

**NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL -
MONDAY, 22ND JUNE, 2020**

SUPPLEMENTARY PAPERS

The following presentation was tabled at the meeting:

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Covid 19
NCSSP briefing and update

Richard West
Interim Director Place & Development

June 22nd 2020

Good News

It was announced on Friday that the alert level for COVID 19 has been downgraded from 4 to 3 (with 5 being the highest state of alert)

Housing

Homeless

- We currently have 387 units of temporary accommodation (previous weeks 388, 386, 388) so things are currently stable
- The ban on evictions from social or private rented accommodation has been extended for 2 months through to 23 August 2020, in order to provide greater protection to renters
- We are liaising with both landlords and tenants to prevent “illegal” evictions

Pages

Rough Sleeping

- We now have 50 rough sleepers/single homeless people remaining in “interim homeless accommodation”
- Our success to date in finding longer term solutions for this cohort has allowed us to serve notice at the Manor Hotel w.e.f. 30 June
- Displaced individuals will still be provided for by migrating them into private sector accommodation via hostels and other accommodation
- “New” rough sleepers are being put through the statutory homeless route

Housing continued

Tenants & Housing Regulation

- The easing of lock down increasingly allows us to deploy Housing management staff back into our communities, both to support vulnerable tenants and to audit Osborne caretaking and estate management performance
- We have 77 voids (previous weeks 85, 93, 93, 91, 91) of which we have 28 voids ready to let (previous weeks 38, 43, 47, 43, 40)
- We have undertaken 9 viewings this week, with 5 sign ups, and we currently have 6 viewings planned for next week
- Osborne are working on 29 voids (previous weeks 28, 32, 28, 30, 34) and 20 voids are in other stages of the process
- It is a rolling number with voids being added each week as well as voids being let

Housing continued

Responsive Repairs

- We have received Osborne's remobilisation plan, which sets out Covid-revised risk assessments/safe systems of work and a strategy for full return to work
- There is currently a backlog of 1,500 outstanding repairs, calls are up 33% on last week and work requests are up by 30%
- A step change in activity is promised for w.c. Monday 22 June and we are working with Osborne to prioritise work and agree target completion dates. Our current feeling is that it may take up to 4 months to catch the backlog up
- Compliance works have continued - including Gas Compliance which has been maintained at 100%

Questions and Answers

1) It has been reported that there is a backlog of 1500 repairs (30% increase in work requests). What is the plan for clearing this and by when?

- We are working with Osborne to prioritise work and agree target completion dates

2) Voids, it appears that they are still taking too long to clear. What is the problem?

- Viewing and letting of voids, together with refurbishment of voids, was considered by the Government to be non-essential work and was suspended at lock down. As lockdown has eased we have started to return to both viewing & letting of voids (Housing Officers) and returning voids to a lettable state (Osborne)

3) Where is the Tenant/Leaseholder dispute resolution procedure written down?

- <http://www.slough.gov.uk/council/complaints-and-feedback/> on right hand side marked Neighbourhood Services

4) How many complaints have led to case reviews?

- Members Portal gives up to February 2020. Report today for the period 22 Jun 2019 to 22 June 2020 shows 243x Stage 1, 7x Stage 2 and 3x Stage 3. Plus 133x Cllr Casework, 79x Enquiries, 1x SARs giving a Total of 466

Questions and Answers continued

5) IT Enhancement Members Dashboard, has any progress been made on this?

- Members portal has been developed and enhanced. It is available at:

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoieGlyZTZmOGEtMmI5ZC00MGJmLWEwNjktMGM4NmRIY2UyNjllIiwidCI6IjE1YTc4Njc3LTM5YTctNDBiNi04MGQ2LTBIMDI3NGFmOGI2NSIsImMiOjh9>

- A Repairs App has been developed but all attempts to get residents to use it have so far been unsuccessful, despite a Pilot Group and training courses

6) Neighbourhood Forums, has there been any progress on engagement with residents?

- These were suspended at Covid lock-down. Housing officers are currently reviewing how best to resume these now that lock down restrictions are being lifted

Rough Sleepers Questions and Answers

1) How many Outreach Workers do we have to deal with Rough Sleepers?

- A total of 6 made up of 3 outreach officers and one team leader – all MHCLG funded – plus 1 x complex needs worker, post offered, starting date TBC, and 1 x Tenancy sustainment officer

2) Have we already got employers lined up that could offer some of the Rough Sleepers work?

- Tesco have expressed an interest; a number of farmers need fruit pickers

3) Have Osborne's got the accommodation ready to be let at a peppercorn rent?

- Yes - the project will be managed through London & Slough Run (LASR)

4) Where is "The Mallards"?

- 50 Darvills Lane, Slough SL1 2PH

Rough Sleepers Questions and Answers continued

5) Funding, Cabinet has approved some funding, but other funding for Rough Sleepers during the Covid situation has come in from central government, how much as SBC received from central government funding since January 2020 to assist with the cost of accommodating Rough Sleepers?

- £300k

6) Homeless Prevention Strategy Action Plan - Can we have the action plan itself (Appx A), laid out in a way which is easier to read and follow (not for tomorrow), but for future reference for us and Cabinet. I.e. That the earliest timescales are at the beginning of the plan, and the later timescales towards the end. It just makes more sense when you are trying to find out what needs to be completed within year for example, then in 2021 and 2022 etc.

- Yes - this will be done

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