

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Executive
Date: 13th March 2023
Report for: Decision
Report of: Executive Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods

Report Title

Trafford Supported Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2028

Summary

Supported housing provides a vital service for vulnerable people and has a critical role in supporting people who are vulnerable and disadvantaged because of age, ill-health, disability, or their circumstances and cannot live independently. Appropriate housing is a crucial element of preventative services and is necessary to allow those who require support to receive it in a settled and secure environment.

Trafford Housing Strategy 2018-2023 highlighted a need to draft a Supported Housing Strategy. The Supported Housing Strategy forms part of a suite of specialist and supported housing strategies that sit under the main Housing Strategy 2018-2023 and is intended to support and complement other strategy documents such as Trafford Council Homelessness Strategy 2019-2024 and Trafford Older People’s Housing Strategy 2020-2025.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Executive approves the Trafford Supported Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2028 for publication.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Laura Eaton, Housing Project Officer
Caroline Siddall, Housing Strategy & Growth Manager

Background Papers: None

- Appendix 1: Trafford Supported Housing Strategy 2023-2028
- Appendix 2: Trafford Supported Housing Strategy 2023-2028 – Summary Statement
- Appendix 3: Trafford Supported Housing Strategy Action Plan 2023-2028
- Appendix 4: Trafford Supported Housing Strategy 2023-2028 Consultation Report

Implications:

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	<p>The priorities detailed within the Supported Housing Strategy 2023-2028 meet the Council’s Corporate Priorities of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing health inequalities • Addressing our climate crisis • Supporting people out of poverty <p>In addition, the Strategy is complimentary to, and will play a key part in, delivering elements of the Trafford Housing Strategy 2018-2023 and the Trafford Homelessness Strategy 2019-2024.</p>
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	The Supported Housing Strategy 2023-2028 is aligned with the priorities contained within the GM Strategy and the GM Housing Strategy (2019-24).
Financial	The Strategy identifies actions for the Housing Strategy & Growth Team, HOST, Adult Services, Youth Services, Welfare Rights, Mental Health services, and Commissioning to deliver within existing staff resources and budgets. It also identifies potential actions to be delivered in partnership with other key public, charitable and private stakeholders.
Legal Implications:	None as a consequence of this report – The Strategy doesn’t have any adverse effect on providing our statutory homelessness functions.
Equality/Diversity Implications	None as a consequence of this report.
Sustainability Implications	None as a consequence of this report.
Carbon Reduction	None as a consequence of this report.
Resource Implications e.g. Staffing / ICT / Assets	Existing staff resources will need to be identified to support the delivery of the Strategy. Information will be made available online and documents will be available to access through the Council’s web pages.
Risk Management Implications	Risk to delivery of the recommendations detailed within the Strategy will be monitored and updated as required.
Health & Wellbeing Implications	<p>The Strategy’s main aim is to work collaboratively to provide a range of quality supported housing, and housing related support, to enable those with support needs to live independently in Trafford. The following Strategic priorities will have a direct impact on the health and wellbeing of residents with support needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enable people with support needs to live as independently as possible within Trafford. - Ensure an adequate supply of quality, accessible and affordable supported housing, and move-on accommodation, is in place - Establish closer working relationships with external services, organisations, and charitable bodies to ensure appropriate support is available and easily accessible. - Ensure housing advice is promoted and easily accessible to those with support needs in Trafford.
Health and Safety Implications	None as a consequence of this report.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Trafford Housing Strategy 2018-2023 highlighted a need to draft a Supported Housing Strategy to determine current and future need for supported housing in Trafford. The Supported Housing Strategy (see Appendix 1) covers the five years from 2023 to 2028 and forms part of a suite of specialist and supported housing strategies that sit under the main Housing Strategy 2018-2023. The Strategy provides strategic direction regarding national, regional, and local policies to promote the housing needs and desires of those with support needs. As the Supported Housing Strategy 2023-2028 is a long document containing a lot of detail, a shorter, summary document that sits alongside the main Strategy was created (see Appendix 2).
- 1.2 An Action Plan (see Appendix 3) has been developed alongside the Strategy to detail the steps the Council will take to implement the Strategy along with the anticipated timeframe for completion. The Action Plan was developed with input from several services across the Council including Commissioning, Children's Services, Public Health, and the Autism & Learning Disability Team.
- 1.3 Both the Strategy and the Action Plan have been drafted in the context of the Council's Corporate Priorities, the Trafford Housing Strategy (2019-2023), GM Housing Strategy and discussions with key stakeholders.

2.0 Local Need

- 2.1 The Supported Housing Strategy 2023-2028 identifies the supported housing need, current provision, and future provision required to meet the demands for several cohorts; those experiencing domestic abuse, ex-offenders, those with learning disabilities and Autism, those with physical and sensory disabilities, those who struggle with substance misuse, young people, and those with complex needs.
- 2.2 The consultation findings and research that shaped the Strategy indicated that across all cohorts' individuals want to live as independently as possible. The current provision of supported accommodation and move-on accommodation in the borough is not sufficient to meet the demand and therefore limits the opportunity for individuals to achieve their ambition of independent living.
- 2.3 Residents and stakeholders both noted a need for greater provision of move-on accommodation, particularly for ex-offenders and those with mental health needs. This gap in provision often leads to individuals remaining in supported accommodation for longer than necessary, which over time reduces their ability to live independently as they become reliant on support. In relation to ex-offenders, this can also result in re-offending.
- 2.4 A challenge within Trafford is the lack of affordable and social rented accommodation. Private rents within Trafford are amongst the highest in Greater Manchester which often prices those with support needs, who are reliant on welfare benefits, out of the sector. Combined with the national shortage of social housing, individuals with support needs become reliant on supported accommodation as the most affordable option, even in situations where they could live more independently in general needs housing with floating support.
- 2.5 Individuals who reside in supported accommodation within Trafford are often prevented from working as the reduction in benefits when entering employment can render the accommodation unaffordable. This again limits the ability for individuals with support needs to become independent and restricts them from contributing towards society. Also, Individuals with support

needs in Trafford are often accommodated in supported accommodation as a crisis response. To overcome this challenge, greater forward planning is required to allow individuals to access supported accommodation when they want to, rather when they need to/are in crisis.

- 2.6 A large majority of Trafford residents with support needs currently live with parents/family members, but most would prefer to live independently. As parents/family members become unable to care for these individuals due to age/ill health, they are left in crisis with limited skills for independent living. The most appropriate type of accommodation for those with support needs is 1-bedroom self-contained property. However, there is a shortage of this type of accommodation across the borough.
- 2.7 In 2021/22, Trafford's Tenancy Support Team, which is part of Housing Options Service Trafford (HOST), received 253 referrals for tenancy related support, of which 224 were accepted. The referrals included a variety of different support needs including managing substance misuse, maintaining accommodation, avoiding eviction, budgeting, managing mental health, minimising self-harm and managing physical health. The current average waiting time for support is three months, which gives an indication of the demand for support within the borough.
- 2.8 In 2021/22, 160 referrals were made into Trafford's Commissioned Homeless Supported Accommodation schemes. Trafford currently commission three schemes in the borough, which provide a total of 60 bed spaces for homeless people needing extra support before moving to their own property. Of these 60 beds, 20 are for young people aged 16-19. During 2021/22, 44 referrals to these schemes were refused due to the individuals support needs being too high or complex. Trafford does not currently commission any schemes for those with high-level or complex support needs (someone with one or more support need), which means these individuals are often placed in B&B style emergency accommodation. B&B accommodation isn't appropriate for these individuals and the Strategy looks to address this gap to provide more high needs accommodation.

3.0 Supported Housing Strategy and Action Plan

- 3.1 The Vision for the Strategy is:

“Work collaboratively to provide a range of quality supported housing, and housing related support, to enable those with support needs to live independently in Trafford”

- 3.2 The Strategic Priorities are:

Priority 1: Enable people with support needs to live as independently as possible within Trafford.

Priority 2: Ensure an adequate supply of quality, accessible and affordable supported housing, and move-on accommodation, is in place.

Priority 3: Establish closer working relationships with external services, organisations, and charitable bodies to ensure appropriate support is available and easily accessible.

Priority 4: Ensure housing advice is promoted and easily accessible to those with support needs in Trafford.

Priority 5: Explore and review good practice in other Local Authority areas in relation to supported accommodation and support services and implement within Trafford where possible.

3.3 The Individual Analysis section of the Supported Housing Strategy contains a breakdown of supported housing need, current provision, future provision, and strategic objectives relating to each of the following need groups:

- Domestic Abuse
- Ex-offenders
- Learning disabilities and Autism
- Mental Health
- Physical and Sensory Disabilities
- Substance Misuse
- Young People
- Complex Needs

3.4 The Action Plan summarises the Strategic Priorities and the tasks required to achieve them. Once approved, a Supported Housing Champions Group will be established and this group will adopt the Action Plan as its delivery plan and provide a co-ordination role in terms of delivery, monitoring progress and performance management.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 Following completion of the Draft Strategy, a six-week public consultation was held during September and October 2022. An online survey was created which posed questions relating to the proposed priorities and actions required to deliver them. A copy of the survey, Draft Strategy and appendices were available on the Council's website following a press release and publicity via social media.

4.2 In total, 22 responses were received to the online survey (see Appendix 4) with 41% being a personal view from residents and elected members. 59% of the responses were made on behalf of an organisation, such as housing associations, and private sector organisations including voluntary sector/charities.

4.3 Overall, respondents were very positive about the creation of the Strategy, the proposed priorities and recommendations identified. Respondents felt the following priority was the most important: *"Ensure an adequate supply of quality, accessible and affordable supported housing, and move-on accommodation, is in place"*.

4.4 After assessing all consultation responses and suggested additions, the Strategy has been amended to include the following recommendations within the relevant priority:

Priority1: Enable people with support needs to live as independently as possible within Trafford.

- Explore opportunities to involve those with support needs in the wider decision-making process e.g., seeking advice on style of accommodation and type of support required.

Priority 4: Ensure housing advice is promoted and easily accessible to those with support needs in Trafford.

- Consult with those with support needs to understand barriers to accessing advice and explore how best to resolve these.

5.0 Wider Corporate Linkages

5.1 The recommendations detailed within the Supported Housing Strategy 2023-2028 meet the Corporate Priorities of “Reducing Health Inequalities”, “Supporting People Out of Poverty” and “Addressing our climate crisis”. The Supported Housing Strategy 2023-2028, coupled with the Trafford Housing Strategy 2018-2023 and GM Housing Strategy 2019-2024, forms a comprehensive and fully joined up approach to supported housing within Trafford.

6.0 Other Options

6.1 An option is not to have a Supported Housing Strategy for the borough. The absence of a Supported Housing Strategy would mean that Trafford would not have a strategic and co-ordinated approach to meeting the challenge of delivering supported housing to meet the needs of residents.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 The Executive is asked to approve the Trafford Supported Housing Strategy and Draft Action Plan 2023-2028 which sets the key priorities for the borough and the actions required to deliver them by the Council and other key partners. The overarching Supported Strategy will provide the mechanism to supported housing in the borough and meet the Council’s Corporate Priorities, actions contained within the Trafford Housing Strategy 2018-2023 and Homelessness Strategy 2019-2024, and wider GM priorities.

Key Decision: Yes

If Key Decision, has 28-day notice been given? Yes

Finance Officer Clearance - PC

Legal Officer Clearance - TR

CORPORATE DIRECTOR’S SIGNATURE



To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Executive Member has cleared the report.