



Public Document Pack Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Agenda

Scrutiny making a positive difference: Member led and independent, Overview & Scrutiny Committee promote service improvements, influence policy development & hold Executive to account for the benefit of the Community of Dacorum

Wednesday 13 June 2018 at 7.30 pm

Conference Room 2 - The Forum

The Councillors listed below are requested to attend the above meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Membership

Councillor Adeleke
Councillor Armytage
Councillor Banks
Councillor Mrs Bassadone
Councillor Conway
Councillor England
Councillor P Hearn

Councillor Fethney
Councillor Imarni (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mahmood (Chairman)
Councillor Silwal
Councillor Mills
Councillor W Wyatt-Lowe

Substitute Members:

Councillors Howard, D Collins, Clark, Ransley, Tindall and Link

For further information, please contact Member Support

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes from the previous meeting

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest

A member with a disclosable pecuniary interest or a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered -

- (i) must disclose the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent

and, if the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest, or a personal interest which is also prejudicial

- (ii) may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter (and must withdraw to the public seating area) unless they have been granted a dispensation.

A member who discloses at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary interest which is not registered in the Members' Register of Interests, or is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the disclosure.

Disclosable pecuniary interests, personal and prejudicial interests are defined in Part 2 of the Code of Conduct For Members

[If a member is in any doubt as to whether they have an interest which should be declared they should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer before the start of the meeting]

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

An opportunity for members of the public to make statements or ask questions in accordance with the rules as to public participation

5. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO CALL-IN

6. Q4 BUDGET

Report to follow

7. Q4 RESIDENT SERVICES (Pages 3 - 6)

8. Q4 HOUSING

Report to follow

9. HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY (Pages 7 - 86)

10. UPDATE ON VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR CONTRACT DELIVERY (Pages 87 - 109)

11. SPORTS & ACTIVITY STRATEGY (Pages 110 - 151)



AGENDA ITEM:

Report for:	Housing and Community Overview & Scrutiny
Date of meeting:	13 June 2018
PART:	
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Quarter 4 Performance Report – Community Safety & Safeguarding, Arts, Children Services and Neighbourhood Action
Contact:	Cllr Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder for Resident and Regulatory Services Author/Responsible Officers: Matt Rawdon (Group Manager – People and Performance) Joe Guiton (Community Safety and Children Team Leader) Alex Care (Community Partnerships Team Leader)
Purpose of report:	Monitoring and information
Recommendations	That Members note the report and identify any areas where they require additional information
Corporate objectives:	Building strong and vibrant communities Delivering an efficient and modern council
Implications:	<u>Financial</u> Within existing budgets
‘Value For Money Implications’	<u>Value for Money</u> Services are regularly reviewed to ensure they are efficiently delivered and commercial opportunities are actively sought.
Risk Implications	None at this stage.
Equalities Implications	None at this stage.
Health And Safety Implications	None at this stage.
Consultees:	Service Team Leaders
Background papers:	Nil

1. Introduction

1.1 A recent corporate restructure resulted in Resident Services being disbanded into different service areas within the Council. The following services were moved under the Group Manager – People and Performance: Community Safety & Safeguarding, Arts, Children Services and Neighbourhood Action.

1.2 The other service from within this group that report into this Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the community partnerships team.

1.3 This paper will provide an update of the above services on performance over Q4 2017/2018 and also highlight key achievements over this same period.

2. Performance Reports 17/18 – Quarter 4

2.1 Quarter 4 report - See appendix 1

3. 4th Quarter Achievements.

3.1 The following achievements are a sample of the projects/work undertaken by this group of services during the forth quarter of 2017/2018.

4 Verge Hardening / Adventure Playgrounds / Community Safety Partnership and Safeguarding

a. Children attending APG's 10,909.

b. The Verge Hardening project completed all the projects for the year.

c. M-ask; Now on cohort 4 of M-ask, a wellbeing drama project that has engaged with 46 young people referred a number of ways including self-referrals and all participants have or continue to suffer with anxiety or depression. Very successful cohort throughout January to March. 11 participants completed the programme. The project is tied in with an arts award and all eleven are on course to complete this and receive their bronze arts award.

d. Community payback; In conjunction with BeNCH community rehabilitation company (previously the probation service) Dacorum Borough Council have benefitted from the use of community payback for jobs such as litter picking, clearing footpaths and alleyways and making Council owned allotments suitable to be let again. Currently running two days a week, but due to the success this will be expanded to three days from May 2018.

e. Community Safety Partnerships – Priorities have been set for the partnership to tackle three crime areas, these include knife crime, ASB and drugs/alcohol. Project planning is underway and the project progress will be monitored at the Responsible Officer Action Group (ROAG).

5. Old Town Hall

a. In the final quarter of 2017/18 – we achieved 83% attendance for the programme January to March. Our target is 75% and clearly this was


surpassed. We enjoyed sell out performances not just for our comedy but also high attendance across our other shows.

- b. A joint open event with Herts Inclusive Theatre (a young persons mixed ability theatre group) Customers / attendees queued down the High Street. Estimates were around 400 people through the doors – enjoying storytelling and arts activities for children.

6. Community Partnerships

- a) Community Sector Contracts: All have been running over one year and KPIs have been set for year 2. There is an item on the agenda which will illustrate the contract performance and progress made to date.
- b) Sports Strategy: The Sports Strategy has been out for consultation with residents and sports partners. There is an item on this agenda which provides Members the opportunity to feedback on the draft strategy.
- c) Everyone Active: Operational and strategic board meetings are set up and taking place to assist with the transition and monitor performance.
- d) Armed Forces Day – An event is being planned for June 30th at Gadebridge Park; Portsmouth Action Field Gun Display Team and Rockwood Dogs are confirmed as arena acts, Rockabellas and Halton Military Wives Choir are among confirmed acts for the Community Stage.

OSC Report - Housing & Community Department - Performance, People and Innovation

Indicator Name	Results Mar-2018	Last Quarters Results Dec-17	Last Years Results Mar-17	RAG 	Comments	Actions
Building Community Capacity - Empower local community action and delivery						
CYP01b - Number of young people attending Youth Clubs at Adventure Playgrounds	916 Attendances Info Only	1038 Attendances Info Only	783 Attendances Info Only		No Comments	No Info
CYP01a - Number of children attending Adventure Playgrounds	9993 Attendances Info Only	No Data Info Only	15189 Attendances Target: 16000		No Comments	No Info



Report for:	Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	13 June 2018
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Preventing and Tackling Homelessness
Contact:	Cllr Margaret Griffiths – Portfolio Holder for Housing Cynthia Hayford – Homeless Prevention & Assessment Team Leader Carly Thomas – Homeless Reduction Project Lead
Purpose of report:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The purpose of this report is to provide the committee with an update on the housing service's progress against the commitments set out in the Homelessness Strategy 2016 - 2020. 2. Provide an update on the Council's preparation for the Homeless Reduction Act, which was implemented on 3 April 2018.
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For members to receive a full progress update on the housing service's approach to preventing and tackling homelessness, and review this in line with the commitments set out in the strategy. 2. For members to note the implications of the outlined challenges and trends impacting on the housing service's response to preventing and tackling homelessness; in particular, the growing demands on the service.
Corporate objectives:	Preventing and tackling homelessness contributes to the follow corporate objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clean, safe and enjoyable environment • Building strong and vibrant communities • Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need
Implications:	<u>Financial</u> This report will offer an overview of the financial implications on the homelessness service of both increasing demand, and the introduction of new duties through the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA), and will set out how this strategy will help to offset this. With the increased duties now placed on Housing Authorities,

	applicants are likely to remain in temporary accommodation, which undoubtedly will have an impact on resources.
'Value for money' implications	<u>Value for money</u> Throughout the Preventing and Tackling Homelessness Strategy there is a commitment to streamlining processes and taking a preventative approach so value for money can be achieved. One area that is key to this is raising standards in the private rented sector.
Risk implications	Housing Risk Assessment is presented to the committee on a quarterly basis.
Health and safety Implications	There are no direct Health and Safety implications arising from the strategy.
Consultees:	Cllr Margaret Griffiths – Portfolio Holder for Housing Natasha Beresford – Strategic Housing Group Manager Emily-Rae Maxwell – Strategy Improvement & Engagement Team Leader Homelessness Forum partners
Background papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness Strategy 2016-2020 • Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 • Homeless Reduction Act Project Plan • Homeless Link report
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	H&COSC – Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee NPSS – National Practitioner Support Service HRA – Homeless Reduction Act MHCLG - Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government HART – Homeless Action Review Team HAS – National Homelessness Advice Service HMO – House of Multiple Occupation

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In October 2016 the new Preventing and Tackling Homelessness Strategy 2016 – 2020 was presented to the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (H&COSC).
- 1.2 It was agreed that H&COSC would take ownership of this strategy and monitor the housing service's performance against the five commitments set out within the strategy.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide members with a progress update for each of the commitments and outline both national and local considerations that impact upon the council's homelessness service.
- 1.4 This update will include key pieces of work undertaken over the past year by the housing service, including an update on the HRA following its implementation in April 2018 and commitment to achieving a gold standard housing options service, by completing ten local challenges set by the National Practitioners Support Service (NPSS).

2. Homeless Reduction Act update

- 2.1 Detailed guidance and consultation was undertaken by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Governments (MHCLG) ahead of the implementation of the new Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which subsequently came into effect on 3 April 2018.
- 2.2 All new recruitment in relation to the HRA and Flexible Homeless Support Funding, which was reviewed by H&COSC and subsequently cabinet on 31 July 2017 has been completed and Officers are in post.
- 2.3 The service took the decision to create a secondment opportunity and implement a HRA Project Lead, this post was advertised and implemented with effect from October 2017, which led to a detailed project and communications plan developed by the HRA Project Lead. From the outset of the project, the service took the decision to start working with the principles of the new legislation in advance of the Act's implementation, so as to ensure Officers were sufficiently prepared and confident in the new requirements.
- 2.4 The management of the project has been comprehensive and has seen the housing service leading on the development of not only local but also County arrangements, to ensure a consistent approach to the HRA and joint working wherever possible. The service has led on developing a Local Connection Referral Protocol which has been put into place with all ten districts in Hertfordshire. This is an agreed approach to cases where the applicant's local connection lies with another district in Hertfordshire. MHCLG has requested and been provided with a copy of this to be considered when advising other local authorities in the country on good practice.
- 2.5 Pathways have been developed for key vulnerable client groups. These ensure that the service is notified at the earliest possible point of impending homelessness for these groups. Not only does this maximise the ability to provide meaningful and tailored support to try and prevent/relieve homelessness for that client, but it also improves joint working relationships with local partners.

- 2.6 Ongoing work is also being undertaken to see which of these pathways can be extended across the County.
- 2.7 A Homeless Prevention Hub has been set up as a sub group of the Homeless Forum. This involves all local partners working together to develop a virtual hub and an agreed notification form which focuses on the principle of a single point of access concept for clients.
- 2.8 Personalised Housing Plans are provided to every applicant detailing their housing and support needs. These plans are tailored to the client's needs and are reviewed throughout the process as the client's circumstances change.
- 2.9 New procedures and casework toolkits and have been produced in order to ensure a consistent approach across the service to comply with the new legislation. This has included development of new script information for the council's Customer Service Unit as first point of contact. We have altered the approach process to include a Triage Officer, where all cases are triaged and given initial advice before being referred to the Homeless Prevention Team which has been invaluable. We have been able to achieve a high number of positive outcomes through early intervention in this way. Using New Burdens funding allocated by MHCLG our case management system Civica has been upgraded. This is to ensure we are able to record the new stages of a case in line with the legislative requirements. We also have a new core suite of letter templates, linked to the HRA that still include all relevant case law but have a more personable approach to them, making it easier for clients to understand them.
- 2.10 It cannot be denied that there has been an impact in terms of increased workloads for staff. Average caseloads are around 40-50 cases per officer, there are 5 full time Homeless Prevention & Assessment Officer roles within the service undertaking this casework. There are several factors that contribute to this. These include a significant increase in the administration of new cases, combined with working to the increased duties for a larger pool of applicants as the HRA extends the same level of duty to all applicants provided they are eligible for assistance. There were also legacy cases that had to be completed under the old legislation as these had been opened pre HRA. This has meant that Officers have been working on two different processes within the same system which has increased time spent on each case.
- 2.11 Training has been provided by both NPSS and National Homeless Advice Service. The NPSS having noted the work Dacorum has done has also requested examples of this to be included in a good practice guide for other local authorities.
- 2.12 It is important to highlight that the service has been noted for taking a proactive approach to absorbing this change in legislation. The appointment of the dedicated Project Lead and early recruitment has meant that the service had all additional staff in place ahead of implementation. This has not been the case for many authorities, locally and across the country. The service is now working to new legislation and ensuring we are compliant with all new duties that exist.

3. Strategy update

3.1 To deliver Commitment One: Continue to build partnerships across different sectors and lead Dacorum's response to preventing and tackling homelessness, the housing service has;

- A Homelessness Forum which is strategically led and directed by the Group Manager, Strategic Housing and Chaired by an elected voluntary sector representative, the Chief Executive of DENS. The forum has increasing engagement from the statutory and voluntary sector including local registered providers, charities, Adult Care services, mental health and Police. The service is currently engaging with a number of new organisations, churches and the local MP to increase involvement in the forum and improve outcomes.
- New pathways and referral processes have been developed, with commitment from all relevant organisations, in relation to: Hospital Discharge; - Mental Health; - Prison; - Care Leavers; - Ex Armed Forces; - Domestic Violence.
- The service is actively engaging with DENS, Hertfordshire County Council and other stakeholders, to undertake performance reviews and audits of the Elms contract.
- A virtual homeless hub has been established to ensure the services response to changes in legislation and a mutual referral process for all clients accessing housing advice and prevention services. We now have a referral pathway with Fire Service relating to rough sleepers.
- Developed a communications plan to ensure that our partners and residents are aware of our response to homelessness, which impacts on the whole community. Currently the service is developing a series of short videos with our corporate Communications team to raise awareness of homelessness. As part of our regular updates on the development of key projects, the Homeless Forum issues a quarterly newsletter providing vital information, which includes access to grant funding opportunities to deliver key projects.

3.2 To deliver Commitment Two: Work together with partners and residents to understand the causes of homelessness and increase the help Dacorum services can offer, the housing service has;

- Commissioned a report in partnership with Homeless Link to inform how a Housing First model to support people with complex needs experiencing homelessness into accommodation could be implemented in the borough. The Homelessness Action Review Team (HART) are currently investigating good practice models further and will be developing a model that is in keeping with the local need and demographic of clients. It is intended that a business case on the proposed model will be presented to the Housing Senior Management Team and Portfolio Holder for consideration later in the year.

- No Second Night Out Policy has been developed and implemented, it is currently under review in line with legislative change to ensure it remains fit for purpose.
- Awarded a total £10k of homelessness prevention grants to Voluntary & Community organisations in 2017-18 to fund small projects to prevent and tackle homelessness in Dacorum. Projects include:
 - DENS Housing Legal Clinic – to be based at their newly developed Open Space to offer support for people who do not have secure and stable tenancies and at risk of losing their accommodation.
 - South Hill Centre housing advisor post – work with vulnerable women in Dacorum currently delivered through its ‘Cherished’ activity to include more focussed support round housing.
 - Herts County Council/ Youth Connexions life skills training course for young people (teaching budgeting and home management skills to prevent homelessness)
 - Dacorum Community Trust temporary accommodation starter pack fund- targeting homeless people/ families who attend their offices for practical help and support. Families that have been offered temporary accommodation and referred to them by Council Officers and DENS
- Launched Tenant Academy in September 2017, which allows DBC tenants and leaseholders as well as homeless clients living in housing service temporary accommodation to access training and skills courses.
- Grant funding of £35,000.00 provided to Hightown for Dacorum Safer Haven (refuge in Hemel).
- Grant funding of £5000 provided to Herts Young & Homeless (HYH) to deliver home truth education sessions in secondary schools around the borough.

3.3 To deliver Commitment Three: Improve access, security and stability within the private rented sector and help Dacorum residents to remain in their homes, the housing service has;

- A dedicated Private Sector Housing team has been established for the council and now sits within Strategic Housing. This means the service has a holistic approach to tackling rogue landlords and supporting tenants through housing advice.
- The Private Sector Housing team are now able to take a proactive approach to identifying landlord harassment, retaliatory evictions, and have a new identification marker on the housing register form relating to HMO's to enable us to identify PRS accommodation.

- The housing service have been proactive in raising the profile of Universal Credit and the impact this will have for the Private Rented Sector and Affordable Housing in the borough due to the increased likelihood of arrears and therefore risk of homelessness.
- The housing service has also explored the impact Universal Credit will have for people trying to access the Private Rented Sector and is scoping out the use of discretionary housing payment to cover the first payment whilst an application is being processed.
- We refer cases to Herts Mediation and Living Stable Lives for further support where there is a breakdown in relationship between the tenant and landlord or there is an opportunity to sustain the tenancy.
- Our partnership with the National Landlords Association has meant Dacorum Landlords can now easily access formal training on property management and support through a dedicated advice line.
- Use of Homeless prevention funding to prevent homelessness from the private rented sector and improve access: In the last financial year we have prevented 14 families from becoming homeless from the private sector and provided assistance with deposit payments for accommodation from the Homeless Prevention Fund. The total amount spent in 2017/18 was £10,865, arrangements are made directly with the tenant and landlord, to re-coup this money back into the Homeless Prevention Fund when the deposit is released from the protection scheme.

3.4 To deliver Commitment four: Empower Dacorum residents to make informed decisions about their housing options the housing service has;

- Currently undergoing a review of the website content to make it easier for residents to access information relevant to their situation
- We improved our Enhanced Housing Options toolkit, which is accessible via the Moving with Dacorum site so clients can self-service and access housing advice at all times and ensured that all information is correct in line with current legislation and reflective of local services.
- Created a virtual homeless hub in Dacorum with representatives from key partners to ensure all housing advice given throughout the borough is consistent and in line with legislation and DBC policies.

3.5 To deliver Commitment Five: Reduce the effect of homelessness on young people and families, the housing service has delivered the following:

- We work closely with Herts Mediation to offer impartial and independent mediation for families to help resolve disputes that could lead to homelessness.

- We haven't placed any applicant in Bed & Breakfast since June 2016.
- We provide funding for Herts Young & Homeless to deliver Home truth sessions in secondary schools in Dacorum. The Housing Service regularly evaluates these sessions to ensure that they are effective and have a positive impact on the targeted client group. It is considered that these sessions are valuable in assisting in the prevention of homelessness from this client group.
- We have recently refurbished our temporary accommodation at Leys Road to ensure that households can continue to be accommodated in a safe and secure environment.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The housing service is on track to deliver against the five commitments set out in the Preventing and Tackling Homelessness Strategy 2016 – 2020. During 2019, the service will commence a full and formal review of the strategy, ahead of its expiry and to inform the approach and development of the new strategy.
- 4.2 The housing service has successfully achieved ten local challenges set out by the NPSS and has achieved the Gold Standard. We are the first local authority in the Eastern Region and Hertfordshire to achieve this status and the thirteenth in the country.
- 4.3 There have been a number of changes introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) which could have impacted upon the progress of the strategy. To avoid this impact, we have formed a Homeless Action Review Team (HART), a formal sub-group of the Homeless Forum, which consists of members from across the housing service and includes other homeless forum members. This is to ensure that our strategy and overall approach to homelessness is consistent and compliant to the new statutory duties.
- 4.4 A significant amount of work has been undertaken over the past couple of months by HART to review each of the five commitments and the group will continue to review its progress in partnership with the Homelessness Forum. The group is also actively undertaking a number of key projects linked to achieving the strategy commitments.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 For members to note the performance in relation to the delivery of the Preventing and Tackling Homelessness Strategy 2016-2020 and to offer comments.
- 5.2 For members to consider the format and content of the report and advise if there are particular areas of scrutiny that they wish to consider going forward.



'Preventing and Tackling Homelessness'

Homelessness Strategy 2016-2020

Foreword

I am pleased to introduce Dacorum Borough Councils Homelessness Strategy for 2016-2020.

Homelessness has continued to increase in Dacorum and changes in legislation mean we must work in partnership to prevent and tackle homelessness.

With our commitment to achieving a gold standard service we can help to keep people in safe, secure and affordable homes.

Using the five commitments set out in the strategy we can capture the difference we as a housing service along with our partners make to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Councillor Margaret Griffiths

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Delivering a great service

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Conclusion

Introduction

Dacorum Borough Council is committed to working in partnership to prevent and tackle homelessness within the borough.

This strategy sets out how we as a housing service will consider the needs of homeless households and offer assistance to those who we have a statutory duty to support under The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977, Housing Act 1996, and the Homelessness Act 2002.

It will also detail the approach taken to prevent homelessness within the borough. This includes helping people to address their housing needs to avoid becoming homeless. Additionally, the strategy sets out how we as a housing service will, where possible work with those people who we have no statutory obligation to support find accommodation. This strategy explores the impact of local and national changes on homelessness in Dacorum and sets out five commitments which it will deliver in partnership.

For the purpose of this strategy a person is considered homeless if they are;

- have nowhere to stay and are on the streets
- have been evicted, illegally evicted or forced to leave their last place of residence
- have been released from prison or discharged from hospital with nowhere to go
- are at risk of losing their home within 28 days
- have a priority need for housing e.g. care leavers

Vision

In Dacorum, preventing and tackling homelessness is more than addressing peoples housing situation. It is about helping them to fulfil their potential and live a quality life. Our vision is to create a borough where homelessness is not an option. We will work together with our partners to help every person that is homeless or at risk of homelessness to gain the right skills and resources to improve their lives and *'get back on track'*.

This strategy supports the councils corporate vision of *'...working in partnership to create a borough that enables Dacorum's communities to thrive and prosper'*.

To deliver this vision it is essential that we work with our residents to create strong and vibrant communities that enjoy safe and clean environments. We will continue to provide good quality affordable homes, particularly to those in need and ensure the economic growth and prosperity of our borough so our residents can support themselves. As a council we will explore how we can create more efficient and modern services so those who need help can access it through multiple channels.

National Context

This strategy will take into consideration how decisions made at a national level can affect individuals living in Dacorum. We recognize that all people will at some point have experiences that could lead to homelessness. Poor life skills, relationship breakdown, mental or physical ill health and the ending of a tenancy can all contribute to this. For many people, they are able to resolve these issues themselves; however, it is important for us to acknowledge that not everyone has the ability to cope or the resources to support themselves through these hard times. It is these experiences that often result in individuals becoming homeless.

Welfare Reform and Universal Credit

To prevent and tackle homelessness it is important for us to understand how changes to legislation such as Welfare Reform and the introduction of the Housing and Planning Act (2016) affect Dacorum residents.

The move towards Universal Credit means people will receive benefits on a monthly basis. This will put more pressure and responsibility on individuals to manage their money and budget for the month. Receiving a lump sum can also lead to complex social issues such as financial abuse for vulnerable people and the risk to individuals with drug and alcohol dependencies. This change highlights the importance of improving people's life skills to allow them to live independently.

Housing and Planning Act

Additionally, The Housing and Planning Act 2016 marks the end of local authorities offering lifetime tenancies. Local authorities will now offer tenancies up to ten years, with some exceptions being made for families with young children and other households considered vulnerable. Alongside the benefits created for us as a council when managing our housing stock, this will require us to consider how we can support people whose tenancies are not renewed to access alternative housing and prevent them from becoming homeless.

A changing landscape

Changes in legislation can often cause the increased risk of homelessness for individuals. Based on this, the council is committed to regularly reviewing this homelessness strategy and shape services according to both local needs and national requirements.

The potential introduction of a homelessness reduction bill would see local authorities' responsibility to prevent homelessness needing to be evidenced by a formal duty, placing additional pressures on the service to meet demand.

Equality and Diversity

As a Housing Service we believe everyone should have the opportunity to access our housing advice and options service regardless of; age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation (Equality and Diversity Act 2010). We are committed to being inclusive with our approach to preventing and tackling homelessness and will ensure our policies and procedures and working practices reflect this commitment.

We know that groups within our population are more likely to be at risk of homelessness. Through customer insight we can trend the profiles of people within Dacorum presenting as homeless and shape the services we and our partners offer to improve this.

Value for Money

It is important that we deliver value for money for local people accessing our homelessness support services. Increased demand requires us to explore new ways to improve efficiency within our housing advice and options service so we can target resources to improve service quality, enhance effectiveness and deliver positive outcomes for our clients. We are also committed to 'demonstrating the cost effectiveness of preventing homelessness'. By investing in preventative approaches we can support people to stay in existing accommodation.

Working in Partnership

An increase in demand for housing and limited resources, Dacorum Borough Council is committed to working in partnership to prevent and tackle homelessness effectively. Leading a borough wide Homelessness Forum, we create the opportunity to discuss strategic issues which cross-cut all sectors with our partners. The Forum will be used to monitor the progress and effectiveness of the strategy. Our homeless hostel 'The Elms' managed by a voluntary sector organization allows us to adopt a No Second Night Out policy. To effectively deliver this strategy, we will continue to maintain agreements with a variety of organizations to ensure our service can offer the highest quality advice and support to those in need. Taking an outcome based approach through the five commitments; we will monitor our performance and those of our partners to ensure by 2020, homelessness is not an option for people living in Dacorum.





Our commitments

To develop this strategy, we worked with a variety of stakeholders including service users, the local voluntary and community sector and other statutory services. Using trend analysis, we also identified the key reasons people become homeless within Dacorum. This includes the termination of short hold assured tenancies due to increased rents in the private sector.

From this insight into local need and the requirements of the National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) ten local challenges we have developed five outcome based commitments for delivering this strategy, these are;

- Commitment one: Continue to build partnerships across different sectors and lead Dacorum's response to preventing and tackling homelessness
- Commitment two: Work together with partners and residents to understand the causes of homelessness and increase the help Dacorum services can offer
- Commitment three: Improve access, security and stability within the private rented sector and allow Dacorum residents to remain in their homes
- Commitment four: Empower Dacorum residents to make informed decisions about their housing options
- Commitment five: Reduce the effect of homelessness on young people and families

Setting the Standard

To support the delivery of this strategy, the housing service will achieve the NPSS gold standard for homelessness. Our commitment to achieving this standard, demonstrates our desire to continuously improve and provide an excellent customer service. Achieving this, we will; improve our response to homelessness, identify opportunities that prevent Dacorum residents from becoming homeless and work with our partners to intervene at the earliest possible point. A gold standard homelessness service is achieved by completing the following ten local challenges;

1. To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services
2. To actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
3. To offer a Housing Options prevention service to all clients including written advice
4. To adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative
5. To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support
6. To develop a suitable private rented sector, offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord
7. To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
8. To have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness, reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging
9. To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation
10. To not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks

Commitment One- Continue to build partnerships across different sectors and lead Dacorum's response to preventing and tackling homelessness

Commitment one seeks to build on the well established relationships between the housing service and the voluntary and community sector and other statutory services. By increasing our network and developing these relationships further we can address not only peoples housing needs, but help them to improve their lives by gaining the right skills. We will explore opportunities to reduce both long-term and short-term demand on services in Dacorum. To achieve this, we will;

- Increase the effectiveness of the Homelessness Forum using it effectively manage joint resources and tackle key issues to tackles homelessness
- Offer holistic support to people that are homeless or at risk of homelessness by improving pathways between services
- Review agreements between the housing service and external organisation against required outcomes and value for money achieved
- Lead a borough wide response to any national changes to ensure a consistent service
- Have a communications plan to ensure that our partners and residents are aware of our response to homelessness, which impacts on the whole community
- Utilise our travel assistance fund is used to allow reconnection of homeless clients with their local area, to prevent further demand on Dacorum's resources and services.

Commitment Two- Through investments and improvements our assets generate income and support the housing service business plan

Commitment two is about understanding both the needs and the experiences of people that are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Taking this informed approach, we can develop preventative approaches and reduce the number of people becoming homeless in Dacorum. To achieve this, we will;

- Use customer insight to map the services we offer against current and emerging need and effectively consult with customers to continue service improvement
- Develop a Housing First model to support people with complex needs experiencing homelessness into accommodation
- Eradicate rough sleeping by developing a No Second Night Out model
- Utilise our management systems and data sharing to enable us to identify potential victims of Domestic Abuse and people with mental health problems earlier and implement appropriate interventions preventing further risk or homelessness
- Support grassroots organisations to set up initiatives that tackle the causes of homelessness within Dacorum
- Develop our Positive Futures programme to provide increased opportunities for our clients to access support and achieve independence through developed life skills

Commitment Three: Improve access, security and stability in the private rented sector and help Dacorum residents remain in their home

Commitment three looks to improve access and security within the private rented sector for local people, increasing their housing options. This will also help to manage the demand for social housing. We will work with residents and landlords to improve stability and help residents to remain in their homes. We will achieve this by;

- Help people to stay informed by improving access to information on housing rights, new initiatives and how to access support through channel shift and signposting
- Work with private sector landlords to improve their relationships with tenant and act as a mediator to help people stay in their homes
- Develop our 'help to rent' scheme allowing people to access housing in the private sector
- Increase the support offered for mortgage repossession prevention

Commitment Four: Empower Dacorum residents to make informed decisions about their housing options

Commitment four focuses on helping people to stay informed about their housing options through high quality advice. We believe this is key to preventing homelessness. We will explore the use of channel shift so local people can access support at any given time. We will achieve this by;

- Tailor our communications so people can access information about their housing options easily
- Improve our Enhanced Housing Options toolkit and information that is available on website so people can access housing advice at all times
- Improve our contact channels so people can contact the right team and access advice at the earliest possible point
- Work with partners to increase access housing advice and options support through outreach work and pop-up events

Commitment Five: Reduce the effect of homelessness on young people and families

Commitment five looks to give young people and families experiencing homelessness the best possible start. We understand that homelessness is a stressful experience for all. We will explore all opportunities to help families stay together and prevent individuals, particularly young people from becoming homeless. Through education we will support the next generation to avoid homelessness and work to reduce the effects of those who do experience it. To achieve this we will;

- Increase our offer of respite accommodation and mediation services to reduce breakdown in family relationships
- Reduce the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for young people and families with young children
- Improve young people's understanding of 'living independently' by offering life skills workshops and housing eligibility
- Ensure any young people or children have access to appropriate support following their experience of homelessness

Conclusion

Within this strategy we have set out how Dacorum Borough Council's housing service will work with strategic partnership organizations to prevent and tackle homelessness within the borough.

We are committed to considering the needs of homeless households, offering support to those we who we have a statutory duty to support and working with those in non-priority homeless households.

We will take a leading role in responding with key changes in legislation and work with partners when required to coordinate a local response.

Throughout this strategy we have emphasized the importance of partnership working and will continue to keep this at the core of our service delivery.

We will consider the needs and experiences of people that are homeless or at risk of losing their home to improve our services and effectively target resources.

Improving access to the private sector and working with private landlords we will seek to reduce demand for social housing.

By empowering local people to make informed choices about their housing options we will seek to prevent homelessness wherever possible.

We will help young people and families to reduce the effect of homelessness and ensure they stay in safe and secure temporary accommodation for a limited period of time. We believe these five commitments will support the service to achieve the NPSS gold standard.

Overall we will work towards a borough where homelessness is not an option.



Dacorum Council Homeless Reduction Act – Detailed Delivery Plan

Resources Plan

Each of the items listed below in the Work Plan will have its own delivery plan with milestones, responsibilities and target dates for implementation.

Desired Outcome	Description	What needs to be done	Lead Officer and Progress	Timetable
1 page 26	Developing a Council wide approach to preventing and tackling homelessness	<p>Action: Obtaining a Corporate Commitment to prevent and tackle homelessness.</p> <p>Proposed actions and dates</p> <p>1. This process has already been started in Dacorum. A CMT briefing was completed in June 2017 to this effect.</p> <p>2. A report was submitted to Cabinet in July 2017 where proposals were made for the Homeless Reduction Act</p> <p>3. A presentation has also been completed at the leadership event to let all service areas know they will need to nominate a homeless champion moving forward.</p> <p>4. Following on from this an email has been sent to all Group Managers requesting that all nominations need to be submitted by October 20th.</p>		Oct/Nov 17

		5. Once completed a briefing report detailing the Project Plan will also need to be submitted to the Portfolio Holder.		
2	<p>Working in Partnership to prevent and tackle homelessness and the new duties in the Homelessness Reduction Act</p> <p>1) Obtaining a commitment from all relevant statutory and voluntary sector partners to work in partnership to pilot and successfully implement the new model of prevention to meet the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act</p> <p>2) Deliver the Homelessness Reduction Act objective to provide early intervention prevention work through partnership working</p>	<p>Actions to deliver: Set up a Sub Group of the Homeless Forum to create the Homeless Hub in Dacorum.</p> <p>Proposed actions and progress:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Homeless Forum in Dacorum has been advised on the requirement to create a Homeless Hub in the borough. 2. Agreement obtained from the Forum to set up sub group to help create the Homeless Hub. 3. Requests via the Homeless Forum have been made for members to nominate a Homeless Champion to work in partnership with the Project lead to create the Homeless Hub. 4. Following on from this an email has been sent out to all members requesting nominations for this to be submitted by 23rd of October 2017. <p>Actions to deliver this action</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overall aim is that all relevant partners' (including Hertfordshire Local Authority partners) sign up to a new "Homeless Prevention Charter" structured around the partnership aims of the Homelessness Reduction Act and linked to the Council's Homelessness Strategy. 2. Work will then commence with each partner as well as services in the voluntary sector such as HYH, Druglink and Community Action Dacorum to 		<p>Nov/Dec 17</p> <p>Jan 18</p>

	<p>3) Deliver bespoke prevention help through Personal Housing Plans as required by the Homelessness Reduction Act and to seek to make the Personal Housing Plans a live and</p>	<p>identify their organisations role and agree their contribution in helping to deliver early intervention prevention work. The charter appendixes will also set out their contributions by way of Partnership agreements (or memorandums of understanding)</p> <p>3. The objective is to provide effective prevention help and advice through the principle of 'no wrong front door' Applicant would be able to receive the same quality of advice from any partner agency even if the delivery of specific prevention actions may be the responsibility of the Council or a specific agency in that partnership.</p> <p>4. Building on this the Homeless Hub will be created both in a physical and virtual sense. There will be regular sessions set up at a location (to be decided), initial considerations are that this location could be The Elms, where clients can attend in person and see a representative from the service they are looking to access. The same information and advice will also be made available for clients to access online allowing flexibility for those who have other commitments or reasons that prevent them from being able to attend in person.</p> <p>Actions to deliver the objective of bespoke Personal Housing Plans:</p> <p>Actions set 1: Delivering Personal Housing Plans through the Housing Solutions Service</p> <p>Dacorum has already begun implementing this requirement in anticipation of the HRA. Currently this is in the format of a word document. This is completed with client during the initial interview and signed when both parties are happy with the agreed actions.</p> <p>This will be developed and evolved into an online version that is accessible to both the caseworker and applicant that can be amended throughout the process to create a live and evolving plan.</p> <p>Action set 2: Delivering Personal Housing Plans in Partnership</p>		<p>Feb/March 18</p> <p>Jan 2018</p>
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	<p>evolving plan through partnership working</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider feasibility of adaption the current Enhanced Housing Options assessment tool to achieve the PHP requirements through Civica. 2. This will involve developing a system whereby copies of all PHPs will be stored online ideally on a password protected server 3. Applicant will be given password and link to own their own Personal Housing Plan. 4. We will also work with IT services to create a system where a notification will be sent via email to the caseworker when the PHP is added to or amended. 5. Will explore the option of developing a system with selected partners who will have access to the persons personal housing plan (with consent) to help keep the PHP and the actions relevant and live to increase the chances of a successful prevention outcome. If feasible in Dacorum and agreed to, all partners to be asked to follow a protocol whereby they can (with the customers consent) to add, amend and support the delivery of that plan <p>This is to realise the objective of the plan being a live and evolving set of actions to be taken with support from the Council and Partners to try and achieve a solution.</p> <p>Action set 5: Develop Pathway Plans for a number of specific vulnerable groups</p> <p>Dacorum, in response to the new section 179 advice duty in the HRA will as will be required by the new legislation develop Pathway Plans – These can be seen as a specific form of a Personal Housing Plan for specialist vulnerable groups who may have more problems in preventing homelessness or help to obtain accommodation.</p> <p>Dacorum already has joint working protocols in place for the majority of vulnerable groups. For groups where they do not already exist, plans will be created. For those that currently exist, these will need to be reviewed and updated to reflect new legislative changes.</p>		<p>Jan/Feb 18</p> <p>Feb 18</p>
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		<p>Actions: Pathway Plans and Joint Working Protocols will be created and developed to provide meaningful prevention help, support, and an accommodation pathway for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 16/17 year old homeless cases b. Care leavers c. Hospital discharge cases including mental health d. Leaving prison or young offenders e. Service personnel homeless on leaving the armed forces <p>A framework for each Pathway Plan for each vulnerable group will be developed between partner agencies who work with each vulnerable group</p>		
<p>3 Page 30</p>	<p>Improving the quality and effectiveness of prevention work to meet the requirements of the new section 195 prevention duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act</p> <p>1) Develop and introduce new prevention focused casework resource toolkits targeting the 2 main causes of homelessness in Dacorum - parents/relatives exclusions and section 21 notice cases.</p>	<p>Dacorum currently has a Homeless Prevention Toolkit, however this will need to be reviewed as it is based on current service and not the changes that will come with the HRA.</p> <p>Review effectiveness of the new prevention approaches by measuring specifically prevention outcomes for all parental/extended family exclusion cases and all AST/Possession action cases at 6/12/18 months after introduction compared to prevention rates prior to introduction for these 2 main causes – <i>actions at 6/12/18 months after introduction</i></p> <p>Actions to deliver a ‘Formal Offer to Resolve’ Model</p>		<p>Feb 18</p>

	<p>2) To introduce the ‘Offer to Resolve’ model</p>	<p>Southwark have introduced a new concept in prevention work of making ‘a formal offer to resolve the problem’ to any person wishing to exclude covering all approaches where there is a threat of homelessness relating to a notice for any tenure, or withdrawal of a permission to live with parents, relatives or friends.</p> <p>This is not a requirement of the new Homelessness Reduction Act but Southwark believe it is an essential model to give discipline to prevention work and to ensure everything has been tried before it is accepted that homelessness cannot be prevented.</p> <p>This is different to a personal housing plan and covers a formal written bespoke offer to resolve the problem that has been identified and made to the person wishing to exclude or repossess (in AST/tenancy cases)</p> <p>This will be a written offer tailored to the problem and potential solution (unless it is a case where it is assessed that it is unsafe for the applicant to remain).</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formal offer to resolve templates to be developed 2. Homeless Prevention Team to trial the new concept for all casework once template is ready 3. Review compliance and effectiveness of the formal offer to resolve process at 6 months and 12 months 		<p>Trialled from Nov 17 Reviewed in Feb/March 18</p>
	<p>3) To look into sustainment plans at the point of ending a prevention, relief or main duty</p>	<p>Action: To consider appropriate options for sustainment plans at the point of ending a prevention, relief or main duty</p> <p>As a trailblazer Southwark have piloted an approach where each household who is offered accommodated will be given a sustainment plan. Dacorum already has a lot of sustainment options in place, such as working relationships with Living</p>		

		<p>Stable Lives and the Advice, Support and Guidance workers etc. Individual plans may be a duplication of this and increase the workload of staff.</p> <p>However we can look at generating a Sustainment Pack that provides generic information and advice on how to sustain a tenancy too all households when duty discharged. To do this we will look at what information is given at the sustainment courses that tenancy run and adapt that into a pack.</p> <p>We will monitor the success of the sustainment plans through discussions with a random section of households (who have had the duty ended and are still in accommodation 6 months following) to ascertain whether or not to continue.</p>		Feb/March 18
Page 32	<p>Improving the quality and effectiveness of help to single applicants to help them to find accommodation to meet the new section 189B 'Help to Secure' Duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act</p>	<p>Action 1: Extra support to help single people secure accommodation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This will be most effectively met through the development of the Homeless Hub. This will deliver a multi-agency advice, options accommodation finding and access to support service accommodation finding. 2. This is anticipated to be available both in a physical and virtual Hub that is easy to access. 3. All prevention schemes will also be reviewed to try and increase accommodation options for single people and help them secure accommodation 4. Longer term Dacorum will also review the provision of the Elms contract 		March 18 and ongoing as the service develops
4	<p>To develop a self-help prevention of homelessness strategy</p> <p>The objective is to promote concept of <i>Customer Choice and Empowerment</i> as a core principle for how the new prevention model is intended to operate</p>	<p>Encouraging the principle of self help for applicants who are not so vulnerable that they are able to help themselves to find a solution</p> <p>Self help on line resources</p> <p>The Self-Help principle is enshrined in the Homelessness Reduction Act and Dacorum Council will adopt this approach in several ways. Applicants should be seeking a solution themselves with the support of the Council and should be helped to take actions through bespoke practical resources. (Note: an assessment will be made to ensure an applicant can help themselves.</p>		

	<p>both in the pilot stage and to inform thinking post enactment of the HRA.</p>	<p>Applicants with a level of vulnerability that means they cannot help themselves will not be expected to pursue self help options)</p> <p>This will be achieved through several strands of work</p> <p>A self help strategy will be delivered through:</p> <p>1) Developing a fully interactive on-line self help prevention and options advice module</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop the EHO toolkit to create an online advice service where applicants can receive all advice on prevention and options in relation to their housing online. 2. This will be accessed via our website and will be developed to be an interactive tool that can be tailored to the individual's requirements <p>2) Develop practically focussed Self Help Packs to be provided to applicants at the earliest point where an approach for help is made</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self help packs for the main causes of homelessness and for single people and families who are homeless when they present 2. The packs will be introduced and monitored and reviewed following feedback 3. A focus session with residents to be run by staff at the Elms to establish what they would like to see in these packs and what their expectations are for housing and homelessness. <p>3) Finding out early customer expectations to manage expectations and provide realistic help at the earliest point of contact</p> <p>The Council to consider adopting the Welsh model where by within the new statutory assessment applicants are asked what solution they are seeking. This will allow the council to discuss how realistic that solution is and may mean applicants are more receptive to the practical solutions when discussed at the development of the personal housing plan stage</p>		<p>Jan/Feb 18</p> <p>March 18</p> <p>March/April 18</p>
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		<p>1. Question to find out applicant's expectation of a solution to be incorporated into new assessment form</p> <p>4) Providing clear facts and illustrative materials on what solutions are available so people can understand their options quickly</p> <p>1. Dacorum Council will develop illustrative materials giving facts on the likely housing solutions available</p> <p>2. These will cover:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Fact sheets on social housing prospects Fact sheet on where people can afford to live and what they can afford These will be incorporated in the PHP's as well as on the online toolkits. <p>5) Piloting the 'passport to Independent living model' to support the principle of <i>Self-help: Promoting Customer Choice and Empowerment</i></p> <p>Southwark Council have specifically piloted a new approach to parents seeking to exclude – however Dacorum is already implementing some of this work as a part of the service we provide. This is where the conclusion is that there are tensions at home and a desire to see son/daughter into independent housing to provide very practical help and support to try and engage parents and applicants through a more honest approach to address the <i>housing need problem</i> rather than the <i>homeless in crisis</i> problem.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> This is to support parents where they feel they have to exclude to obtain help Provide solutions that are planned and therefore more likely to be sustainable through the person being more ready for independent living. Setting this out in a model called 'Passport to Independent living' setting out help and support and milestones for the person to seek to achieve working towards being ready for independent living <p>Actions</p>		March 18
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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We already work alongside Herts Young Homeless (HYH) to provide mediation for families in this situation. 2. We can look at providing additional leaflets or information about the service to incorporate what they already do as a part of our plan/pathway. 3. Strengthen the working relationship with HYH and ensure their participation in the Homeless Hub – meeting already scheduled in October to start this process 		Initial meeting in Oct 17 and ongoing from that
5	<p>Treating Customers with Compassion, Understanding and Empathy to tackle the <i>culture change</i> issue highlighted by the DCLG Select Committee and change which the Government have publically stated they want to see brought about by the HRA</p>	<p>Action 1: Changing the language used in statutory notification letters</p> <p>Dacorum Council will change the language used in all contact with customers for example: advice letters and statutory decision letters to avoid technical language and bureaucratic framework to be replaced by plain English explanations and clear information on customer options, e.g. – this is what is likely to happen if you go down avenue A versus this is the likely outcome if you choose avenue B rather than language that indicates the customer will be ‘punished’ in some way</p> <p>Actions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop new plain English notification letters 2. Develop plain English principle to all options and advice notifications 3. Review templates of all letters on Civica, and all statutory decision letters and notifications to be rewritten in new customer focused language <p>Requests have already been sent to Southwark who have piloted this for template examples</p> <p>Action 2: Develop a new approach to intentionally homeless households</p> <p>Positive pathways</p> <p>Promote a new approach to intentional homelessness within the personal housing plan with the concept of a ‘pathway out of intentional homelessness’</p>		Jan/Feb 2018

		<p>Aim is to change the approach to intentional homelessness to tackle the causes of any deliberate action rather than punish that action providing a better 'deal' for potentially IH applicants who are willing to address any issues that cause the loss of their accommodation. Intentional homelessness will still be applied to those unwilling to take action to address causes or who fail to cooperate with help offered</p> <p>Actions</p> <p>Dacorum has already implemented a positive pathways scheme. This is currently on hold due to procedural issues. The procedure as a whole will be reviewed before implementation to establish if this is a feasible initiative that can work in Dacorum alongside the HRA requirements.</p>		<p>Feb 18</p>
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Develop a number of new initiatives to support the new section 189B 'Help to Secure Accommodation Duty' for single people and families

Action 1: Providing a new *Accommodation Finding Service* tailored to find a solution based on a customers informed choice

A new Accommodation Finder Service is to be developed to search for private rented accommodation in any area where the Council and the applicant agree that is realistic and affordable for a household to consider living in.

The new service will be based on the following key principles:

- a) People should be given all the information available to freely identify what accommodation options are realistic and affordable
- b) They will be offered the new service and supported to secure any accommodation options in whatever area that is affordable based on a clear discussion and acceptance by the client
- c) They will receive bespoke practical help and materials to help them secure including information on any guarantees re deposit, rent in advance, landlord incentive package, etc
- d) The offer will include helping people to apply to register for any council housing register or registered provider waiting list where the person would qualify and wish to live

Actions:

- 1. Include a specific 'Accommodation Finder' tool on EHO to allow people to look for themselves for places to live, ideally tailored to their needs.
- 2. Include links to websites for accommodation such as Gumtree/Spare-room etc.
- 3. Look at what incentives can be offered to landlords, tenancy sustainment training, consider the expansion of the Homeless Prevention Fund to include rent in advance, discuss with Housing Benefit DHP provision for deposits etc.
- 4. Develop the paperwork and procedures to operate the new service

February
2018

Action 2: Look at schemes to increase accommodation options for single people

1. Review consultation by Homeless Link for accommodation for single people
2. Review provision of the Elms contract
3. Review existing stock provision to see what developments could be made to make the best use of it i.e. conversions of bigger properties that are less in demand into HMO's that could house a number of single people.
4. Develop stronger working relationships with Den's Rent Aid and similar organisations to increase use of the service.
5. Development of Help to Rent scheme to increase accessibility to private sector housing in Dacorum.

7	<p>Development of Resettlement Support Service to provide on-going support to the most vulnerable and act as an early warning service for those housed who may experience difficulties in sustaining their accommodation.</p>	<p>Dacorum already has support in place for vulnerable tenants, through in-house teams and other organisations such as Living Stable Lives.</p> <p>As part of service development the Help to Rent scheme will be fully reviewed, in line with the development of Dacorum's Private Sector Housing Strategy to look at the scope of the service and how this can be potentially delivered to meet requirements.</p> <p>The Homeless Hub, once set up, will also be key in making sure the most vulnerable tenants have access to appropriate support.</p>		February 2018
8	<p>Making sure there is a holistic approach to assessing housing needs and homelessness with Children Services and Adult Social Care and ensure that where no duty is owed applicants are dealt with correctly under social services legislation supported by the Housing Service</p>	<p>Developing effective working protocols with Children Services aimed at preventing and relieving homelessness develop on JHP</p> <p>Actions to review the existing Joint Housing Protocol, which covers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 16 and 17 year olds 2. Care leavers 3. No Housing Duty cases <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dacorum Council already has existing protocols in place in relation to these areas. 2. A review will take place for all existing protocols in the light of operational experience and how it relates to the new legislation. 3. To look into what scope there is for a joint protocol for adults who may lack mental capacity or may trigger services under the Care Act as this currently doesn't exist in Dacorum. <p>Action 2: To develop a 'one council' accommodation finder service for individuals and households who are homeless and require help with obtaining accommodation regardless of which legislation duty applies (Children, Housing, No Recourse, Adult Care Legislative duties)</p> <p>Actions</p>		February 2018

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To scope out whether a one council accommodation finding service (for homeless individuals and families who may be owed a duty under children and families law and Adult social Care Law) is a feasible option in Dacorum. 2. If this is a feasible option, this should be done through the development of the Homeless Hub, agreements in place with all services and homeless champions and the possible sign up to the Homeless Prevention Charter 		
Page 40	<p>9</p> <p>Working with DCLG to develop a new P1E reporting framework</p>	<p>In order to fulfil the requirements of the HRA the current systems Dacorum use are not sufficient.</p> <p>We will continue to work with Civica and Dacorum's IT team to review the new Homelessness Module and reporting software to ensure that the systems meet the necessary requirements.</p> <p>These will include;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once the appropriate changes have been made, to test and report back on the new core reporting requirements for the new Prevention and Relief duties and how these will impact on the other reporting requirements of the P1E 2. The ability to generate one unique reference number for all applicants 3. The ability to convert all existing cases to having this reference number 4. Alert systems in place to notify advisers for when a case changes from Prevention to Relief Stage 		March 2018
10	<p>Anticipating and tackling problems that may undermine the successful implementation of the new prevention model</p> <p>Action 1) Tackling potential recruitment and retention of staff problem</p>	<p>Southwark are looking at piloting new schemes to avoid issues in this area, however as a borough outside of London, Dacorum may not face the same challenges.</p>		April/May 18

		<p>Dacorum is already recruiting new staff ready for the implementation of the Act, including Project Lead, another Homeless Prevention Officer, an additional Temporary Accommodation Officer, a Review Officer and a Triage Officer.</p> <p>A review of staffing will have to be done once the Act is implemented to ensure staffing levels are appropriate for the increased demand on the service.</p>		
11	<p>Anticipating and tackling problems that may undermine the successful implementation of the new prevention model.</p> <p>Action 2) Tackling any potential negative impact of introducing Universal Credit on landlord confidence to let properties</p>	<p>Universal Credit (UC) has been implemented in some of the village areas in Dacorum. This is due to be fully rolled out in September 2018 for all household groups</p> <p>Work will need to be done with Housing Benefit and the DWP to develop a framework and procedures to minimise the risk of non payment of benefit for applicants on or switching over to UC which will be on-going.</p> <p>Initial project group meeting to prepare for this scheduled for the 26th of October</p> <p>This work will need to extend to cover applicants in TA, Social Housing and in mainstream PRS tenancies in order to effectively prevent homelessness in the borough.</p> <p>This will be essential as the full implementation of Universal Credit possibly poses the biggest risk to the success of the new prevention focused legislation through the HRA.</p>		<p>Oct 17 for initial meetings and ongoing throughout the year until rollout completed</p>
12	<p>Ensuring as the service develops in is in line with service users expectations and shaped by their views.</p>	<p>Dacorum will conduct regular briefings on the developments of the HRA and what that means for the service and service users.</p> <p>Communications team will be involved to ensure that the developments are shared both throughout the service and with the service users.</p> <p>Will also liaise with the tenant involvement team to look at what scope there would be for service user feedback on the changes to the service.</p> <p>Reduction Act training will be arranged for all service areas affected by the new legislation.</p>		<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Initial training to be completed by Jan/Feb 18</p>

		<p>This will be prioritised to ensure the services that will be affected the most are trained first and then filtered out to the rest of the teams affected over the coming months.</p> <p>To consider whether appropriate to commission a 'mystery shopper' review of the service quality to provide a check of the service at 9 months and 18 months into the new model.</p>		
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Dacorum Borough Council

Scoping Housing First

March 2018

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Appx 1: Models of Housing First in England

Appx 2: Case Studies and Examples

Appx 3: Quotes from Service Users and Providers

Appx 4: Further reading and resources

Appx 5: Thanks to contributors

Scoping Housing First

Housing First as a suitable model for Dacorum

1. Introduction

In its Homelessness Strategy 2016-2020, 'Preventing and Tackling Homelessness', Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) has made a commitment to 'Develop a Housing First model to support people with complex needs experiencing homelessness into accommodation'. To inform the way it takes forward this commitment, the Council has commissioned Homeless Link to explore Housing First and carry out a local scoping exercise.

This study will define Housing First, looking at the background to its development and summarising the models being delivered in England. The study will also summarise any evaluations that are available, evidencing the effectiveness and identifying the specific circumstances of the models evaluated, including any limitations. In addition, the study will identify who typically benefits from each type of model, and whether the models are led by clients' needs or by the resources available.

Based on the local Dacorum context, two of the above models will be identified as being most appropriate and will be considered in more detail, with a view to delivery in Hemel Hempstead, where need is highest and where services are centred.

2. What is Housing First?

Housing First is an approach by which people with multiple needs who have faced persistent challenges in sustaining accommodation are supported by intensive case management and a personalised approach to live in their own, permanent home. A growing body of evidence demonstrates that those with histories of repeat or entrenched homelessness who may have a range of needs in the areas of mental health, drug and alcohol dependency, criminal justice, physical health and domestic violence and abuse can benefit. Data which is emerging from all countries suggests that 70-90% of Housing First service users do sustain their tenancies.¹

At the core of the psychology of Housing First is Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs'. By supporting client's needs in the areas of physiology, safety, belonging and esteem, he/she will be enabled to self-actualise. In addition, it draws on Attachment Theory, and provides a context for a long-term relationship based on trust in which the client can recover from childhood experiences which link to their experience of developing multiple needs (¹, above)

Traditionally, homelessness services have taken a 'treatment first' approach to housing, where a person is required to address his/her issues before they can be housed. This traditional pathway from the street or repeat homelessness to a settled life involves structured moves through stages, adhering to rules, with housing at the end.

¹ (2017) Housing First: Guidance for Commissioners, Homeless Link
<https://hfe.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Housing%20First%20Guidance%20for%20Commissioners.pdf>

In the UK, floating support and personalised approaches are used successfully to help people navigate ‘the system’ yet people with multiple needs still tend to slip through the gaps. Services may find it difficult to engage with them; services may have rules that they have to follow in order to have a roof over their head. People with needs in many areas may find it difficult to follow those rules; they may not be able to engage with services effectively, or at all. Their needs remain unmet and with no housing stability they are unable to break the cycle. Housing First offers them stability in one area of their lives and can demonstrate positive outcomes for people for whom services have not worked.

In a Housing First service, the service user only has to be willing to keep a tenancy; other than that, he/she needs to make no commitment to seek to address their other needs or to engage with other services.

The support is ongoing and long term; if a tenancy does end, and for whatever reason, the support continues to enable the client to sustain new accommodation. Housing First has also been used to prevent homelessness in cases where someone has repeat prison or hospital admissions and subsequent frequent discharges.

3. Housing First: background and original model

Housing First has its origins in New York in the 1990s, when ‘Pathways to Housing’ delivered a new approach for people who were chronically homeless and had severe and enduring mental health needs. Pioneered by psychiatrist Sam Tsemberis, and with core principles that everyone has a right to a home at its heart, the approach demonstrated positive outcomes for clients and the building of an evidence base. The approach spread widely across the United States and Canada and then into Australia and Europe, where Housing First is supported and promoted by FEANTSA (European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless). FEANTSA has produced a Housing First Guide for Europe² and has been key in establishing a Housing First Europe hub.

As international evidence indicates that Housing First does reduce long-term homelessness and recurrent rough sleeping for people with high support needs³, Housing First is also gaining momentum in the UK.

4. Housing First: the UK context

Currently, there is a strategic landscape which is supportive of Housing First. In November 2017, the Government declared its intention to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and to eliminate it by 2027. To this end, it has set up a Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel comprising of key names with expertise and interest in the field. It is significant that Peter Fredriksson, a homelessness advisor to the Finnish government, which has carried out a successful Housing First approach (see below) is included in this panel.

² (2016) <https://housingfirstguide.eu/website/>

³ (2015), Bretherton, J & Pleace, N, Housing First in England, Centre for Housing Policy, University of York.

In addition, the Government has pledged £28 million to fund Housing First pilots for people who are entrenched rough sleepers in the West Midlands, Greater Manchester and Liverpool.⁴

Interest in Housing First in the UK is, however, long-standing and early projects drawing on the model were included in a 2008 Shelter briefing paper⁵ which highlighted the need for national evidence on the effectiveness of Housing First. In 2010, research for Crisis by University of York⁶ called for further research into the effectiveness of the range of approaches for homeless people whose support needs were complex. The researchers referred to the development of new projects drawing on 'Housing First-ness', which were being outnumbered by specialist housing projects for the same group set up along transitional lines.

A Housing First project was set up in Glasgow in 2008, in Camden in 2010 and in 2012, nine Housing First pilots were established in England under Homeless Link's 'Homelessness Transition Fund'. In 2013 an Anglesey project was established which later led to Housing First being recommended in Welsh Government guidance. Homeless Link has received funding for three years from Comic Relief and Lankelly Chase for 'Housing First England', a project to promote, support and research Housing First, and the first project under this scheme was established in 2016. New Housing First projects have been established in every region, and more are being developed.

Homeless Link has built on principles defined by Tsemberis in the original schemes and in the FEANTSA guidance for Europe to develop a set of principles which underpin Housing First being delivered in this country:

- People have a right to a home
- Flexible support is provided for as long as it's needed
- Housing and support are separated
- Individuals have choice and control
- An active engagement approach is used
- The service is based on people's strengths, goals and aspirations
- A harm reduction approach is used

and recommends that these core principles are used as the foundation for establishing Housing First to achieve the best outcomes.

Housing First England's Guidance for Commissioners¹, above, cites concerns expressed by Pleace and Bretherton (2102, 2015) that if services don't adhere to the core philosophy there is a high risk of/that:

- A likelihood of reduced effectiveness and positive outcomes for individuals
- Failure due to low fidelity

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-lead-national-effort-to-end-rough-sleeping>

⁵ (2008) http://england.shelter.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/145853/GP_Briefing_Housing_First.pdf

⁶ (2010) Staircases, Elevators and Cycles of Change: Housing First and other Housing Models for Homeless People with Complex Support needs, University of York, Crisis
https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/20498/staircases_elevators_and_cycles_of_change_es2010.pdf

- may bring the model into question
- The approach cannot be implemented strategically, or in policy, if it is unclear what it is.

Amidst this growth, there are many projects which are badged as ‘Housing First’ which are not ‘Housing First’. They may be innovative and modernised supported housing models and they may be very effective in what they are trying to do for their target group. Range and diversity is needed in the sector as part of the spectrum of support that vulnerable adults need – but if they don’t adhere to all the principles of Housing First, then they are not Housing First.

5. Housing First: summary of models currently in place across England

In the US, and where there is a limited welfare state, the main delivery model is one of *Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)*, delivered by a multi-disciplinary team. There are a small number of UK examples, such as the one delivered by Turning Point in Glasgow (where an Occupational Therapist is part of the team).⁷

In England, so far the majority of Housing First services follow an *Intensive Case Management (ICM)* approach, with the Housing First team taking on a navigational role, supporting and enabling clients to access the other services they need – when the clients feel they are ready to do so – and this scoping study is focused on the ICM approach as being the most appropriate for Dacorum.

Housing First, based on a set of core principles yet growing and evolving out of individual circumstances, has a range of different models with many different elements. These have been summarised in tables in *Appx 1*, whilst *Appx 2* illuminates different aspects of the models with a range of case studies and examples.

6. Evaluation of Housing First

6.1. In 2015, Homeless Link’s Policy and Research Team explored the research and evidence base for Housing First in ‘Housing First’ or ‘Housing Led’?⁸

6.2. Amongst its conclusions were that Housing First has a lot to offer but critical thinking and research are necessary, as is holding on to the original Pathways ethos, and considering structural and cultural constraints when transferring it from one locality to another. Whilst there have been outstanding outcomes in terms of housing sustainability results in terms of recovery and social integration have been less promising.

In terms of target client groups, rough sleepers and people with multiple and complex needs are by far the largest. Also listed were women and young people aged 16-24, and ‘Other’.

⁷ (2013), Johnson, S Turning Point Scotland’s Housing First Project Evaluation, Turning Point Scotland & Heriot Watt University <http://www.turningpointscotland.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/TPS-Housing-First-Final-Report.pdf>

⁸ (2015), Homeless Link, ‘Housing First’ or ‘Housing Led’: The current picture of Housing First in England

Importantly, this paper identifies some of the barriers reported in establishing Housing First which may be helpful to consider when setting up a service:

Barriers to setting up a Housing First Service	
Securing buy-in from commissioners	10%
Securing buy-in from local providers	20%
Securing funding	27%
Securing suitable properties/accommodation	46%
Agreeing referral routes/access to the Housing First properties	14%
Developing a Housing First model which is appropriate for the local area and existing commissioning arrangements	20%
Involving appropriate partner agencies in providing wrap-around support	10%
Lack of appropriate method to evaluate outcomes of the model	12%
Other	17%

Fig 1: Source: Online Housing First survey, Homeless Link (59/61 respondents)¹⁰, above

- 6.3.** A 2015 evaluation, Housing First in England³, above, evaluated the nine Housing First services established under the Homelessness Transition Fund. The evaluation was carried out in 2014, and most services had been running for less than 3 years, some even less.

There were 143 service users across the nine services, and anonymised outcomes data was collected from 60 (42%) who reported that they had been homeless for an estimated 14 years. Of the total 143, 27% were women. Services filled in outcomes data templates for health, well-being, housing sustainment and social integration for every service user and focus groups were carried out with staff.

All projects had taken a case-management approach and all targeted those with ‘sustained and recurrent experience of homelessness who also had high and complex support needs’² above (p19). The two main groups housed included:

- those with sustained/repeat histories of living rough and
- those who had not been successfully rehoused following significant/repeated time in homelessness services.

All nine services operated in ways which were consistent with personalisation. Service users had maximum choice and control over the services they needed and they all took a strength/asset-based approach.

There was clear evidence of housing sustainment (see table). Across 5 services there was evidence of sustainment at 74% - and taking out one service, which had staged housing, was deemed not Housing First, the percentage across the other 8 was 83%.

In addition to concluding that Housing First is very effective in ending of long-term homelessness, other findings included:

- Improvements in mental and physical health
- Some evidence of reductions in use of drugs and alcohol though in-depth interviews showed an uneven pattern
- Positive evidence re neighbourhood social integration and rebuilding family links
- A reduction in anti-social behaviour

Though the above gains were not uniform and there was some possibility that mental and physical health deteriorated, it was conclusive, however, that there was no evidence of increases in drug or alcohol use or anti-social behaviour.

One service, delivered by Stonepillow in West Sussex, began with an initial stay in temporary accommodation in a shared house and required clients to move to go into a second stage was deemed not Housing First but a 'hybrid model'. Once in their long-term accommodation, the service did resemble Housing First, though it differed in one respect. None of the services required engagement with services other than the Housing First team except Stonepillow, which, though aligned with the others in its harm-minimisation approach to drugs and alcohol, did require acceptance of treatment for mental health problems.

Costs

Where international models of Housing First could have high initial capital costs (purpose-build housing/conversion etc – eg, Finland delivers on-site support in dedicated buildings), none of the England projects had high set up costs as they mostly used regular mechanisms for rented housing.

Services were calculated as costing between £26-£40 per hour.

Timescales

Timescales to house someone in a housing first property were wide ranging from 6 weeks (1), 12 weeks (2) to 24 weeks (5). Stonepillow was longer but was removed because, using interim temporary accommodation, it didn't fit the Housing First model.

- 6.4.** Evaluation of Housing First in this country is in its early stages and as yet there has been no long term evaluative work. Homeless Link is carrying out research into Housing First, exploring three elements. Currently, research is being undertaken into: i) understanding Housing First, focussing on: where funding comes from, the kind of accommodation used and organisational support and ii) the future funding of Housing First. Towards the end of 2018 they will begin looking into iii) the economic impact of Housing First. Reports from elements i) and ii) should be published in the spring of this year.

7. The local Dacorum context

This section has been based on desktop research and interviews with a range of key people from local agencies [Appx 3] in an attempt to understand the issues around people with multiple needs in Dacorum, especially in Hemel Hempstead and explore what might be possible.

7.1. Relevant Local Strategies

***Dacorum Borough Council Homelessness Strategy 2016-2020: 'Preventing and Tackling Homelessness'*⁹**

As stated in the Introduction, DBC has made a commitment to 'Develop a Housing First model to support people with complex needs experiencing homelessness into accommodation'.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA)¹⁰ and Health and Wellbeing Strategy¹¹

Hertfordshire's Homelessness JSNA last reviewed in 2016, covers needs in a range of areas and examines the health and wellbeing needs of people who are homeless and/or rough sleeping as well as families in temporary accommodation. The JSNA aims to improve health outcomes by improving access to primary health care, improving A&E and hospital discharge policies for homeless people, improving substance misuse treatment for homeless people and improving mental health treatment for homeless people.

⁹ (2016) Dacorum Borough Council Homelessness Strategy 2016-2020: 'Preventing and Tackling Homelessness'
<https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/housing/homelessness-strategy-2016-review---final.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

¹⁰ <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/jsna/hertfordshires-joint-strategic-needs-assessment.aspx>

¹¹ <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/about-the-council/partnerships/hertfordshire-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-2016-%E2%80%932020.pdf>

The Alcohol Harm and Drug Misuse JSNA highlights the levels and impact of alcohol harm and drug misuse.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2020 includes seeking to:

- strive to address the wider causes of poor mental health and support those who are experiencing mental health problems to recover or manage their condition.
- tackle homelessness and housing issues and their underlying causes
- reduce the harm caused to health by smoking, alcohol and drug use among working age adults.

7.2. Rough Sleeping and Multiple Needs in Dacorum

Dacorum has always had rough sleepers but numbers are not particularly high. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s (MHCLG, formerly Department of Communities and Local Government, DCLG) Annual Evaluation of Rough Sleeping gives a snapshot of numbers on a single, typical autumn night.¹²

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
7	4	7	9	7	4	6	7

Fig 2: MHCLG Rough Sleeping Statistics for Dacorum, 2010-2017

For 2017, the profile was 6 men and 1 woman, all UK nationals and all over 25. In speaking to a local service, 4 people of the 11-12 they knew to rough sleep in the Hemel Hempstead area would be considered to have multiple needs, and this was in line with DBC’s view that there were 4-5 people on the street who were not engaging with services. In addition, there are reportedly street sex workers with multiple needs.

DBC wishes to explore Housing First for a larger group than rough sleepers, to include those who are repeatedly homeless and who are caught in the ‘revolving door’.

Data provided by DENS, the provider of homelessness services in Dacorum, shows that 40 residents using their hostel services at The Elms between 2015-17 were deemed as having high needs. Of those, 4 were still at the Elms when the data was collected.

	Total number with ‘High’ needs	Number with ‘High’ needs no longer at the	Number leaving without a successful	%age of ‘High needs’ people no longer at the

¹² (2018) Rough Sleeping in England 2017, [Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2017)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2017>

	accessing The Elms	Elms	outcome	Elms leaving without a successful outcome
Male	28	25	7	28%
Female	12	11	3	27%
	40	36	10	28%

Fig 3: Source, DENS data

28 (70%) were male, 12 (30%) were female. Of that high needs cohort who had stayed at The Elms and whose stays were not current, 7 men (28%) and 3 women (27%) left without a successful outcome.

This indicates that whilst the majority of people whose needs were deemed high moved on to a positive outcome, there was a significant minority who had been recorded as leaving without one. It was not possible from that data to find out whether those with a positive outcome later returned, and needs data was not fully explored. This initial look at the data can only give a broad indication of the numbers of people who might possibly benefit from a Housing First approach.

7.3. Eligibility for Housing First

There are different approaches to deciding who would most benefit from Housing First, or who would be eligible. The Table 1 in Appx 1 identifies two commonly used methods which are used to select the cohort: a multi-agency panel or index-assessment approach. A multi-agency panel would need to include both voluntary sector and statutory agencies, and the names of those included would be likely to be those who were known to a range of services. In an index-assessment approach, the New Directions Team Assessment is one tool. It enables 'scoring' of individuals, and those with scores over a certain level would be included.

Dacorum already has a Multi-Agency Response Panel (MARP) which could be developed to take on this function. Whichever method is used, multi-agency partnerships and 'buy-in' are key in delivering Housing First.

7.4. Funding Housing First

As in Supported Housing, rents are paid for by Housing Benefit or the Housing Element of Universal Credit whilst any necessary Service Charge would be paid by the tenant. The tenant would also be responsible for paying for utilities and household bills.

In terms of the service itself, commissioners are currently working toward more integrated approaches. A further conversation with DBC will be had when the models to work up are agreed upon.

7.5. People with Lived Experience

Last but far from least is service user involvement. Personalised approaches are at the heart of Housing First and people with lived experience have a key role to play in the development of all services.

8. Current services and resources in Hemel Hempstead

A range of services were contacted to gain understanding of what is available in the local area. Need in Dacorum is concentrated in Hemel Hempstead and there is wide bank of services there which make it the logical place to deliver Housing First. Not all services were contacted and there may be others not listed.

It has been mentioned already that a spectrum of approaches is necessary to meet the supported housing needs of vulnerable people and Housing First is a possible additional option for a defined cohort for whom the range of other services are not effective.

DENS

DENS is the main provider of services for people who are homeless and currently delivers the following:

- The Elms - Emergency Accommodation in DBC's purpose-built, 44-bed hostel. DBC has an allocation of 21 units for use as Temporary Accommodation. The average stay is about 3 months.

The Elms does have rules which some people with multiple and complex needs may find it challenging to engage with. It replaced DENS former night shelter and although it is now a 24-hour service those staying there are expected to leave the premises between 11.00 – 3.00 and engage in activities elsewhere unless they are having a key-working session, are involved in a scheduled activity, or by prior arrangement.

People are also breathalysed and asked to blow below a certain agreed level (individually negotiated for people with alcohol dependency issues).

- Day Centre
The Day Centre is the first point of contact for rough sleepers and people in housing need and the main source of referrals to The Elms. It also links people in with services at The Hub.

Dacorum Rent Aid – provides Rent Deposits for PRS accommodation for single homeless people in Dacorum and links with local landlords.

- Rent Deposit Scheme

- The Hub

- Includes a day service and access to education, training and employment for people who are generally stable and are housed – invitation only but links in Rent Aid clients.
- Food Bank for single people and families
- Furniture warehouse

Herts Young Homeless

Herts Young Homeless housing support to young people aged 18- 24, runs Nightstop, a hosting service for up to 5 nights and It is also commissioned to contribute to the delivery of the Herts Complex Needs Service (see below), including two dual diagnosis workers.

The needs of young people, whilst they can be complex are generally not so entrenched as those over 25.

CGL/Spectrum

CGL/Spectrum deliver the commissioned prescribing drug and alcohol service and local appointments are offered at Jobcentre Plus where the service is co-located. There is a perception amongst local services that service users are uncomfortable accessing the service there on an appointment basis and would prefer to return to a drop-in service. (There is a drop-in service in Watford but t ravel costs, although reimbursed, are perceived as a barrier).

Druglink

Druglink offers substance misuse services which includes prevention, recovery and reintegration, offering pathways to employment via a social enterprise, 'Coffee Ethic'. They offer 2nd stage drug/alcohol abstinent-based supported housing in Hemel Hempstead and Luton for people who have been abstinent for 3 months.

Druglink also deliver Oxygen, staged housing project for people who are alcohol dependent in Welwyn Garden City. The project is a partnership with Welwyn Hatfield Homelessness Prevention and Housing Needs Team, Resolve (street homeless outreach team), Welwyn Hatfield CAB (outreach service). Stage 1: Oxygen Housing First 12 week Treatment, aiming to reduce drinking and with a psychologically-informed approach, plus a 6 months Assured Shorthold Tenancy in shared accommodation. People are still included if they don't engage with the aims of the programme though they are told that their drinking will be monitored; Stage 2: Referral to Welwyn Garden City Housing; Stage 3 Own council tenancy with 40 weeks Floating Support; Stage 4: Discharge and signposting to local services. Those who during Stage 1 feel able to address their alcohol issues via abstinence are diverted to Druglink's abstinence-based pathway.

Whilst this service is 'badged' as Housing First, it could be classed as staged accommodation. Like one of the services in the Evaluation of Housing First in England, this aspect could be considered 'hybrid'. Whilst Oxygen follows a harm-reduction approach for alcohol that does not extend to drugs and testing positive may lead to loss of the Stage 1 tenancy. In addition, whilst clients receive long-term (40 weeks) Floating Support, in Housing First, clients receive support as long as it is needed. The service provides an

innovative, personalised approach for a particular cohort of alcohol-dependent drinkers who would otherwise be excluded from supported housing. However, although it draws on Housing First and has some elements of it it does not follow all of the seven principles of Housing First which have been developed for England by Homeless Link.

Supporting Herts – Westminster Drug Project

Working closely with Druglink to support people in recovering from alcohol and drug dependency, Supporting Herts offers floating support, recovery beds and abstinence-based (3 months abstinence needed) shared accommodation in Dacorum and other Herts towns.

Herts Complex Needs Service: Turning Point/Herts Young Homeless/Herts Mind Network

Hertfordshire has a service commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council to work 1-1 in a holistic, personalised way to support people in achieving positive outcomes over a structured 12-16 week period. People can access the service more than once and there would be reflection on what had not worked for them. There are 13 Recovery Workers who work via outreach. The service is contracted as follows:

- Turning Point: Governance and Mental Health
- Herts Young Homeless: Mental Health and Substance Misuse
- Herts Mind Network: Mental Health
- Referral can be from any source, for example service user self-referral, carer, community agencies, Community Mental Health Team (CMHT), (Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust (HPFT)).

There is a high demand for this service.

Housing Link – Turning Point

Housing Link is a Turning Point service which provides tenancy support to people with mental health needs, substance misuse issues and learning disabilities. It focuses on those who 'slip through the net' of mainstream services.

South Hill Centre

The South Hill Centre is a faith-based charity with a room-hiring social enterprise attached to South Hill Church. With a person-centre philosophy, it has local community engagement as part of its mission, takes a community hub approach, has an outreach service to link with other agencies and has a range of partners, including:

- CGL/Spectrum, the prescribing drug and alcohol service
- DENS
- Druglink
- Herts Mind Network
- Groundwork UK
- Jobcentre Plus

- Shaw Trust (Work Programme)
- Osborne (Property maintenance)
- Police and Crime Commissioner (It receives funding from the Security and Safety Partnership)
- Dacorum Foodbank
- Education and training agencies

Computer training and other learning activities area on offer.

South Hill has an informal Friday afternoon service which uses volunteers, including volunteer mentors and roles for some people who are using their services. Centre users include people who are homeless.

The South Hill Centre's 'Cherished' service delivers support for women who have experienced abuse. They take client referrals from a range of agencies including statutory, such as Children's Services, Refuge, the mental health team and the hospital and deliver a 'Recovery Toolkit' offering a range of psychological support. Some users of the 'Cherished' service do have multiple needs.

Citizen's Advice Dacorum (CAD)

The CAD has its main service in Hemel Hempstead (Drop in x 4 mornings a week with afternoon appointments) but has an 'outreach' base in Berkhamsted and an advice line. The most vulnerable clients tend to approach via drop-in/phone call with support; they may have significant advice needs and are unable to self-help, and people with multiple needs can be difficult to advise. They may need support around appointments, papers, benefits issues and may have complex debt problems. Women are more likely to seek support than men. If resources were available a bespoke service could be established.

9. The Commissioning Landscape

Commissioners of some services were also contacted for this study.

People with needs in many areas are on the strategic agenda in many areas. A new strategic level Complex Needs Steering Group has been formed with the aim of more integrated commissioning for people with multiple needs.

Housing Related Support (HRS) commissioning, including Floating Support, is coming up for a review, and there will be a focus on a more integrated approach though as yet no timescale has been set. The Hertfordshire County Council Drug and Alcohol Provider contract will end in March 2019 and work on commissioning is about to begin

In terms of substance misuse, there is a new Government Drugs Strategy¹³ which aims to link into the new arrangements for funding Supported Housing, better equipping them to work more confidently with people with substance misuse needs. This will be taken into account when HRS services are restructured. Current proposals are for HRS to receive £250k funding reduction across Herts for 2019/20 over three areas: Complex Needs, Homelessness and Mental Health.

¹³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/628148/Drug_strategy_2017.PDF

There is an awareness that there is an increasing number of women who have needs in more than one area, especially with alcohol as a primary substance (about 60/40 m/f).

Herts County Council has previously commissioned Resolving Chaos to deliver 'You Can', a project for people with multiple needs, in Hertsmere and Three Rivers. Whilst this was not continued, outcomes have fed into the Complex Needs Steering Group and the learning will feed into any new project.

Commissioners need to work in an evidence-based way. They need cost-based models and case-studies to inform their thinking and decisions. (Government Outcomes, GoLab has a useful Unit Cost Database)¹⁴ There is a county-wide budget for integration. In a two-tier Local Authority system such as Hertfordshire where housing pathways are based within the districts, it could be helpful to ensure that commissioners have the fullest understanding of the Homelessness Reduction Act and emerging housing pathways.

10. Issues to be considered in the view of people contacted

A range of issues to be considered in setting up a Housing First project were mentioned by some of the people spoken to. These included:

- Loneliness and isolation – people are sometimes pulled back into homelessness services for social support. This needs to be addressed in some way.
- Flexible budgets would be very helpful
- Data and case studies
- Inappropriate referral
- Information sharing and sharing of assessment information
- Access to mental health services can be difficult and there are waiting lists
- Could have a positive impact on health/services eg A&E
- Housing quality
- Peer support

11. Two models for Dacorum

Access to suitable housing is one of the biggest challenges of Housing First. The following options have been considered:

- Decommissioned Sheltered Housing
- Access to DBC's own housing stock (currently, there is a bid to convert 5 x 3-bed maisonettes above shops into 1-2 bed Temporary Accommodation)
- 21 Local Authority units within The Elms
- Building new accommodation
- Private Rented Sector (PRS)
- Shared living accommodation at Berkhamsted with 1/2/3 bed mix

¹⁴ <https://golab.bsg.ox.ac.uk/resources/unit-cost-database/>

Housing model	Possible?	Benefits	Risks
Decommissioned Sheltered Housing	Yes, for single site approach. Could be a possibility for DBC where there are smaller dispersed units of accommodation that could be commissioned.	Reduced support travel costs. Peer support.	Clients would be living on same site as others with multiple needs.
Access to Dacorum's own housing stock	This could be an option for dispersed housing. DBC has been successful in a growth bid for conversion of such properties.	Most secure for client. High quality housing.	Possible isolation (though could be addressed in a range of ways)
21 Local Authority units within the Elms	Not recommended.	Support would be on-site. Peer support.	Given that the likely HF cohort has not thrived in The Elms previously, there may be continued challenges. Could be difficult to develop Housing First approach within the Hostel location and culture.
Building new accommodation	This would be an option for single site housing. New build development is underway for new units of temporary accommodation, which could be used for Housing First.	Most secure for client. High quality housing.	Initial investment costs would be high. Clients would be living on same site as others with multiple needs if on a single site. New temporary accommodation will be likely to have families on the same site which might not be appropriate for

			every client.
Private Rented Sector (PRS)	This option is not something that DBC considers viable at present.	<p>Increased choice and flexibility of location.</p> <p>Possibly less waiting time for housing.</p> <p>Clients would have ASTs.</p> <p>DENS has good landlord links and operates Dacorum Rent Aid.</p> <p>LHA does cover most of the rent for single-person properties in Dacorum.</p>	<p>The benefits are market-dependent. Dacorum is a high rent area, not far from London, and PRS property may not always be so easy to find.</p> <p>Local agencies have commented that it may be challenging to find affordable housing. There is a reported shortage of 1-bed self-contained accommodation.</p> <p>End of PRS tenancy is now one of the leading contributors to homelessness.</p> <p>Landlords can be reluctant to let to people on benefits. Universal Credit is on the horizon.</p> <p>Possible isolation (though could be addressed in a range of ways)</p>
Shared living accommodation at Berkhamsted with 1/2/3 bed mix	DBC has concerns around the locality and accessibility to vital services.	<p>Reduced isolation.</p> <p>A short distance away from Hemel Hempstead.</p>	<p>Difficult to access services.</p> <p>Transport costs for clients.</p> <p>Shared living might not work for everyone.</p>

Fig 4: Appraisal of options for housing

11.1. LHA Rates (PRS)

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates, the level at which Housing Benefit is paid, for Hemel Hempstead are within the South West Herts Broad Rental Market Area.

Shared Accommodation Rate	£78.50
1-Bed Rate (self-contained accommodation)	£156.00

Fig 5: Weekly Local Housing Allowance Rates for Hemel Hempstead, 1st April 2017-31st March 2018¹⁵

11.2. Support and costs of support

Whilst traditional support has a low ratio of one staff member per 20-40 people, the intensive support at the heart of Housing First necessitates a low staff:tenant ratio. Homeless Link's Principles recommend each staff member supporting between 5-7 tenants. (Homeless Link, Principles of Housing First). In addition, the recommendation is that support workers need to be experienced. As stated above, currently researched costs tend to be commissioned at between £26 and £40 per hour. (Evaluation of Housing First England, University of York³, above, and cited in Guidance for Commissioners,¹, above)

Dacorum currently has 4 support workers who provide support to homeless clients. Due to the additional skill set required, dedicated Housing First staff may need to be recruited.¹⁶ Based on the figures above, the calculation would look something like this (showing both the cost for one worker or scaled up for 4 workers):

	Hourly Rate	£ per worker/ 35 hour week	x 4 workers per week	x 4 workers per annum	Number of clients at 5-7 per staff member	Unit cost per client per week	Unit cost per client per annum
Lower Rate	£26	£910	£3,640	£189,280	20-28	£130 - £182	£6,760-£9,464
Upper Rate	£40	£1,400	£5,600	£291,200	20-28	£200 - £280	£10,400 - £14,560

Fig 6: Projected costs at hourly range for Housing First cited in 'Housing First in England'³, above

¹⁵ [https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/benefits/local-housing-allowance-rates-in-dacorum-for-april-2017-to-march-2018-\(pdf-25kb\).pdf?sfvrsn=0](https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/benefits/local-housing-allowance-rates-in-dacorum-for-april-2017-to-march-2018-(pdf-25kb).pdf?sfvrsn=0)

¹⁶ (2018), Housing First How To: Tips from Frontline Professionals. Skills and learning needs of Housing First workers, (Homeless Link) https://hfe.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Skills%20needed%20by%20Housing%20First%20workers_0.pdf

The above costs need to be considered against these examples of projected savings:

- *Scenario 1: Within a year, an individual has contact with an outreach team and then moves into a high support hostel before being resettled and provided with floating support. The cost savings of providing an individual with Housing First instead is estimated at £3048 –£4794.*
- *Scenario 2: An individual is housed and remains in a high intensity supported housing placement for 18 months. If instead they were offered Housing First, the estimated savings are £16,380-19,656.* ^{3,1 above}

11.3. Costings and upfront investment

Following DBC's feedback, three models seemed viable: Decommissioned Sheltered Housing, Dacorum's own housing stock above shops and new build Temporary Accommodation. The last option has not been considered further here. Housing First is meant to provide a permanent and stable home; psychologically, living on a site where others living there were only there for limited periods of time, and may also have vulnerabilities, may make it difficult for the client to feel secure, given their own histories. The two models to be considered as most viable, then, are Decommissioned Sheltered Housing and DBC's own housing stock above shops.

In terms of upfront investment, Dacorum already has the housing stock and its growth bid for conversion of above-shop units has been successful. However, this bid was for Temporary Accommodation and DBC will need to satisfy itself that it can be used for Housing First accommodation. If it can, then this cost will have been covered.

In terms of decommissioned sheltered housing owned by Hertfordshire County Council, the cost of commissioning units would need to be explored with them if this option is pursued. One model where single site decommissioned sheltered housing is being used for formerly homeless people is Webster Court, run by St Martin's Housing Trust, in Norwich. Whilst the majority of units are occupied by people who have an ongoing care need, including those needing dementia-friendly accommodation, and have Personal Budgets from Norfolk County Council, there are a small number of units which have been refurbished for independent living and were used for a Housing First pilot (this has not been assessed against the Principles of Housing First in England but it may be worth exploring in terms of the details of the conversion process and how costs were covered/managed).¹⁷

¹⁷ <https://stmartinshousing.org.uk/how-we-help/our-services/residential-care/webster-court/>

11.4. Support: type/frequency/cost and options for providing that support

The cost of support has already been discussed above at 11.2. DBC has been clear that it wants to provide Housing First for more than just those people who are rough sleeping, but at this stage the scale of the project is not clear.

As availability of housing is the biggest challenge to Housing First, as it takes Housing First forward, DBC will need to consider how it can best balance the number of clients who could potentially benefit from the approach and the number of units available before actual costings can be calculated. Even in a client needs-led approach, suitable housing, of course, needs to be available. The separation of housing and support is a key principle of Housing First in England. If DBC opts for a model where its own housing stock is used, or where it is/acting as landlord, then support workers need to be employed by a different agency.

In addition, DBC will need to balance the client needs-led approach with the resources available to pay for support at the rates outlined above. In Housing First, workers take a case-load of 5-7 people. As some people need less support, it may be possible to increase that. There may be, for example, a time when someone has progressed to just needing a weekly phone call, but the core client:staff ration should not exceed 5-7 for Housing First to be fully effective. Some agencies use a red-amber-green 'traffic light' system to manage this. The support worker skillset needed is laid out in Homeless Link's briefing referenced¹⁵ on page 22 above. Specialist training and supervision will be needed for workers to be effectively supported in their roles.

Ways of working, in how they differ from the traditional support environment and practices are listed in this document as:

- Housing First principles/models; how this differs to traditional therapy
- Solution focussed therapy
- Psychologically Informed Practice
- Trauma Informed Care
- Reflective practice
- Pre-engagement work
- Asset based approaches
- Motivational interviewing (MI)
- Cognitive behavioural therapies (CBT)
- Harm reduction techniques
- How to support people at different stages of their journey (stages of change/MI/CBT)
- Opportunities to shadow partner agencies and other Housing First services

11.5. Summary of the two models

	Advantages/ Benefits for Client	Disadvantages for Client	Advantages/ Benefits for DBC	Disadvantages/ Disbenefits for DBC
Model				
Decommissioned sheltered housing	<p>Rent could be set at a level covered by HB.</p> <p>Good quality housing.</p> <p>If single site:</p> <p>Peer support.</p> <p>Very easy for client to access support on site.</p> <p>Secure for length of lease from Herts County Council.</p>	<p>If single site:</p> <p>Living on the same site as others with multiple needs could prove challenging.</p> <p>If dispersed single units:</p> <p>Possible isolation.</p>	<p>Conversion costs are likely to be minimal as units are already single, self-contained accommodation.</p> <p>If single site:</p> <p>Travel costs would be minimised for support workers.</p> <p>If dispersed single units:</p> <p>Travel costs would need to be factored in.</p>	<p>DBC would need to lease/commission units from Herts County Council.</p> <p>If single site</p> <p>May be more units that DBC needs on site.</p> <p>If dispersed single units:</p> <p>DBC would need to consider who was being housed in neighbouring units if other groups, eg families etc, depending on needs of client.</p>
Dacorum's own housing stock above shops	<p>Rent levels would be covered by</p>	<p>Possible isolation.</p>	<p>DBC already owns stock.</p>	<p>DBC needs to carry out conversions.</p>

	HB. High quality housing. Very secure.	Above-shop units may be challenging for clients with mobility issues.	Conversion costs covered by Growth funding (DBC advised to check as funding gained for Temporary Accommodation).	
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Fig 7: Summary of two models

11.6. Possible client income streams

It is anticipated that most Housing First clients would be in receipt of ESA and that they are likely to be in the Support Group rather than the Work-Related Activity Group. In addition, some clients may be in receipt of PIP. However, clients' income streams will be very individual and variable according to their needs and may change. They will also depend on how wide the Housing First client base is – ie, according to the eligibility/ selection criteria. DBC would be advised to do some additional scoping of the current benefit income of potential clients for Housing First.

12. Conclusion

International research and an increasing body of evidence from Housing First projects in England point to Housing First as being beneficial for people who have been unable to maintain stable housing and are chronically homeless, either regularly sleeping rough or trapped in the revolving door of homelessness services who have needs in a range of areas and are facing multiple disadvantage. The Homelessness Reduction Act brings opportunities for new approaches and Housing First could provide an additional pathway for those who are the most excluded and least likely to thrive within existing services.

Of the two options summarised above for Dacorum, either would be a workable option for Housing First. There is much expertise and local resource to support the initiative. However, implementing Housing First in Dacorum will require a degree of 'cultural shift' at all levels, from frontline staff to strategic leads and those who 'hold the purse strings'.

Potentially, Housing First could save costs to the public purse by preventing inappropriate use of, and better engagement with, services. And a defined cohort would have, at the very least, a real opportunity to establish a home with the support they need to keep it, giving them a safe, secure base which may help them address the challenges they face.

Christine Spooner, March 2018

Models of Housing First in England

Drawing on Homeless Link's "Housing First: Guidance for Commissioners", "'Housing First' or 'Housing Led'"

Table 1 – Aspects of models of Housing First

		Examples	Benefits	Dis-benefits
Staffing and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important that ratio is 1 staff member per 5-7 clients • Dedicated manager/team leader beneficial (could also do case work) • Needs absence cover so clients are not unsupported • Teams should be flexible, creative and persistent 	<p>OxHoP Housing First: 1 fte project worker & 0.5 fte peer support workers per 6 people</p> <p>Foxton Centre, Preston: 2 ft and one pt staff member for 16 people</p> <p>Many services have 24/7 cover, usually via on-call.</p>	<p>24/7 cover can reassure neighbours, landlords and tenants.</p>	
Identification of cohort/Eligibility criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-agency approach • Caseload established via multi-agency discussion • Generally established group, eg task and targeting, complex needs panel, homelessness forum etc. but can also be project stakeholder panel or 			

	steering group			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Index-assessment approach • Using a numerical measure • New Directions Team Assessment¹⁸ is most used (commonly known as 'chaos index') to establish client vulnerability 	Threshold use this model.	Can be used as basis for discussion re referral.	
Delivery costs	<p>In addition to salaries at a more senior level than usual project support staff, costs may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff travel • Engagement activities (food, coffee etc) • Personal budgets for residents to buy essential items (eg, mobile phone, ID documents, items for home) • Rent deposits/bonds • Contingency funds, eg for damage to properties, emergency 	Camden Housing First has £1,500 personal budgets for year one, then £1,000 for the second year. As well as essential items, can be used for meaningful activities eg, laptop, camping, going to watch football etc. Can also be used for basic needs if benefits have	Clients can lead on the reasonable spending of the personal budget.	Can be costly if dispersed tenancies.

¹⁸ <http://www.meam.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/NDT-Assessment-process-summary-April-2008.pdf>

	<p>electricity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff supervision, training, support etc 	been stopped.		
Housing	<p>Should consider difference between 'accommodation' and a 'home'. Housing First aims to give clients a home. FEANTSA guidance identifies property fit for occupation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security of tenure • Privacy • Control over space • Physical safety and security • Affordability • Access to amenities • Choice of furnishings • Private kitchen and bathroom • Working lighting, heating and plumbing <p>Housing should not be in areas high in crime or where a vulnerable person might be bullied etc.</p>		Right location for the client can support their recovery.	Poor location can undermine recovery that Housing First seeks to encourage.
	Social Housing	49% of Housing First projects evaluated by	Most stable.	Housing First tenants do not move on,

		<p>HFE used social housing</p> <p>Cambridge MEAM Approach uses partnership with a RP for 'training flats' which provide permanent homes for the client.</p>	<p>Most affordable.</p> <p>Either direct via own Allocations Policy or through arrangement with local RPs.</p>	<p>therefore property need may increase over time.</p>
	<p>Private Rented Sector (PRS) Housing</p>	<p>51% of Housing First projects evaluated by Housing First England used PRS.</p> <p>In Preston, the City Council leased properties (from a supportive landlord with whom the council already had a relationship) for a Housing First pilot run with the Foxtan Centre. They paid 'up-front' and also furnished the properties, working with residents.</p>	<p>Increased choice and flexibility of location.</p> <p>Less waiting time for housing.</p>	<p>Can be hard to source in some areas.</p> <p>Rents may exceed LHA rates.</p> <p>Quality may be poorer than social housing.</p> <p>May be less stable than social housing. Landlords only offer ASTs, which are fixed term.</p> <p>Housing First staff may spend valuable support time in sourcing accommodation where there is no dedicated staff member for this.</p>
	<p>Dispersed Housing</p>		<p>Can support clients' wishes to move away from former associates.</p>	<p>Clients may feel isolated.</p>

	Shared Housing		Can help to combat isolation. Peer support.	Some clients may find sharing difficult.
	Single Site Housing		Support more easily delivered to clients. Can help to combat isolation. Peer support.	Clients may find it hard to make progress on the same site with others with similar multiple needs.
Funding Current funding sources for Housing First in England				
	Local Authority local grant	27%		
	Housing Related Support	31%		
	Social Services	4%		
	Fundraising/charitable sources (including Charitable Trust, fundraising and individual donations)	15%		
	Criminal justice	2%		
	Substance misuse – such as Drug Action Team	2%		
Other	20%			
Possible other funding sources	Social Investment	Use of social investment is growing generally.	Might be possible to use social investment to lever in capital to buy properties.	Feasibility for Housing First support as yet unclear Meeting the outcome/return requirements of

				investors could compromise capacity to adhere to Housing First principles.
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Table 2 - Adapted from 2017 Housing First in England, University of York/Homeless Link

Name of Service	Date started operating	Housing Association Assured Tenancy	Local Authority Secure Tenancy (Permanent)	Local Authority Probationary Tenancy	Private Rented Sector Assured Shorthold	Temp Accommodation	Number of service users @ November 2014	Prop of women @ November 2014	Max client load/worker	Dispersed/ single site etc	Tenancy Sustainment for one year or more
Bench Outreach Housing First (LB Lewisham)	Jan 2014	Yes ¹	No ²	No	Yes	Yes ³	15	27%	7.5	Dispersed	Not reported
Brighter Futures Housing First (Stoke-on-Trent) *Built on early experiments	2009*	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	25	28%	10	Dispersed	Not reported
CRI Housing First (Brighton)	Sept 2013	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes ³	8	25%	5	Dispersed	4
Changing Lives	Mar	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	34	41%	5	Both	30

Appx 1

(Newcastle-upon-Tyne)	2012										
SHP Housing First (Greater London Authority)	Feb 2012	Yes ⁴	No	No	No	No	17	29%	7	Dispersed	17
SHP Housing First (LB Redbridge)	Mar 2013	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	8	0%	10	Dispersed	
St Mungo's Broadway Housing First	Feb 2012	Yes ⁴	No	No	Yes	No	13	23%	5	Dispersed	8
Stonepillow Housing First (West Sussex)	Mar 2014	No	No	Yes	No	Yes ⁵	10	10%	10	Initial shared temporary, then dispersed	Removed from wider data as not deemed HF
Thames Reach Housing First (London)	Apr 2012	Yes ⁴	No	Yes	No	Yes ³	13	15%	5	Dispersed	Not reported

1) Also Housing First starter tenancies. 2) No service users were yet in a secure local authority tenancy, but some were in probationary tenancies which would become secure after one year. 3) While awaiting housing. 4) Two-year shorthold tenancies, renewable subject to ongoing support needs. 5) Residence in temporary accommodation was required prior to provision of an independent tenancy.

Case Studies and Examples

These are taken from Homeless Link's Guidance for Commissioners¹, above

CASE STUDY: Oxford City Council

Oxford City Council first started to think about the Housing First model back in 2012/13, as they had several entrenched rough sleepers for whom it was felt there was no suitable, available accommodation. The majority had been sleeping rough for more than 10 years and many had never accessed any accommodation at all. Some had accessed hostels for very short periods of time but had not been able to maintain their stay. The Council started conversations with a local service provider that was in a good position to take on a small Housing First project (5/6 units). The commissioner and provider worked in very close partnership to increase the chance of success and to ensure synergy with the Homelessness Strategy.

CASE STUDY: Brighton

During August and September 2014, a research programme about rough sleeping in the City, Picture the Change, conducted 29 in-depth interviews with people using homelessness services there. The research recommended continuing and expanding the local Housing First service (based on learnings from the pilot) to provide another housing option for the most vulnerable people straight from the street or emergency accommodation. The report can be found here:

www.homeless.org.uk/facts/our-research/picture-change-repeat-homelessness-in-

CASE STUDY: Camden Adult Pathway

As the number of bed spaces within the Local Authority Adult Pathway has tightened, the complexity of need dealt with by Pathway services has continued to increase. The London Borough of Camden responded by introducing new service models, such as Camden Housing First (commissioned for 20 people in 2014 after a successful three year pilot), and commissioning a review of Camden Adult Pathway in 2016. Consultation with frontline staff and service users on the Pathway articulated interest in the success of Housing First in housing people with complex needs, people who 'revolve' repeatedly through services, and as an alternative to hostels. It concluded that "Camden Housing First is a service model that works well for those who find the hostel environment a challenge and 'revolve' around the first two stages of the Pathway" and recommended the increase of capacity of the Camden Housing First service from 20 to 30.

Camden Adult Pathway Review Refresh Report 2015 identified 87 service users who were considered as suitable for referral into a Housing First service.

CASE STUDY: Eligibility criteria for Two Saints' Housing First Pilot

Between 2015 and 2017, Two Saints worked with entrenched rough sleepers through the Housing First model. Clients had to:

- ✓ Be known to local services
- ✓ Be Long Term Chronic Homeless - defined as street homeless for one year or more, or four or more episodes of homelessness within the last three years.
- ✓ Have multiple, complex needs and fall into three or more of the following categories:
 - Severe mental illness and mental health problems and or learning disability.
 - Problematic drug and alcohol use.
 - Poor physical health, including physical disability and limiting illness.
 - High rates of experience of contact with the criminal justice system.
- ✓ Poor, or no employment record or educational attainments.
- ✓ Poor social supports i.e. lack of friendships, a partner and contact with family members.
- ✓ Exhibiting challenging behaviour.
- ✓ Locally connected at the point of referral according to the definition utilised by the Local Authority and Rough Sleepers Teams.
- ✓ Entitled to UK benefits including Housing Benefit

CASE STUDY: The Foxton Centre

The Foxton Centre is provided with a grant from Preston City Council to provide services for rough sleepers including an assertive outreach response. The City Council and the Foxton Centre have worked for many years in partnership at addressing the needs for this vulnerable and complex client group.

The Council was successful in a bid to address housing needs of single people and took this opportunity to develop a Housing First approach in conjunction with the Foxton Centre. This was initially a pilot project and properties were sourced from the private sector. The private landlord is one the Council has worked with for many years and they fully embraced the project's aims and objectives.

During the pilot, the Council leased the properties and paid the agreed lease amount up-front. It also furnished the properties and involved the first residents in this process, giving them a sense of ownership.

CASE STUDY: Cambridge MEAM Housing First

Cambridgeshire became a Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) pilot area in 2011. A vulnerable street homeless person was taken onto the caseload and it was agreed that she would be offered a flat from a local registered provider. After a long period of homelessness, she signed an assured shorthold tenancy and moved directly from the street into her new home.

They called this provision a 'training flat' to distinguish it from the wider general needs housing entry criteria. Rather than having to achieve a certain priority status, and then bidding until successful, the individual is moved directly and supported to maintain a tenancy. They can remain in social housing as long as they are able to maintain the tenancy.

Instead of providing intensive case management, the primary method of support for this individual was to co-ordinate existing services to ensure that their needs were met. Where gaps in provision were identified, the MEAM co-ordinator encouraged service flexibility to bridge them. The approach was successful and has been offered to others on the MEAM caseload. ✓ Entitled to UK benefits including Housing Benefit.

Eligibility process

When a vacancy becomes available for a training flat, a candidate is selected by a multi-agency group consisting of local statutory and voluntary sector partners. The group, which oversees the operational work in Cambridgeshire, includes the Police, Probation, Mental Health, Housing, Adult Social Care, Domestic Violence, Drug & Alcohol, and accommodation providers. The group will discuss the following:

The accommodation should be:

- ✓ Available or about to become vacant
- ✓ Appropriate for the needs of the individual

The potential tenant should:

- ✓ Be willing to accept an appropriate package of support (this may be extremely light touch)
- ✓ Be vulnerably accommodated (rough sleeping, friend's floors or other temporary accommodation)
- ✓ Not ordinarily be considered for housing due to perceived risk
- ✓ Have demonstrated reasonable engagement with Cambridgeshire's MEAM service or other services (the threshold for this is quite low, answering the phone from time to time or taking some action towards being accommodated would be reasonable)
- ✓ Have found difficulty in negotiating the usual housing pathways. For example, they may have difficulty in managing shared accommodation, or providers may perceive the risk to be too great to accommodate.

The operational group selects the eligible individual whose need is highest. The offer is unconditional excepting the terms of a tenancy agreement. Additional conditions may be added, in consultation with the potential tenant, if all parties believe that it will enhance the offer and add to the support.

Coordinating the support

The individual is supported to identify the support they might need to help them maintain their tenancy. The MEAM co-ordinator, who is likely to have a good knowledge of the person already, will assemble all the services and hold a pre-sign up meeting to agree each agency's responsibilities and ensure a uniform approach. The prospective tenant will be involved with this process, which ensures all services commit to, and are accountable for, providing support.

continues

Monitoring success

Follow up meetings, either actual or virtual, take place periodically as required to review the following:

1. Has the individual benefitted from the accommodation?
2. Have they managed / maintained the tenancy?
3. Have there been any significant issues in the wider community?

The landlord of the training flat is involved in the process throughout. This gives them reassurance to accommodate other people with “higher needs”, as well as a direct point of contact if there are any issues that they need support with.

Longer term housing and support

After 6 months, the end of the assured shorthold period, a review of the individual's progress in the training flat takes place involving them, the MEAM co-ordinator, the landlord and other relevant members of their support network. Assuming they have managed and benefitted from the tenancy and not been an ‘unreasonable’ neighbour, the co-ordinator will begin to work on a greater permanence for the tenant. Usually this will involve an application to a City Council panel who have the ability to award an ‘A’ priority for permanent social housing.

On one occasion, the tenancy was converted to an assured tenancy and the person remained in the same location. This is not common due to the lack of availability of flats for this use locally, and it then took some time before another flat could be identified, meaning another person could not be offered the opportunity in the meantime. If it is felt that the tenant could benefit from a further period in the training flat, then the period can be extended to 12 months.

Even if a tenancy has been successful, the process of resettlement can take a significant time due to the demand on housing in the social sector, so it is not uncommon for tenants to still be in the flat up to two years later; longer on occasion. When a move to permanent social housing is secured, the support that has made the tenancy successful can still be accessed by the individual. This may include additional support that has been identified during the period in the training flat.

Personal budget

Camden Housing First offers generous personal budgets of £1,500 for the first year, and £1,000 for the second year that a person is engaged with their team. The personal budgets are used to purchase items for the tenant's new home, but can also be used for meaningful activities such as camping, buying a laptop or going to watch the football. In some cases, an individual may use their budget to meet their

Housing First steering groups

The establishment of strategic and operational steering groups are useful to develop clear policies and procedures for the service and wider partnership working. They can assist in defining the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, engage local champions of Housing First, gain community support and promote effective communication.

Brighton and Hove set up a Housing First steering group and agreed Terms of Reference for its pilot. The group was used to discuss potential referrals and to share information about the progress and any issues encountered with those supported by the project. Community Safety provided advice and guidance regarding anti-social behaviour and hate incidents. The group assisted in the risk assessment of those persons being considered for accommodation.

Oxford City Council and **Thurrock Council** have regular steering group meetings to discuss the progress of the Housing First project and any adjustments that need to be made. The steering group is considered essential and is made up of representatives from different sectors including substance misuse and mental health services, accommodation providers, rough sleeper outreach team and the police.

Bournemouth, Poole and Weymouth Partnership established a Housing First Operational & Referrals Group. Members include housing providers, the Rough Sleepers team, Drug & Alcohol Outreach Team, Community Safety, Commissioning Team, and Children's Services if applicable. Other partner agencies are invited to discuss individual cases if required. Meetings are every four weeks. The Housing First provider chairs the meetings.

The purpose of the group is:

- To process and assess referrals
- To bring referrals to the group identified by outside meetings and agencies i.e. Rough Sleepers Team and Drug & Alcohol Outreach Team will have input from hostels and hostel manager's meetings
- To monitor the progress of those supported by Housing First
- To assess what works and what has been less successful
- To feed strategic issues to the Housing First Steering Group
- To provide monitoring and client data to the Housing First Steering group

Funding

Thurrock Housing First pilot is jointly funded through Housing, Adult Social Care and Public Health. The contract is initially for a one year pilot scheme to support 5 service users. If successful, and subject to available funding, this could be extended in terms of time and/or number of service users.

Dispersed and shared housing

The Wallich Housing First service was introduced in April 2013, on the Isle of Anglesey, following an increase in rough sleeping and entrenched homelessness. A business case was presented to develop Housing First, instead of traditional hostel provision, to the Supporting People Planning Group that is responsible for the governance of the programme locally. The proposal was approved for an initial 12 months.

Initial provision was to support 12 individuals in dispersed site, private sector properties. The capacity of the service has since increased and currently the number stands at 20, for the same contractual price. All residents hold their own tenancy and the service will support people into shared housing if they express this preference.

91 individuals have accessed the service and are no longer receiving support. Of these, 78% are still maintaining their tenancies, of which 43% remain in the housing they were allocated when support ended.

A number of Housing First **teams in London** source dispersed flats through the Private Rented Sector. Due to the housing market, properties are often found in areas further away from central London. Residents report being happy to move away from previous associates but there are issues related to contact with existing support agencies and the time required by the team to travel to people.

The Foxton Centre in Preston has five houses that accommodate three people sharing in each, and is about to add a sixth. Two of the houses are for women only, with one specifically for street sex workers. There are also two flats - one for male and one for female tenants. The tenancies are not time limited.

Quotes from Housing First service users and providers, taken from Housing First in England,³ above

Some quotes from service users

I'm 43 now and I've never had my own place, so it's a first for me and I like it. Hopefully I don't mess up. I've got no intentions of getting in arrears.

Housing First service user (female) [p33]

I feel stable, because everywhere else I've been it was just like a flying visit sort of thing, if you know what I mean? Just go there, stay there for a little bit and move on to somewhere else, because I've never been in a place for a long time, and this is where I want... Well, something has kept me there, and I don't know what, but it must just be because I'm content.

Housing First service user (male) [p33]

Anything, like they said to me, 'Any problems you have in the house or whatever problem you have, just call us. We need to help you.' So, they'll be helping you. All the issues like housing benefit issues, rent issues, all these things they help me with; everything, yes.

Housing First service user (male) [p33]

They helped us with moving in; they helped us getting it furnished. [Housing First worker] still comes and sees me, to make sure I'm settling in okay and I haven't got any issues. Basically any problems that I have, I can go to them and they'll help me with them. I haven't had any problems as such but, as I say, they've helped me get it furnished and apply to some charities and things like that; they've helped to get me a few bits and bobs.

Housing First service user (male) [p33]

No, now I've got my own place I've got a lot of things to do, yes! I'm still decorating and I got my cooker, fridge and washing machine Monday, I've got all that brand new so I've got all that. I've got to plumb my washing machine in today. I've got an electric cooker and I thought it'd be easier than a gas because I thought, just plug it in, and it's not the case. You've got to get a cable, which doesn't come with it. So, yes, I'm learning new things, different things that I wasn't expecting.

Housing First service user (female) [p33]

Appx 3

It's clean and tidy. It's semi-secure. Because it's a tower block no-one really knows anybody, but everyone lives behind closed doors. It's like you don't know who's coming in, who's coming in with you; you've got no idea who's in the building.

Housing First service user (male) [p33]

Yes, he's with Housing First, he's one of the staff. He drops me anywhere. If I need to have like a hospital appointment or doctors or anything then he'll take me.

Housing First service user (female) [p36]

Yes, happy, healthier. Everybody, like people I work and the people at Housing First, when they saw me before, they now move after two weeks they look at me and say 'You look a different man.' Yes, it's different when you live by yourself and nobody to stress you out. You arrive at home; everything is clean like it's supposed to be. Living with other people it's so dirty, it's not good, then you stress, then you say something, they stress as well. So, I'm very happy.

Housing First service user (male) [p36]

It is now they've put me on the right medication, but when I ended up in the nut house last year, [Housing First service] were there for me and that. They helped me and came up and that, because they put me in a [psychiatric] hospital...but they was there all the time and that. They sorted my stuff out, what I needed and that.

Housing First service user (female) [p38]

Yes, I've never been so happy like I've been this last year because I've been doing the things on my own as well and people have been helping me a lot as well. I don't feel lonely with these people who've been helping me. I don't feel lonely because I can call them, they can call me.

Housing First service user (male) [p38]

I don't feel as anxious and it's more easy to talk. My eye contact still struggles but that's just with people. I've always had that problem. Yes, everything else, I'm doing all my day-to-day stuff.

Housing First service user (male) [p38]

Appx 3

Yes, I'm on a script now, I'm on methadone. I'm reducing every couple of months so hopefully about another year I should be off methadone.

Housing First service user (female) [p39]

It was just, as I say, I had problems with drugs and that and it has taken me a while to sort myself out. I'm happy that I'm on the right track now. As you see, I'm not dossing about, I've got my own flat, I'm all sorted. I'm going to a treatment centre and doing everything right.

Housing First service user (male) [p39]

Yes, fine, as I say I've been clean drugs wise for, is it four months? Yes, four months. If I've been here four months then that's the amount of time I've been clean. I voluntary go and do weekly tests with the addiction thing. Two reasons, one because I want to stay clear, and if I do a weekly test then it is impossible for me to use anything, because it would show up.

Housing First service user (male) [p39]

No, I've been doing it since I was 12 years old. I tried to give up loads of times but at least for me it's a bit difficult. I don't know how to explain anyway because when I smoke I feel normal. When I'm not stoned I don't feel okay, I don't enjoy doing the things I'm supposed to do... they want me to stop smoking, they don't come to me, 'You have to stop,' but they always make sure that they are there to help me and if I need help anytime, just tell them; they're there to help me.

Housing First service user (male) [p39]

No, I think they do a great job. Well, they have for me, personally. As I say, they've helped me no end. That's all I wanted was my own place and being settled and through their help I've got that... If you'd asked me that this time last year, everything was just chaotic and I wouldn't have thought a year down the line I'd be as settled as I am but I am, so it's all good, yes.

Housing First service user (male) [p46]

Some quotes from providers

Most definitely, but with I think, definitely, yes. I've seen it with our clients. Like I said they, when they do go in there isn't that pressure for them to engage, but I think of their own accord they will sort of start asking about sort of local services they can be linked in to and stuff, so yes.
Housing First service provider [p48]

Sometimes it is difficult to focus just solely on the tenancy when you can see there are so many other things that need fixing but I think with the ones that have been successful so far, things kind of slot into place once they get into this whole idea of housing and wanting to keep the home and wanting to keep it tidy and making appointments and going to the doctor's. It all starts to kind of click into place.
Housing First service provider [p48]

So if you could see the change, so if they're thinking like that because a lot of them have been on the streets for a long time, so when they're on the streets they get used to that way of life. So suddenly when they get into one of the Housing First projects, like their flats, and then their mind-set changes they don't want to go back to that rough sleeping. They're really, really happy to be in that flat.
Housing First service provider [p48]

*With the hostels it's very much getting them to engage, getting them housing ready within like such a short space of time, and I think with the client group I think pushing them to do something when they are not ready it doesn't work, it doesn't work. I think working with our clients on a more sort of informal, relaxed way, I found them to, even though our clients are supposed to be non-engagers, they've **never engaged with services**, we've got a good sort of like engagement, got them linked in with services. So, definitely, definitely the informal way of working with clients is, to me, it works. And I think probably the level of the support that we are able to offer them as well. I think in hostels it is a key worker once every two weeks, which lasts for about 20 minutes, if the client turns up. With our clients we can visit them on a daily basis. And yes, and we are kind of like fortunate to be able to sort of like go to appointments, go to other, we can take them out for coffee, if they want to go shopping we can*

take them shopping, and we've got that flexibility to be able to do that, and

Appx 3

the time to do that within the Housing First.

Housing First service provider (emphasis added) [p49]

I think there's also an element with regards to chaotic and entrenched street homeless people that they haven't actually got or been offered many opportunities...whereas what we're saying is, 'We will provide you an opportunity. The door is open' and then... 'What would you like? Where would you like to end up? It's your journey'. I think that's where we differ as well because we offer them an open door.

Housing First service provider [p49]

So we're talking 10, 15 years on the streets so, come on, these are people that most people walk past and don't think of how they're coping or how they've had to cope within the last whatever amount of years they've been out there. So I think it was a very good project to get funding for and helping people that obviously were very vulnerable in society...

Housing First service provider [p49]

Appx 4

Further reading and resources

There is a wide range of resources on the Housing First England website, which is continually updated: <https://hfe.homeless.org.uk/>
<http://resolving-chaos.org/what-we-do/case-studies>

Appx 5

This study was completed with the help of several local agencies. Thanks are due to:

Citizens Advice Dacorum

Dacorum Borough Council

DENS

Drug Link

Hertfordshire County Council

Herts Young Homeless

Homeless Link

South Hills Centre, Hemel Hempstead

Turning Point



Homeless Link

Homeless Link is a membership organisation with some 800 members, representing the homelessness and supported housing sectors. In 2016 Sitra merged with Homeless Link. We now operate as Homeless Link, with a specialist supported housing arm - the Supported Housing Alliance. Between us we have operated across the homelessness, housing, support and health & social care sectors for over 30 years. The merger creates an exciting opportunity for both organisations to work together even more closely to benefit members, customers, and partners and to ensure a stronger voice for our sectors. We offer training, consultancy and advice, leads on policy development and play a key representative role as the voice of the sectors in which we operate, contributing to emerging policy and promoting best practice.

We have a strong consultancy service for members, providing support to organisations from the largest to the smallest and across the spectrum of their activities from the operational - such as policies and procedures and rent setting and service review – right through to the strategic – commissioning, research and evaluation, strategy development, business planning, restructure and workforce development. As well as our active consultancy work, we are a leading training provider delivering both in-house and public courses nationwide and to a variety of customers including local authorities, large registered housing providers, third sector and charitable organisations and service user groups, across homelessness, housing, support, health & social care and criminal justice services.

We are recognised and consulted by Government departments and other bodies, including the Department of Communities & Local Government (DCLG), the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Department of Health (DH) and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), as representatives of the sector.

The linking of our policy & representative role with our detailed support for specific organisations makes for a strong combination. It means that our work on good practice and policy and procedural development draws on the strength of our large membership base and on our role in discussing and developing policy to respond to merging issues at a national level.

We carry out work both on a policy level and in providing specific support for individual organisations. We are a leading training provider, running both public programme and tailored in-house courses for clients around the country. We also provide a range of seminars and conferences on housing with support and care themes.



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Report for:	Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	13 June 2018
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Update on Voluntary and Community Sector Contract Delivery
Contact:	Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder Community & Regulatory Services Author/Responsible Officer(s) Matt Rawdon (Group Manager – People and Performance) and Alex Care (Community Partnerships Team Leader)
Purpose of report:	1. Update Members on the performance of the Voluntary Sector Contracts.
Recommendations	1. Members note the performance of the contracts and the added value they provide 2. Members promote the contracts / services to their residents
Period for post policy/project review	Formal quarterly meetings are held for each contract.
Corporate objectives:	A clean, safe and enjoyable environment Building strong and vibrant communities Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
Implications:	<u>Financial</u> This report has no financial implications for the Council
'Value for money' implications	<u>Value for money</u> This report shows the value for money that these contracts provide for both DBC and Dacorum residents.
Risk implications	N/A
Community Impact Assessment	A community Impact Assessment is reviewed annually

Health and safety Implications	None reported. Health and safety issues would be discussed as part of contract management
Consultees: (including feedback from Scrutiny where appropriate)	N/A
Background papers:	Attached are some example case studies Appendix 1 Living Stable Lives Case Studies Appendix 2 Reducing Social Isolation Case Studies Appendix 3 Promoting Healthy Relationships Case Studies
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	

Introduction:

Effective from April 2016 the Council implemented a new approach to working with the voluntary sector in response to changes in the market place and best practice.

After an extensive consultation and engagement process to inform the service specification of each contract, five contracts were tendered on the open market and awarded as follows; *Information, Advice and Advocacy* was awarded to Citizens Advice Dacorum; *Reducing Social Isolation for Older People* was awarded to Age UK Dacorum who work with Centre in the Park to deliver some of the outcomes; *Supporting the Voluntary Sector* was awarded to Community Action Dacorum who worked with the Volunteer Centre Dacorum to deliver certain outcomes; *Promoting Healthy Relationships* was awarded to a partnership between Relate London North West and Hertfordshire, and Mediation Herts; and *Living Stable Lives* was awarded to Westminster Drug Project .

Each contract has specific aims which they are trying to achieve, but the impact of the achievement of these aims has wider implications on the demands for statutory services; the preventative aspects of each of these contracts results in a reduction on demands for statutory services such as health, anti-social behaviour and homelessness.

The first year of each contract was used to gather baseline data against which performance indicators and targets could be set for the outcomes, where appropriate. As data started to be gathered the reporting framework needed to be adapted to ensure it was fit for purpose.

This report is intended to update Members of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the contracts' delivery and performance over the past full year of each contract. A summary and overview will be written about each contract, including performance data and targets, where relevant, concluding with comment on the impact of the contracts on Dacorum residents and the value for money the contracts deliver.

Contracts:

Information, Advice and Advocacy

Outcome	Management Information
Dacorum residents who access information, advice & advocacy are able to have their issues resolved satisfactorily and are able to resolve similar issues in the future.	As a result of the support from CAB, of those that responded to a client survey, 96% stated they had a better understanding of how things worked, enabling them to better support themselves in the future.
The information advice & advocacy offered has a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing.	Of those that responded to the survey, 96% reported an increase in their confidence and 87% reported an increase in their wellbeing.
The information, advice & advocacy offered improves people's financial circumstances	£2,659,197 of debt for Dacorum residents was written off and £633,251 of income was raised for Dacorum residents through support and advice regarding claiming relevant benefits.
Information advice & advocacy can be accessed by all local people	7472 clients have been helped over the last 12 months either over the phone or face to face.
People have access to further support that is relevant to resolving their issue	CAB are a signposting service as well as an advice service. They have good knowledge and connections of the local area. In addition, they also run a number of additional projects which provide added value to Dacorum residents. Over the last year they have run a crisis intervention project (supporting 313 residents), Public Health project (supporting 50 residents) and an Energy best deal project (supporting 68 residents).
People feel satisfied with the service they receive	87% stated improved wellbeing 96% stated improved confidence 96% stated improved understanding of how things worked.
Dacorum Tenants are supported to maintain their tenancy.	212 DBC tenants sought money advice which helped them to maintain their tenancy.

The contract started in July 2016. The first full year of the contract resolved over 15,300 separate issues for Dacorum residents and, as a result of utilising 40 volunteers, saved £78,500 worth of staff costs each quarter.

The most frequently identified issues have been debt, and benefit and tax credit support. Concerns around the roll out of Universal Credit have been discussed at contract monitoring meetings and in more depth at specific cross-organisation meetings set up to identify how different agencies can work together to minimise the impact. Additionally, teams from across DBC have also been meeting to discuss how we will work with residents and other agencies to minimise the impact.

The move to the Forum for CAB has been successful overall, with a much more visible presence for them and a more favourable working environment; feedback has been positive from both staff and volunteers.

The impact of supporting residents with financial worries or concerns cannot be underestimated. There is a clear link between stress regarding finances and debt, and mental health and wellbeing. As can be seen in the figures above, the improvement in residents' wellbeing having had financial issues resolved is critical. By supporting residents with the issues that they present, CAB is not only able to help resolve those issues, but are able to support residents to help themselves to avoid similar situations in the future. This results in less contact for DBC and other statutory services.

Living Stable Lives

This contract began in December 2016 and is targeted solely at private rented tenants and landlords in Dacorum. The overall aim of the contract is to keep tenants in their homes to prevent them from becoming homeless and then requiring statutory support from DBC. The nature of the contract means that the clients supported tend to be some of the most vulnerable.

The contract was awarded to an organisation outside of Dacorum, but one that was already working in Dacorum through a contract with Hertfordshire County Council. Unlike the other contracts, this contract needed to spend some time raising its profile, building relationships with organisations and clients, and making it clear who the service was aimed at and its desired outcomes.

This contract provides statistical information in order that it can be monitored to review and analyse its reach. However, due to the nature of the contract the outcomes are better evidenced in case studies and by using 'outcome stars'. These can be seen in appendix 1.

The contract has supported 88 clients to date, provides breakdown of resident using services from equalities perspec

Qualitative evidence and analysis can be challenging when dealing with vulnerable clients. The 'outcome star' is a way to identify, at a moment in time, how an individual is feeling about certain areas of their life at that moment. While they are a recognised evaluation method, it is worth noting that when completing the outcome star at the beginning of an intervention, the client may not be aware of how low their confidence or knowledge of a certain aspect of their life might really be; you don't know what you don't know.

As with the other contracts, the benefits of successful support can be experienced by others; neighbours, family and friends and a reduced demand on statutory services.

Reducing Social Isolation

Outcome	Management / Outcome Information
Older People and their carers have increased contact with others and feel less isolated. Older people and their carers will feel more integrated with the community.	This outcome is delivered through their Centre in the Park, and Tea and chat clubs. In total there have been 7208 annual users of the Centre in the Park service and 1175 users of their Tea and Chat Clubs.
Older people and their carers use technology to help with daily tasks.	Age UK Dacorum were running separate clubs for technology support. However, this did not prove to be a good use of resources associated with the contract and so these sessions were incorporated into their Tea and chat clubs which are better attended. This has resulted in more older people bringing along their devices and asking for specific help as and when they need it. Age UK Dacorum is working with other organisations to bid for additional funding to support partnership working in digital support for older people.
Older people and their carers are independent and maintain their dignity	This outcome is delivered through their Living Well Service which is evaluated through individual case studies of the residents the service supports. Example case studies have been attached to this report. Please see appendix 2
Older people and their carers have an improvement in their overall quality of life	This outcome is delivered through their Living Well Service which is evaluated through individual case studies of the residents the service supports. Example case studies have been attached to this report. Please see appendix 2
Older people and their carers live in warm, weather tight, safe and secure Council owned properties	This outcome is delivered through their Handyman service. Over the last year 526 jobs have been completed at 214 properties. Security and general repairs are the most common request for the handyman service.

The contract started in October 2016. This contract's aim is to support older people to feel less isolated which in turn will have an impact on demand for other services.

Although Management information can be provided for this contract to monitor delivery against the outcomes, this contract is a good example of where the impacts

of the contract can be more readily seen through the use of case studies (please see attached).

Some comments which have been received from service users include:

Mrs C said she was pleased to have made new local friends as her neighbours were out at work all day and she had been feeling lonely since moving but now can look forward to having company on a regular basis (relating to the Tea and Chat club)

"It's marvelous what you have done for me. All the piles of paperwork were getting on top of me and I just couldn't seem to make a start on sorting it by myself". (quote from a carer)

"I didn't realise how much I had let myself go. I didn't know where to turn. Until AUKD helped me I had no one to ask for help"

Again, the impact of this contract on the lives of Older People in Dacorum cannot be underestimated. The improvements to their mental and physical health and wellbeing as well as the practical support this contract provides, means that the demand on other services is reduced. Unnecessary health and other appointments are reduced, resulting in decreased costs and the freeing up of time for more vulnerable residents.

Supporting the Voluntary Sector

Outcome	
There is a raised awareness of the voluntary and community sector within Dacorum	260 different groups have signed up to receive monthly newsletters. 110 new groups joined the Support4Dacorum (S4D) service in 2017/18. Over the past year, S4D has registered a total of 18150 visits to their website and social media.
The voluntary and community sector have improved access for local people	There have been 13 separate events held at the Roundhouse in the centre of town, and since opening on a Saturday, as part of the contract, they have had a total of 712 visits to the Roundhouse. 1078 VCS groups have registered on their community database and they have 468 members of their new Community News Facebook group.
The voluntary and community sector use digital technology to deliver services	In addition to the figures above, 23 groups have joined the Digital online forum set up by S4D.
The Voluntary and community sector create strong partnerships and networks	S4D has made a number of business contacts (358) throughout the year and has started relationships with 83 VCOs.
The voluntary and community sector access a variety of funding opportunities	There are 62 members of their online fundraising forum and 19 groups engaged with S4Ds check and advice service regarding funding applications. 60 groups have reported that they have had success when using online funding platforms promoted by S4D, and 44

	organisations have contact S4D for information about local funding opportunities.
The voluntary and community sector can fill and sustain volunteering vacancies	Over the last year there have been 94 new volunteering opportunities, 463 registered as being interested in volunteering, and 380 individual volunteering advice sessions delivered. S4D has made 614 referrals to organisations and a total of 252 volunteering vacancies have been filled. The new volunteering system and training sessions have been accessed by 105 different organisations.
Volunteer brokerage increases and improves the quantity, quality and diversity of volunteering locally	The role the Volunteer Centre / Roundhouse opening on a Saturday has been pivotal in registering 71 young people interested in volunteering and 13 individuals accessing the service on a Saturday morning, specifically for volunteering opportunities.

This contract started in December 2016. Originally awarded to Community Action Dacorum (CAD) who sub-contracted to the Volunteer Centre Dacorum for the volunteering specific outcomes, the contract is now wholly delivered by CAD who have taken on the responsibilities of the Volunteer Centre. The contract aims to support the voluntary and community sector in Dacorum to be robust and sustainable. This in turn ensures that much needed services remain available to Dacorum residents and prevents unnecessary strain on statutory services.

Opening on a Saturday has had a positive impact, encouraging those who would not usually seek opportunities, to seek them. For instance, verbal feedback from one resident stated that had they not been open on a Saturday he would not have volunteered, although he had been looking to volunteer for a while, He works during the week and so was unable to come to the centre during the week. Despite the demand and financial benefits from increasing online enquiries and traffic, the services sector still demands face to face interaction, and opening on a Saturday opens up volunteering to audiences that may not otherwise have volunteered.

Further anecdotal feedback from community groups has found the Saturday morning sessions offered to them to promote themselves at the Roundhouse to be a great way to raise their profile.

Giving the ever changing and ongoing austerity that particularly the public and voluntary sectors are facing, volunteering continues to play such a critical role in delivering services to vulnerable residents.

Promoting Healthy relationships

Outcome	
Dacorum residents are able to better manage issues affecting their relationships with others	An annual average of 97% of those seen by Mediation Herts feel more able to deal with difficulties affecting their relationship.

Dacorum residents feel better able to cope with future issues that affect their relationship with others	An annual average of 97% of those seen by Mediation Herts feel better able to cope with future issues.
Dacorum Borough Council tenants can better maintain and manage relationships with others	83 clients that Mediation Herts saw over the last year were DBC tenants. Of those, 95% stated that they feel they can better maintain and manage their relationships.

This contract began in December 2016 and is aimed at ensuring Dacorum residents have good relationships across all aspects of their lives. Although there is management information to evidence the success of the delivery of this contract, impacts seen through case studies can show that the affects on the individuals are far wider and deeper than statistics can indicate. Please see appendix 3.

The two organisations have come together to work in partnership to ensure that each of the outcomes in the contract can be delivered. The two services offer slightly different forms of support, and as such support different needs of Dacorum residents. Mediation Herts focuses on dispute resolution between two or more parties (and have seen the majority of their cases relating to family issues or issues within the community), whereas Relate London North West and Herts focuses on relationship counselling.

The benefit of this joint service to Dacorum residents isn't solely in the resolution of the issue presented. The impact of the skills learnt and developed through these sessions equip individuals to deal with issues better in the future.

Where neighbourly disputes (the most common community issue) have escalated to such an extent that they impact negatively on the immediate community, the support given to the individuals is also of great benefit to them. There can be a reduction in anti-social behaviour, improving the quality of life for all involved and reducing the demand on relevant statutory services.

Conclusions:

The move to a contractual style relationship with the Voluntary and Community Sector in Dacorum has overall been successful. The services that are now being delivered through the contracts have been specifically designed to respond to our residents needs and tackling community issues. The Council can be assured that our money is making a real difference to our residents and that the contracts are playing a key role in the preventative agenda

Also by having contractual relationships with the voluntary sector, it enables the Council to have a more robust way of ensuring outcomes are being achieved.

Appendix 1

Living Stable Lives Case Studies

Case Study 1

In December 2017, a landlord who rented out private rented accommodation in Flamstead phoned Dacorum Council for advice on issues she had with a tenant. She was informed about Living Stable Lives and told to contact them for support. After speaking to the Living Stable Lives team, the referral was processed. The tenant was 47 years old and during his initial assessment the following issues were identified:

- The white goods in the property were not working properly.
- Security was an issue as the locks on several doors were not secure.
- The tenant had rent arrears of £150.
- The windows were not able to open fully.
- The boiler not working properly.
- The landlord and Tennant were not communicating effectively

As result of the outstanding repairs, the tenant had taken upon himself to withhold the rent payments.

After visiting the property and collecting all the relevant information, the Living Stable Lives worker decided the best course of action was to email both parties outlining their responsibilities. As a result, of this action the landlord agreed to correct some of the repairs.

There was a further problem with the plumber that had been employed to undertake the work. The contractor was unreliable, and the tenants had on several occasions had to wait in for him, but he never showed up. The Living Stable Lives worker spoke to the landlord and in was agreed for the tenant's wasted time he would be compensated the amount of rent arrears that was owing.

However, as the landlord took longer than expected to undertake the other repairs, this caused further disgruntlement from the tenant. The Living Stable Lives worker continued to email the landlord and eventually she agreed to complete all the repairs.

How does this case study evidence the key performance indicators?

- Outcome 1 states Dacorum tenants can manage and maintain their homes in line with their tenancy agreement and as a result feel more secure in their accommodation. Following the work of Living Stable Lives, the tenant has stated that he feels more comfortable in his accommodation and would like to live there for the foreseeable future.
- Outcome 3 states Dacorum tenants have a positive relationship with their landlords and can resolve issues effectively. This is evidenced by the fact the tenant and the landlord now communicate effectively and openly, as and when the need arises.

Case Study 2

In June 2017, a tenant attended the South Hill Centre and self referred himself to Living Stable Lives. The main issues he needed support with were:

- He had received a Section 6A letter stating the landlord wished to evict him.
- He had rent arrears of £2,000.

As the property was rented through the Help to Rent scheme, the Living Stable Lives team did not negotiate directly with landlord, as that part of work was undertaken by council staff.

The flat was a two-bedroom property as the tenant had originally been living there with his child. However, two years ago the child went to live with his mother and since then the tenant had only been receiving benefit equivalent to a one-bedroom property.

At first the tenant was reluctant to make any payments towards his rent arrears. However, in October 2017, by working jointly with the Help to Rent team, Living Stable Lives managed to secure a back payment of housing benefit. This was paid directly to the landlord, so he therefore delayed taking any further action until January 2018 when he decided to go to court to ask for an eviction. During this time, the tenant attended one of the workshops organised by Living Stable Lives. At the workshop he was informed about the importance of managing payments to all creditors when in debt. Immediately following the workshop, the tenant attended Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and sought further advice.

Because of the appointment with CAB it transpired that the tenant had total debts amounting to £8,000 to different creditors and he was then assisted in formulating a debt management plan to manage all his debts. Furthermore, the Living Stable Lives Housing and Support Worker help to secure a discretionary housing payment for the tenant. However, this lasted just three months. The landlord delayed acting, but in January 2018 he decided to issue the papers to the court the court granted possession to the landlord.

In addition to working with the tenant, the Housing and Support worker also worked closely with Dacorum's Housing Prevention team. The plan was that they would assist him in finding the tenant alternative one bedroom private rented flat. However, the tenant was unable to raise the money for the deposit, so this plan never materialised.

During March it has become apparent that the tenant is about to lose his home. However, Living Stable Lives has been in contact with other local housing providers to see what else is available in the area. The team have liaised with the DENS and have supported him in applying for a room. Normally the DENS will not take people with such an amount of debt. However, by undertaking effective joint work with the DENS, it seems very likely that he will be able to access accommodation through this route.

The original accommodation that the tenant was in was never financially sustainable. However, by moving into a room that is more affordable, he is better able to manage his finances. In addition, the tenant has continued to be able to see his son a regular basis and

his debt payments have been put on a manageable footing which will avoid any legal action being taken against him in the future.

How does this case study evidence the key performance indicators?

Outcome 2 states

Dacorum tenants have accomplished life skills and use them to maintain a stable lifestyle. This case links into what is stated in this outcome, by the fact the tenant has achieved the skill of how to be more responsible around his finances and better manager his affairs.

Outcome 5 states

Dacorum tenants can recognise when they are struggling to cope of experiencing significant change and access a clear pathway of support to prevent crisis. In this case, the tenant sought the advice of both LSL and Citizens Advice Bureau, to manage his situation better. By listening to their advice, he has been able to cope with the change and had a clear pathway of support.

Appendix 2

Reducing Social Isolation Case Studies

Case study LW Mar 18

Mrs H (13337)

1.ABOUT THE PERSON	Help Notes
<p>Mrs H is now 70 and is retired. She lives alone in DBC supported housing, having moved from London last summer to be nearer her only son so he could support her more easily. However, this meant that she is removed from all her friends. She is registered as partially sighted. She suffers from depression which affects her inclination to engage in social events and to try new things.</p>	<p>1. Please say a little about the person. If an older person –what is their age? Do they live alone? How is their general wellbeing? Do they have family/friends nearby? If a volunteer – what is their background? Are they a student? Working? Retired?</p>
<p>2. WHAT WAS THE SITUATION</p>	
<p>I met Mrs H when she came along to a Tea and Chat event in her scheme lounge. The following month I knocked for her when she hadn't turned up – she said she was feeling unwell with a bad stomach – she thought this was because she couldn't cook any proper food – as she had no oven, she was only able to heat up ready meals in the microwave. I thought I could help with applying for a grant for a table top cooker (no space in the kitchenette for a full size cooker), but things were not that simple as I was concerned that a wall cupboard over the worktop may be a hazard to any cooker underneath. Eventually her SHO referred her to HCC and her kitchen was inspected.</p>	<p>2. Describe how the person came to be involved in the project or service you are writing about. If an older person - what challenge or issue were they facing and how was this affecting their life? If a volunteer – why did they want to become involved?</p>
<p>3. WHAT DID AGE UK DACORUM DO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?</p>	
<p>I applied for a grant for a table top cooker for her before Christmas – unfortunately, due to funding issues we are still waiting for a decision. Similarly there has been no movement yet on kitchen adaptations. Throughout this time I have been in contact with Mrs H and been encouraging her to attend the “blind club” and local coffee mornings.</p>	<p>3. Describe what action Age UK Dacorum / the volunteer took to help. About the service/project.</p>
<p>4. WHAT OUTCOMES WERE ACHIEVED?</p>	
<p>Our involvement with Mrs H is ongoing – at least until the decision is reached on the grant for the cooker – as she now also has support from HertsHelp and I referred her to Herts Vision Loss. Due to the difficulty in getting her to attend a club, she is on the waiting list for one of our befrienders.</p>	<p>4. What was the outcome of the service/project for the older person? If writing about a volunteer – how has becoming involved in volunteering changed their life?</p>
<p>5. QUOTES/FEEDBACK</p>	
<p>“I'm ever do grateful for all you do for me. You're really helpful”. “Sometimes I am feeling all alone then I hear from you and I know how nice and helpful you all are”. “When I call the office</p>	<p>5. Please provide a direct quote from the older person or volunteer in this case study. What did they say about the service, and</p>

and talk to Anne she is really nice to me". "I just didn't know what to do about my broken MonoMouse (text magnifier)" "I really miss cooking in my oven but I just can't afford to buy a new one".

the difference this has made to them?

1.ABOUT THE PERSON	Help Notes
<p>Mrs C was a widowed lady of 74 when she moved into a supported housing bungalow in Hemel Hempstead, having downsized from a house in a neighboring town. She lives alone with her dog; having no family close by and her friends were left behind in her previous area.</p>	<p>1. Please say a little about the person. If an older person –what is their age? Do they live alone? How is their general wellbeing? Do they have family/friends nearby? If a volunteer – what is their background? Are they a student? Working? Retired?</p>
2. WHAT WAS THE SITUATION	<p>2. Describe how the person came to be involved in the project or service you are writing about. If an older person - what challenge or issue were they facing and how was this affecting their life? If a volunteer – why did they want to become involved?</p>
<p>Mrs C contacted us to ask about attending an active living club but could only leave her dog alone for a maximum of 4 hours and the day of the nearest club was not convenient for her, so our information officer suggested that she try a T&C Club. She noted that Mrs C was chatty but not confident about going by herself, might need a bit of encouragement. She was happy to walk but didn't know the area very well. Luckily she know where I meant when I explained how to get to her nearest venue.</p>	<p>3. Describe what action Age UK Dacorum / the volunteer took to help. About the service/project.</p>
3. WHAT DID AGE UK DACORUM DO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?	<p>4. What was the outcome of the service/project for the older person? If writing about a volunteer – how has becoming involved in volunteering changed their life?</p>
<p>She didn't attend the next event despite me leaving a message, then there was a while before the next scheduled event due to various reasons but I persevered with calling her and encouraging her to come along.</p> <p>She eventually attended and was made to feel welcome at hthe supported housing scheme. She has continued to attend regularly.</p>	<p>5. Please provide a direct quote from the older person or volunteer in this case study. What did they say about the service, and the difference this has made to them?</p>
4. WHAT OUTCOMES WERE ACHIEVED?	
<p>The tenants at this scheme(which is physically closer to Mrs C's home than the base for her SHO so she can walk to it) are aa particularly active group and invited Mrs C to join in with their other self-organized activities. This has opened up a whole new local friendship group to her with regular easily accessible social activities, leading to her settling in and feeling at home in her new environment.</p>	

5. QUOTES/FEEDBACK	
Mrs C said she was pleased to have made new local friends as her neighbours were out at work all day and she had been feeling lonely since moving but now can look forward to having company on a regular basis.	

Case study LW 10269 Mr JH

1.ABOUT THE PERSON	Help Notes
<p>Mr H is a retired gentleman, then aged 83, who lived on his own in the same 3 bedroomed semi that he moved into in 1953 when it was new. He originally moved in with his parents and has never moved out or married so was all alone since his dad died in the 90s. He is not in touch with his nephew (closest surviving family). He also has no landline or mobile phone and kept in touch only by sporadic letter with an old army friend who lives in Wales. Nothing much was known about his home life to start with as he referred himself to his local Active Living Club and walked there each week. He is a diabetic and also has heart problems along with long term chronic pain and infection in his left leg.</p>	<p>1. Please say a little about the person. If an older person –what is their age? Do they live alone? How is their general wellbeing? Do they have family/friends nearby? If a volunteer – what is their background? Are they a student? Working? Retired?</p> <p>2. Describe how the person came to be involved in the project or service you are writing about. If an older person - what challenge or issue were they facing and how was this affecting their life? If a volunteer – why did they want to become involved?</p> <p>3. Describe what action Age UK Dacorum / the volunteer took to help. About the service/project.</p> <p>4. What was the outcome of the service/project for the older person? If writing about a volunteer – how has becoming involved in volunteering changed their life?</p> <p>5. Please provide a direct quote from the older person or volunteer in this case study. What did they say about the service, and the difference this has</p>
2. WHAT WAS THE SITUATION	
<p>Mr H was taken ill at the club and when he was taken home by the staff member it was apparent when entering his home that he was not coping well or looking after himself properly. The house was in a very dirty, mouse-infested, cluttered and unhealthy state. We have since discovered that he had not let DBC carry out any improvements or maintenance to the property for many years and evidently had not done any housework or tidying himself. There were clear signs of a hoarding disorder. The club Co Coordinator was helping in his own time but there was simply too much to be done, so I took Mr H on as a Living well client.</p>	
3. WHAT DID AGE UK DACORUM DO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?	
<p>We were able to get Mr H the immediate medical help he needed to help him with his conditions and liaise with DBC to get him into respite care following his discharge from hospital. Then we have helped with arranging community meals, a change of GP Surgery, assistance in managing his bank account, and eventually introducing a cleaner / homehelp for when his level of care package was reduced.</p>	
4. WHAT OUTCOMES WERE ACHIEVED?	
<p>Our involvement with Mr H is ongoing. We worked with DBC to get him rehoused in the Supported Housing Scheme of his choice. We also helped him to de-clutter and supported him</p>	

with re-locating his possessions, getting new items as required, packing and moving and unpacking. We take him to his various medical appointments, and we are slowly helping him to sort out his complicated financial and personal affairs.

made to them?

5. QUOTES/FEEDBACK

“I didn’t realise how much I had let myself go. I didn’t know where to turn. Until AUKD helped me I had no one to ask for help”

Appendix 3

Promoting Healthy Relationships Case Studies

Case Study – Mediation Herts

Managing Future Issues

This case involved neighbours with issues over noise and parking. One party took exception to the other's complaints, making the other party feel intimidated.

The mediators visited each party to discuss their issues which followed in an agreement to attend a joint meeting.

Due to the feeling of intimidation, one party would only agree to attend the joint meeting if it could be conducted as a shuttle mediation.

The meeting culminated with an agreement. The parties would take measures to manage the noise and to use consideration when parking in the future. The parties agreed to use more respectful behaviour towards each other.

Following the meeting, the parties now felt able to discuss any issues that may arise in the future face to face.

Case Study Mediation Herts

Signposting

This case involved a father and his young teenage son. The parents were separated.

Due to the conflict in their relationship, the son had refused to have any contact with his father which appeared to be having an effect on the child's schooling and attendance.

When the mediator went to visit the parties individually, it came to light that the main reason for the conflict was that domestic violence was involved.

The son had allegedly been dragged down the stairs, had his arm twisted behind his back (which had only just healed after being broken) and was locked out in the garden by his father. The child's mother was unaware of this.

We had to make a safeguarding referral in respect of this and the social services investigated the incidents.

Nevertheless, the parties resolved to attend to a joint meeting and an agreement was reached.

Case Study Mediation Herts

Agreement

This case involved a dispute over a boiler that had been fitted by party 2. The parties were uncle and niece.

The parties were visited by the mediators and discussed their issues. A joint meeting was arranged.

The parties reached an agreement at the end of the meeting where party 2 offered a refund for the work to be paid in monthly instalments.

Case summary – Relate

Don and Jen (details changed to protect anonymity)

Don and Jen, self-referred for couple counselling to Relate as they were struggling to deal with their new 'sober relationship' since Don had given up drinking alcohol eighteen months ago.

In the initial session we explored how Don had become aware of the damage his drinking had caused his relationship. He spoke with remorse of having being verbally aggressive towards Jen when he was drunk. Jen spoke of how she had chosen to keep quiet and had avoided speaking to Don when he was drunk. The couple had lived in the shadow of Don's drinking and now that he was sober, they had been left without any idea as to what a 'normal' relationship looked like.

In line with our protocols and procedures regarding potential DV, the couple were seen individually in order to thoroughly assess the balance of power in the relationship. After the interviews and consultations with a supervisor, it was agreed that the work could continue with careful monitoring.

The aim of the work was agreed and in subsequent sessions was the theme of our conversations: what was different now and what else needed to be different in order to get their relationship 'back on track'.

For example – and with a focus on communication styles – neither told each other when they were anxious or upset. Don would notice physical changes in Jen, and ask her what was wrong, and he expressed his guilt and shame that he had made Jen act in this way. However, as Jen was also unable to communicate how she felt, especially when Don was drunk, the cyclical pattern continued.

Conversations were facilitated around how Don's reliance upon drink had evolved. These revealed that the more pressure he felt to be the 'perfect' husband- the more of a failure he felt and how he had used alcohol to comfort himself. The more he did this – the more distance grew between them as Jen would then withdraw from him – thus increasing Don's sense of failure.

We worked together on making nonverbal communication verbal within the couple relationship and discussed how this could create a different atmosphere – one where feelings were expressed and were real and not imagined – or 'mind reading' as we came to call it in session.

This was a pivotal moment in the work as we identified that this process provided a bridge from the old relationship to the new one they were now jointly creating. Further exploration revealed how they had both held unrealistic expectations of each other and of their relationship, some of which had been based upon looking at social networking sites and images.

The work also looked at what had been lost by the couple when the drinking ceased as Don had initially felt unsupported without drink to turn to when he felt stressed or anxious and Jen had lost being the decision maker in the relationship when Don was not sober enough to make choices.

The couple were invited to review their progress at the last session and they both spoke of how counselling had changed the path of their relationship. With an improved communication style and realistic viewpoints, both felt more understood, supported and equipped in their relationship and hopeful that Don could maintain a healthier relationship with alcohol.

Agenda Item 11



Report for:	Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	13th June 2018
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Consultation on Sport & Physical Activity Strategy
Contact:	Councillor Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder Community & Regulatory Services Author/Responsible Officer- Matt Rawdon (Group Manager – People) and Ben Russell (Community Partnerships Officer)
Purpose of report:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To update Members of the consultation process and feedback on the strategy. To seek feedback from the committee on the strategy
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> That Members note the report and provide feedback on the draft sports and activity strategy
Period for post policy/project review	The strategy is due to go live in 2018. A review should be undertaken on the progress at the end of 2019.
Corporate objectives:	Building strong and vibrant communities
Implications:	<u>Financial</u>
'Value for money' implications	<p>There is no direct financial impact on the council in developing this strategy. However, there is likely to be some financial backing required to support its delivery over the next four years.</p> <p><u>Value for money</u></p> <p>The development and implementation of a Sport & Physical Activity Strategy will provide countless benefits to the community. The Government Strategy, Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation, identifies five key outcomes that sport and physical activity can deliver, they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved physical wellbeing - Improved mental wellbeing - Individual development - Social and community development - Economic development

Risk implications	n/a
Community Impact Assessment	To be carried out at final draft stage.
Health and safety Implications	n/a
Consultees:	<p>Internal Colleague Consultation- Wednesday 19th April 2017-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Partnerships • Neighbourhood Action • Innovation and improvement • Environmental Sustainability • Parks and Open Spaces • Planning <p>Sport Organisation Consultation- Monday 7th April 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport England • Herts Sports Partnership • Dacorum Sports Network <p>Club Consultation- Tuesday 10th October 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hemel Bowls Club • Berkhamsted Raiders FC • Bovingdon & Flaunden Tennis • Berkhamsted Hockey • Hemel Swimming Club • Shelley's Netball Club • Berkhamsted Tennis • Tring Swimming club • Tring Rugby • Tring Tornadoes • Hemel Stags • Hemel Storm • Berkhamsted Swimming club • Dacorum & Tring Athletics • Hemel Youth FC • Hemel Aces FC • Herts Baseball • Tring Tennis club <p>Public Consultation- Thursday 19th April 2018- Friday 18th May 2018</p>

	<p>Stakeholder Consultation- Thursday 19th April 2018- Friday 18th May 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herts Sports Partnership (HSP) • Dacorum Sports Network (DSN) • Sport England • Public Health • Everyone Active • Dacorum Sports Trust (DST) • Sports Clubs
Background papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1- Draft Sport & Physical Strategy • Appendix 2- Full consultation response from residents • Sport England Strategy • HSP Strategic Plan
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herts Sports Partnership (HSP) • Dacorum Sports Network (DSN) • Dacorum Sports Trust (DST)

1 Executive Summary:

This paper explains to Members the consultation process that was carried out and details in full the consultation responses we received.

The strategy has been largely well received, and we feel with some adjustments post this consultation process, the Council will be able to deliver a robust strategy which is supported by our partners and the residents of Dacorum, whilst making a difference to people's lives.

2 Introduction

This strategy will focus on a vision for sports and physical activity across Dacorum and it will look at the role of our sports clubs, the Council and its partners can play to improve provision and opportunity for all residents.

To ensure the strategy is representative of the borough, a number of consultations have been conducted with relevant stakeholders.

This purpose of this report will provide information surrounding the consultation process and the feedback received to date.

3 Consultation (Prior to developing the draft strategy)

3.1 Wednesday 19th April 2017- Internal Colleague Consultation

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss how different departments could support the development and delivery of a Sport & Physical Activity Strategy. We also looked at identifying what they viewed as priority areas of work within their particular field that could benefit from such a strategy. In order to ensure we had a good mix of people we invited a number of colleagues from different departments, such as:

- Community Partnerships
- Neighbourhood Action
- Innovation and improvement
- Environmental Sustainability
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Planning

3.2 Monday 7th April 2017- Sport Organisation Consultation (Sport England, Herts Sports Partnership, Dacorum Sports Network)

The purpose of this meeting was to gain an understanding of what is important to these organisations and what their key areas for delivery are, in particular any priorities they may have for sports / physical activity in Dacorum. We also wanted to know what they would expect to see in a Sports & Physical Activity Strategy.

They agreed that there is significant importance in ensuring that this is adopted council wide, and that an implementation board should be created, including both internal and external stakeholders to monitor the delivery of the strategy. The table below provides some further feedback from this consultation on the strategy aims and objectives.

Key Area	Priorities
Asset/ Facility transfer and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using existing strategies to support i.e. Asset Transfer Policies (improving infrastructure) • Strategy that will get visible buy in from entire council (i.e planning) to have more positive attitude towards sport • Improve quality of existing facilities
Partnership Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a greater sense of collaboration between the council and external partners • Work closely with voluntary and community sector organisations to support workforce development • Work closely with local leisure operators
Club Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with clubs to gain better understanding of their needs and priorities which the council can support • Must articulate with clubs that this strategy will support their outcomes • Facilitate satellite clubs
Tackling Inactivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce levels of inactivity by engaging with underrepresented groups • Use behaviour change theories • Promote active travel
Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Implementation Board monitor and evaluate the ongoing delivery of this strategy

3.3 Tuesday 10th October 2017- Club Consultation

The purpose of this consultation was to further understand the needs and priorities of local sports clubs, and what the council can do to better support them going forwards. After publicising the consultation on the Dacorum Sports Network website we had a total of 18 clubs and two DSN representatives attend. These clubs were:

- Hemel Bowls Club
- Berkhamsted Raiders FC
- Bovington & Flaunden Tennis
- Berkhamsted Hockey
- Hemel Swimming Club
- Shelley's Netball Club
- Berkhamsted Tennis
- Tring Swimming club
- Tring Rugby
- Tring Tornados
- Hemel Stags
- Hemel Storm
- Berkhamsted Swimming club
- Dacorum & Tring Athletics
- Hemel Youth FC
- Hemel Aces FC
- Herts Baseball
- Tring Tennis club

For the purpose of this workshop we had drafted some priorities from previous consultation to get feedback from the clubs on whether they feel they are reflective of what they require. The priorities were summarised as follows:

- Increase membership
- Retention of existing members
- Be more financially sustainable
- Facility development and security of use and costs
- Ownership of assets (asset transfer from DBC to club)

Further to this, we agreed that there was a need for the council to work more closely with clubs going forward, and as such had committed to meeting with clubs to discuss their more specific requirements which would then feed into the Action Plan that sits alongside the strategy.

4 Consultation on the Draft Strategy

Following initial consultation (as set out above) a draft strategy was developed. This was then shared for further consultation with a number of stakeholders. From this consultation we hoped to gain feedback and insight which could be used to further develop the strategy to ensure it is truly representative of Dacorum as a whole.

4.1 Public Consultation- Thursday 19th April 2018- Friday 18th May 2018

The public consultation was open for 4 weeks (extended from 2 weeks) and was open for residents of Dacorum to review and feedback on the Sports & Physical Activity Strategy. In total we received 58 responses via our online portal, all of which can be viewed in Appendix 2.

From the responses received, we are able to see some common themes:

- Investment into existing facilities to improve quality and increase provision
- Look at better utilising parks and open spaces to promote activity
- Increase working with sports clubs particularly in terms of their growth and development
- Ensure activities are kept inclusive and accessible to all
- Ensure relevant partners are consulted and worked with in delivering this strategy (DST)
- Collaboration to provide better overall value for money and deliver wider value to the community

We are also able to see some common areas of concern:

- Concerns over the recent change in leisure provider within Dacorum and how the contract will be managed
- Lack of contribution to the strategy by sport organisations
- Lack of commitment to invest in particular facilities with high need (Berkhamsted Leisure Centre)
- Doesn't show who is responsible for developing the action plan and delivering this strategy
- No budget assigned to the delivery of the strategy
- No evidence that the council has made provision for the increase in local population

Within these responses, there are a large number of very useful insights and suggestions which we will incorporate in to the strategy. However, there are some elements that the strategy cannot encompass, although we will, where possible, give relevant feedback to appropriate teams within the council.

4.2 Stakeholder Consultation- Thursday 19th April 2018- Friday 18th May 2018

To ensure that the strategy is reflective of our stakeholders views and priorities, we sought further feedback from them on the document. We shared the draft with a number of partners:

- Herts Sports Partnership (HSP)
- Dacorum Sports Network (DSN)
- Sport England
- Public Health
- Everyone Active
- Dacorum Sports Trust (DST)
- Sports Clubs

Some key feedback from stakeholders can be seen below:

Stakeholder	Comments
HSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I commend your council on its work in formulating this draft strategy. It is particularly pleasing that it incorporates physical activity as well as sport • We believe that your vision for the strategy is a laudable one which reflects key national agendas and brings an opportunity for cross departmental working within your council, to greatly enhance the local offer.

	<p>Moreover, it will provide a very important reference point for engagement with external agencies, including Public Health and the CCGs, and as such, from our experience you will need to ensure that the contents are both adequately referenced and evidence based.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve health of Dacorum residents, we would recommend including the Health Map by Barton and Grant (2006) which is an adapted version of Whitehead and Dahlgren Social determinants of health model. • We would recommend using/referencing the Hertfordshire Evaluation Framework to measure the impact of projects. • How will you measure the impact of the commitments?
DSN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment 1- To deliver this needs funding and there is no mention of this coming from DBC except that you will seek funding from elsewhere. This approach will not be enough or sustainable • More emphasis needs to be on the role that the Action Plan will play, as the strategy is light on detail • Include more images that relate to physical activity- currently very sport focussed • We welcome that there will be a sport and physical activity board and hope that DSN will be included on that board to represent community sports clubs in Dacorum
Sport England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity Profile of Dacorum – while key data has been included in this section, as the source is unclear can I suggest that you check against the recent data prepared by the Herts Sports Partnership which provides a range of up-to-date data profiles on sport/activity/health at district level in Herts including SE’s Active Lives data • Commitments – would suggest checking the commitments and proposals for achieving them against Government/SE policy to ensure consistency where possible although I have no issues with the proposals • Commitment 3 – while reference is made to the Outdoor Facilities Study (2014), no reference is made to the subsequent DBC Playing Pitch Strategy & Action Plan (2015) which I attach. I would expect the sport and physical activity strategy to be aligned to the delivery of the PPS strategy. • Commitment 3 – while acknowledging the recent DBC Strategic Review of sport and leisure facilities, the Council lacks an indoor sports facility strategy based on a detailed assessment of needs (like the outdoor sport study and strategy). This is currently a weakness in making the case for new development to make provision for indoor sport through s.106 as developers will challenge the lack of evidence

Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No response
Everyone Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategy will work very well alongside the leisure contract aims and objectives • It sets out nicely Dacorum current position but not to where we want to see the borough in 2022. Success measures and targets should be included, i.e. example grow active participation from 64.6% to 68%
DST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamentally I think there is an opportunity to understand and recognise how much investment the facilities need and / or realise that the only way to achieve your desired outcomes are to look at brand new facilities perhaps in a more accessible area of Dacorum • I appreciate it is a strategy rather than a detailed document to support what I assume would be some specific KPI's although I think there is an opportunity to be more specific about 'Dacorum' issues. • Lastly I would add a series of targets / measures of success to show how you know that the strategy has achieved what it set out to do within the Borough
Sports Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A need for some definitions as this has a significant influence on how the strategy is interpreted. For example, what is meant by in-active and active? • Netball- new document inflates the actual position of playable courts (many don't even meet NGB Category 1 standard let alone Category 2 for safe community use). It bears no relation to what is useable by the community – i.e. central venues required for competition. Both actual and playable courts should be shown. • Bowls- Commitment No 3 lists the facilities held by DBC but omits to mention the Bowling Green facilities located in Gadebridge Park which are both managed by DBC • Hockey- need to understand the need for astro turf pitches for hockey as it cannot be played on 3G surfaces

5 Conclusion

It is evident that there is a need and desire for a Sport & Physical Activity Strategy within Dacorum. The consultation received so far has provided the Council with some useful insight on where we can improve the strategy so that it is representative of the Council, local residents, sports clubs and key partners.

Views from Members of the Housing and Communities overview and scrutiny committee will assist with further development of this strategy.



Sport and Physical Activity Strategy

2018 - 2022

Introduction

Sport and physical activity can have a hugely positive impact on individuals and local communities.

It can improve physical health including lower risks of heart disease and strokes and up to a 50% lower risk of type 2 diabetes. It also improves mental health, helping to lowering the risk of depression and reductions in cognitive decline. Taking part in sport and physical activity can also boost productivity and support increase learning.

However, while there are clear benefits to sports and physical activity, we also recognise that a coordinated and strategic approach to sports provision is needed if we are going to ensure that all residents can benefit from its affects.

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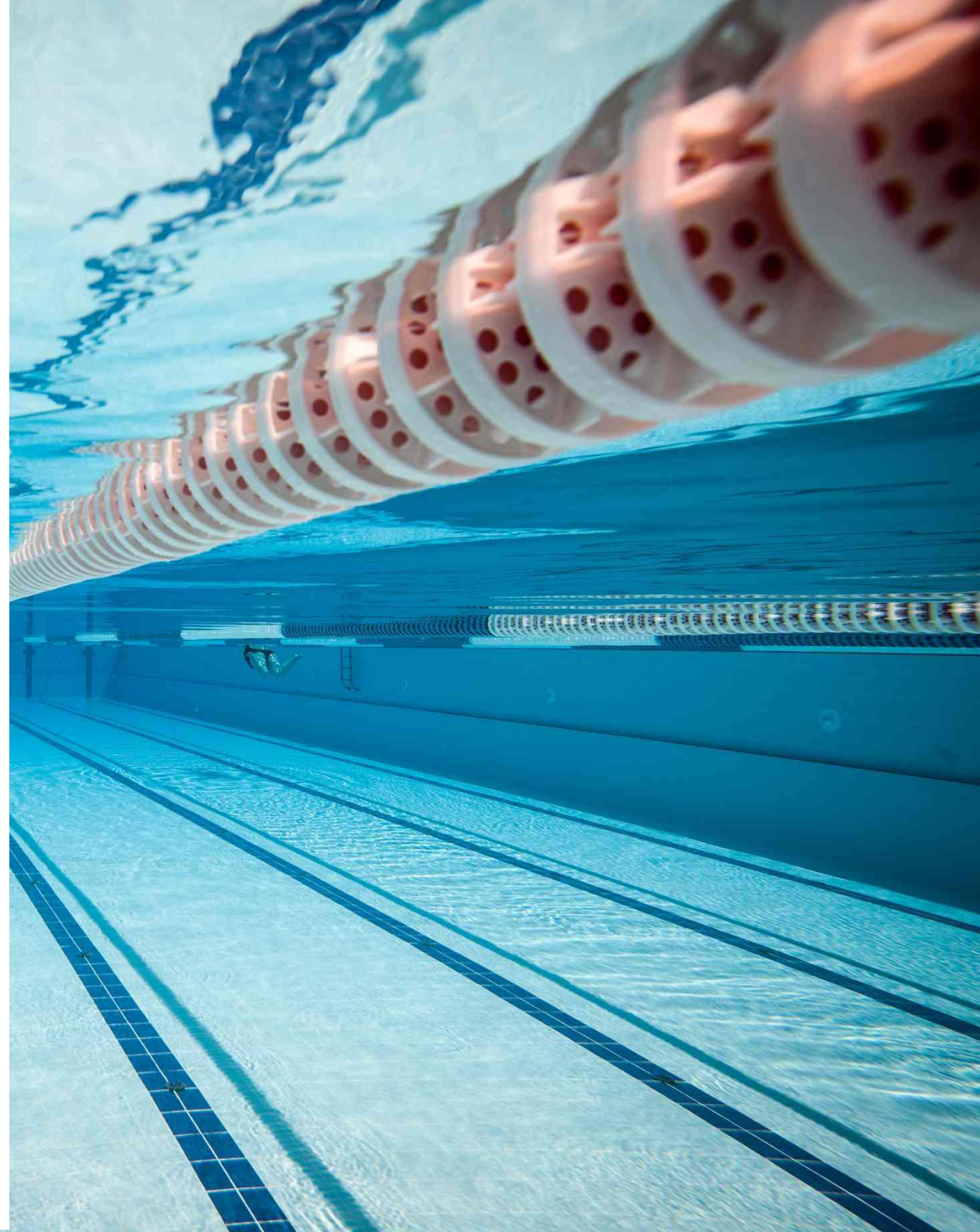
Councils have an important leadership role to play, bringing schools, voluntary sport clubs, National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs), health and the private sector together to forge partnerships, unblock barriers to participation and improve the local sport delivery

The Case for a Sports and Physical Activity Strategy

Research shows that there are huge benefits linked with being physically active which can have a profound effect on improving a person's physical and mental health. It can also improve the quality of life and generate improvements in learning, employment and in reducing social isolation.

That is why we have developed a new strategy and vision which will ensure we have the approach, infrastructure and commitment to deliver a lasting legacy for sports and physical activity across Dacorum.

This strategy gives us a clear vision that everyone can work towards, it set out our priorities and allows us to target resources where we will see the most impact. It helps us to engage with stakeholders and develop a more detailed action plan that will sit alongside this strategy. In developing this strategy we hope to see a greater investment in sport and physical activity across the borough which will in turn lead to a healthier and happier community.



The Activity Profile of Dacorum

Existing Activity

Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) is hugely supportive of local sport. There are over 200 sports clubs within Dacorum, which offer residents a whole host of different opportunities to take part and be active, as well as a number of high profile clubs within Dacorum including Hemel Storm (Basketball), Hemel Stags (Rugby League) and Sapphire Gymnastics. Our sport and leisure facilities that are run by Everyone Active have around 4,800 members, a number that continues to grow with the ever-expanding activities and opportunities they present for the community.

Deprivation, Demographics and Health Issues

Dacorum is made up of 25 wards and is considered a largely rural and affluent area. However, Dacorum does have pockets of deprivation with 6 of its wards being graded at a 4 or below on the index of multiple deprivation, and within these wards average life expectancy is 7.2 years lower for men and 5.6 years lower for women. Cardiovascular disease in people aged between 30 and 74 in Dacorum is statistically significantly higher than the averages for England and Hertfordshire and around 50,000 residents aged 50 and above suffer from a long-term health problem or disability.

Physical Infrastructure

Within Dacorum we are fortunate enough to have a number of high quality facilities to support sport and physical activity provision within the borough. We have two large leisure centres which boast 7 swimming pools, as well as an athletics track, all of which are run by Everyone Active. We also boast a golf course, an indoor extreme sport centre and a ski slope, as well as an abundance of green parks and open spaces, all of which provide opportunity to be active within Dacorum.



Currently **21.2%** of Dacorum population is inactive which is less than the national average (**25.7%**) but more than two other districts within Hertfordshire (Three Rivers - **20.5%** and St Albans - **18.3%**)



The Vision

Provide opportunities for residents to take part in activities that create healthier, more active communities and will shape and promote a positive attitude towards sport and physical and emotional wellbeing.

Our vision is for Dacorum to be a leader in the promotion of health and wellbeing with physical activity being a key driver in creating healthier, more active communities.

In Dacorum, reducing physical inactivity amongst residents is about more than just getting people moving. It is about helping and supporting them to live an active lifestyle and fulfilling their potential.

We want to create an environment that allows our residents to be physically active as part of their daily routine, removing barriers and stigmas attached to sport and physical activity.

We aim to deliver a high quality-sporting environment, which enables people to play, enjoy and benefit from sport, whether they are a beginner, enthusiastic amateur or an elite performer.

We have worked collaboratively with clubs and other external partners to identify the needs and priorities of the borough. Using stakeholder insight to develop this strategy, as well as supporting strategies from Central Government and Sport England, we have developed five outcome-based commitments.



The Commitments

These commitments and the action plan that will be developed to deliver these will help ensure that we can achieve our ambitious vision for Dacorum.

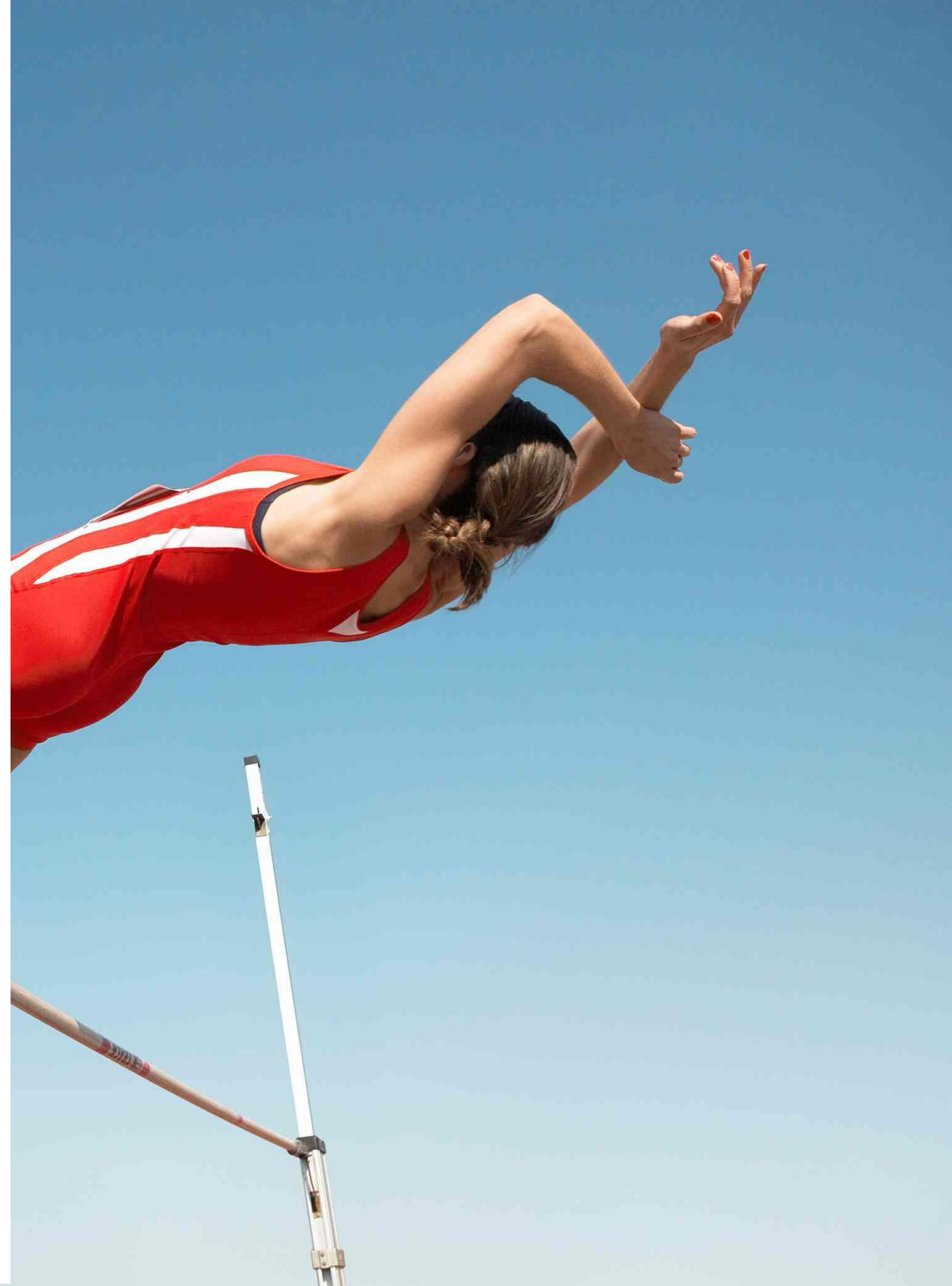
Commitment 1: Increase participation in sport and physical activity for inactive people

Commitment 2: Working in partnership with clubs, National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and other key stakeholders

Commitment 3: Ensure that we provide high quality sporting infrastructure, which can be accessed by all members of the community

Commitment 4: Developing sporting provision and activity at a local, regional, and national level

Commitment 5: Increase the profile and reputation of sports in Dacorum



Commitment 1: Increase participation in sport and physical activity for inactive people

Current position

In Dacorum, some 64.6% of its adult population are active. However, there are many groups who do not engage in physical activity for various cultural, economic, personal or practical reasons. Within Dacorum there are a number of areas with high levels of multiple deprivation, within which there are a number of residents who belong to underrepresented groups, although they are not exclusively within these areas.

DBC successfully delivered a 3-year Sport England funded project (Get Set Go Dacorum) which ended in September 2017. This project aimed to reduce inactivity across the borough and focussed primarily on underrepresented groups. The project engaged with over 3000 people during the 3 years it was delivered, the majority of which were either inactive or doing moderate activity prior to this.

However, there are many groups who do not engage in physical activity for various cultural, economic, personal or practical reasons. Within Dacorum there are a number of areas with high levels of multiple deprivation, within which there are a number of residents who belong to underrepresented groups, although they are not exclusively within these areas.

Our Commitment

We will develop and implement a series of targeted campaigns and actions to improve participation amongst demographic groups that typically report higher levels of physical inactivity. This will be built around five key areas:

- Low income Families
- Black and Minority Ethnic Groups
- People with disabilities
- Women and Girls
- Older Adults

To achieve this, we will:

- Identify how we can change/ influence people's attitudes, beliefs and perceptions towards physical activity
- Work with our Everyone Active to deliver a 'Sports Development and Outreach Plan' within Dacorum
- Work with partners such as Herts Sports Partnership (HSP) to actively source funding to support underrepresented groups to become more physically active
- Consult with those underrepresented groups, identifying needs and priorities surrounding the provision of sport and physical activity and remove barriers to entry which could affect them taking part in sport/ physical activity
- Work with the housing team to support residents in social housing
- Create resources that are available for the public which outline what is available within the borough and signpost them to these activities

Commitment 2: Working in partnership with clubs, National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and other key stakeholders

Current position

DBC works closely with a number of partners across the public, private and third sector.

Within Dacorum there are over 200 sports clubs, offering a huge variety of different sports to thousands of residents. The standard of sports clubs within the borough is high, both in terms of performance level and the community work they undertake. We also work closely with the HSP and local sports club representatives.

Our Commitment

Effective partnership working is integral in delivering this strategy. We want to encourage a collaborative approach with both local and national organisations.

This commitment seeks to further build upon the relationships the council has with voluntary and sporting organisations and clubs, whilst also forging new partnerships, sharing ideas and experiences to develop a stronger offer to the local community.

To achieve this, we will:

- Work with key partners to support the delivery of this strategy and ensure buy in to delivering the 5 commitments i.e. signed commitment to the strategy
- Hold regular meetings with local clubs and Everyone Active to identify actions and opportunities to support growth in club membership and usage
- Work closely with Dacorum School Sports Network to support development of activity within local schools
- Identify opportunities for funding and sponsorship of local clubs from Sporting NGBs and other public, private and voluntary sector organisations
- Liaise with NGBs and HSP using their specialist knowledge and revenue to support growth in Dacorum
- Ensure DBC leisure management contracts are well managed to deliver a great service to members and casual users

Commitment 3: Ensure that we provide high quality sporting infrastructure, which can be accessed by all members of the community

Current position

Dacorum has many sporting facilities and open spaces which can be used to support residents in becoming more physically active. In 2016 we conducted an audit and assessment of our sports facilities within Dacorum which aimed to provide evidence of the current condition of the council's portfolio and future community need within Dacorum. DBC have since committed to build a brand new athletics track as well as significantly invest into refurbishing the Tring facility.

Facility	Number
Athletics Track	1
Football Pitches (Grass)	155
Artificial Grass Pitches	7
Netball Courts	71
Squash Courts	23
Golf Courses	4
Cricket Pitches	40
Rugby Pitches	37
Swimming Pools	21
Sports Halls	36

Source: Dacorum Borough Council Outdoor Facilities Study September 2014 and Strategic Review of the sports and leisure facilities in Dacorum 2016

Our Commitment

This commitment seeks to identify ways in which Dacorum can better utilise its existing facilities, support the growth of local sports clubs and create a more active environment for the community to thrive.

To achieve this, we will:

- Create an environment in which being physically active is made easier for residents
- Better utilise and promote how parks and open spaces are used for recreation as well as sports facilities
- Work with clubs to explore management options to bring facilities onsite
- Set out an annual budget for capital works investment in new and existing sports and leisure facilities within the borough
- Explore the use of section 106 funding to support use of green space for sport and physical activity.

Commitment 4: Developing sporting provision and activity at a local, regional, and national level

Current position

Whilst we understand the importance of getting those people who are inactive active, it is important we do not neglect those that are already active.

Dacorum has produced high quality sportsmen and women, which is something we are keen to continue to support. The annual Dacorum Sports Awards recognises the great work all sporting people, clubs and organisations do in Dacorum each year.

Our Commitment

Becoming complacent about this group could lead to them losing their active habit when they experience life changes. Life changes are unavoidable, but what is important is that we are prepared to support people through these changes and ensure we offer an activity that will continue to meet their needs. In conjunction with this, the best way to ensure sporting provision is by supporting our local clubs and teams, aiding them in delivering a high quality experience to their members.

This commitment seeks to create opportunity and alternative routes to remaining active for already active residents, should their circumstances / needs change. It also seeks to support local clubs in delivering a quality service which will help retain existing members as well as improve the opportunity of recruiting new ones. Furthermore, it will focus on progression and development routes for young aspiring sportsmen and women as well as talent identification.

To achieve this, we will:

- Work with the Everyone Active and clubs to support residents who can no longer partake in particular sports/ activities due to a personal change in circumstances
- Provide a signposting tool to support residents to find local groups and clubs
- Support recruitment and retention of volunteers in sport and physical activity
- Work with local clubs to support young sportsmen and women in identifying talent pathways
- Allocate a proportion of community grant funding to be used to support provision for active people.

Commitment 5: Increase the profile and reputation of sports in Dacorum

Current position

Over the years Dacorum has played a role in some large national sporting events, such as the Tour of Britain, and has also produced some notable world class sports men and women, most recently Max Whitlock (Rio 2016 double Olympic gold medal winning gymnast) and Jessica Stretton (Rio 2016 Paralympic gold medallist in Archery).

Our Commitment

We want to put Dacorum on the radar and to make it a location capable of hosting major sporting events. We also want people to think of Dacorum as an innovative borough where sporting associations can trial new projects and approaches to sport. We have a proven track record of delivering large events successfully, have a strong infrastructure and a number of high quality facilities. With a number of professional sportspeople and top sports teams, we believe we can further enhance our reputation in elite sports development by showcasing and supporting talented individuals and teams.

To achieve this, we will:

- Work closely with local and regional clubs, Everyone Active, HSP and Sport England to showcase the quality of sport within Dacorum
- Promote Dacorum to NGBs encouraging them to view Dacorum as a hub for sport
- Look to host large scale events in Dacorum
- Continue to produce and promote elite sportspeople and sports clubs from Dacorum

Putting Commitments into Action

There is a fantastic opportunity for DBC to develop sport and physical activity in Dacorum. The power and influence that sport and physical activity can have on people's lives and the positive impact it can have on entire communities is the exact purpose for developing this strategy.

The Council will prepare an annual action plan in collaboration with partners, both internal and external, such as Planning, HSP, and Everyone Active, which aligns to this strategy. In this plan, we will set out a series of more specific actions which will take place throughout the year, taking the strategy forward.

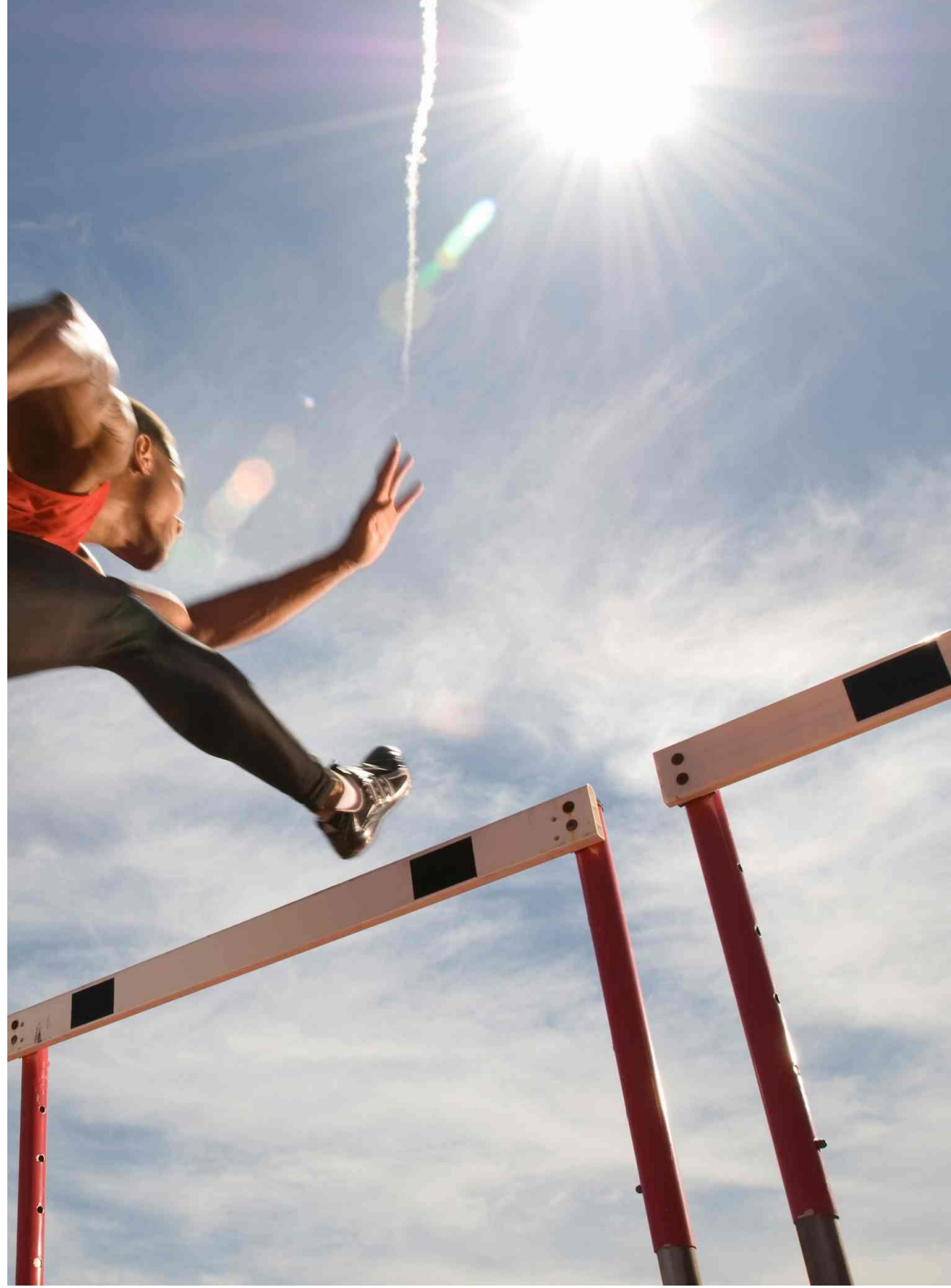
Monitoring

A sport and physical activity board will be created consisting of both internal and external stakeholders. It will meet at least twice a year to discuss progress on the outcomes of the strategy and the annual plan.

Targets

Setting measurable targets is a key part of being able to evaluate the success of our actions and interventions. In those areas where we can use quantifiable targets it is important that we do so as this will be a valuable measure of progress for the strategy.

Both Public Health (Health Profile Tool) and Sport England (Local Profile Tool & Active Lives Survey) also provide useful information about the profile of sport and physical activity across Dacorum which can be used as a success measure.



Appendix 2- Full consultation response from residents

I believe there should be more funding towards the Camelot RFC, as I feel like as a town we could be a great team but due to the bad looks on the club and lack of advertisement I feel less people are attracted to the club. With some funding I believe we could rebuild or renovate the club house and overall improve the fitness of young people in the local area

Hi If you want assistance on your first 2 objectives I can help. I coordinate rugby for women and girls with a strong link to the RFU. We are based in Watford but we are your closest offering. I would love to work closer to make a difference. I look forward to hearing from you

Well done Dacorum, this all sounds great.

The document looks great and we are very lucky to live in an area where we have lots of green spaces and facilities. I'm still not convinced privatising the local sports centres is the way forward, I understand it's early days but there do seem to be a few problems. I would most like to see our parks and canal have more accessible paths. Several of the play parks are surrounded by grass which means on a wet day the surface in the actual playground gets muddy and all over the play equipment. It's much nicer, and easier for buggies, wheelchairs, to have a proper path. It would also be great if DBC could work with Canal & River Trust/Inland Waterways to improve the canal towpath through Hemel Hempstead. Some parts are OK to walk on, others are an absolute mud bath and currently full of puddles which will become potholes. I don't expect it to be perfect, just to be easier to walk along. Thank you for asking for input and thank you to all those who look after our green spaces and sports facilities.

Dear all, I would like to see fitness equipment in parks and open green spaces, as there are in some European towns. Having the facilities 24 hours nearby home encourages its use. Many thanks for your attention.

Overall the strategy is excellent. There are a few typos/grammatical errors, e.g. in the introduction: However, while there are clear benefits to sports and physical activity, we also recognise that a coordinated and strategic approach to sports provision is needed if we are going to ensure that all residents can benefit from its affects. Should read: However, whilst there are clear benefits to sports and physical activity, we also recognise that a coordinated and strategic approach to sports provision is needed if we are going to ensure that all residents can benefit from its effects.

I applaud your ambitions to getting more people active and to excel in sport locally and nationally. Personally I sincerely hope that all the classes remain in the villages eg Kings Langley. These classes are held in halls, not sports centres necessarily and it would be a backward step if these local classes were abandoned. This would encourage the elderly especially to take part in the classes. Also, there is a huge problem of obesity, which begins in childhood, so it would be helpful for Everyone Active to be involved in local schools for advice and support on exercise and diet..

Following the success of the England Netball team at the commonwealth games this surely is one sport that needs a lot of time and money spent on it in Dacorum. We need more junior Netball clubs and better facilities - public courts and better courts at schools. Tring tornadoes Netball club is currently the only thriving junior club in Dacorum - we have long waiting lists as there is a lack of opportunity to do this sport within Dacorum - girls need team sports as well as boys - come on Dacorum let's get on the Netball map and show the rest of Hertfordshire we mean business.

We need more swimming pools to replace the Kings Langley and Cavendish swimming pools so that all children can get the chance to swim. With the increasing population we need more capacity. I

suggest a flexi pool being built at Longdean or Adeyfield so that primary school children can walk to a pool. The new pools can be used in the evening to expand the sports centre swimming lesson programme.

Strategy fine, hope resources are found to back it up. Just 3 points: (1) Page 4 - accept difficulty in listing all clubs, but the swimming clubs in the Borough are well and long established - e.g. HH Swimming Club and Berkhamsted/Tring (?) Swimming Club. (2) strategy could be perceived as being HH centric. Make reference to towns and villages throughout the Borough (3) p11 - mention is made of Max Whitlock and Jessica Stretton, but I believe a Berkhamsted (former?) resident also was a medalist in the Rio Paralympics 2016.

The consultation paper sounds reasonable in principle, but there is no real meat to it in terms of how Dacorum will achieve the stated commitments or how it will be funded. The paper appears to be 'targetting' specific groups when we need to get everyone in and remains active by offering a wide range of activities at a reasonable cost - good health cannot be about profit! There is no mention of things like mentoring people who are perhaps inactive, over-weight etc.

Well, I'm sure I'm not the only person to notice the copy and pasted paragraph on page 7. 'However, there are many groups who do not engage in physical activity for various cultural, economic, personal or practical reasons. Within Dacorum there are a number of areas with high levels of multiple deprivation, within which there are a number of residents who belong to underrepresented groups, although they are not exclusively within these areas.' Nothing in there is offensive or off the mark. Would be expecting to see more in there relating to schools and young people, but appreciate that they are one of five groups who do not do enough exercise

Bit f@#king late really isn't it? There's no point giving our opinions because you'll just steamroller along with your own (stupid) ideas anyway. I can't wait to see what you're going to waste our money on this year.

The deterioration in attitude and provision since Everyone Active have taken over is already apparent. They stopped providing wipes for folk to clean spinning bikes before using them until complaints overwhelmed them. The waiting list 'system' for classes is chaotic and unfair and is resulting in empty spaces at classes.

Very surprised not to see Bowls Clubs listed as a sporting contributor to Dacorum.. helping all people but particularly but not exclusively older people take part in an active and competitive environment... really shows the kind of overview our council has. Upkeep and maintenance of bowls facilities provides both a facility and an atmosphere and aesthetics of the area..

Hopefully DBC's various commitments in the Sports and Physical Activity Strategy are coterminous with Everyone Active's need to generate profit, but the current shambles at what was Sportspace Hemel does not fill me with hope. Lots of local people have lost their jobs at Sportspace. Well done DBC

I was very surprised by the facilities available in Dacorum. Are there really 71 netball courts? Where are they? I live in Tring and have access to 3. Yes only 3. We in Tring are completely forgotten about when it comes to finding, support and facilities. I had to beg someone from Herts Netball to start up an adult league somewhere more convenient than Welwyn. I'd really like to see a plan for each town with Dacorum to ascertain the fairness in allocation of resources. I'm sure that once again Tring will get ignored and we'll be forced to use the sportscentre at Berkhamsted which is over priced and in need of repair

Why is the deadline for this 4 May, when this is only giving people 3 days to comment? How is that fair? Who has been consulted? Is it the same 30 odd people only, who were allegedly consulted about sportspace!!?? Have any of you visited Everyone Active or actually taken any interest in the new sports centre? It has dramatically gone down hill. Empty spaces on classes as people are not able to book onto classes, an unfair booking system, cleanliness not adhered to when the signs say they will be cleaned. I witnessed today a Hoover being taken into the changing rooms to Hoover the floor and only the mirrors cleaned. The cleaner looked in the showers but did not clean them when 2 were DIRTY. You are not committed to reflecting the views and aims of the stakeholders, if you were, you would not be sending this out with 3 days notice to comment. One aim is to increase sport participation. People are actually looking to leave EA as the customer service has deteriorated so much. If you look at the figures and customer satisfaction, it has declined with people wishing to go to one of the cheaper gyms in the area for only £19.99 per month! Outreach work which SportSpace did is no longer happening. The classes provided for customers who have been referred by their GP is stopping. How is this fair? Low income families will choose a gym which is much cheaper than EA. Currently at £43 for this year, which will increase in 2019/2020. Open spaces such as the adventure playground which is utilised by so many people, the changes which are being made, how is this supporting local residents and children who love and enjoy using these free facilities? Since EA have taken over, a number of communications have been sent out regarding not being able to use the pool? How is this fair? Measurable targets are being set for EA? Councillors need to visit the building, see the horrendous queues for yourself, queues miles long in the machine operated cafe. One til not taking cash. Councillors need to read reviews on the Hemel Hempstead leisure site facebook page, people are not happy with the customer service. Incorrect membership fees being taken, EA staff not able to refund; this can only be completed by a manager. Membership fees being taken for people who have cancelled their memberships. I witnessed today, a customer receiving and TAKING a phonecall in a spinning class, the customer was in the front row next to myself, the instructor clearly saw her and allowed her to continue to take her phone call whilst the class was being conducted!!! Its an absolute disgrace how the sportSpace situation was handled. You will definitely not be getting my vote and this is unfair, deliberately sending it out with 3 days notice!

As a long term member of sports space and a resident of Dacorum for fifty years I feel it's insulting that you are having an consultation now after you have put our sports centre into private hands. EA gave so far made it into a miserable place to exercise they do not care about there customers , it there way or no way . You Dacorum Borough Council council have taken away what felt like our towns sports centre and made it into EA's sports centre , you said in your documentation that membership is growing well I know lots of people who have left or are thinking of leaving , do rather than promoting sport in Dacorum as far as our sports centre goes I don't think your interested.

Whilst this is another beautifully packaged fairy tale. The truth of the matter is... if they aren't interested they ain't gonna come. If you take it back to basics kids do not play out anymore. And even if you invest a vacuous pit of money video games have kidnapped minds of the youth. These games have enabled lazy parents to not spend time with their children. A video game ,no matter how violent enables the highly entitled parent to have a free babysitter.. please stop your perfect brochure and if you really care take sport and exercise as fun back to school. Your pretty brochure is offensive

I feel a lot of this is waffle and rather corporate consultant speak with a great deal of repetition. You don't currently "work closely with 200+ clubs" - in fact you treated them rather badly in the recent laughable travesty of a contract award process which actively attempted to avoid public

consultation. However, this does seem to be the start of some realisation at DBC that they need to do something to grow sport provision and address the shameful 7 year variation in lifespan across Dacorum. Sport won't fix this, but if they put some investment into facilities and have a Sports Development team, which their contractor EA doesn't have any more as they have taken redundancy, things may improve. Perhaps if they eventually receive some of the £6 million pounds promised by EA over their 10 year contract they could return this money back to the users/taxpayers in the form of improved or new facilities that aren't managed by EA. They could give grants to some of the many clubs to help them grow their membership and people's involvement in sport. It will be a good idea, if DBC can develop an accurate portal to signpost people to appropriate sports clubs and for DBC to actively promote it. Much more can be done in linking NHS surgeries to Sports facilities/gyms with qualified PTs to help unfit/unwell people to improve their fitness and develop their body's function. DBC could be the catalyst for this by working with the clubs and the GPs as well as the Hospital Trust. I hope you have recruited some people at DBC who understand leisure facilities management at a fundamental level and not just at corporate speak.

I would say it is important to encourage children into sports and therefore invite use of facilities by schools.

As an older resident coming up to 65 I applaud the sentiments expressed in the strategy regarding encouraging older people to participate in sports and other activity. However, as a member of the sports centre in Berkhamsted I have some concerns over the attitude of the Everyone Active team both towards older members and older employees. They have made many of the older employees redundant and we get the impression that they want to alter the class structure to favour classes more suitable for a younger age group. They are making the activity room into a dedicated spinning studio which means that the Pilates classes that currently run in that room will be moved to the smaller Mind and Body studio. As some of these classes regularly have long waiting lists it suggests that even more people will miss out. We shall not find out whether our concerns are well founded until they start to implement changes to the existing class structure but I am far from the only person to be concerned. Berkhamsted has a large number of members over 50 who are very active and I feel they should be encouraged to continue. I might add that the somewhat slower paced classes such as Pilates, yoga, Zumba Gold and Forever Fit aerobics are suitable for previously inactive under 50s, spinning, body pump, Metafit etc are not.

I don't believe that 64% are doing enough regular exercise to consider them as active. Specific classes should be aimed to get morbidly obese people to do something as a group together as these are the people at the most risk of poor health. Also healthy and affordable cooking classes ought to be offered at the various community centres.

I was most surprised by the number of facilities. For instance, the number of swimming pools. Where are they all? Is it public knowledge? Are some of them private clubs?

The strategy seems to lack real substance. There needs to be included how hard to reach groups can be engaged. People need to be inspired to want to participate and feel that they will be welcomed and not outfaced. The first 'attempt' can be make or break. I suggest mentors or partners who would engage with 'new' participants and show them the ropes, plus receive feedback and follow up how activities are going. Very small issues can cause people to be put off. I can declare that I play league squash, racket ball and tennis plus mountain/ hill walking, but can understand how people can be reticent to exercise.

Fine words from DBC, whose Sports and Development officers have a talent for writing Plans. In your latest report we have a list of sports facilities. If the Council really want to understand what is going on and how these facilities are promoting local residents, why is there not a review and statistical analysis of how many DBC residents take part in the primary sports teams that use these facilities? Why are there no requirement for clubs and societies which use these facilities to supply data on local residents participating in the upper echelons of their activities? What data is being gathered on specific financial assistance and targeted encouragement being provided to talented individuals from deprived areas and families in the DBC area? Your report boasts of successful sports persons and teams from, or performing within, Dacorum. To the best of my knowledge at least one of the two individuals you cite is and has not been a resident of Dacorum for many years. Whom else comprise the list of 'exceptional talents' found and developed through local schools, clubs and societies? Lots of hot air, Dacorum Borough Council. Much is heralded regarding Everyone Active as partners in future development and participation levels in the Borough. But from what I have seen so far, they have for instance no discount scheme for pensioners at the sports centres in the Borough. More, they do not seem to be offering further discounted membership or pricing for pensioners on Pension Credit or individuals and families receiving benefits. This is just a first pass at my appreciation of the plan published here. I have 50 years experience in Dacorum, have held an MBA in Marketing and Business Development from a leading Business School since 1978 and am very familiar with the lack of support from Clubs and the Council due to my own 'changing circumstances'. Another new 'Plan' is no surprise, as the Council has failed for so many years. As I said above, fine words DBC.

As soon as Sport England funding stopped last year , you went for a privatised set-up. THIS I REGARD AS WRONG. It should have been retained under local authority control as time will tell when openings and prices will be dictated to residents. I also disagree with the proposal to move the Jarman Fields Ateletic track. A move to Cupid Green would be costly and make it more inaccessible to residents in western neighbourhoods and to school use. Anther proposal not in the interersts of sport but in the interest of local authority finances.

"Our sport and leisure facilities that are run by Everyone Active have around 4,800 members, a number that continues to grow with the ever-expanding activities and opportunities they present for the community." - Its a bit early to say what the impact of Everyone Active is, they have only just taken over running the facilities. Early impressions have not been the best and many people are feeling alienated by the process. Commitment 2 - This could go further and engage with groups outside of the normal sporting clubs, such as the Scouts, Guides, Cadets, also older groups such as the U3A or local National Trust groups. How can this also be extended to engage with business to provide opportunities to promote sport and physical activity to their employees. Commitment 3 - There needs to acknowledgment here that these community assets should be provided at cost and not for profit for local residents and clubs/ charities. It would also make sense to develop a support fund to help new groups to develop and use these assets. There needs also to be better information about how groups can book and use the wider facilities. At present there is little easily accessible information about the facilities within decorum. Commitment 4:"Provide a signposting tool to support residents to find local groups and clubs" - this needs to also include identifying local facilities General comment: There needs to be a clear review of the involvement in Everyone Active and demonstrate that they are providing the best for Dacorum. The facilities provision should show clear value for money (for both the council AND the users / residents). It needs to be shown that they are not making a profit out or residents use of these facilities. If this cannot be shown then the running should be returned to the not for profit sector.

There didn't seem to be anything new or exciting in this proposal. Certainly not pushing the boundaries.

You have just outsourced Boxmoor Leisure centre, Notice that the Tennis courts have not been included. You didn't give approval for the swimming at Kings Langley School, in fact, no schools have their own pool anymore. Where're the free items for those you can not even afford a £1 to do? All about the middle classes and those who can afford and not enough about those who just to the park and picnic as that is what they can afford.

Overall I would say the strategy looks very good. I would like to see more attention on working with schools and sixth form colleges to encourage school leavers to stay involved in sport and get connected with clubs as they transition away from sport and physical activity as part of the curriculum. This is particularly true for students who are not in first teams to encourage to make activity a lifetime habit.

With all these things there tends to be a gap between aims and delivery of those aims. Sport and exercise are obviously positive things for both physical and mental health. Activity levels depend largely on age and amount of spare time. Whether the DBC needs to provide and encourage sport is an open question. Sport will happen with or without a local council's encouragement. For example, I have ridden a bike since I was five. I am now 70 and still cycle for exercise with my dog every day in all weathers. DBC have never encouraged or hindered my choice to do this. I just did it. I was once a member of the Berkhamsted Sports Centre but I found the gym crowded and rather dank and airless. I changed to the Ashridge Lifestyle Centre where the gym was no better and the people were awful. So I gave up gym training altogether. As a young man I played rugby to a good standard but constant injuries and frequent concussions made this a rather dangerous option. Some sports are actually bad for long-term health! If your new strategy works I shall be pleased for you but how will you judge the effect, impact and value for money of your scheme? No budget was mentioned. What happens if you provide sport for ethnic minority women (one of your aims) but take-up is low because of modesty about appearing in front of others in sports attire? This needs to be researched before schemes are rolled out. Likewise, deprived groups with limited income are less likely to spend £200 plus on new football kit. Will such groups receive DBC subsidies to get them started? My only negative comment about the strategy is that it seemed to be primarily focused on women and girls. Young boys are now notoriously inactive too.

Please make it affordable for all. Swimming has become very expensive for a family.

I was wondering why the public bowls green was shut last summer & doesn't seem to be opening soon this year ! The Public Bowls green in Gadebridge park doesn't appear on this Draft Sports & Physical Activity strategy ! I have used the facility for many years ! I am now disabled but like a game of green bowls & so does my 86 year old father who has dementia ! It use to be some where to go & enjoy a cheap game ! The new splash park wasn't started till September & DBC seems to have stopped it being used ! Why is bowls not a sport & a physical leisure activity the council no longer wants to run ?

You make no mention of facilities for playing lawn bowls in Dacorum. There are a number of active clubs who regularly play against each other and hold internal competitions One of these clubs is Hemel Hempstead Bowls Club in Gadebridge Park which leases its club house and green from Dacorum Borough Council. Lawn bowls is known to have health benefits for older people in that it is a low-impact, therapeutic exercise that can improve fitness, coordination and confidence. The state of Victoria in Australia actively promotes the game for its health benefits. A game of bowls can last

for a number of hours and during that time a player can benefit from extensive gentle walking and bending. It would good if Dacorum Borough Council could encourage lawns bowls by promoting it and by ensuring that there are good facilities within the borough. This would not be difficult as the DBC already owns the facilities used by Hemel Hempstead Bowls Club.

I'm sure DBC have this in hand given the Local Plan, etc they have drawn up, so it is just a matter of making the amenities for any activities within the Borough, more accessible perhaps, for example: I like the idea of having various outdoor fitness/workout equipment placed next to or within certain park areas which enable people to utilise them without signing up for any gym membership as such. Further promotion of the Nickey Line as a walking/running/cycling route with better lighting perhaps ? The fact is, it will purely be down to any individual as to what exercise, etc they complete but making activities more accessible would be good.

Interesting look forward to the future but in some of the centres equipment is often broken and seems to take forever to mended. Eg the sauna at Berkhamsted have had a broken light for over six months and some of the slats have been lose for even longer. May I suggest that the contract for maintenance is improved and that someone takes responsibility, just putting a sign saying "engineer have been called " for weeks on end is not good enough.

It's all very good in principle but as an older resident of Dacorum what I find frustrating is that there is no one central point to find out about clubs and activities in the area. I have recovered from breast cancer but have to go to Abbot's Langley or Watford for the MacMillan Move More programme as nothing locally. I also think that imposing a charge for membership of the Sports Centre for older residents in Dacorum has put some people off exercising. You also need to be careful about making everything electronic as a lot of the older generation in the area are either computer illiterate or don't have access to one.

I note that throughout the document there is no mention of Dacorum Sports Trust. Although we have lost the main contract to manage Sports and Leisure in Dacorum we still manage Little Hay for DBC and own the XC which is a major provider of facilities for predominantly young people. We are a community based Trust and it is our intention to continue to expand our facilities throughout Dacorum . It would be eminently sensible for DBC and DST to work together to ensure there is no duplication of effort on the various initiatives proposed in the draft document.

Please support Tring Rugby Club's desire to have more space to create pitches for playing rugby along with it's own commitments to improve facilities for the community. There are only two rugby clubs in the borough that support both Mini & Junior and Adult rugby and Tring serves not only the town itself but Berkhamsted and the outlying villages. There is space available adjacent to the current facility to the east of the town but that land is held by Herts County Council. Funding for equipment and coach development is also needed to offer access to training and matches to more children (currently c. 450 between the ages of 3 and 16).

Additional land currently held by Herts could be made available to Tring Rugby club. Tring is a club with excellent community links and is welcoming to all. It supports the full age range of players and is developing a team for older girls which is lacking on a national scale. The club draws in players from a wide area due to the range of different age coaching they provide. Any support for this club would be positive for the whole local community.

I would like to see the council plan to build a football / rugby stadium in Hemel Hempstead Also more indoor facilities for football, tennis etc I would also like to see a positive attitude to safer cycling by pushing for an integrated cycle ring road in Hemel, to encourage eveyone to get on their

bikes. St Albans & Watford have miles of cycle paths while Hemel only has a few and these are not joined up

I have always been a firm believer in Compassionate Conservatism and was a fan of David Cameron's concept in the "Big Society" where local people and charities come together to deliver services for the community, by the community. That concept was actually also a feature in Dacorum Sports Trust that was set up by DBC and was absolutely the right thing to do. Ahead of its time, one might say. Although this is mainly behind us now, I remain unhappy with the way in which DBC went about ending the contract with DST and appointing Everyone Active (EA) in its place to run the majority of services. I feel that this decision was borne out of a misplaced ideology rather than to deliver a demonstrated improvement in services for the community. This runs counter to the principles of Compassionate Conservatism and the Big Society. My perception is that this was more about money, ideology and personal agendas. I would rather have seen the council consult with DST more effectively before terminating the contract. I can see that EA can leverage some economies of scale through the centralisation of functions such as HR, Finance, H&S systems, Management systems etc. But I would rather have seen the council explore how DST could have worked with a larger consortium of not-for-profit or charitable trusts who are running sports facilities in other boroughs. This model would have had the benefit of shared centralised services coupled with local people running local provision and more flexibility than can be had through a commercial contract arrangement, which tend to be rigid and unresponsive to changing needs. Value for money is clearly an important aspect, especially when budgets are tight, but there is huge value in the community being directly involved in the management of the provision of sports facilities. The community spirit and associated sense of well being and contentment in the local population will have some direct economic benefits, which could probably be measured if some clever people at the council put their minds to it. See this government website for some useful papers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-wellbeing>. This is not a zero-sum game! The strategy talks vaguely about working with other organisations such as HSP, but makes no mention of DST or Sportspace, even though they continue to provide sports services in the borough, and a photo of XC even appears in the document. That seems a major omission and could be perceived as a snub or DST being purposely excluded because the council did not like something that DST has done. Regardless of the above, it is not at all clear to me from the strategy how sports development for the young and the over 50s will be delivered. This provision is one of the services that have not been fully replicated in the contract with Everyone Active, and was part of Sportspace's previous outreach programme. I would like to see much greater emphasis on services being delivered in conjunction with local charities. To summarise, I would like to see: 1. A strategy for how sports and physical activity can be promoted and delivered for the community in a responsive way, guided by the principles of the big society rather than profit. 2. The strategy for how DBC will engage with DST and work with them to explore the opportunities of collaborating with other similar trusts in future to provide better overall value for money and deliver wider value to the community. 3. A specific strategy for the delivery of sports development for the young and the over 50s.

I think it's great the council are investing in sport and wellbeing. However, before trying to create any new facilities they really need to take a look at the facilities they have already, which are quite frankly in very poor condition and often filthy. I have been to swim at Berkhamsted quite often and the changing rooms and shower area are so dirty I would not even wash my dog in them! Money is no excuse - I grew up in one of the most deprived areas of the UK and their leisure centres were much much cleaner. The staff seem to sit around and do nothing whilst the facilities are a mess. I do realise that when such facilities are old and worn, as they are any Berkhamsted and Tring, it can be much harder to maintain them. I think I full refers of the pool changing room at both venues would

be sensible. I also think incentives could be put in place for people who exercise regularly, much like the vitality health scheme. It doesn't need to be much but a free coffee in the cafe or a free parking ticket for hitting a goal could really get people moving.

Please support Tring Rugby Club's desire to have more space to create pitches for playing rugby along with its own commitments to improve facilities for the community. There are only two rugby clubs in the borough that support Mini, Junior and Adult rugby and Tring serves not only the town itself but Berkhamsted and the outlying villages. There is space available adjacent to the current facility to the east of the town but that land is held by Herts County Council. Funding for equipment and coach development is also needed to offer access to training and matches to more children (currently c. 450 between the ages of 3 and 16).

Have you considered partnering also with small businesses (swim school) within Hemel to also help achieve aims?

Cost to individuals and to clubs to carry out an activity. Also to help clubs expand. All need looking at. Not a footballer but there are a lot less Sunday league teams around now and anecdotally people have said £5 - £6 a week to play to cover costs of which most is pitch rental is too much. Particularly when it's just recreational for most players. If you want people to exercise it has to be cheap and easy.

don't privatise sportspace

The strategy is keen to outline the number of facilities available in Dacorum. It does however neglect to highlight what an incredibly poor state many of the facilities are in when compared to neighboring areas. Our Sports Centres at Hemel and Berkhamstead are good examples of this. It has been well publicised that Everyone Active will be investing in the facilities but as of yet there have been no guarantees of how these will be improved. The strategy should also have more of a focus on children. As has become the norm minority groups have been singled out for support, but how about planning for the support of children.

I have read the document with interest. The aims are ambitious and very wide ranging. I have heard that the athletics track at Jarmans park is likely to be closed and moved to a site in Grovehill. While appreciating that this would greatly benefit Grovehill I feel that an athletics track should be nearer the centre of the town where it is easily accessible to more young people. While I use both Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead sports centres I feel the swimming pool at Berkhamsted is in serious need of refurbishment.

Can the facts... and around 50,000 residents aged 50 and above suffer from a long term health problem or disability. Is this correct, I looked at the Dacorum website and it said the population of Dacorum is 152K, if there are 50,000 over 50 with long term health problems or disabilities that's almost 30%. With respect of the Activities I feel that the monthly costs are high for many people, they are not much less than the private places who have profits to make. The list included the Ski Slope and XC but what proportion of the visitors are from Dacorum or beyond.

This is a twelve-page, highly-presented PDF document, amounting to 2,500 words – just over 200 words per page, with lots of pictures. It is pretty thin on substance and simply not convincing or satisfactory. Perhaps not surprising, as the Council just ended their partnership with the experts at Dacorum Sports Trust and has instead relied on consultation with about 20 of the 200 voluntary sports clubs in Dacorum. Saying you will make some undefined and unquantified commitments and will write an Action Plan in due course is not a Strategy. Dacorum has a contract with Everyone

Active, but Dacorum cannot let its Strategy be defacto decided by the contracted delivery company which is earning shareholder profits and paying a fee. That would be a conflict of interest. And there's the rub: Who is responsible for this Strategy and the Action Plan for detail, which is yet to come? There is no name on the document – and the Strategy doesn't say specifically who will be on the Board, or more important who in the DBC staff has the Sports and Leisure experience to drive this progress day-to-day. There is no budget attached - not even in relation to the income expected from SLM. What should residents expect from a Strategy? A "Big Idea"? An overall plan? The big-picture specifics of What, Where, When change is expected - the Why, the How – and the Who? A tangible, credible vision with a route to achieve it? Ownership. Dates. Stages. An overall Budget estimate to achieve the goal? A Strategy is supposed to unlock achievement and show how a desired outcome is possible within, in this case 2018-2022. What do we get in this document? There are five uncostered "Commitments", which sound a bit strategic, but none of them are quantified, one is repetitive, Commitment 4 is confused and there are no illustrations or examples, apart from a "New" Athletics Track (which is actually a replacement, not an addition). NB: Commitments 1 and 5 are not supported by this strategy unless Commitments 3 and 4 are made more ambitious for substantial improvements in infrastructure and amateur/elite progress. The online Consultation should have gathered suggestions in response to specific questions: Q: What would encourage you to be more active, and/or take up a sport? Q: What sports facilities are missing or in need of investment? Q: What facilities or land assets - near you - are required? Q: What money is needed to do this - and where is it coming from? Q: What do you look for when planning to get more active? Q: How do the Housing plans and increasing/ageing population factor in? Ownership. This draft is rejected until a Sports and Leisure services-experienced Officer is recruited to own this strategy and lead a proper consultation and develop a real Strategy, with resources to realise it.

Overview The document is very glossy but contains limited detail and is poorly written in places. Apart from the photographs which give a professional gleam the prose is less than professional and does not put Dacorum Borough Council in a good light with respect to clarity of purpose and policy making capability. It is a set of high-level statements rather than a well-researched and coherent strategy. It is also not a true consultation in that there are no questions to answer and no focus groups or other engagement with residents/users. The vision Difficult to argue with the vision statements – I agree with the intentions. I expect the Council to be far clearer about the number of clubs and external partners you have worked with in developing the strategy, the needs and priorities for the Borough. Commitments The commitments are worthy but uncostered with no detail about how they will be measured or what success will look like. Commitment 1 has the same paragraph repeated twice: "However, there are many groups who do not engage in physical activity for various cultural, economic, personal or practical reasons. Within Dacorum there are a number of areas with high levels of multiple deprivation, within which there are a number of residents who belong to underrepresented groups, although they are not exclusively within these areas." This is sloppy and embarrassing. It also over emphasises the parts of the community who do not engage in physical activity. I would expect to see the data to back up the statement and evidence of the kinds of activities that have been shown to work to encourage greater participation. In the text box you say that a recent project, funded not by the Council but by Sport England, engaged over 3000 people. How many of those people stayed active, and how many were inactive beforehand? The actions proposed are worthy but how much will they cost and what is the expected outcome/return on investment? Commitment 2 – how will this be funded and will every club in Dacorum get a say? To create more opportunities for people to get involved you need more volunteers at clubs and a joined up approach with schools and workplaces and residents to get more people to try out more sport. As a long term junior girls cricket coach I know first hand the challenge of recruiting players

with very little joined up support from schools and sports bodies – how will this strategy help increase participation by supporting volunteer coaches? Commitment 3 – Using 2014 and 2016 statistics to develop a 2018-2022 strategy is questionable. Why didn't the council do more recent research or develop the strategy sooner, to make the most of the data collected 2 to 4 years ago? What does "Work with clubs to explore management options to bring facilities onsite" mean? What does "onsite" mean – onsite where? What "management options"? Setting a capital budget and publicising it is welcome but the Council must be clear that investment decisions will be made on the basis of evidence of where the needs of the Borough can be most efficiently met. I also support the use of section 106 funding to support the use of green space for sport and physical activity. Outdoor gyms, cycle routes and protection for cricket pitches including ensuring that green spaces are cleared of litter would be among my priorities to look into. Commitment 4 – I agree this is as important as getting new people active. Do not underestimate the amount of people resource and leadership you will need to support clubs to recruit and retain members, not overly rely on Everyone Active, a for-profit national leisure centre management company to do this for you at little or no extra cost. Many sports e.g., cricket, tennis, athletics, have national and regional talent pathway schemes. It is essential that the Council or EA do not ignore these and work with the national and regional bodies to support and nurture the work that they try to do. All bodies are stretched thinly and if the Council is serious about boosting Dacorum's elite they will need to resource it adequately over years (i.e., not with sporadic grants or unstrategic one-off events). Commitment 5 – I welcome the ambition to host more events, which must be published across Dacorum so that we get as many spectators along as possible to be inspired and to make sure the events are a success. Thought should also be given to events outside of Hemel. I enjoy doing the Hemel Tri and think we should keep this and perhaps run a Berkhamsted and Tring Tri too, with awards for doing all three? How are you going to "Continue to produce [and promote] elite sportspeople and sports clubs from Dacorum"? The Council can promote them but how would a Council "produce" them? It makes me think of a breeding programme, which is not what I think you meant... Putting Commitments into action While I understand and accept that Everyone Active is a key delivery partner I am concerned by the potential influence a national for-profit leisure centre management company has over the Council's plans and question whether they will be as altruistic as the Council anticipates. I hope that full costings have been or will be considered. I would want to know as a tax-paying resident how much of the payment to the Council from EA will go back to EA to pay for them to run the extra services that might be required if the Council is to deliver on the full extent of its ambition in the strategy. Monitoring and setting measureable targets against which the electorate can hold the Council to account is essential. There is a lot more the Council can do to engage citizens in sports and leisure facilities, including publicising the wealth of facilities and activities available alongside that offered by EA. You could have a sport or two of choice a year on which to focus, with the aim of developing long term sustainable participation. I would also recommend having an advisory council made up of community groups, sports clubs and residents to advise on the implementation of the strategy/action plan and hold delivery to account on behalf of Dacorum residents, given the importance of this issue for the health and wellbeing of the Borough for many years to come.

Is this a strategy for the borough council or for the borough as whole? Not really coming through the way the locally would like. DBC pretending it has high quality facilities - please dont as they need lots of investment? Under Commitments, please add two new one: C6 To Assist sporting providers with their facility re-development schemes C7 To Assist sporting providers with their holding of high profile events / competitions Under Commitment 3 Did the 2016 audit and assessment deal with state of the provision out in Dacorum ? Did the 2016 audit carry an assessment on the tennis provision within the borough? Nothing listed to date. Tennis needs reviewing again and are they fit

for purpose? Under the Achieve section to explore future new trends in sport & PA ie disc golf, pickleball, beach tennis, more walking sports and padel tennis - all growing fast in the UK currently. More street / community games events locally? create an urban can do fitness activity programmes ? Dacorum sports games like a UK corporate games but locally to get everyone involved? to open up all the facilities? Under Commitment 5 Please explain proven track record with examples - cant think of any? DBC pretending it has high quality facilities - please dont as they need lots of investment? Even when DBC have leased out facilities they didnt monitor them (this may change now SLM/Everyone Active are in place) ! If DBC build the facilities they will attract/create a better environment to improve DBC profile and reputation or least help local partners to do so? More show case sporting event in the town centre - mass participation (Guinness World Record attempts?) A concern obese resident from a club that is being sort of held back by DBC property dept over a land swap deal.

Have you read the annual Parkrun report? I would recommend continued support of the parkruns in the borough. Please invest in some new basketball courts like the one behind Warners End shops, these are needed in all areas (even two in busy areas), please consider Chaulden playing fields first.

The service at the sports centre has gone downhill rapidly since everyone active took over in April. I have been a member of sportspace for over 15 years, but am seriously considering cancelling my membership. The place looks shabby, for example, poster ripped off the walls and bare plaster left on show. The desk upstairs near the gym is closed, so long queues downstairs to book activities. The outdoor pool is still not open, yet the weather has been excellent for outdoor swimming. the list goes on..... I am a keen cyclist and breeze champion for Hemel, The ladies network is growing and rides are popular. This is great, however the roads in and around Dacorum are in a dreadful state of repair with massive pot holes widespread. There are few traffic free paths that are useable for cyclists. The Nicky line surface is dreadful even on a mountain bike and litter is widespread, the surface in Redbourn to Harpenden is much better. The canal tow path is again very rough and bumpy, the towpath from Kings Langley to Watford is in much better condition. Watford has a far better cycling infrastructure than Dacorum, why is this? I take part in Herts health walks, like most of the participants we are active residents who like to get out for a walk. Despite there being first steps walks, there are very few of the targetted audience taking part, why? Dacorum has a long way to go....

Well, I'm sure i'm not the only person to notice the copy and pasted paragraph on page 7. 'However, there are many groups who do not engage in physical activity for various cultural, economic, personal or practical reasons. Within Dacorum there are a number of areas with high levels of multiple deprivation, within which there are a number of residents who belong to underrepresented groups, although they are not exclusively within these areas.' Nothing in there is offensive or off the mark. Would be expecting to see more in there relating to schools and young people, but appreciate that they are one of five groups who do not do enough exercise

Public consultation feedback continued

Executive Summary

This document provides feedback on the draft Sport & Physical activity strategy document and makes a number of new recommendations.

In its current draft form, the strategy is weak, and does not contain the substance to enable a considered consultation by the clubs, sport bodies or the general public.

It has only been discussed with 17 of the 200 clubs in the area, and has only been actively publicised to the general public on social media 2 weeks. Feedback from these clubs has apparently not been included in the draft and no feedback from the previous workshop in May 2017 has not been included.

Without seeking, considering, and including wider feedback from the industry, public and clubs, the strategy will be seen as no more than a tick box exercise.

Furthermore, the strategy should be re-circulated in a complete form prior to being submitted for council approval.

S Day

Acting in a personal capacity as a resident of Hemel Hempstead but I am also a trustee of Dacorum Sports Trust and the initiator of the Facebook group "Leisure Facilities Are Not For Profit"

Feedback related to draft strategy document

1) Contribution to Strategy – by qualified sports organisations

What professional organisations have given their signoff to this document as being a professional competent document. My personal view is it looks like a masterpiece in Mac desktop publishing with attractive pictures etc but there is no strategy in it of any value.

Ben Russell said via email 2/10/18 "We are consulting with a number of stakeholders on the strategy including local sports clubs, leisure operators and residents as well as the Herts Sports Partnership, Public Health and Sport England."

"Consulting" should include consideration, discussion and agreement, as opposed to asking and ignoring. I would like the Sporting NGBs eg Sport England and Herts Sports Partnership to be named in the document as signatories as well as the portfolio holder Cllr Neil Harden, and a senior Dacorum Borough Council officer (Not Rob Smyth as he is leaving) before the strategy document is published. This means that they have read, understood, and agree with the document and believe it is a good strategy that benefits the community.

Action required – Get agreement from Sport England and Herts Sports Partnership to become signatories of the strategy.

2) Management of leisure contracts

Page 9 states you will "Ensure DBC leisure management contracts are well managed to deliver a great service to members and casual users".

There are no sports and leisure industry professionals in the council's employment (ref Rob Smyth May 2017 public consultation meeting).

What strategy will you use to ensure that the £6m payment to from Everyone Active is delivered? This should be included in the strategy document and published online available to the general public to show the contribution that Everyone Active have made on a cumulative basis as well as any payments the council has made to Everyone active both before the contract started and from it's commencement.

Action required Specify how you will manage the contract without industry professionals.

3) Commercial approach to Sport

The council should put in its strategy document whether it will as a corporate objective aim to take money out of a specific area (eg leisure centres), put money in, or be cost neutral. Figures should be put in to support this, breaking down the figure for each year as a progress report to the scrutiny committee on the actual results delivered by the contract.

It is clear that the leisure facilities contract was designed to make a profit for the council – this was advertised as £6m over 10 years. The council should state in the document that it's strategy is to take money out of leisure facilities and should also state where it intends to spend this surplus.

Action required Add section about commercial elements of sport detailing financial objective for each area.

Action required Provide annual report to scrutiny committee as to the financial performance of the contract against the objectives.

4) Measurement of growth

Page 9 references 5 bullet points "Liaise with NGBs and HSP using their specialist knowledge and revenue to support growth in Dacorum ". This does not specify how this commitment will be measured to ensure the commitment is successful.

Measurement should be conducted in a similar way that DBC claims to when managing it's suppliers. This measurement and performance should be reported to the scrutiny committee and published on a quarterly basis.

Action required Add metrics for measuring success

5) Working with other major operators

Page 4 states "We also boast a golf course, an indoor extreme sport centre"

The previous 2012 sports policy statement said "Exemplar buildings such as the Snow Centre and XC encourage sporting tourism to Dacorum"

Page 11 states

"the organisations it will work with but there is no mention of Dacorum Sports Trust. This is a major sports provider in the area and excluding them from this is unacceptable."

To be fair to all sports centre operators, there should be a reference to Dacorum Sports Trust or the council could be considered to be biased towards Everyone Active.

Action required Add reference to "Continue to work with Dacorum Sports Trust "

6) Infrastructure

Page 4 states

“We have two large leisure centres which boast 7 swimming pools, as well as an athletics track, all of which are run by Everyone Active.” This is wrong.

Action required. Correct the number of swimming pools as Everyone Active do not currently have a permanent contract to manage Tring Sports Centre.

7) Incorrect information

Page 9 states the following “DBC have since committed to build a brand-new athletics track as well as significantly invest into refurbishing the Tring facility.”

The strategy should state how this will be paid for. Will it for example be paid for by selling off the land for the existing track and the remainder (together with CIL money) returning to the council’s central reserves, or will it be invested in sport elsewhere? What is the council’s strategy when it comes to investing vs selling off land for profit?

Action required Clarify where money will come from for sport infrastructure.

8) CIL Contributions

Regarding CIL contributions from builders, these are now meant to be used to benefit the individual areas that the properties are built in. Can the council assure the community by putting into it’s strategy that it will use CIL contributions for sports and leisure activities in the areas that receive the payments? Otherwise it could be seen that the money is being diverted into areas that favour certain districts eg those close to the leisure centres.

Action required State that CIL contributions will be spent on sports in the specific ward area it was received.

9) Major investment strategy

Page 10 states

“Set out an annual budget for capital works investment in new and existing sports and leisure facilities within the borough. “

There is no mention in the strategy of major investment in facilities for example the re-building of Berkhamsted sports centre which is long overdue as the building is past it’s viable life. For example in this September 2016 report on the councils website <https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/strategic-planning/sports-facilities.pdf?sfvrsn=0> it states

“Berkhamsted Sports Centre is in a poor state of repair and needs significant refurbishment. Dacorum Sports Trust/Sportspace do not have sufficient funding to refurbish the sport centre to current standards and are considering funding the development of a new facility via the redevelopment of the existing site. ” But the tender process made no request for redevelopment of the facilities.

One may therefore assume that there will be NO NEW MAJOR INVESTMENT BY THE COUNCIL until after 2022 either as part of the leisure facilities contract (as it contained no requirements for major investment), or as part of the sports strategy as it is not in the council’s strategy. This will result in

existing centres being maintained by the operator plus the council funding existing infrastructure repairs.

Action required Specify investment strategy for major infrastructure investment between now and 2022 in the strategy and engage in public consultation to identify and agree that strategy.

10) Board / User advisory group

The leisure facilities tender stated in a clarification question that there would be a “User Advisory Group”. This was what the council stated

“The Council is keen to engage with local clubs and users on issues including the operation of the facilities and community outreach and development. The User Advisory Group would act as an advisory body to support this and would be made up of representatives from sports clubs, users, the operator and DBC. This would include the Dacorum Sports Network (but would not replace the role of DSN). “

The draft states under monitoring on page 12 “A sport and physical activity board will be created consisting of both internal and external stakeholders. It will meet at least twice a year to discuss progress on the outcomes of the strategy and the annual plan. “

The strategy should state the objectives of the group and it should have the authority a board has not be seen as an “advisor” or “monitor”. The group’s remit and responsibility should be specified in the strategy.

In relation to the leisure services contract, I would ask that this group is able to hold not only the council to account but the operator to help re-build the trust of the community after the farcical tendering process.

Also meeting twice a year gives no opportunity to correct issues in an expedient and cost-effective manner.

Action required Roles & Responsibilities of the board need to be clarified, and the role of the User Advisory Group needs to be specified.

11) Population vs Capacity

There is no evidence that the council has made provision for the increase in local population. Since the existing facilities/centres were built the population has grown significantly. The draft strategy should demonstrate that capacity for the anticipated growth in sport usage indicated in the strategy is there.

Action required Ensure capacity matches aspiration of the strategy and projected population growth

Feedback on strategy not in the draft

12) Relocation of facilities

The current printed edition of Dacorum Digest states “We will be bringing forward proposals for the development of a new athletics track and stadium. We will be conducting a public consultation with drop in sessions in June 2018”

Any re-location and reconfiguration of facilities should be based on a strategy. If it's not in the strategy it can be challenged. In this case, the strategy should describe a mechanism, and the direction relating to relocating facilities. For example, is it the council's strategy to sell valuable land in the middle of Hemel Hempstead for housing to pay for rebuilding on a cheaper site, and to use any money left over on sports development? Or is it the intention to take any surplus into central funds or to divert it away from sport facilities. This should be described in the strategy.

Action required Describe the council's strategy for relocation of facilities

13) Leisure contract performance strategy transparency

The recent contract awarded to Everyone Active was done against massive public opinion.

The tender requirements for the contract required an electronic helpdesk for council officers to enable them to manage the contract performance. In a clarification question the council was asked and answered the following:-

Question The Council has asked for access to an Electronic helpdesk (section 11) – what does it want?

Response:

The Council wants to be able to view information (and reports) on customers using the facilities in support of our service requirements and performance objectives. We are happy to work with the Operator to determine the best way to provide this and how we can gain information outside of normal reporting cycles.

The strategy should state that to demonstrate an openness to the running of the council's sports/leisure facilities, the electronic helpdesk should act as a portal not only for council officers but for the general public to enable them to re-build confidence in the council.

- For example, the general public should be able to view monthly reports of the performance issues via the council's website.
- For example, the general public should be able to see live data on what faults/complaints have been logged.

Reports will reflect the reporting requirements in the tender process, detail failings in the operator's performance, and where the council have failed to provide the facility to the operator. Clearly the public should only have read only access to the reports and dialogue between the council and the operator.

Members of the public should also be able to log faults/complaints online via the portal for reporting to the operator, which are then reflected in the live data and subsequently monthly reports.

Action required Specify in the strategy a mechanism to ensure the public see a transparent management of the boroughs leisure facilities. Eg Develop a portal to ensure the public can satisfy itself that the council is professionally managing the contract, that the operator is resolving issues to the performance metrics in the contract.

14) Leisure contract financial transparency

In addition, to the above point, to demonstrate that the council is holding the operator to account, the strategy should state that the council will operate an open book style of accounting transparency and publish the information via the helpdesk/portal. This should include

- Performance and payments of the contract
- Penalty payments for failure by the operator to deliver against contractual performance
- Payments made to the operator by DBC

Action required Specify in the strategy a mechanism to ensure the public see a transparent management of the boroughs leisure facilities relating to the financial objectives specified in the tender and published when the contract was signed.

15) Scrutiny of consultation – General public

The consultation was allegedly made available to the general public via the council's consultation website on the Thursday 19th April. However it was not publicised.

3 days prior to the closure of the 2 week consultation, the consultation was discovered by a member of the Facebook community group. Several urgent messages were sent to the council and the deadline was extended by 2 weeks. The council said that it had been advertised on the councils website and via the Dacorum Sports Network website. Since the extension of the deadline, up to today (16/5/18) 2 days before the closure of this extended consultation, the council has only publicised it to Facebook users 4 times in those 8 days. So clearly the council's publicity has resulted in only a small number of members of the public being aware of the consultation.

Personally, this is my position

- I have not received notification of the consultation or extension as a member of the public
- I have not received notification of either as administrator of the "Leisure facilities are not for profit" - but have publicised the consultation to the 2.5k people there.
- I have not received notification of either as a trustee of Dacorum Sports Trust Sportspace although I understand Sally Marshall confirmed with Rebecca Hemmant this morning that Dacorum Sports Trust have been consulted.
- I have not received notification of either as a member of the public who attended the workshop run by Rob Smyth on 30th of May 2017 entitled "Consultation workshop for residents to discuss issues and priorities for sports development and sports provision across Dacorum." Rob took my email address.
- I am not personally aware of a mailing list of "interested parties" but believe one exists as someone I know received information about it.

Further dialogue with Ben Russell from DBC who is running the consultation revealed the following:-

"This extension means that residents have had a total of 4 weeks to make any comments relating to the draft strategy. Further to this, we have promoted the consultation through our social media channels as well as our consultation emailing group (c.800 residents) and Dacorum Digest (c. 14,500 residents)."

This implies that extensive consultation has taken place, but this is not the case. The consultation has NOT been listed in the printed Dacorum Digest (circulated to 165,000 residents) which was distributed in the last 2 weeks. It has only been publicised to 16k via the electronic version of Dacorum Digest and a small number of "consultation" subscribers. 4 Facebook posts will only reach a small percentage of the 5,500 people following the council on Facebook.

The consultation has not been thorough, and has not reached as many people as the petition organised by the Facebook leisure facilities are not for profit group (C2,500) and has not reached as many people as signed the petition to stop the leisure facilities contract (c 8800).

Action required Consider re-running consultation.

16) Scrutiny of consultation - Clubs

I would like the council to print in the strategy the names of the clubs that were

- Consulted
- Responded
- Approve of the final draft

The draft refers to 200 clubs in the area, a number revealed during the leisure facilities tendering process by the community. Dacorum does not know who the 200 clubs are and has only had 1 meeting in late 2017 with 20 of them. It is a serious misrepresentation to put misleading text like "The standard of sports clubs within the borough is high, both in terms of performance level and the community work they undertake." By the councils own admission, the deputy director leading this project is not a sports industry professional and none of his staff are either. All of the staff who are sports industry professionals were moved from the council to Dacorum Sports Trust 14 years ago. In addition, if the council does have the expertise to make these kind of statements, why were the sports consultancy were paid a fat fee to provide professional facilities in the tendering process. Have they inspected and rated these clubs what is their professional competency to do this ?

Furthermore, in email dialogue with Ben Russel I attempted to understand how many of the 200 clubs had ACTUALLY responded or consulted.

2nd May 12.51 "We are consulting with a number of stakeholders on the strategy including local sports clubs, leisure operators and residents as well as the Herts Sports Partnership, Public Health and Sport England."

2nd May 14.01 I then asked for a complete list of clubs that were consulted. I didn't get an answer to this but received the following.

2nd May 14.29 "With regards to our club consultation, this was open to all sports clubs within Dacorum to attend, and as such was promoted on the Dacorum Sports Network website. From this we received a good response for our consultation which took place at the end of last year."

However, he did not state how many had actually seen the "promotion", how many the council had actually asked and how many the council had actually talked to.

I followed up again on the 14th of May to get the list of clubs and received the following:-

"I can confirm that due to the interest in the strategy, we extended the consultation deadline to Friday 18th May. This extension means that residents have had a total of 4 weeks to make any

comments relating to the draft strategy. Further to this, we have promoted the consultation through our social media channels as well as our consultation emailing group (c.800 residents) and Dacorum Digest (c. 14,500 residents).

We promoted the club consultation on the Dacorum Sports Network website which has a strong coverage of the clubs in Dacorum. A workshop was held where 20 Dacorum sports clubs attended the session, with good representation from a number of different sports. “

Anecdotally Dacorum Sports Network doesn't feature in the document as a partner etc, yet it's website is put forward as an effective method of promoting the consultation.

So the evidence from Ben Russel is that 20 clubs met with DBC in late 2017. 20 clubs out of 200. There is no evidence to suggest that the other “publicity” has actually worked and looking at the draft document, it certainly didn't result in any significant input to the draft consultation.

I also asked whether input from the 20 clubs consulted in late 2017 had been incorporated into the draft released on the public website on the 19th of April but didn't receive a reply. I understand the feedback has NOT been included therefore this document is not a consultation it is a tick in the box !

Furthermore, the portfolio holder stated that the following “representative stakeholder organisations, clubs & depts” have been consulted

External

Sport England

Dacorum Sports Network

Herts Sports Partnership

Tring Sports Forum

Harbour Lights Scuba club

Hemel Hempstead Bowls club

Bovingdon and Flaunden Tennis club

Berkhamsted Raiders Football club

Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead Hockey club

Hemel Hempstead Swimming club

Tring Swimming club

Tring Tornadoes sports club

Hemel Stags Rugby League

Hemel Storm Basketball

Berkhamsted Swimming club

Dacorum and Tring Athletics club

Hemel Town Youth Football club

Hemel Aces Football club

Herts Baseball club

Tring Tennis club

Internal

Planning

Resident Services

Housing

Community Partnerships

Parks and Open Spaces

There are 17 clubs listed and 3 sport organisations. So the claim that 20 clubs attended a meeting in late 2017 cannot be proven as fact as only 17 were consulted!

So the draft strategy would not seem to reflect the view of the 200 clubs in the area, and does not reflect the views of the 17 that were consulted.

Action required – Remove unsubstantiated misleading statements that the council cannot back up. Consider re-running consultation with full consultation with clubs.

17) Discrimination against regular members

The sports strategy should not disadvantage any group of sport users whether they be newcomers, OAP's or regular people.

To enable "Commitment 1: Increase participation in sport and physical activity for inactive people" you need to ensure that prices at the local sports and leisure facilities are kept to a minimum thereby enabling local people to participate.

This point was made to Robert Smyth deputy director at the consultation meeting on the 30th of May 2017 but does not appear in the sport strategy document. Therefore the public view has not been taken into account at the ONLY public meeting held to contribute into a sports strategy.

Page 6 and 7 state various commitments but none of these are targeted at the general population who make up the core of the community. So, if one is not part of an elite group, or minority, or hasn't exercised recently, there doesn't appear to be ANY recognition that the largest part of the community is actively being supported by DBC. This is a major omission.

The only reference in the strategy regarding regular users is "Allocate a proportion of community grant funding to be used to support provision for active people." which is a rather weak statement and should community funding not be available will be less than helpful.

However, the new leisure contract proactively discriminates against regular users of sports centres as it does not offer any protection of membership pricing after the first year of the contract. This is because the tender documents stated that only CORE products should be price protected. However, the majority of income and volume of users is through membership for swim and gym plus swimming lesson. The "core" products protected only comprise about 5-7 % of the income for the contract. (data provided by Dacorun Sport Trust)

The only statement that the council leader made during the public council meetings (cabinet, scrutiny and full council) was that prices that are not protected will find their own market level. This failed to take into consideration that most of the sports centres in the surrounding this area are now run by the same operator.

Should community funding be made (as referred to on page 11, there is no mechanism to see that this is not being returned to the operator and council in the form of profit and management fees. There needs to be clear separation between the commercial interests of the council and the operator and the funding available to avoid the council being accused of sucking back community funding via the management fee at the cost of regular facility users.

The contract makes no effort to protect the prices for the majority of sports facilities users.

Action required Ensure the strategy makes it clear that the regular users are not discriminated by the commercial interests by the council.

18) Commercial interests

The current strategy states

“Dacorum Borough Council will: Maintain a relationship with Dacorum Sports Trust who deliver major sports provision to the community using sports centres owned by the council “

As Dacorum Sports Trust is a non-profit charity, there was no issue with pricing being driven by commercial interests however the draft strategy fails to specify that the council now has a strategy to make money out of the contract for both it's own and commercial interests.

The new contract does not follow this strategy and is in the commercial interests of the council. The more money the operator makes, the more the council makes. This is a conflict of interest. It is a wholly unacceptable situation to develop a sport strategy that does not protect the pricing for the community.

Action required The strategy document should be transparent and the council should specify what it's strategy is with regards to making money out of leisure facilities.

Conclusion

This draft strategy is wholly inadequate and is clearly written with no sport industry knowledge. It is wholly inadequate without major changes which should be reviewed in final draft form by the community AND clubs before it is put forward for approval.