

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2021/22 and 2022/23

Report by Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place

Report for Noting

1 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

This report presents the update review of Midlothian Council's Rapid Rehousing Plan which was submitted to Scottish Government on 30th June 2021.

2 Recommendations

Council is recommended to note the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan submitted to the Scottish Government on 30th June 2021.

Date: 21 July 2021

Report Contact:

Name: Simon Bain

Tel: 0131 271 3161

Email: simon.bain@midlothian.gov.uk

3 Background

- 3.1 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) was set up by Scottish Government in October 2017 to produce short and long-term solutions to end homelessness and rough sleeping. A key recommendation from HARSAG was the transition to a Rapid Rehousing approach.
- 3.2 Each local authority was required to develop and cost a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) over a planned phase of 5 years to 2023/24 for submission to the Scottish Government in December 2018. The plan is required to be reviewed annually, with an update to be submitted to Scottish Government on 30th June 2021.
- 3.3 Local authorities were encouraged to be ambitious in their plans with a view to receiving funding to support delivery of actions under the RRTP. Midlothian has so far received £522,000 for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 which was based on the number of homeless presentations to the Council during the previous years. Funding for 2022/23 and future years is still to be confirmed by Scottish Government.
- 3.4 Midlothian Council's RRTP was approved at full Council on 18th December 2018. This set out a vision towards 2024:
"An increased number of homeless households will obtain permanent accommodation, no homeless household will be accommodated in bed and breakfast accommodation, and the average time taken for the Council to complete its homeless duty will have halved from 105 to 52 weeks."

[Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 - 2023/24 | RRTP 2019/20 to 2023/24 \(midlothian.gov.uk\)](https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/RRTP2019-2023-24)

The following key actions were identified to support this vision:

- Increasing the supply of affordable housing in Midlothian.
- Revise Midlothian Council's Housing Allocation Policy to address the backlog of homeless households already in temporary accommodation, and reduce the time taken to house homeless households in the future.
- Seek alternative models of temporary accommodation to reduce the need for bed and breakfast accommodation.
- Ensure homeless households are supported to access a wide range of housing options, including the private rented sector.
- Develop a 'Housing First' approach in Midlothian to house homeless households with complex needs.

The RRTP shows how the Council will continue the work undertaken to deliver the above actions during 2021/22 and explains how we will address the next phase of its approach to transforming the services provided to those in housing need, including compliance with the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2020. Section 4 describes the key projects currently

in place to achieve the vision set out above. Section 5 details the Council's priorities for 2021/22 to 2023/24. Section 6 sets out the resources required to effectively deliver these activities.

- 3.5** Significant progress has been made in transforming services provided to those households experiencing homelessness or threatened with homelessness. Specific achievements include:
- Ending the use of emergency bed and breakfast accommodation in November 2020 for all homeless households. This ensured the council is extremely well placed to achieve compliance with the amended Unsuitable Accommodation Order in advance of its commencement date.
 - Significant reduction in the number of households residing in temporary accommodation for over 2 years from 189 at 31 March 2019 to 52 at 31 March 2021.
 - The Council introduced a new Housing Allocation Policy in May 2020 which sets a target to increase lets to homeless households and requires homeless applicants to widen area choices and house types, which is resulting in quicker permanent housing outcomes.
 - 51 temporary tenancies were changed into Scottish Secure Tenancies during 2020/21, resulting in fewer households requiring temporary accommodation and a reduction in the time spent in temporary accommodation.
 - A Housing First pilot was launched in July 2020 providing 20 new tenancies in year 1, resulting in positive outcomes and tenancy sustainment for those households.
 - Refurbishment and conversion works commenced at Jarnac Court, Dalkeith to providing supported accommodation for 22 single households. This is scheduled for completion by February 2022.

4 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

4.1 Resource

RRTP activities are currently funded by the Scottish Government and budget savings re-invested as we are no longer using emergency bed and breakfast accommodation.

4.2 Digital

None.

4.3 Risk

The RRTP sets out key actions and priorities to meet legal duties in respect of homeless households or those at risk or threatened with homelessness.

4.4 Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)

The content of the RRTP was considered under the Council's Integral Impact Assessment process and this is provided as Appendix 2.

4.4 Additional Report Implications

Appendices

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan link

[Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 - 2023/24 | RRTP 2019/20 to 2023/24 \(midlothian.gov.uk\)](https://midlothian.gov.uk/rapid-rehousing-transition-plan-2019-20-2023-24-rrtp-2019-20-to-2023-24)

Appendix 2 - RRTP Integral Impact Assessment

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

The provision of appropriate temporary and permanent accommodation will improve the quality of life for homeless households and reduce the gap in health outcomes.

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- ☐ Holistic Working
- ☐ Hub and Spoke
- ☐ Modern
- ☒ **Sustainable**
- ☒ **Transformational**
- ☒ **Preventative**
- ☐ Asset-based
- ☐ Continuous Improvement
- ☐ One size fits one
- ☐ None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- ☐ One Council Working with you, for you
- ☒ **Preventative and Sustainable**
- ☐ Efficient and Modern
- ☐ Innovative and Ambitious
- ☐ None of the above

A.4 Delivering Best Value

Key actions contained in the RRTP reduces the financial burden on the Council in respect of significantly reduced future use and spend on temporary accommodation.

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Internal consultation has taken place with relevant services and Tenant Panel members. The RRTP consultation was also incorporated into the Local Housing Strategy 2021-26 consultation.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The RRTP sets out an ambitious plan to transform services provided to homeless households in Midlothian, subject to annual review by the Scottish Government.

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Provision of increased supported accommodation ensures that homeless households are accommodated in higher quality and more appropriate accommodation than bed and breakfast provision. Addressing the needs of homeless clients will assist in moving the balance of services and resources into preventing the need for longer term or crisis support

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The planned use of Jarnac Court reduces further the financial burden on the Council; and ensures that effective use of vacant buildings is ensured resulting in a sustainable use of Council assets. This is achieved whilst not precluding the potential to redevelop Dalkeith town centre to provide further permanent affordable accommodation.