

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

14 JULY 2016

7.00 PM

**ROOM 2
CIVIC OFFICES,
CENTRAL MILTON KEYNES**

A G E N D A

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/scrutiny

Councillor C Williams (Chair)
Councillors Ganatra and Wallis (Vice-Chairs)
Councillors Burke, Ferrans, Geaney, Hosking, Jenkins, Khan, D McCall, Petchey and Webb

For more information about the meeting please contact Elizabeth Richardson on (01908) 252629 or e-mail: Elizabeth.Richardson@milton-keynes.gov.uk

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

Each local authority is required by law to establish an overview and scrutiny function to support and scrutinise its executive arrangements.

Each scrutiny committee or task and finish group has its own remit as set out in its terms of reference but they each meet to consider issues of local importance and have a number of key roles:

1. Providing a critical friend challenge to policy makers and decision makers
2. Enabling the voice and concerns of the public
3. Driving improvement in public services.

The scrutiny committees consider issues by receiving information from, and the questioning of, both council officers and external witnesses / partners to develop an understanding of proposals or practices. As scrutiny committees have no executive powers they often present their conclusions in the form of recommendations to the Cabinet, full Council, council officers, or external partners that they believe will improve performance, or as a response to public consultations. The Committee will often request a formal response and progress report on the implementation of recommendations that they have provided to various parties.

Attending Meetings of Scrutiny Committees / Task and Finish Groups

Meetings of scrutiny committees and task and finish groups are held in public and are open for everyone to attend. If you would like to attend then please just turn up. However, if you would like to make a representation to councillors on behalf of yourself or others, then let us know you are attending before the meeting so that the Chair can be advised in advance.

If there are specific issues that the meeting must consider in private then they will be asked to agree this at the meeting.

After the meeting the recommendations and Minutes of the meeting, as well as agendas and reports for the majority of the Council's public meetings are available via the Council's website at:

[\(http://cmis.milton-keynes.gov.uk/cmiswebpublic/\)](http://cmis.milton-keynes.gov.uk/cmiswebpublic/).

The Scrutiny process aims to promote the vision, values and objectives set out in the Milton Keynes Council Plan

The Council Plan 2016-20 ([Council Plan 2016-20](#)) sets out how Milton Keynes Council will work to achieve its ambitions for Milton Keynes. Within it are the priorities the Council will address between 2016 and 2020, together with a detailed delivery plan showing what will be done and the main milestones along the way.

Milton Keynes Council wants to enable a 21st Century city whilst preserving what makes us special; an internationally recognised centre of prosperity, economic innovation and cultural creativity, in a high quality green space and built environment.

Vision:

To develop a thriving, dynamic European Destination City and to ensure a fair, hardworking and more equal Milton Keynes for all.

Values:

To become a co-operative borough where customers are put first, everyone works as team and makes a difference every day.

Objectives:

A City of Opportunity

Milton Keynes has limitless potential. We want every person to have the chance of a good, well paid job and the skills to do it in a more equal society; a prosperous Milton Keynes with a strong, diverse economy that has an international reputation for innovation. We are in the right place to succeed, taking advantage of our excellent links to the wider regional, national and international economies, building on our success in the service and professional industries and taking advantage of new opportunities in a knowledge-based, high skilled economy. We will support people to succeed, develop the skills they need to access well paid employment and have the opportunity to meet their potential.

An Affordable City

We want to create communities that can attract, retain and enable people from every background. Milton Keynes has been built on meeting the aspirations of people to live in a good home at a price they can afford to rent or buy, and businesses being able to access high quality, affordable premises that meet their needs. We will promote more affordable good quality housing and create the space for business to thrive. We want to ensure citizens have access to high quality services, a well maintained built environment and green space, and a range of facilities and cultural offers that are the fabric of any modern diverse and successful city.

A Healthy City

We will ensure lifelong wellbeing for all. We want Milton Keynes to be an active, vibrant place with people living long, healthy and fulfilling lives. We will support people and invest in services that promote prevention, choice and empowerment. We will reform public services to encourage aspiration, independence and resilience; ensure children and vulnerable people are protected from harm and neglect and work with partners to integrate services, improve outcomes and reduce health inequalities.

General Terms of Reference for Scrutiny Committees and Task and Finish Groups

- (a) To review or scrutinise any decision made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any of the Executive Functions within the remit of the committee or task and finish group.
- (b) To make reports or recommendations to the Council or to the Cabinet with respect to the discharge of any of the Executive Functions within the remit of the committee or task and finish group
- (c) To review or scrutinise any decision made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any of the Non-executive Functions within the remit of the committee or task and finish group.
- (d) To make reports or recommendations to the Council or any Committee of the Council with respect to the discharge of any of the Non-executive Functions within the remit of the committee or task and finish group.
- (e) To make reports or recommendations to the Council, to the Cabinet or to a regulatory committee on matters within the remit of the committee or task and finish group
- (f) To consider any representations made in connection with the work of the committee or review group by a Member of the Council on behalf of her/his constituents.
- (g) To appoint advisers from outside the Council to advise the committees or task and finish groups.

Housing and Community Committee Terms of Reference

1. To scrutinise the planning and provision of housing services in Milton Keynes and the Council's role as landlord, to ensure that these services provide good quality, affordable accommodation for the Council's tenants and to create a sense of place for all citizens of Milton Keynes.
2. To review the availability and provision of housing in Milton Keynes, including the impact of the Council's planning policies.
3. To review and assess measures to address homelessness and rough sleeping in Milton Keynes.
4. To seek to ensure that the anticipated needs and aspirations of future Milton Keynes' residents are met in the planning and delivery of new housing developments.
5. To scrutinise the planning and provision of leisure and cultural services provided by the Council and its partners.
6. To scrutinise the involvement of the Council in regional and national organisations operating within the remit of the Committee to ensure that the involvement provides value and benefit to Milton Keynes.

Health and Safety

Please take a few moments to familiarise yourself with the nearest available fire exit, indicated by the fire evacuation signs. In the event of an alarm sounding during the meeting you must evacuate the building immediately and follow all instructions provided by the fire evacuation officer who will identify him/herself should the alarm sound. You will be assisted to the nearest designated assembly point until it is safe to return to the building.

Mobile Phones

Please ensure that your mobile phone is switched to silent or is switched off completely during the meeting.

Agenda

Agendas and reports for the majority of the Council's public meetings can be accessed via the Internet at: <http://milton-keynes.cmis.uk.com/milton-keynes/> Wi-Fi access is available in the Council's meeting rooms.

Users of Windows 7 and above can simply click the link to any documents you wish to see. Users of Windows XP will need to right click on the link and select 'open in browser'.

Recording of Meetings

The proceedings at this meeting may be recorded for the purpose of preparing the minutes of the meeting.

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, you can film, photograph, record or use social media at any Council meetings that are open to the public. If you are reporting the proceedings, please respect other members of the public at the meeting who do not want to be filmed. You should also not conduct the reporting so that it disrupts the good order and conduct of the meeting. While you do not need permission, you can contact the Council's staff in advance of the meeting to discuss facilities for reporting the proceedings and a contact is included on the front of the agenda, or you can liaise with staff at the meeting.

Guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government can be viewed at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/343182/140812_Openness_Guide.pdf

Comments, Complaints and Compliments

Milton Keynes Council welcomes comments, complaints and compliments from members of the public in order to make its services as efficient and effective as possible. We would appreciate any suggestions regarding the usefulness of the paperwork for this meeting, or the conduct of the meeting you have attended.

Please e-mail your comments to scrutiny@milton-keynes.gov.uk

If you require a response please leave contact details, ideally including an e-mail address. A formal comments / compliments / complaints form is available online at <http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/complaints/> .

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair to welcome councillors, officers of the Council, witnesses and the public to the meeting and introduce councillors, officers and witnesses who are present.

2. Apologies

3. Disclosures of Interest

Councillors to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests, or personal interests (including other pecuniary interests), they may have in the business to be transacted, and officers to disclose any interests they may have in any contract to be considered.

4. Minutes

To approve, and the Chair to sign as a correct record, the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Housing and Community Committee held on 25 May 2016 (Item 4) (**Page 9**).

5. Presentations

MK YMCA

To receive a short presentation from Simon Green, Director of Operations at the MK YMCA, about its work, the situation regarding young homeless people in Milton Keynes, and what the MK YMCA is planning to do in response to this.

Simon has been at MK YMCA for 7 years and in August will take up the role of Chief Executive. Before joining the YMCA, he worked as a Housing Manager at the Aldwyck Housing Association and as an Anti-Social Behaviour Officer and Housing Officer at South Beds District Council.

MK YMCA has been providing supported housing to young people and the homeless in Central Milton Keynes since 1981. Milton Keynes YMCA is one of 114 YMCAs affiliated to the national body – YMCA England - but it remains a financially independent local charity governed by its own Board of Trustees. At its site in Central Milton Keynes the YMCA houses 150+ young people at any one time – most of whom come to them whilst experiencing a period of homelessness.

Homeless Support

To receive a short presentation from Daniel Haydon on the support work he does with the homeless. Daniel has been working with the homeless in Milton Keynes for the past 3 years and is currently employed by Christ the Cornerstone Church as a homeless support worker. He works with individuals on both ends of the scale from those in threat of homelessness to long term rough sleepers.

He has also worked for organisations such as the YMCA, Winter Night Shelter and various other homeless outreach programmes. He has a very good understanding of the homeless landscape in Milton Keynes and is well connected with those who are actively working to combat this issue.

Daniel will share with the Committee his experience and understanding of the various issues intertwined within homelessness, identifying many of the barriers faced on a day to day basis and also some solutions for moving forward.

6. Draft Strategy for Meeting Statutory Housing Need – A Response to the Homelessness Task & Finish Group

To review and comment on the Council's draft *Strategy for Meeting Statutory Housing Need*.

Two housing related task and finish groups met during 2015/16; the first one looked specifically at the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme ([Housing Allocations Scheme TFG - Report](#)) the other at the issue of homelessness in Milton Keynes and possible ways this could be alleviated ([Homelessness TFG - Report](#)). Both Task and Finish Groups made a series of recommendations to Cabinet.

On 6 June 2016, the Cabinet approved the 2016-20 Council Plan which highlights the need to tackle homelessness as a priority for the Council; full Council approved the plan on 8 June 2016 ([Council Plan 2016-20](#)). Both Cabinet and full Council acknowledge the need to develop a short to medium term strategy to alleviate homelessness until such time as the longer term strategy of building more Council houses can be achieved.

With this in mind, the Council commissioned the Housing Quality Network (HQN) to assist it in meeting this challenge. HQN carried out an independent review of homelessness (as required by Section 1(a) of the Homelessness Act 2002) in order to help the Council develop a Homelessness Strategy for Milton Keynes (Section 1(b) of the Homelessness Act 2002) ([HQN Report](#)).

A report presenting the work done by HQN and the Draft Homelessness (Statutory Need) Strategy was presented to Cabinet on 11 June 2016 ([Cabinet Report](#)), with the recommendation that the Housing and Community Committee be asked to review and comment on the new draft strategy (Item 6) (**Pages 10 to 19**).

The Committee is therefore requested to consider the Strategy and identify any comments it would like to present to the Cabinet.

7. Work Programme 2016/17

The Committee's proposed Work Programme was presented by Councillor C Williams, as Chair of the Housing and Community Committee, to the Scrutiny Management Committee on 22 June 2016. The Scrutiny Management Committee made the following recommendations in respect of the Work Programme:

1. That a programme of six meetings for the Housing and Community Committee be agreed.
2. That the Housing and Community Committee be requested to review the Work Programme to ensure that scrutiny of all of the items listed is essential.
3. That the Housing and Community Committee be requested to provide objectives against each of the items it wishes to scrutinise.
4. That the Scrutiny Management Committee's Planning Group be requested to consider whether any of the items listed in the Work Programme could more appropriately be scrutinised elsewhere.
5. That the Scrutiny Management Committee monitor resources available to support the scrutiny process to ensure that demand does not exceed resources available.

The Scrutiny Management Committee's Planning Group met on 30 June and suggested that the item on "Land Banking" and the under development of sites by developers be considered by the Scrutiny Management Committee at a future meeting. The Planning Group also considered the Council's Regeneration Plans (RegenerationMK) to be a cross-cutting, long term project and that the Scrutiny Management Committee should consider how this can be most effectively scrutinised for the duration of the project.

The Committee is invited to consider recommendations 2 and 3 above in order to refine the Work Programme for 2016/17 (Item 7) (**Pages 20 to 21**).

Revised meeting dates are:

- Tuesday 23 August 2016
- Monday 10 October 2016
- Wednesday 30 November 2016
- Tuesday 17 January 2017
- Thursday 9 March 2017
- Wednesday 26 April 2017 (provisional)

Minutes of the special meeting of the HOUSING AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE held on WEDNESDAY 25 MAY 2016

Present: Councillors Bramall, Burke, Ferrans, Ganatra, Geaney, Hosking, Khan, D McCall, Wallis, Webb, and C Williams

Also Present: Councillors Alexander, Bald, Betteley, Bint, Brackenbury, M Bradburn, R Bradburn, Brunning, Buckley, Cannon, Clancy, Clifton, Coventry, Crooks, Dransfield, Eastman, Exon, A Geary, P Geary, Gifford, Gowans, Green, D Hopkins, V Hopkins, Legg, Long, Marland, I McCall, McDonald, McKenzie, McLean, McPake, Middleton, Miles, Morla, Morris, Nolan, O'Neil, Patey-Smith, Petchey, Small, Wales, Walker, P Williams, C Wilson and K Wilson

HAC01 ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED -

That Councillor C Williams be elected Chair of the Housing and Community Committee for the Council Year 2016/17.

HAC02 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRS

RESOLVED -

That Councillors Ganatra and Wallis be appointed Vice-Chairs of the Housing and Community Committee for the Council Year 2016/17.

A Draft Strategy for Meeting Statutory Housing Need

1. Introduction

This homelessness strategy has been produced following a robust independent assessment of the existing service (baseline review), and a councillor-led review which focused on particular aspects of the service and involved a range of our partners.

A key driver of homelessness is the shortage of appropriate housing; many of the households we see on a daily basis would be able to resolve their housing need without intervention from the Council if there was sufficient rented housing available at prices they can afford. In addition, relationship breakdown, domestic abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, mental health problems and financial problems can all contribute to making households homeless. Some of those who are homeless have complex problems which require tailored solutions beyond simply a roof over their heads.

Becoming homeless creates a crisis for any household. The uncertainty about the future, the challenges of living in temporary accommodation, the impact on health, are all well-documented. Our primary aim is to prevent homelessness wherever possible, and where this is not possible to support the household to find alternative accommodation quickly. Becoming homeless is no longer the way into social housing: the Council will seek all solutions including the private rented sector and where appropriate, low cost home ownership solutions.

This strategy provides a vision for the future service, underpinned by some broad key objectives, and actions to deliver these objectives. The external context for our work is continually changing, and it is likely that the legislative context will also change over the next 12 months or so. In developing this strategy we have looked ahead as far as possible and responded to known and predicted changes. The strategy provides a broad, robust framework which should remain relevant despite these changes. The more detailed actions will be subject to an annual review.

2. Wider context

Across the UK, homelessness is increasing, driven by the shortage of social housing and market rent housing at prices which are affordable to those on lower incomes. The situation in Milton Keynes is exacerbated by our success in being an area where people aspire to live and work. Increasing the supply of housing is a high priority for the Council, creating a range of accommodation to meet different needs and aspirations. There is a significant supply of new housing, some of it already on site and some of it planned. The Council has been proactive in encouraging developers, and in particular investors, to support rented accommodation as well as properties to buy. We have also been proactive in encouraging a range of lower-cost home ownership schemes, to enable those on middle to lower incomes to get that first step onto the housing ladder.

Nevertheless, there will remain a significant proportion of households for whom renting is the only short-term solution. Although Milton Keynes is an area of high employment, some of that work is lower waged. Not everyone who wants to live in Milton Keynes will be able to do so. Part of our strategy is working to create more realistic expectations in customers about the housing market in Milton Keynes, and in particular to highlight the extreme shortage of social housing.

3. Legal framework

The Council has a number of legal responsibilities under the homelessness legislation and statutory codes of guidance. This includes the duty to develop a homelessness strategy which works to prevent homelessness, to secure accommodation for those who need it, and to find ways to access support for those who may need a bit of extra help to prevent them becoming homeless again in the future. Alongside this are statutory duties to help some households to secure accommodation – those who are found to be homeless, not intentionally so, who have a local connection and are in priority need.

Currently there is no statutory duty to prevent homelessness. Such a duty has already been introduced in Wales and Scotland, and a Parliamentary Commission currently looking at homelessness is likely to recommend a new duty for England. This strategy puts prevention at the heart of our service, and will be fit for purpose if this new duty is introduced.

4. Conclusions from the baseline review

- The housing options and homelessness service attracts a very high volume of enquiries and requests for assistance: during 2015/16 there were over 7,000 callers into the Civic Centre (approximately 26 per working day), with 1,614 housing options interviews (approximately six per working day) and 1,111 homeless applications (approximately four per day). 85% of homeless applications result in a statutory duty being accepted. Between 2014/15 and 2015/16 there was a slight reduction in both the number of callers into the Civic Centre and the number of housing options interviews (possibly as a result of introducing the on-line self-help tool). There was a small increase in the number of homeless applications;
- Currently almost all those accepted as homeless will get an offer of social housing, after a period of time in temporary accommodation. The supply of social housing, both from the Council's own stock and from rental properties is reducing: combined numbers were down by around 300 homes in 2015/16 compared to the previous year;
- Not surprisingly, this is resulting in larger numbers of households living in temporary accommodation. On average there were 271 households in temporary accommodation each month during 2015/16, compared with 163 the previous year. This is resulting in households having to be sent out of Milton Keynes for accommodation, and is also putting significant pressure on budgets;
- As a result, the service has become overly responsive and focused on the Council's statutory duty. Prevention work is not well-embedded, recorded or managed. Making a significant shift towards greater prevention should reduce the numbers requiring temporary accommodation and alleviate some of the pressure. The main alternative option for most customers will be the private rented sector, which is difficult for many customers to access. There will need to be a strong focus on increasing supply, and a need to "change the message" with customers who often expect to get social housing as a right;
- There has been a visible increase in rough sleeping in Milton Keynes, reported by staff, members and partners, but there is limited data on this, and no assessment of the extent of sofa surfing locally. Tackling rough sleeping quickly – even amongst those who are not owed a statutory duty – is important in preventing the development of longer term, embedded needs and patterns of behaviour, and in

building the image of Milton Keynes as a successful town attractive to new employers;

- A recent councillor Task and Finish Group on homelessness recognised the role that partners play in tackling homelessness, particularly for single homeless people, rough sleepers and those at risk of sleeping rough. Councillors have recommended a more joined-up approach with better co-ordination to help to maximise the impact of current services; there also needs to be shift towards a “No Second Night Out” approach in line with current government policy. Partners recognise the duplication that exists within voluntary services, welcome the member intervention and are hopeful that this signals the start of a more constructive dialogue with Milton Keynes Council.

5 Key recommendations for the strategy

Recommendation one: Achieve a significant cultural shift across the service away from being a path into social housing towards helping people to find housing solutions

- Consider the balance between prevention and statutory work in the new structure and ensure that prevention is the focus on all contact with the client;
- Use the short-term prevention officer posts to develop and embed prevention work;
- Agree how homelessness prevention performance will be measured and how data collection will be carried out in short term;
- Undertake skills audit for homelessness prevention and identify training needs; develop and deliver training plan;
- Develop clear housing pathways and an up to date toolkit for staff to use;
- Review the role of social housing allocations/nominations to reflect shift to prevention;
- Ensure housing advice is accessible to non-priority households, including access to services to tackle landlord issues;
- Work with partners to support their housing advice functions, including supporting a drop-in advice centre.

Recommendation two: Get the message out about the shortage of housing and shift expectations

- Engage proactively with customers, partners, stakeholders and wider community to really get the message across about the shortage of social housing, housing pressures and homelessness, and the outcomes from a homelessness application;
- Ensure a clear and consistent corporate message which is supported by councillors, senior managers and all services;
- Use all engagement with customers, including website, written and oral communication to get the message across;
- Work more proactively with partners to ensure a wider understanding amongst agencies and volunteer staff, so they in turn can promote realistic housing solutions, and focus efforts on services that help people towards independence.

Recommendation three: Work differently with partners

- Create opportunities for open and constructive dialogue with partners about the role that the Council can play, that partners can play and expectations of each other. Ideally, the Council should provide resources to co-ordinate a Homelessness Forum, that brings partners together to reduce duplication, and develop a more effective response;
- Review and refresh protocols with statutory and voluntary sector partners, taking the opportunity to embed prevention at the heart of joint working and create more realistic expectations of each other and messages to the customer;
- Create appropriate forum(s) for discussion with the Council landlord and rental properties on the role that social housing should play, who they house, and how they manage accommodation. This should include greater challenge of restrictions on lettings (eg, proportion of accommodation designated for elderly, rejection of nominations on inappropriate grounds) and pre-eviction protocols.

Recommendation four: Increase the focus on performance supported by clearer data

- Get stronger information about real number of customers for service;
- Improve the collection and credibility of data;
- Move away from managing performance on a caseload basis; find ways to capture performance on prevention;
- Include partner data in prevention figures;
- When commissioning new IT system ensure data collection is embedded into workflow processes.

Recommendation five: Make best use of existing stock/resources

- Review TA and refocus appropriate supply for prevention/discharge of duty;
- Open discussions with partners about impact of single room rate extension to social housing and opportunities to create shared accommodation from existing or acquired stock;
- Launch a lodging scheme matching those wishing to let a room with those seeking a room;
- Review and re-launch the deposit bond scheme, with clear criteria and tighter management;
- Move management of Discretionary Housing Payment and LWP into housing options team and refocus on prevention;
- Create savings scheme to enable repayment of loans for deposit/rent in advance or for saving for deposit when move on.

Recommendation six: Continue work to increase range of accommodation solutions available to those on lower incomes

- Use new accommodation development posts to proactively increase number of private landlords working with the Council; explore alternative incentives including rent insurance scheme (either externally purchased or funded internally);

- Explore the potential for local authority or partners to manage shared housing as a solution for younger/single homeless;
- Explore the potential for bringing empty properties back into use as rented accommodation for those at risk of becoming homeless;
- Explore the potential for a local authority owned or influenced process to acquire and develop properties for rent at market/sub-market level; this could be an expanded role for an existing organisation or a new body such as a local housing company;
- Continue to explore and progress institutional investment in market rented schemes;
- Explore the role that could be played by rent to purchase models, as a housing solution for working families, instead of social housing.

Recommendation seven: Take forward the recommendations in the Homelessness Task and Finish Group

- Create a resource within the new team structure to lead on partnership working around single homelessness and rough sleeping and lead on development of agreed pathways, underpinned by shared data and resources;
- Work with partners to identify premises and resources for a drop-in centre for homeless people to access a wide range of help and advice, including from Council services and other statutory partners such as health services, drug and alcohol teams;
- Ensure NSNO¹ approach is embedded into new ways of working.

In addition to the above, the Cabinet has been asked to also consider the following additional recommendations as part of this Strategy:

- *‘Consider how the Homelessness (Statutory Need) Strategy aligns with the emerging work on non-statutory homelessness and the implementation of the Homelessness Task and Finish Group Report to ensure a single unified approach to all Homelessness across the Council and wider city’.*
- *‘Consider developing a scheme with the private rented sector to secure longer term assured tenancies’.*
- *‘Consider ways to prevent homeless applicants from the parental family home, with the exception of violent situations’.*
- *‘To consider how applicants should be required to access training and education opportunities, where appropriate’.*

6 Action Plan

Timescales:

- immediate = 3 – 6 months,
- short-term 6 = 12 months,
- medium term 1 = 2 years,
- longer term = 2 years plus.

¹ *Nil satis nisi optimum* – “nothing but the best is good enough”

Recommendations	Priority	Resources	Timescale
Recommendation one: Achieve a significant cultural shift across the service away from being a path into social housing towards helping people to find housing solutions			
Consider balance between prevention and statutory work in the new structure and ensure that prevention is the focus in all contact with the client	H	Existing (in new structure)	Immediate
Use the short-term prevention officer posts to develop and embed prevention work	H	Existing (in new structure)	Immediate
Agree how homelessness prevention performance will be measured and how data collection will be carried out in short term	H	Can be done within existing resources.	Immediate
Ensure data collection for prevention is embedded into workflow	H	Some short term improvements may be possible; this needs to be a key element when current system is reviewed	Medium
Develop housing pathways and housing options toolkit for top 3 reasons for homelessness (ending of ASTs, asked to leave parents/family/friends/DV)	H	HQN will provide template and structure, there is also existing information which can be utilised	Immediate
Develop housing pathways and housing options toolkit for remaining reasons for homelessness	M	See above	Short
Undertake skills audit for homelessness prevention and identify training needs; develop and deliver training plan	H	HQN will provide suggested template; individual audits can be part of appraisals; training plan likely to include motivational interviewing techniques	Short
Agree processes for capturing and sharing learning from prevention and implement	H	May be as simple as standard item on team meeting agenda or may require additional meeting(s)	Immediate

Recommendations	Priority	Resources	Timescale
Recommendation two: changing customer perceptions			
Review website content to deliver a much stronger message on the shortage of social housing and that the outcome of a homelessness application may well be a private sector tenancy	H	Work can be spread over a number of months to make this more manageable; IT have already indicated a willingness to prioritise changes needed	Short
Ensure website content is up to date	H	Part of the same piece of work	Short
Providing written confirmation of oral advice	H	Template letters with links to relevant information on the website can be developed in line with development of the toolkit	Immediate (top 3 reasons) Short (rest)
Review self-help tool to ensure clearer message and more tailored advice; provide link to Neighbourhood Employment Service for appropriate cases	H	The tool is being reviewed almost constantly and these are mostly tweaks rather than fundamental changes	Immediate
Ensure all communication with customers stresses the need to consider other options, at all stages	H	This is a shift in way of working rather than additional resources	Immediate
Agree a small number of short and clear messages which should be consistently communicated to customers by Members, senior managers and all staff	H	Can be done as part of sign-off process for the strategy	Short
Recommendation three: Work differently with partners			
Create opportunities for open and constructive dialogue with partners about the role that the Council can play, that partners can play and expectations of each other	H	Resources within new structure once implemented	Short
Review and refresh protocols with statutory and voluntary sector partners, taking the opportunity to embed prevention at the heart of joint working and create more realistic	M	Existing resources	Medium

Recommendations	Priority	Resources	Timescale
expectations of each other and messages to the customer			
Create appropriate forum(s) for discussion with the Council landlord and RPs on the role that social housing should play	H	Existing resources	Immediate
Recommendation four: Increase the focus on performance, supported by clearer data			
See recommendation above on agreeing how homelessness prevention performance will be measured	H	Can be done within existing resources.	Immediate
Ensure data collection on homelessness cases is embedded into workflow	M	Needs to be tied in with review of IT system and commissioning of new system if that is the outcome	Medium/longer
Shift away from measuring case-load to measuring outcomes and through-put to provide a truer picture of the volume of work	H	Can be done within existing resources.	Immediate
Find ways of capturing information about returning customers to get a clearer picture of true volume of work	H	Can be done within existing resources.	Immediate
Capture, analyse and share quarterly information to get a better picture of emerging trends	M	Can be done within existing resources.	Medium
Conduct regular case-file audits to ensure consistent quality and approach	M	Can be done within existing resources.	Medium
Recommendation five: Make best use of existing stock/resources			
Review TA and refocus appropriate supply for prevention/discharge of duty, eg, leased properties where can offer assured shorthold tenancy of at least 12 months	H	Existing resources	Short
Open discussions with partners about impact of single room rate extension to social housing and opportunities to create shared accommodation from existing or acquired stock	M	Existing resources	Medium

Recommendations	Priority	Resources	Timescale
Launch a lodging scheme matching those wishing to let a room with those seeking a room	M	Existing resources	Medium
Review and re-launch the deposit bond scheme, with clear criteria and tighter management	H	Will require some budget which could be funded from savings on TA	Immediate
Move administration of DHP and LWP into housing options team; resource to manage this will also have to be transferred	H	Existing but based in another team	Immediate
Create savings scheme to enable repayment of loans for deposit/rent in advance or for saving for deposit when move on	M	Existing	Medium
Recommendation six: Continue work to increase the range of accommodation solutions available to those on lower incomes			
Use new accommodation development posts to proactively increase number of private landlords working with the Council; explore alternative incentives including rent insurance scheme (either externally purchased or funded internally)	H	Resources within new structure	Short
Explore potential for bringing empty properties back into use as rented accommodation for those at risk of becoming homeless	M	Resources within new structure	Medium
Explore potential for a local authority owned or influenced vehicle to acquire and develop properties for rent at market/sub-market level; this could be an expanded role for an existing vehicle or a new vehicle such as a local housing company	H	Existing resources	Medium

Recommendations	Priority	Resources	Timescale
Continue to explore and progress institutional investment in market rented schemes	H	Existing resources	On-going
Explore the role that could be played by rent to purchase models as a rented solution for working families, instead of social housing	M	Existing resources	Medium
Recommendation seven: Take forward the recommendations in the Homelessness Task and Finish Group			
Create a resource within the new team structure to lead on partnership working around single homelessness and rough sleeping and lead on development of agreed pathways, underpinned by shared data and resources	H	Resources within proposed structure	Short
Work with partners to identify premises and resources for a drop-in centre for homeless people to access a wide range of help and advice., including from Council services and other statutory partners such as health services, drug and alcohol teams	M	May require additional resources	Medium
Ensure NSNO approach is embedded into new ways of working	H	No specific resources required	Medium

Housing and Community Committee

Date	Item	Notes	Action / Witness
Meeting 2: 23/08/16	Housing Mix	Scrutiny of the balance of housing required – both between affordable & commercial, and tenure types of affordable housing	
	Alternative Housing Schemes	Cttee to look at various alternative schemes such as Y-cubes, and other modular schemes, 'container' housing and innovative schemes that are working elsewhere.	
Meeting 3: 10/10/16	"Land-banking" & under development of sites	Planners & Developers to be invited to discuss with the Cttee why they appear to be "Land-banking" and not building properties even though planning permission has been granted.	Issue wider than just housing - Item to be considered by the Scrutiny Management Committee
	Private Landlord Issues	Private landlords to be invited to meeting to discuss their issues in relation to the housing problem in MK	
Meeting 4: 30/11/16	Local Regeneration Plans	Scrutiny of the Council's proposed regeneration plans for various areas of MK	Seen as a cross-cutting, long-term project. Scrutiny Management Committee to consider the best way to carry this forward into the future.
	Community Issues	Understanding the "Community" part of the Committee's remit, what this includes and what the Committee should be doing	
Meeting 5: 17/01/17	Residents' Forums	Why have some worked and some not, should the Council be providing more support to make these viable organisations/	
	Views of Council and private sector tenants	Are local housing policies working for them?	
	Scrutiny of changes to Repairs Service for Council properties		
Meeting 6: 09/03/17	Update on cost of temporary accommodation	Including 'hidden' costs such as home to school transport, and the cost of leasing schemes with private landlords.	

	Review of 2016/17 Work Programme & proposals for 2017/18 Work Programme	What has been achieved, what happens next, draft Work Programme for 2017/18	
Reserve Meeting: 26/04/17	Just in case anything else comes up.		