

Health & Wellbeing Board

Buckinghamshire

Developing a One Council approach to delivering housing for people with social care needs

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Consideration: **Information** **Discussion**
 Decision **Endorsement**

Please indicate to which priority in the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, [Happier, Healthier Lives Strategy \(2022-2025\)](#) your report links to.

Start Well	Live Well	Age Well
<input type="checkbox"/> Improving outcomes during maternity and early years	<input type="checkbox"/> Reducing the rates of cardiovascular disease	<input type="checkbox"/> Improving places and helping communities to support healthy ageing
<input type="checkbox"/> Improving mental health support for children and young people	<input type="checkbox"/> Improving mental health support for adults particularly for those at greater risk of poor mental health	<input type="checkbox"/> Improving mental health support for older people and reducing feelings of social isolation
<input type="checkbox"/> Reducing the prevalence of obesity in children and young people	<input type="checkbox"/> Reducing the prevalence of obesity in adults	<input type="checkbox"/> Increasing the physical activity of older people

None of the above? Please clarify below:

Housing is a key determinant of health and has a key impact on both physical and mental health and wellbeing. The delivery of appropriate and quality accommodation for children and adults with social care needs is also key in helping individuals maximise their potential and stay independent longer. Some design principles will support the specific health and wellbeing strategy priorities above.

Start Well

Live Well

Age Well

1. Purpose of report

1.1 This report provides an overview of the development of a One Council Approach to delivering accommodation to meet the needs of children and adults with social care needs. The development of the Unitary Authority has provided a new opportunity for social care, housing, planning and property teams with the Council to work in a co-ordinated way to achieve this. Housing is a key wider determinant of health.

2. Recommendation to the Health and Wellbeing Board

1. The Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to note the proposals contained within the report.

3. Content of report

Background

3.1 The Unitary Authority offers new opportunities to take a co-ordinated and Council wide approach to the planning and delivery to meet the housing needs of children and adults with social care needs. To progress this the Council has established an Adult Social Care Accommodation Steering Group, which has been developing an action plan to maximise the potential of a Unitary Authority to support this agenda. Appropriate housing is a key determinant in the health and wellbeing of social care clients. In addition, access to appropriate housing also has a financial impact, with the availability of the right types of housing enabling people to stay independent for longer, supporting more effective care provision and enabling clients to continue to reside in Buckinghamshire. The creation of a One Council Action Plan will deliver benefits for both residents and the Council.

Housing and health & wellbeing

3.2 There is existing evidence that a safe, warm and secure home underpins people's ability to lead a happy and healthy life and prevents physical and mental ill health. The Covid pandemic has illustrated the importance of having the right home, as we have been asked to stay in our homes for long periods, often without social contact. It is also widely recognized that different types of housing can play a significant role in effective care and support to enable people with substantial social care and health needs to live as independently as possible within their community, including people with dementia.

3.3 In 2018, Buckinghamshire's Director of Public Health wrote her report with a focus on housing, 'Healthy places, healthy futures, growing great communities'. The report recognised that poor housing is a driver of poor health and increasing health inequalities and has significant impact on our mental health and wellbeing. Living where you can afford, knowing that you have certainty of a safe and stable home helps us to put down roots and create a sense of belonging and greater involvement within community life. The report recognised that improving the health of Buckinghamshire residents reduces the demand on health, social care and other public services.

- 3.4 The right home environment is crucial to health and wellbeing, so housing is considered to be one of the wider determinants of health. Unhealthy, unsuitable or unstable housing presents a risk to a person's physical and mental health. Investing in housing, particularly for vulnerable people, can also affect and avoid costs for other public services, for example reducing costs of health services and residential care.
- 3.5 However, not everyone has the same opportunities for securing a good quality and affordable home in the right place. People who are elderly or young without a support network or family, adults with disabilities or mental health needs are all more likely to need help to get the right housing.
- 3.6 Within Buckinghamshire Council, Housing, Planning and Property are working together with Adults and Health and Children's Services to plan strategically to deliver the right housing for people with social care needs and to help those people access appropriate housing, as the Council has statutory duties towards its residents in respect of both housing and care. Being flexible with resources and collaborating across departments to meet those statutory duties will ensure that we can respond holistically to need, but also focus on prevention, allowing people to live as independently as possible in their own community.

Social care reform

- 3.7 The need for improved collaboration between health, housing and social care has long been recognised and indeed was set out within the Care Act 2014. This need for effective collaboration has never been more important, with significant changes for social care underway through social care reform and funding for local government. In December 2021 the Government issued its plans for the future of social care in England – People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care Reform. The paper recognised that too many people with care and support needs still live in inappropriate housing and three housing priorities were identified: embed housing into the local health and care system, make it easier for people to adapt their home so they can live independently and increase the supply of specialist housing.

One Council approach to accommodation for people with social care needs

- 3.8 The creation of the Unitary Council in Buckinghamshire from April 2020 onwards brought together in one place the key responsibilities for housing, including homelessness, housing allocations, the wider housing strategy and planning. Whilst recognising the wider public health and housing agenda, it should also be acknowledged that all of these responsibilities have the potential for significant impact on people with social care needs, both positive and negative.
- 3.9 A partnership approach therefore needs to be developed both within the Council and with its external partners for housing and care, as well as generating new partnerships with external developers and providers to increase housing capacity and deliver innovative models of care.

3.10 Action and progress has already been made:

- The Adult Social Care Accommodation Steering Group has been established. It is attended by representatives from a range of council departments and is chaired by the Director of Integrated Commissioning, Adults and Health. The overlap with accommodation for children with care needs has been recognised and the membership and terms of reference for the group are currently being reviewed and will include representation from Children's Services.
- A Market Analysis has been commissioned and is close to completion. This analysis will use local data to forecast the accessible housing requirements for people with social care needs.
- Children's Services are mapping both the potential housing needs of young people who will transition into Adult Social Care (to inform the Market Analysis above) and the numbers of young people leaving care which will inform the accommodation need for this group into the future.
- Work has been completed to develop a set of design principles for people with social care needs / accommodation requirements to inform how these needs can be supported through local planning.

3.11 The creation of the Adult Social Care Accommodation Steering group is a positive step to bring together people from within the Council with the right skills and knowledge. The meetings to date have generated much discussion and wider engagement from different departments. The group includes representation from Children's Services who have accommodation needs in respect of young people leaving care and jointly with Adult Social Care in respect of transitions. The group is in the process of transitioning to a Specialist Housing Group, to act as a sub group to key plans and strategies for planning and housing. The Specialist Housing Group will report into and have membership from three Directorates within the Council, these are; Adults and Health, Children's Services and Planning, Growth and Sustainability.

3.12 The work of the group has identified a range of strategies and plans that need to align to deliver maximum benefit. These include:

- Housing allocation policy
- Local Plan
- Business cases to consider children's or adults social care accommodation for any Council land or property that becomes available for development

Future work needs to ensure that these plans enable responses to social care housing needs.

3.13 Key to informing these strategies and plans is the availability of good evidence on the housing needs of social care clients in terms of type of housing, location, numbers and key design features. The Market Analysis, commissioned by Adults and Health, in respect of specific housing requirements for adult social care, has been undertaken in many other parts of the country and should provide the evidence base in respect of accommodation currently used by

service users. It will also forecast forward future requirements of housing units needed across the county and will form the basis for development of the housing elements of the adult social care Market Position Statement for accommodation, which is due to be updated in 2023. The Market Position Statement is a key document to inform developers, housing providers and care providers of the future needs in Buckinghamshire to facilitate the development of local provision.

4. Next steps and review

4.1 It is recognised that it will take time to further develop and truly embed a One Council approach.

The ongoing work will have 4 areas of focus:

- Identifying and mobilising key responsibilities and joint working across teams within the Council
- Ensuring full co-ordination across key strategies and plans and where appropriate the development of businesses cases for specific developments
- Ongoing market analysis and effective use of data and intelligence
- Engagement with wider stakeholders such as Registered Housing Providers and Developers
- Return to Health and Wellbeing Board in 12 months to discuss progress and successes

5. Background papers

None