



Report for: Health and Wellbeing Board

Date of Meeting:	2 November 2023
Subject:	Health and Wellbeing strategy Update: Healthy Places
Responsible Officer:	Carole Furlong Director of Public Health Dipti Patel, Corporate Director of Place
Public:	Yes
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Presentation

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the work and commitments being taken forward as part of the healthy place domain of the health and wellbeing strategy. This includes community safety and housing.

Recommendations:

The Board is requested to:

- Note the work that is underway and planned to support the delivery of the health and wellbeing strategy
- Endorse the approach being taken to improve the health and wellbeing of Harrow

Section 2 – Report

This update of the health and wellbeing strategy will cover aspects of the healthy places domain of the strategy. At this meeting, there will be a presentation of the community safety strategy and an update on housing including: homelessness, damp and mould, increasing the quality of existing council homes, and new affordable homes, with reference to partnership working.

They are being presented to the health and wellbeing board because each has an impact on the health and wellbeing of residents and those working and visiting the borough.

Community Safety

Harrow's community safety strategy is a statutory requirement for all community safety partnerships. This 3-year strategy sets the vision for one this administration's key priorities, to create a borough that is clean and safe, and has been produced in collaboration with key agencies to create an ambitious plan to ensure Harrow remains a borough with one of the lowest crime rates in London.

The process to produce this strategy involved collecting and analysing data which highlighted crime trends and areas where focus was most needed. These findings were taken to consultation workshops with Members, statutory partners and VCS organisations were all given the opportunity to reflect and inform the discussion and raise any community safety concerns identified by Harrow residents. Post-workshop engagement also took place to ensure we fully captured the discussions. This process allowed us to identify priorities and shape the key outcomes and actions outlined in this plan.

The strategy identifies six key community safety priorities for Harrow and outlines how each of these will be measured and progress monitored. The priorities are as follows:

- Tackling and Reducing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Reducing incidents of Burglary / Motor Vehicle Crime / Robbery
- Reducing the number of violent incidents in the borough
- Tackling and reducing offences and harm caused by drugs
- Tackling Hate Crime
- Perception of Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

We anticipate that by working closely with our partners to implement this strategy we will ensure that Harrow remains one of the safest boroughs in London. A range of appropriate forums have been identified to deliver the action plan over the next three years.

Housing

1. Homelessness

London is in a severe housing affordability crisis due to the cost of living and changes in the Private Rented Sector (PRS). Average rents have gone up and there are limited housing options locally for families who need help from Housing Benefit or Universal Credit for housing costs and for families affected by the Benefit Cap.

Loss of private rented accommodation is the most common cause of homelessness in Harrow. Due to the small social housing stock in the borough private rented accommodation is the main housing solution but affordability is a challenge.

As it is difficult to find alternative affordable accommodation in Harrow, it is important for residents at risk of homelessness to try to avoid losing their current home and to seek help as early as possible. The Housing Needs service is successfully preventing more homelessness as a result of the early intervention initiatives in the B&B Elimination Strategy, such as the outreach programme. However, there are currently over 1000 households in temporary accommodation, with an increase in the use of nightly paid accommodation and B&B accommodation.

The Housing Needs service has a programme of initiatives to support rough sleepers in Harrow, offering them a route back to settled accommodation, including:

- an Outreach Team where specialist council officers tour the borough twice a week, building rapport with rough sleepers in order to support them off the streets
- a first stage Rough Sleeping Hub, with five private bedrooms which give service users a safe place to stay for 28 days and the opportunity to provide intensive support for personal issues
- a Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme scheme, where 9 flats have been purchased to provide accommodation for rough sleepers and a Housing First style support service is delivered by a local VCS organisation.

The annual street count will take place on the night of 23 November. The Outreach Team, alongside partner agencies, will visit hot spots across the borough to identify the number of rough sleepers bedded down.

Housing works with a range of partners, both statutory and voluntary and community sector, who come together at the Harrow Homelessness Reduction Board and the Operational Sub-group. The Board aims to work in partnership to deliver the objectives of the council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. Colleagues from Public Health and the NHS are represented on the board.

On an operational level, Housing Needs works closely with Health, Children's and Adult Social Care on a range of important issues, including hospital discharge, care leavers and move on from supported housing. Housing Needs also works closely with services across the council on asylum accommodation and refugee resettlement.

2. Damp and Mould

The death of toddler Awaab Ishak in Rochdale, in which the coroner found that damp and mould contributed to his death, highlighted the need for all social landlords to ensure their approach to damp and mould is appropriate and effective. The London Borough of Harrow must deal with damp and mould effectively both as a local authority landlord and as an environmental health service.

It is usually the tenant's responsibility to prevent condensation and to remove mould when it appears, including taking steps to ventilate and heat their home adequately. This may be particularly challenging currently, in the context of the cost of living. If problems with damp and mould continue after the tenant takes basic steps to address them, they should report the problem to their landlord or accommodation provider. They should carry out an inspection and fix any issues that are caused by a repair problem or that are affecting the health and safety of the occupants.

If the landlord or accommodation provider does not respond or adequately address the problem the tenant should contact Environmental Health, particularly if they cannot use some rooms or the damp or mould is affecting their health. The Environmental Health Domestic Team is responsible for checking conditions in private rented accommodation and targets properties that are poorly maintained, overcrowded, and/or have damp and mould issues. The team works with landlords and managing agents, using enforcement powers where necessary to serve legal notices.

Residential licensing is also used in Harrow to improve standards in the private rented sector, with both mandatory and additional HMO licensing across the borough and selective licensing in specific wards.

Housing is leading a cross-council working group on damp and mould, with representatives from Environmental Health, Public Health, Children's, and other services. The group reviews data, is developing a strategy, and has commissioned a campaign which is being delivered by the Communications Team. The campaign includes improved information on the website, posters, leaflets, videos and social media resources. The leaflet will be translated into a range of community languages. The group is also promoting services that assist residents with energy efficiency and fuel poverty, such as the pan-London service SHINE (delivered by Islington Council) and the new Harrow Energy Advice and Support with the Cost-of-Living Project (funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund).

Within council housing stock, the Asset Management service responds to reports of damp and mould. A surveyor is responsible for carrying out inspections and instructing repairs works. A specialist contractor is used when needed. A decrease in reports would be expected in spring and summer

months, but this has not been the case this. This may be due to a Housing Satisfaction Survey in March which asked tenants whether they experienced damp and mould in their property, and a national government campaign to encourage tenants to complain to their social landlord about disrepair.

The new Asset Management Strategy commits to developing a Damp Risk Assessment programme. This will help identify potential problems so that the appropriate preventative measures can be planned, such as improving ventilation, and in turn minimising response repair works.

As part of the approach to decarbonisation, energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty, the worst performing homes are being targeted. A fabric first approach is being taken with those properties where energy surveys indicate a rating of D and below. These improvements include insulation and ventilation systems which will help combat damp and mould.

3. Increasing the quality of existing council homes

Housing has secured £2.1 million from the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, which together with £3 million of investment by the London Borough of Harrow, is funding a two-year programme of extensive works to more than 236 council homes. This includes new windows, doors, roofs, ventilation and will boost the energy efficiency of the borough's poorest performing homes. The scheme will also pilot new green technologies including the installation of solar panels, under floor insulation and low energy lighting. These council tenants will benefit from lower energy bills and warmer homes. As part of its ambition for council tenants to have good quality, secure, well-maintained homes, Housing has developed its 3-year capital programme. This includes programmes for new kitchens and bathrooms, replacement windows and doors, and Homesafe 3 (security and compliance).

4. New affordable homes

After many years in the making, Harrow has completed the first new homes in the regeneration of the Grange Farm Estate. The moving in process started this summer and the Housing Regeneration service is working with the secure tenants to support them through the transition. There are 69 social rented homes and 20 homes that are being marketed for sale as shared ownership properties.

There are 54 homes currently being built that received some grant from the GLA, under the Building Homes for Londoners programme (BCHfL). These are located on Milton Road, Brookside Close, Charles Crescent and Waxwell Lane, consisting of 28 London Affordable Rent and 26 shared ownership units.

The council has also received a grant allocation under the GLA Affordable Home Programmes 2021-2026 to deliver 175 homes (60 for social rent and 115 for shared ownership). These will be delivered via the Harrow Strategic Development Partnership (HSDP).

Housing Regeneration works in partnership with Planning, the HSDP, and Registered Providers (housing associations) to ensure that opportunities for affordable housing in the borough are maximised.

Housing Regeneration also works closely with Health, Children's and Adult Social Care on developing housing needs assessments for different groups in the community (i.e. older people, mental health, learning disability) and identifying appropriate housing solutions.

Financial Implications/Comments

There are no direct costs associated with delivering the health and wellbeing strategy.

Whilst there are no additional direct financial implications arising from this report, the prioritisation of strategy, through the wider system, will need to be contained within existing partner resources, which includes the annual public health grant.

Legal Implications/Comments

Section 116A of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, stipulates that it is the responsibility of the local authority and integrated care boards to prepare a local health and wellbeing strategy.

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 provides responsibility to the Health and Wellbeing Board for the oversight of the local health and wellbeing strategy.

A key responsibility of the Health and Wellbeing Board is to therefore have oversight and accountability of the proposed strategy.

Risk Management Implications

The health and wellbeing strategy does not present any risks, or suggest any mitigation

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

The relevant risks contained in the register are attached/summarised below.
n/a

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? **No**

Harrow's Health and Wellbeing strategy plays a crucial role in advancing the equality, diversity, and inclusion agenda across the borough. By addressing the unique health needs of a diverse population, committing to addressing the

building blocks of good health as a priority, as well as ensuring that health and care services are accessible and tailored to different demographics, this therefore reduces health disparities and promotes equality. It also fosters inclusivity by actively engaging with underrepresented groups and involving them in the planning and implementation of initiatives - a key priority for this strategy. This strategy can help create an environment where all residents, regardless of their background or circumstances, feel valued, supported, and empowered to lead healthier lives, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and equitable society.

Council Priorities

A council that puts residents first

A place where those in need are supported

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance (Council and Joint Reports)

Statutory Officer: Donna Edwards

Signed on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 17/10/2023

Statutory Officer: Sharon Clarke

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 17/10/2023

Chief Officer: Senel Arkut

Signed by the Corporate Director

Date: 19/10/2023

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO as it impacts on all Wards

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Carole Furlong, Director of Public Health,

Carole.Furlong@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers:

[Harrow Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

- | | |
|-----------------|----|
| 1. Consultation | NO |
| 2. Priorities | NO |