

Midlothian Council 29th August 2017

Question to the Leader;

Q. Under the current system for people presenting as homeless how many persons have (a) low support needs, (b) medium support needs and (c) high support needs?

A. Information taken from the current number of 57 clients (54 singles and 3 couples) who are either currently c/o emergency B&B or awaiting shared supported accommodation.

(a) low support needs – 12

(b) medium support needs – 7

(c) high support needs – 38

Q. What proportion of a, b, and c will be housed at Pentland house?

(a) 10

(b) 6

(c) 5

Q. What are the current options for those who have medium to high support needs?

A. Midlothian Council has a range of housing options available to meet its statutory obligations in terms of the Homelessness legislation and the assessed needs of homeless households. Where an assessment determines additional needs, accommodation would be provided at the supported accommodation.

2 flats, Loanhead	HMO – 9 beds Flats - 4	Male and female aged 16+ - high support	2 support staff: 08.00-22.00 daily Caretaker: 22.00 – 08.00 daily
St Andrew's Street, Dalkeith	HMO – 9 beds	Male and female 16-25 years old – high support	2 support staff: 08.00-22.00 daily
St Andrew's Street, Dalkeith	HMO – 4 beds	Female only aged 16+ - medium support	Caretaker – 22.00-08.00 daily to also support 29 St Andrew's St Floating support from the support staff at 29 St Andrew's St

Lodge. Penicuik	HMO – 5 beds Flats - 8	Male and female 16-25 years old – high support	2 support staff 08:00 – 22:00 daily Caretaker 22:00 – 08:00 daily
High Street, Dalkeith	HMO – 5 beds	Male and female 16+ – medium support	Caretaker – 22.00-08.00 daily Floating support from the support staff at 29 St Andrew's St

Q. How many persons presenting as homeless are being turned away daily?

A. Currently 1 single person is awaiting emergency accommodation placement and calling in daily. They all have alternative arrangements in place. Council provided accommodation is available to them on 23 August.

Q. How many of those meets criteria for assistance and needs?

A. 1

Q. How many persons are being asked to phone daily to request availability for emergency housing?

A. 1

Q. And of these how many are single persons?

A. 1

Q. Will the council leader look to put in place immediate improvements to the current system to ensure the number of people in Midlothian sleeping rough does not increase?

A. No current homeless clients have presented or reported as rough sleeping.

If an elected member is aware of those circumstances they are encouraged to provide their information to the Housing Service in order that service can deal with the case directly

Housing Options guidance was published nationally to complement the local work delivering housing solutions and reduce homelessness applications. Progress in Health & Homelessness around the need to modernise temporary accommodation and improve support for drug and alcohol and mental health services, with the importance of housing and related services in delivery of quality health and care services represented at strategic and operational levels in the public health network.

The provision of the Polton Centre, and last week Pentland House, provides improved standards of temporary accommodation which will significantly reduce the need for Midlothian Council to use B&Bs and provide localised services for homeless households, but there are Welfare Reform restrictions on younger people to shared

accommodation.

While additional budget has been provided by the Council for homeless households, you will be aware of the funding shortfall created due to Welfare Reform particularly for young people; the pressure on council provided temporary accommodation; the impact of Universal Credit Full Service implemented in Midlothian and the planned rent cap for social rented housing will cause as a significant pressure on homelessness budgets in general.

There has been a stable position in homelessness In Midlothian attributed to the Housing Options solutions provided, but I suggest there is also a need to look at dedicated capital funding for new additional temporary provision as we need a more durable long term funding package for temporary accommodation and associated support services and a more focused strategy to deal with a growing homelessness problem driven in part by a shortage of affordable accommodation and increasing problems in accessing other tenures, otherwise the Scottish Government's proposals for 50,000 new affordable houses over five years doesn't now look like it's going to be enough.

Underlying this of course is the continuing demand for housing and Midlothian Council is committed to the construction of new build council homes in Midlothian. You will be aware that the Council allocated £108m for its phase 1 new build programme, with 864 homes developed on 16 sites across Midlothian at the end of 2012. The Council has committed a further £60m for the development of Phase 2 new building with new build completed on three sites and a further 3 sites currently in construction. There is also a planned Phase 3 in the social housing programme.

