



Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2023/24-2024/25

Report by Kevin Anderson, Executive Director - Place

Report for Information

1 Recommendations

Council is recommended to note the updated Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, which is to be submitted to the Scottish Government for August, 2023.

2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

This report presents the annual review of Midlothian Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan which is to be submitted to the Scottish Government in August, 2023.

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3 Background/Main Body of Report

- 3.1 The Scottish Government published its [Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan](#) in 2018. The plan sets out how the Scottish Government, local authorities and partners would implement the recommendations of the Homeless and Rough Sleeping Action Group.
- 3.2 Following the publication of this action plan all Local Authorities were required to publish a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) setting out:
- How they will move to a model of rapid rehousing in no more than five years
 - How homeless demand and any backlog of homeless cases will be addressed.

Midlothian Council submitted its first [RRTP](#) in December 2018, following by updated versions in June 2020, 2021 and 2022 (Appendix C).

- 3.3 Local authorities have been supported in the delivery of these plans through funding provided by the [Scottish Government's Ending Homeless Together Fund](#). Midlothian Council has received funding totalling £526,000 between 2018/19 to 2022/23. A further £113,941 has been awarded for 2023/24. As in previous years the amount received is based on the average number of homeless applications in the previous three years.
- 3.4 Midlothian Council's RRTP sets 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”

The following key actions were identified to support this vision:

- Increase the supply of affordable housing in Midlothian.
- Revise the 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 updated RRTP shows how the Council will continue the work undertaken in previous years to achieve this vision and explains how we will address the next phase of its approach to transforming services provided to those in housing need, including continued compliance with the [Homeless Persons \(Unsuitable Accommodation\) \(order\) Scotland](#).

Within the RRTP, Section 3 provides an update on activities that have taken place during 2022/23 to help achieve this vision. Section 4 details the Council's priorities in 2023/24. Section 5 sets out the resources required to effectively deliver these activities.

- 3.5** During 2022/23 Midlothian Council continued to make significant progress in transforming services provided to those households experiencing homelessness or threatened with becoming homeless, building on the foundations established in previous years.
- 3.6** Specific achievements include:
- As a result of ending the use of emergency bed and breakfast accommodation, Midlothian Council was able to achieve compliance with the revised Unsuitable Accommodation Order from commencement, and ensured there were no breaches of the order during 2022/23.
 - Significant reduction in the number of households residing in temporary accommodation for over two years.
 - Continued use of the revised Housing Allocation Policy introduced in May 2020. The revised policy increases the proportion of properties allocated to homeless households and requiring homeless applicants to maximise their chances of securing housing by widening their areas of choice and property types, which has resulted in quicker permanent housing outcomes.
 - 129 households had their temporary accommodation converted to a Scottish Secure Tenancy during 2022/23, reducing the need for multiple moves before being permanently housed, allowing for links established within the local community to be maintained. All those who have been in accommodation for over two years have been offered the opportunity to have their accommodation converted to a permanent tenancy, where suitable to do so.
 - Housing First continued for a second year in Midlothian. 57 homeless applicants, with multiple and complex support needs have now secured permanent housing through this project since its launch in July 2020. The 2022 Housing First Check Up is included with this report (Appendix E).

As a result of the activities described above the overall number of open homeless cases in Midlothian has reduced from 1082 on 31 March 2018 to 587 on 31 March 2023.

The conversion works to redevelop Jarnac Court in Dalkeith have been completed and this project now provides good quality temporary accommodation to 22 households, together with the provision of on-site support.

4 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

4.1 Resource

RRTP activities are funding through a combination of; grants provided by the Scottish Government, reinvesting savings realised by ending the use of bed and breakfast accommodation, and existing service budgets.

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 who are at risk of, or threatened with future homelessness.

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

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

4.5 Additional Report Implications (See Appendix A)

See Appendix A

Appendices

Appendix A – Additional Report Implications

Appendix B – Background information/Links

Appendix C – Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2022/23 – 2023/24

Appendix D – Integrated Impact Assessment

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Preventing homelessness, or where this is not possible providing good quality temporary accommodation, and reducing the time taken for people to be permanently housed improves the quality of life for households concerned, leading to sustainable communities and reducing 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 included in the RRTP reduce the financial burden on the Council in respect of significantly reducing future use and spend for 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.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

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

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The RRTP contains activities that focus on the prevention of homelessness, increasing tenancy sustainment, and reducing the need for costly temporary accommodation, resulting in sustainable communities. Other activities such as the redevelopment of Jarnac Court ensure when temporary accommodation is required it is of a good standard and people are able to quickly access the support they need to prevent recurring homelessness in the future.

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The use of Jarnac Court reduces further the further financial burden on the Council and ensures the effective re- use of vacant buildings is maintained, resulting in sustainable use of Council assets. This is achieved whilst not precluding the potential to redevelop Dalkeith town centre to provide further permanent affordable housing.

APPENDIX B

Background Papers/Resource Links

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan link:

https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/4317/rapid_rehousing_transition_plan_202122_-_202324.pdf