

SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT COUNCIL – COMMUNITY, HEALTH AND HOUSING SERVICES UPDATE
February 2016

| SUBJECT | UPDATE |
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| Shared Housing Service | <p>The working arrangements of the shared housing service are being continuously reviewed to identify opportunities for improved service delivery and sharing of resources across the two authorities. The service is continuing to operate surgery sessions at the SBDC offices on Wednesdays and Fridays for customers who have to see an officer (e.g. a homelessness case) and cannot attend the CDC office. These meetings are by pre-arranged appointment.</p> <p>Two Housing Options Advisers have been appointed following resignations in December</p> <p>Held the Member workshop 3rd February which considered the current and future housing and homelessness pressures facing both CDC and SBDC and identified opportunities to be included in the Housing Strategy</p> |
| Bucks Home Choice | <p>As at 11th February 2016, a total of 578 applicants were registered with South Bucks District Council for Bucks Home Choice and were entitled to express interest in vacant social housing tenancies. A further 189 applicants were registered as Housing Options cases meaning that they have applied to Bucks Home Choice but do not qualify for the scheme and cannot express interest in vacancies. Applicants who are assessed as Housing Options cases will have received advice on their alternative housing options via the Bucks Home Choice website.</p> <p>The availability of properties to let via Bucks Home Choice has continued to be low compared with the number of households registered with Bucks Home Choice. Since 1 April 2015, an average of just two properties per week have been available for letting and been advertised. Consequently, many applicants in South Bucks continue to face a long wait for accommodation.</p> <p>For properties let in South Bucks via Bucks Home Choice since 1 April 2015 the average waiting times for an applicant to be rehoused have been:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 bedroom flat = 15 months 2 bedroom house = 14 months 3 bedroom house = 24 months 4 bedroom house = No Lettings |
| Homelessness | <p>To date in 2015/16 (since 1 April 2014), South Bucks DC has determined a total of 66 homelessness applications of which 50 were deemed to be subject to the main homelessness duty (i.e. the duty to secure accommodation).</p> <p>This pressure on the housing options and homelessness service is evident in the continuing high demand for temporary accommodation for homeless households. The combination of this rising demand with a lack</p> |

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| | <p>of available vacancies in the social housing stock has resulted in an increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation. As at 8th February 2016, SBDC had a total of 57 homeless households in temporary accommodation including 26 in B&B. Of the 26 households in B&B, a total of 9 were households with/expecting children who had been in B&B for at least six weeks. Officers are working actively to move these households on to alternative accommodation.</p> <p>The demand for temporary accommodation and use of bed and breakfast results in an estimated net expenditure of £77k as the expenditure on B&Bs is only partially offset by Government subsidy.</p> <p>Officers continue to look at securing additional and alternative temporary accommodation provision including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SBDC continues to utilise six properties owned by Thames Valley Police as temporary accommodation (located adjacent to the Police Station on Oxford Road, Gerrards Cross) via Bucks Housing Association. It has been agreed that SBDC can continue to utilise these properties as temporary accommodation during 2015/16 until Thames Valley Police TVP is disposes of the property in 2016/17 - Officers have been utilising several Paradigm-owned properties in Amersham and South Bucks as temporary accommodation for SBDC clients pending their re-development or disposal. - In October 2015, uses 4 vacant former student housing L+Q units in Wycombe as temporary accommodation. |
| <p>Private Sector Housing and DFGs</p> | <p>Since 1 April 2015 in the Council's DFG (Disabled Facilities Grant) Capital Programme:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 45 grants for adaptation works have been approved - 38 grants have been completed (some of these grants were originally approved prior to 1 April 2015) <p>SBDC's Disabled Facilities Grant capital budget is on schedule to be fully committed before the end of 2015/16.</p> <p>The team is working with and increased number of landlords who are letting or proposing to let properties as HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation).</p> <p>DECC Green Deal Communities programme is on target to achieve 586 improved properties across the 15 LAs in the partnership scheme. The scheme has also been extended to support those in fuel poverty enabling 92 households in SBDC to register an interest in energy efficiency improvements, 46 Green Deal applications sent out, 25 grant applications received, with 12 offers of assistance made so far.</p> <p>Additionally the fuel poverty group has enabled residents with respiratory and cardiovascular illness to access the Better Housing Better Health scheme funded by British Gas.</p> |

| | The boiler replacement scheme has also enabled 7 households, in receipt of benefits, in SBDC to access new heating systems. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Affordable Housing | <p>In 2015/16, there have been 4 additional affordable homes delivered in South Bucks funded through the Acquisition or Your Choice Equity Loan scheme. These schemes utilise Commuted Sums arising for section 106 agreements. The current position on the councils availability of community sums is</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>£</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Total received (including interest)</td> <td>£5,459,302</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total spent (including re-charges)</td> <td>£3,454,592</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total committed (approved minus spent)</td> <td>£1,057,407</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Newly committed STG site (12 affordable rented properties)</td> <td>£235,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Available</td> <td>£712,303</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Cabinet has recently agreed to commit funds, subject to Catalysts Housing Ltd Board Approval to enable 12 affordable rented properties to be developed during 2016/17.</p> <p>Since 2011 Commuted Sums have secured 65 affordable homes for SBDC residents through the operation of;</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scheme Type</th> <th>Numbers</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>BuyBacks/Acquisitions</td> <td>31</td> </tr> <tr> <td>YourChoice Equity Loan</td> <td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New build conversion grant</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tenant Incentive to Purchase</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tenant Incentive to Downsize</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Numbers delivered (Jan 2011 to-date)</td> <td>65</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>A full report on commuted sums will be presented to the next PAG</p> | | £ | Total received (including interest) | £5,459,302 | Total spent (including re-charges) | £3,454,592 | Total committed (approved minus spent) | £1,057,407 | Newly committed STG site (12 affordable rented properties) | £235,000 | Total Available | £712,303 | Scheme Type | Numbers | BuyBacks/Acquisitions | 31 | YourChoice Equity Loan | 22 | New build conversion grant | 3 | Tenant Incentive to Purchase | 1 | Tenant Incentive to Downsize | 8 | Numbers delivered (Jan 2011 to-date) | 65 |
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| Housing Related Support (Supporting People) contracts | The existing Supporting People contracts for housing related support services in Bucks were renewed for most suppliers for a further two years (2015/16 and 2016/17). Most suppliers have had a cut in their funding and have had to review and reduce their services accordingly. The services affected in South Bucks (i.e. that currently have SP contracts) are Padstones and Bucks Floating Support. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <p>Bucks County Council is now reviewing how homelessness support and prevention services should be delivered after the existing contracts come to an end (i.e. at the end of 2016/17). Bucks CC has held initial discussions with District Council Housing Managers to consider what service provision will be required beyond 2016/17 and further strategic discussions are taking place later in November.</p> |
| Licensing | <p>The draft Taxi and private hire policy will be presented to the licensing committee in March for consideration ahead of formal consultation</p> <p>300 of the 450 drivers licenced for CDC and SBDC have been trained on Safeguarding through the Bernardo's Night Safe programme enabling drivers to be aware of DV, CSE and other safeguarding matters. The courses were well received by the trade and follow up courses are planned for late February and March.</p> <p>All drivers will be expected to take the training as part of their competency to be a 'fit and proper' person. New applicants will be required to receive training and the knowledge test has been updated to incorporate questions on safeguarding.</p> <p>Meeting with Taxi trade for SBDC raised a number of issues in relation to use of Chiltern Rail station forecourts, impact of the 3-year and 5-year fees, licence renewal reminders, information of the DBS updater service. Trade is seeking a joint Taxi forum with statutory agencies to support improved partnership working with businesses. Taxi rank provision remains a concern for the trade and the Council will facilitate discussions with Highways over the provision. The trade also wishes to see a limit on the number of licences issued.</p> <p>These matters will be considered at policy renewal.</p> |
| Environmental Health Shared Service | <p>The shared service is now operational across both councils and all data has been migrated to the shared Uniform database enabling remote access to information and documents.</p> <p>Team building and development is currently being undertaken to deliver a single team culture and procedures.</p> <p>Food business performance has improved so that 94% of food outlets are compliant with regulatory standards. Work will be undertaken in addition to the risks based inspection programme to drive standards up in the 6% poorly performing premises.</p> <p>The 2014/15 air quality report has been submitted to DEFRA</p> <p>Ongoing work includes:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing activity around partnership working on ASB • Update report sent to the Local Government Ombudsman regarding the extending monitoring of alleged nuisance at Lent Rise Road Burnham |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Licensing and Housing relating to caravan site at Dudley Wharf • Prior approval requests for Crossrail, Pinewood, Mill Lane Taplow <p>Working with Planning Policy to ensure mitigation of infrastructure impacts of:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HS2 moving the Heathrow Express depot to Langley • M4 Smart Motorway Public Inquiry • Western Rail Access • Heathrow |
| Community Safety | <p>Whilst South Bucks remains a very safe place with low levels of crime there has been an increase in crime - current figures for the rolling 12 month period:-</p> <p>209 burglary dwelling crimes up 7% to 223 in 2014 2315 burglary non-dwelling crimes up 8% 291 in 2014 407 thefts from vehicles down 9% down from 445 in 2014 Continued low incidents of recorded ASB 667 all violent crimes (non-physical i.e. bullying, threats) up 33% from 503 in 2014. This is understood to be linked to the change in national recording standards and the increase has been seen across the Force.</p> <p>The team has supported the launch of a Dementia-Friendly Communities in Iver and Denham, the launch was attended by over 25 different groups and businesses who may take opportunities to become more dementia-friendly.</p> <p>The winter burglary plan continues with the top repeat victim roads being targeted with the Police and Community Safety team. Residents have been visited and offered crime reduction advice/timer switches and SelectaDNA.</p> <p>The Community Safety Partnership received a community trigger in Iver and following the review no further action was required by the agencies.</p> <p>Domestic Homicide Review, the 1st draft report has been produced which will be the subject of review before submission to the Home Office. The case has proceeded to trial at Reading Crown Court with 3 persons being charged with murder and offences of joint enterprise.</p> <p>Community Cards – visiting all schools year 6 to encourage sign up 16 signed up.</p> <p>The Home Office Prevent grant has been used to deliver WRAP training in schools and feedback is that there is good take up from schools in CDC and SBDC, more than in other areas of Bucks</p> <p>Staff are currently delivering the ‘Community Response to Extremism’ video to faith leaders and young people in the community with a session at Fulmer Mosque</p> |

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| <p>Community and Leisure</p> | <p>Officers are preparing the SBDC brief to consider the future leisure needs of the district to enable options to be considered in relation to the Evreham Centre.</p> <p>Supporting the annual Chairman’s Community and Volunteering Awards 2016 is now open for nominations http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/Chairmansawards</p> <p>Safeguarding policies agreed and updated, training being rolled out to staff and later Members</p> <p>Held the Community Cohesion Forum which considered the impact of Doorstep Crime on the vulnerable and the challenges faced by the Welfare Benefit Changes</p> <p>Four proposals submitted for £15k to fund the Active Bucks Proposals including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking Football in Burnham • Young people activities in Beaconsfield • Yoga and Pilates in Gerrards Cross • Activities in local parks for Wexham and Iver <p>Indoor Rowing competition is scheduled for 1 and 3 March 2016.</p> <p>Delivered 2 training events enabling SBDC Voluntary Sector Groups and Parish Councils to on ‘<i>what do management committees do</i>’</p> <p>The Wexham and Iver Residents Survey A joint survey with Bucks County Council identified the priorities as being;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic and HGV implications on Major infrastructure projects • Parking issues • Footpath Improvements • Reducing social isolation for the elderly and vulnerable • Fly tipping <p>The team will work with CIB and BCC on Good Neighbour schemes in Iver and Denham following feedback from the Prevention Matters project.</p> <p>Dementia Communities – working with the countywide partnership to create dementia communities in South bucks with launch events in Iver, Denham and Burnham</p> <p>Supporting the community clean in celebration of the ‘Clean for the Queen’ campaign</p> <p>Delivering the 2016 National Citizenship Service programme in the district building on the success delivered in 2015.</p> |
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