301	£ 225	£ 232	£ 1,481
Total Costs	£ 3,574	£ 2,059	£ 301	£ 225	£ 232	£ 6,390

There are also some associated cashable benefits:

These relate to the total annual printing and confidential paper disposal costs for Children's Services at Mt McKinley currently run at £33,900 of which 60% could be removed through new system efficiencies and improved business process activities. The potential cashable benefit is £20,340, starting in year 2.

There would be a requirement to continue to run the current system at an annual cost of £174k until the end of the contract which ceases in April 2018, and also to continue with the current hosting and DR/BC contracts at an annual cost of £76k until the end of the contract in April 2019. After the period of dual running of both systems has ceased there would be a cashable benefit of £31k in year 3, reducing to £24k in year 4 (due to expected inflation increases in the cost of the new system).

As highlighted in section 2.5, the non-cashable benefits include efficiency savings in staffing generated from process improvements and reduced double input across the service. It is also considered that improved integration and processes between the Social Care system and the Finance system could improve the management and recovery of the service's debtor invoices. This income is credited to the service in full at the point that the debtor invoice is raised and therefore the avoidance of aged debt and potential write off is not considered a cashable benefit.

COST & BENEFIT CATEGORIES	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Totals
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/2021	
Non-cashable Benefits						
Staff efficiency savings			1,903	1,903	1,903	£ 5,708
Aged Debt Avoidance			247	247	247	£ 740
Environmental						£ -
Other						£ -
Total Non-cashable Benefits	£	£	£ 2,149	£ 2,149	£ 2,149	£ 6,448
Total Benefits	£	£	£ 2,170	£ 2,200	£ 2,193	£ 6,563

It should be noted that the Council already holds a base budget for the existing software maintenance costs of CareFirst and in addition to the cashable benefits noted above, the net position to be funded is £5.1m as detailed below:

	All financial figures are in £000s						
FUNDING POSITION	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Totals	
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/2021		
Costs:							
One off Costs	3,318	1,591				£ 4,909	
On-going Costs	256	468	301	225	232	£ 1,481	
Total Costs	3,574	2,059	301	225	232	£ 6,390	
Base Budget	243	243	243	243	243	£ 1,215	
Cashable Benefits (excl. system savings as included in base budget)			20	20	20	£ 60	
Required Funding	£ 3,331	£ 1,816	£ 38	-£ 38	-£ 31	£ 5,115	

Funding for this project will be provided from the following sources:

The Funding for this project will be provided from internal borrowing against the Council's current cash balances. This will allow the funding of eligible costs to be spread over a number of years, with annual or ad hoc contributions required to repay the funds allocated plus any internal interest charged. Further refinement of the proposal is required to determine the level of spend that can be capitalised, but on the basis that the full net investment of approximately £5.1m is spread over three years, approximately £1.7m would be required each year for repayment. The following areas have initially been identified to cover this cost:

- Cashable savings and realisation of cashable savings from currently proposed non-cashable savings (to be confirmed between £0.04m and £2.19m, on average, per year)
- Uncommitted Adult Social Care Capital Grant Funding (there is currently £1.277m uncommitted with the potential for a further £0.626m funding in 2017/18 and £1.119m in 2018/19 – based on 2016/17 levels)
- Residual funding from ICT Transformation Project resources (dependent upon progress of other ICT initiatives)
- Review of appropriate earmarked reserves (e.g. Resources Efficiency Reserve)

It may be appropriate to make use of the additional powers made available to Local Authorities as part of the Final Local Government Settlement for flexible use of capital receipts. Such a move would potentially enable non-capital spend to be funded from future capital receipts

generated. Such flexibility would require Full Council to approve a Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy at some point during the current financial year.

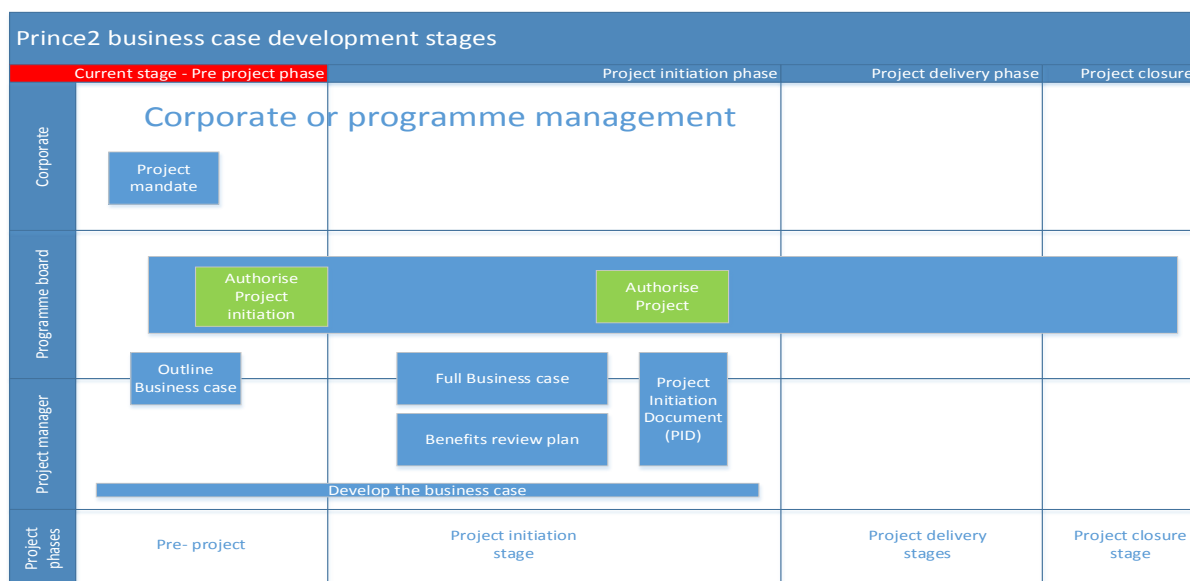
In addition, some of the costs may be funded directly from the Council’s £2m Invest to Save Fund where specific elements of the programme meet the requirements of this scheme.

Further work is to be carried out with the aim to realise greater levels of cashable savings before determining the exact amount of funding that will be provided from each source. The following section considers how this work will be taken forward. Following agreement of the final funding package (by the s151 Officer), cashable savings no longer required to repay internal borrowing (either through substitution or at the conclusion of the project) will be available as base budget savings for the Council.

4. Benefits realisation plan

We are currently at the stage of having outline business case level information and will need to engage some additional project resources to carry out this next round of work. This would not be redundant effort as it will deliver the initial aspects of requirements gathering and specification which will be needed should the full project business case be approved to proceed.

4.1 Develop the business case

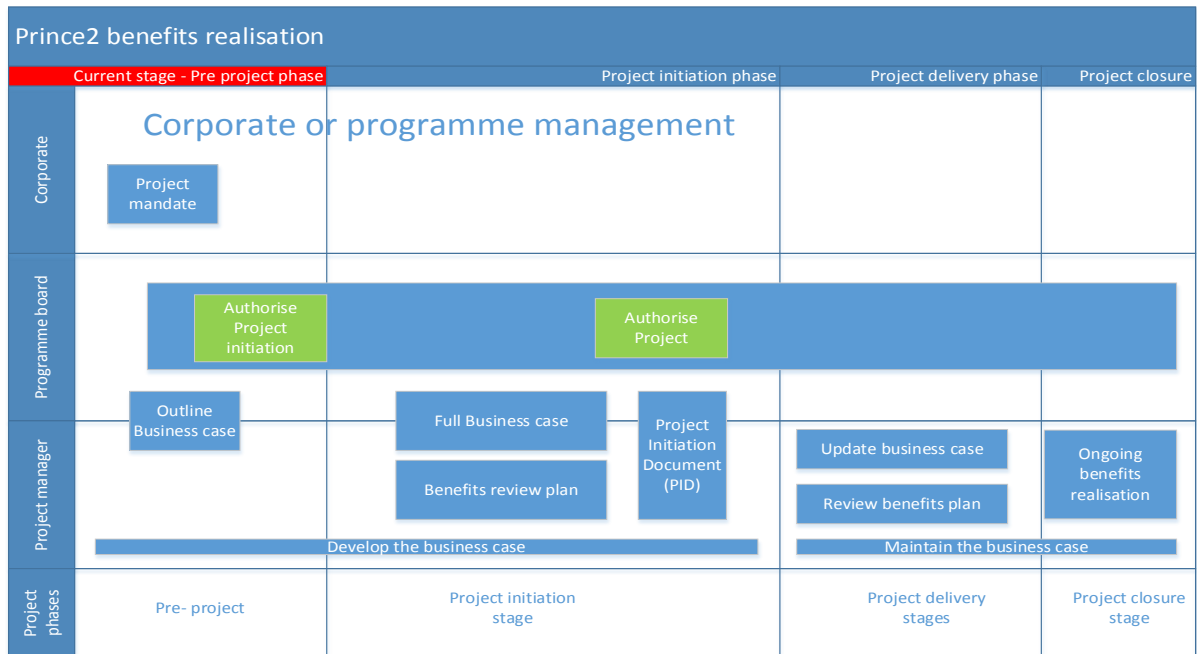


The project progress will be carried out in conformance to industry standard Prince2 methodology which ensures that adequate governance is in place to maintain sight of the forecast costs and benefits of the project.

There will be regular project board reviews of this forecast and if there is an expectation that the agreed project costs will be exceeded, or that the benefits will not be as high as agreed, then the project will be put on hold until the project governance board have agreed an acceptable way forward.

Any amendment to the financial projections of the project will be subject to approval under the Council's virement rules as stipulated in the Financial Rules.

4.2 Develop the benefits review plan

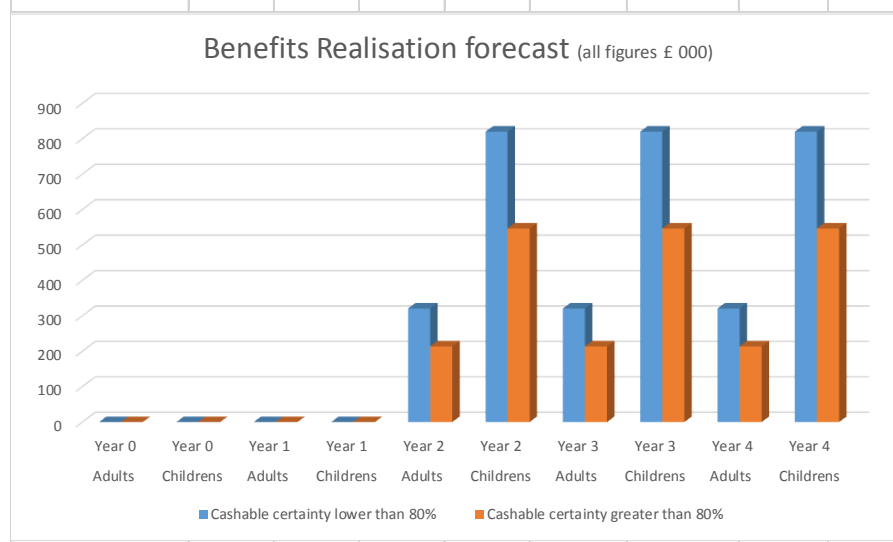


In order to define and agree the detailed plans of how benefits will be realised into cashable savings, it will be necessary to carry out further analysis of the current business and system processes. This will then lead to an informed view of options to release resources to deliver cashable benefits either in the operational budgets or in the purchasing budget particularly for Adult Social Care.

5. Benefits Realisation

Based on the initial review of staffing efficiency savings anticipated, there is a high level of confidence within the project team and senior management of Adults and Children’s Services that at least 40% of these savings will be converted into cashable benefits and therefore can be used towards the funding of the project. This will be monitored and tracked as the detailed benefits review plan is developed but the current projection of benefits realisation at the Outline Business Case stage is detailed below.

	2016/17	2016/17	2017/18	2017/18	2018/19	2018/19	2019/20	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21	Total
	Adults	Childrens	Adults	Childrens	Adults	Childrens	Adults	Childrens	Adults	Childrens	benefits
	Year 0	Year 0	Year 1	Year 1	Year 2	Year 2	Year 3	Year 3	Year 4	Year 4	
Cashable certainty lower than 80%	0	0	0	0	321	820	321	820	321	820	3,425
Cashable certainty greater than 80%	0	0	0	0	214	547	214	547	214	547	2,283
Total	0	0	0	0	535	1,367	535	1,367	535	1,367	5,708



6. Recommended Option

The recommended option 4, provides for the implementation of a new system to meet future requirements and further enhancements to meet a commissioning roadmap. It includes supplier delivered data migration and a training programme and will provide a fully integrated solution to maximise income and minimise debt. Linking operational activities and associated financial transactions to the provision of assessed social care, it will remove redundant and duplicated processes.

Appendices:

7. Scope

7.1 Children's Social care – service level requirements

- Case management – case records, genograms and chronologies
- Safeguarding
- Compass (MASH)
- Family solutions
- Targeted youth
- PACT Charity Adoption
- Foster Care – Records and payments system to carers
- External placements – Records of SLA and payments
- Disabled Children
- Looked after children
- Care Leavers
- Complaints handling module
- E-Start-Consolidation of family information for reporting to government
- Troubled Families
- ECINS/Early Help
- Statutory reporting
- Management reporting
- Data warehouse or offline copy of data base for reporting purposes.
- Gazetteer

7.2 Adult Social care – service level requirements

- Safeguarding
- DOLS
- Early Help (MASH)
- E –Market portal
- Citizen Portal (signposting)
- Client portal – secure communication with service users.
- Complaints handling module
- Statutory reporting

Management reporting

Data warehouse or offline copy of data base for reporting purposes.

Gazetteer

7.3 Integrated Social care financial management requirements

Accounts payable

Accounts receivable

Client balances and arrears

Contracts management

7.4 Integration requirements

Education – Capita One, SIMS

Integration to General Ledger accounting system (Samis)

Integration to Finance Manager CM 2000 ETMS

Integration with Health

Active Directory integration

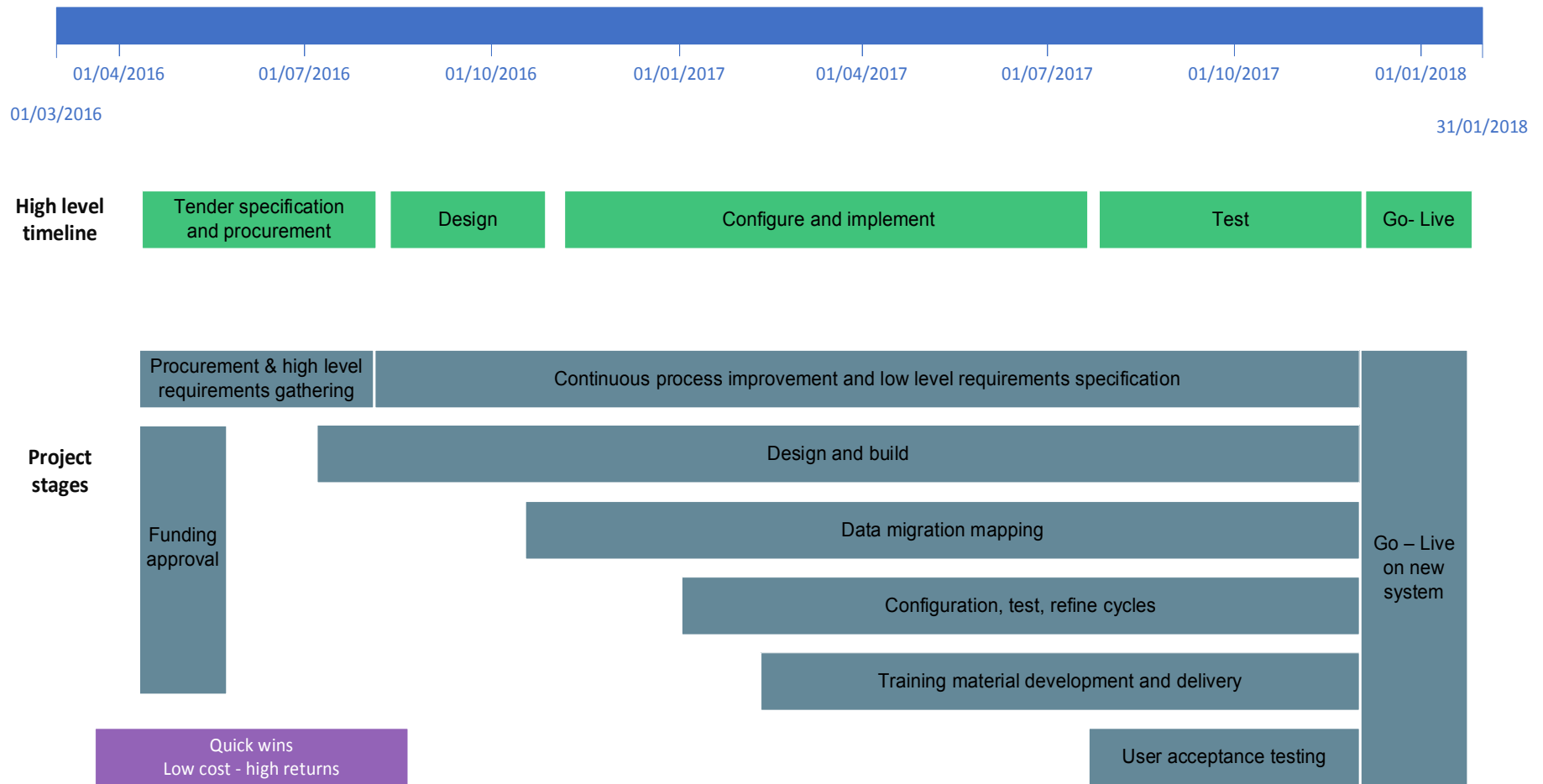
Gazetteer

7.5 Current system volumetrics

Adult Social Care Users	346
Children’s social Care Users	394
Non Social Care Shropshire Council Users	109
Complex Care Team (Health)	3

8. Timescales

Indicative timeline for Social Care project



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

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