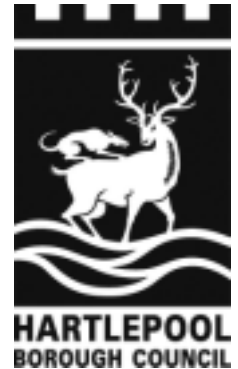


CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Tuesday, 21 April 2009

at 4.30 pm

in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

MEMBERS: CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors Aiken, Fleet, Griffin, Kaiser, London, McKenna, Preece, Shaw and Simmons

Co-opted Member: David Relton

Resident Representatives: Christopher Akers-Belcher, Joan Steel and Sally Vokes

Young Peoples Representatives: Michael Burford, Arran Frame, Dean Jeffries, Chris Lund, Gillian Pounder and Graham Skinner

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
3. **MINUTES**
 - 3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2009.
 - 3.2 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2009 (*to follow*)
4. **RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items

5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

No items

6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

No items

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

7.1 Draft Final Report: Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – *Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum*

8. ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM FORWARD PLAN

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

3 MARCH 2009

The meeting commenced at 4.30 p.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Jane Shaw (In the Chair)

Councillors: Martyn Aiken, Mary Fleet, Sheila Griffin, Francis London, Arthur Preece and Chris Simmons.

Resident Representative: Christopher Akers-Belcher.

Also Present: Councillor Cath Hill, Children's Services Portfolio Holder
Peter Gowland, Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA)

Officers: Sue Johnson, Assistant Director, Planning and Service Integration
Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Safeguarding and Specialist Services
Siobhan Rafferty, Supported Housing Co-ordinator
Tracey Rudd, Benefits Liaison Officer
Lynda Igoe, Principal Housing Advice Officer
James Walsh, Scrutiny Support Officer
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

112. Apologies for Absence

Councillors Kaiser and McKenna, Co-opted Member David Relton and Resident Representatives Joan Steel and Sally Vokes.

113. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

114. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 13 January and 27 January 2009.

115. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

None.

116. Corporate Plan 2009/10 Proposed Objectives and Actions *(Scrutiny Support Officer / Director of Children's Services)*

The Assistant Director gave a presentation to the Forum on the proposed outcomes and actions for the Corporate Plan 2009/10 as they related to the Children's Services Department. The Assistant Director addressed the achievements highlighted in the 2008 Annual Performance Assessment, and the areas to target such as teenage conceptions and the low proportion of mothers in the town breastfeeding. The Corporate Plan section relating to Children's Service was consistent with the Children and Young People's Plan, which was to be presented to Council for approval in late March.

Members raised the following questions and comments –

- “Enjoy and Achieve”; what was being done to ensure children were enjoying their education and how was that measured? The Assistant Director commented that there was significant work being undertaken on this but did admit it was something that was difficult to measure.
- Concern was raised at the low number of mothers breastfeeding and the high levels of teenage pregnancies and young mothers smoking. These areas were being predominantly tackled by the Primary Care Trust (PCT), though with some joint working with the Council. There were PCT targets on smoking and antenatal classes issued very strong advice on smoking. As had been reported to Members on many occasions, there was significant joint work being undertaken on the issue of teenage pregnancies. The target was one set by central government and there was relationship and sex education within schools, the Youth Service was working closely with the PCT on sexual health advice and contraception, and there were other advice and support projects including advice for parents.
- What advice/support is being offered to schools to assist in the advancement of standards at Key Stage 2 (KS2). The Assistant Director commented that there was no magic bullet to break through, what the Councillor described as a glass ceiling. There were some alterations that could be made to the schools formula to give a little more to the most disadvantaged schools. There was a problem with the foundation stage and that was where the work of the Children's Centres were intended to have an effect.
- What work was being done in schools to highlight services such as the credit union in the current economic climate. The Assistant Director stated that there was an increasing use of the family information unit which could signpost families to a lot of different services. This was, however, leading to more complex issues coming forward and additional training had to be given to staff to deal with these problems. Peter Gowland (HVDA)

commented that Credit Union staff were going out into the schools to talk about debt issues.

- There was concern that the redevelopment of schools through Building Schools for the Future (BSF) had the potential to deflect teaching staff from their primary role thus leading to a fall in standards. The Assistant Director indicated that officers didn't underestimate that problem. The School Improvement Team's work would continue and the Transformation Team would be a separate function giving additional resource through the process. The department would be maintaining the close relationship with secondary heads. Hartlepool had gained BSF by working closely together with the schools and that would continue. There was too much to lose by not doing the next part of the process right.

Following the question and answer session, the Chair thanked the Assistant Director for her presentation and responses to Member questions.

Recommended

That the report be noted and that Members comments and concerns be forwarded to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee.

117. Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People – Evidence on the Benefits and Financial Support Available to Young People (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

The Benefits Liaison Officer gave a presentation to forum outlining the range of benefits that young people could access. These included Income Support Job Seekers Allowance, Severe Hardship Allowance, EMA (Education Maintenance Award), Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, and Discretionary Housing Payment. The presentation highlighted that there was very limited scope to make payments to young people under 18 who were homeless.

Members queried if there were many 16 or 17 year olds leaving home to live on their own. The Benefits Liaison Officer indicated that there were not many single young people of that age coming to the Council for benefits, though there were a few single mothers. Members did comment that there were some 16 year olds who had become estranged from their families looking for accommodation. The Benefits Liaison Officer did indicate that many young people did often find their own place in the private rented sector. It was unusual for private landlords to give tenancies to under 18's. The Council only restricted payments in the private sector. Rent levels in the town were rising, but if single and under 25 young people would only get an allowance of £53/week. Private landlords obviously didn't want to rent to under 25's when they know the allowances were so much lower.

Recommended

That the Benefits Liaison Officer's presentation and response to Member questions be noted.

118. Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People – Evidence from Nightstop Hartlepool (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

Peter Gowland, HVDA, gave an overview of the work of Nightstop and how it was intended to introduce it into Hartlepool. Hartlepool Nightstop would be linked to Teesside Nightstop and had received some initial funding from Hartlepool Churches Together; an application to the Supported Living fund had been unsuccessful. The scheme worked on volunteers providing a bed for the night for homeless young people. All volunteers involved in the project would be subject to Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks. Hosts would be able to reject those they considered were under the influence of drink or drugs if they were concerned. There was a care of duty top the host as well as the young person

Following Mr Gowland's outline of the scheme, Members questioned how many young people it was expected that this scheme could potential serve. It was indicated that there were estimates of as many as four or five young people homeless at any one time with around sixty to seventy 'sofa surfers' staying with friends or extended family. Members were also concerned as to how young people would access the scheme. Mr Gowland indicated that young people aged 16-25 would be referred from existing agencies to Nightstop if they were in the situation that they had no bed for the night.

The Chair and Members thanked Mr Gowland for his presentation to Members and responses to questions.

Recommended

That the presentation and the comments of Members be noted.

119. Portfolio Holder's Response to Hartlepool Borough Council's Foster Care Service (*Director of Children's Services / Portfolio Holder for Children's Services*)

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Councillor Cath Hill, was present at the meeting and submitted a report providing Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum with feedback on the recommendations from the investigation into Hartlepool Borough Council's Foster Care Service, which was reported to Cabinet on 12 January 2009.

Recommended

That the proposed actions detailed within the Action Plan, appended to the report be noted.

120. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and

public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 121 Portfolio Holder's Response to Call-in of Decision: Service Specification for Children's Centre Outreach Package (Para 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

121. Portfolio Holder's Response to Call-in of Decision: Service Specification for Children's Centre Outreach Package (*Portfolio Holder for Children's Services*)

The Children's Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor Cath Hill, submitted a report providing the formal response of in relation to the Call-In of the Service Specifications for Children's Centres – Outreach Package Decision re-considered alongside the formal comments of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on 29 January 2009, as per the Authority's Call-In procedure. The Portfolio Holder indicated that she had taken on board the comments of the forum but had decided that the previous decision should be reaffirmed. The Decision Record of the Portfolio Holder's meeting at which the decision was reaffirmed were submitted for Members information.

Recommended

That the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 6.20 p.m.

JANE SHAW

CHAIRMAN

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

21 April 2009



Report of: Children's Services Scrutiny Forum

Subject: DRAFT FINAL REPORT – APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATION FOR HOMELESS YOUNG PEOPLE FOR WHATEVER REASON

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present the findings of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum following its investigation into 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason'.

2. SETTING THE SCENE

2.1 At the meeting of this Forum on 16 June 2008, Members agreed that two work programme items would be selected for the 2008/09 Municipal Year. During discussions Members agreed that their second work programme item would be selected by the Young People's Representatives co-opted onto the Forum

2.2 Subsequently at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 21 July 2008, Members received a presentation from the Young People's Representatives on the topic of 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People'.

2.3 The Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities defines homelessness as being where someone does not have "accommodation that they have a legal right to occupy, which is accessible and physically available to them (and their household) and which it would be reasonable for them to continue to live in"¹

¹ Department for Communities and Local Government - Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities, 2006

- 2.4 Under the Housing Act 1997, Local Authority Housing Departments have a statutory duty to tackle homelessness and ensure that information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness is available free of charge. This legislation underpins the Homeless Act 2002, which placed greater responsibility on Local Authorities in ensuring that they accepted "homeless 16 and 17 year olds as priority cases for rehousing"¹, although the responsibility for finding suitable accommodation for homeless young people under the age of 18 lies with the Local Authority's Children's Services Department.
- 2.5 For those young people who find themselves homeless over the age of 18 the responsibility for finding suitable accommodation falls to the Local Authority's Housing Department, or for those with complex needs Adult and Community Services Department. However, for young people in care the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 made provision that the Local Authority should ensure that all those preparing and leaving care should have a pathway plan, which included an element relating to accommodation and support. The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 reaffirms that it is the "general duty of local authority to secure sufficient accommodation for looked after children"².

3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 3.1 To review the role and responsibility of Hartlepool Borough Council in tackling youth homelessness, with reference to all young people and the information and provision of appropriate accommodation available to them

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the investigation were agreed by the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on 13 January 2009:-
- (a) To examine the different circumstances and outcomes that can lead to youth homelessness;
 - (b) To gain an understanding of the role and responsibility that Hartlepool Borough Council has towards tackling youth homelessness, including the provision of relevant information and appropriate accommodation;
 - (c) To examine the range of accommodation options used and available for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness for whatever reason;

¹ Joseph Rowntree Foundation – Housing Choices and Issues for Young People in the UK, 2008

² Children and Young Persons Act 2008

- (d) To gain an understanding of the Benefits and other sources of financial support currently available to young people to help tackle youth homelessness;
- (e) To review Hartlepool Borough Council's policy, procedure and practice in relation to Care Leavers, with reference to supported accommodation and other appropriate accommodation; and
- (f) To examine good practice examples of Youth Homelessness strategies at other Local Authorities.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

5.1 The membership of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum for the 2008/09 Municipal Year was as detailed below:-

Councillors Aiken, Fleet, Griffin, Kaiser, London (Vice Chair), McKenna, Preece, Shaw (Chair) and Simmons.

Co-opted Member: David Relton

Resident Representatives: Christopher Akers-Belcher, Joan Steel and Sally Vokes

Young Peoples Representatives: Michael Burford, Arran Frame, Dean Jeffries, Chris Lund, Gillian Pounder and Graham Skinner.

6. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

6.1 Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum met formally from 13 January 2009 to 21 April 2009 to discuss and receive evidence relating to this investigation. A detailed record of the issues raised during these meetings is available from the Council's Democratic Services.

6.2 A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:-

- (a) Detailed presentations and reports from Hartlepool Borough Council Officers which was enhanced with verbal evidence;
- (b) Verbal evidence from Members visiting the Right Honourable Iain Wright's Ministerial Department as Member of Parliament (MP) for Hartlepool;
- (c) Verbal evidence from the Authority's Elected Mayor in his role as Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability;
- (d) Verbal evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Children's Services;

- (e) Verbal evidence from Members attending the Children's Services Network Good Practice Seminar on 28 November 2008;
- (f) Verbal evidence from Nightstop Teesside in Hartlepool;
- (g) Site visit by Members to see Supported Accommodation in Hartlepool on 11 March 2009;
- (h) Detailed Presentation supported by verbal evidence from Stockton Borough Council; and
- (i) Detailed Presentation supported by verbal evidence from Housing Hartlepool.

FINDINGS

7. CIRCUMSTANCES AND OUTCOMES THAT CAN LEAD TO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

7.1 Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum were keen to learn about the circumstances and outcomes that can lead to young people becoming homeless. As well as looking at national trends, Members sought evidence from the members of Hartlepool Young Voices who had brought the topic of homeless young people to their attention. Evidence gathered by Members is detailed below:-

National Evidence on the Circumstances and Outcomes Behind Youth Homelessness

7.2 At the meeting of the Forum on 27 January 2009 Members received evidence on the national circumstances and outcomes that can lead to youth homelessness. Based on the number of young people (aged 16-24) presenting themselves to various support services, it is estimated that nationally during 2006/07 75,000¹ young people experienced homelessness.

7.3 The reasons behind youth homelessness are complex in nature and prevention of homelessness is not just a matter of the provision of appropriate housing. In many cases it is the support mechanisms (or lack of them) when young people move into independent living that can result in homelessness. This was highlighted in the study carried out by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation into housing choices for young people, where they noted that:

¹ Joseph Rowntree Foundation – Youth Homelessness in the UK: A Decade of Progress?, 2008

“Transitions to independence among care leavers occur at a relatively young age, and in the absence of supportive social networks, are often characterised by crises and youth homelessness”¹

Although through the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 care leavers have a greater level of extended support from various agencies including the Local Authority, the problem is that sometimes the social networks that young people surround themselves with whilst living independently can result in young people becoming homeless through, for example, acts of anti-social behaviour.

- 7.4 Some young people find themselves at a higher risk of homelessness as a result of unplanned movements out of family / supported accommodation. The YMCA noted that:

“The breakdown of family units has been identified as the main trigger for homelessness amongst 16- and 17-year-olds.”²

This is supported by the research carried out by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation who argued that young people who are ‘pushed’ out of their family / supported accommodation have a higher risk of homelessness, as these situations are often:

“Unplanned, unsupported and hurried...Circumstances such as these are particularly associated with those who leave home in their teens, those from lower socio-economic groups and those who have experienced disruption in family life”¹

- 7.5 In 2002 Ford, J. et al., examined the transition of young people into independent living. They argued that the movement of young people into independent living could be categorised under five distinct pathways, these being; chaotic, unplanned, planned (non-student) and student pathways. The most likely pathway to lead to youth homelessness was the chaotic pathway, where the circumstances leading to homelessness for the young person surrounded an:

“Absence of planning, substantial constraints (both economic and in relation to housing eligibility) and an absence of family support”³

- 7.6 In their study of youth homelessness the Joseph Rowntree Foundation presented the following survey carried out nationally by the Communities and Local Government. Table1 (overleaf) lists the main reason behind youth homelessness for 350 16-17-year olds surveyed in 2006/07:

¹ Joseph Rowntree Foundation – Housing Choices and Issues for Young People in the UK, 2008

² YMCA – Breaking it Down: Developing Whole-Family Approaches to Youth Homelessness, 2008

³ Ford et al – Conceptualising the Contemporary Role of Housing in the Transition to Adult Life in England, 2002

Table1: Main reason for youth homelessness, CLG Survey¹

Reasons Behind Homelessness	Reason for 16-17-year-old Young People Being Homeless	
	All Reasons (%) #	Main Reason (%)
Relationship Breakdown with someone lived with*	70	65
Housing was overcrowded	13	10
Overstayed welcome or could no longer be accommodated	19	10
Eviction of threatened with eviction	3	2
Applying as homeless was the only way to be rehoused	5	2
Problems with paying the mortgage or rent	Less than 1	Less than 1
Applying as homeless was quickest way to get rehoused	3	2
Tenancy came to an end	1	1
Housing was in poor condition	1	Less than 1
Harassment, anti-social behaviour or crime	2	1
Mental or physical health problems	2	Less than 1
Drug or alcohol problems	2	1
Had to leave National Asylum Support Service accommodation	2	1
Other	6	4

Where more than one reason applies

* Includes both parental and partner relationships

Evidence on the Circumstances and Outcomes Behind Youth Homelessness in Hartlepool

7.7 Members of Hartlepool Young Voices were in attendance at the meeting of the Forum of 27 January 2009 to present to Members their findings relating to the evidence on youth homelessness in Hartlepool. The young people stated to Members that from 1 April – 31 December 2008 Hartlepool Borough Council had 438 housing advice enquiries from 16-25 year olds, of these 438 enquiries:-

- (i) 70 were from 16-17 year olds;
- (ii) 22 enquiries resulted in housing applications being made as the young people were deemed to be homeless;
- (iii) 12 of the 22 young people deemed to be homeless were of priority status; and
- (iv) 1 of the priority cases was for a young person under 17.

¹ Joseph Rowntree Foundation – Youth Homelessness in the UK: A Decade of Progress?, 2008

7.8 Members of Hartlepool Young Voices highlighted to Members that there were often some reasons why young people did not make a housing advice enquiry at the Civic Centre and that this often meant that 'official' figures did not represent the 'bigger-picture'. The members of Hartlepool Young Voices pointed out that from the evidence they had gathered, they discovered that:-

- (i) Not every young person who is having housing issues seeks help at the Civic Centre;
- (ii) There are some young people who sleep on people's sofas and floors each night, the so called 'sofa-surfers'; and
- (iii) Often young people are discouraged from taking on tenancies as they would be unable to cope, which may count against them in the future when they require a tenancy.

7.9 The Council's Housing Advice Team attended the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on 27 January 2009 to provide evidence in relation to the statistical evidence that they had behind homelessness prevention. Table2 (below) was presented to Members highlighting the reasons behind homelessness in Hartlepool during 2007/08 and Table3 (overleaf) for the same figures in 2008/09.

Table2: Reasons for Homelessness 2007/08

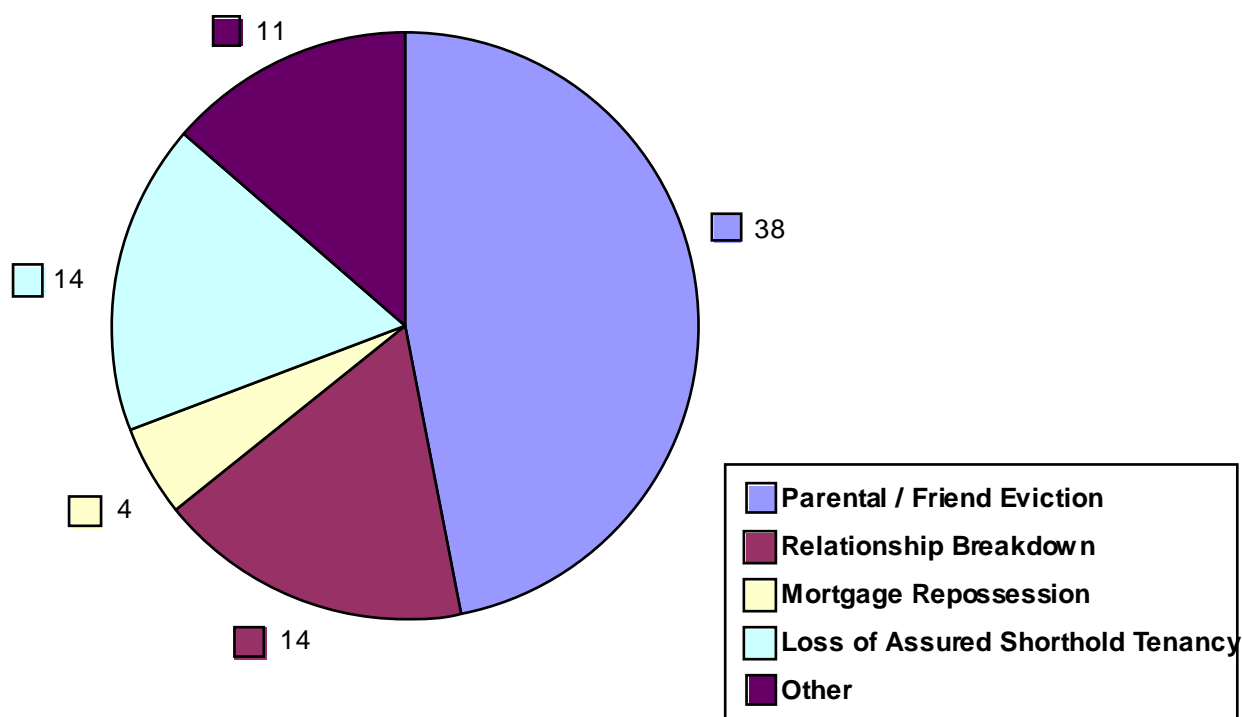
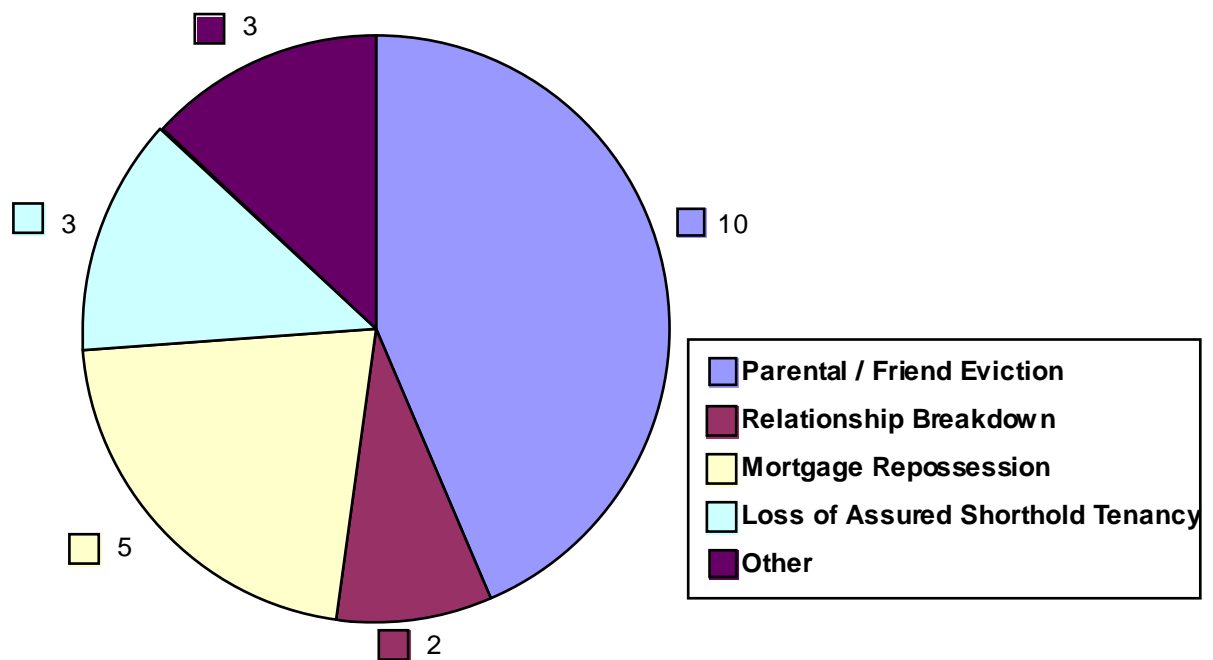


Table2: Reasons for Homelessness 2008/08 up to Quarter 3



7.10 Members were interested to learn that during 2007/08 the Housing Advice Team prevented 103 applicants under the age of 25 from becoming homeless and up to quarter three of 2008/09 they had prevented 60 young people becoming homeless.

7.11 It was noted by Members on 27 January 2009 that the Authority's Mayor had received verbal evidence relating to a number of young people sleeping rough in Hartlepool. The Mayor expressed some surprise at this claim and this was supported by statistical evidence. The Principal Housing Advice Officer informed Members that an external consultant had been employed by the Council to undertake 'street walks', visiting the places that people were likely to sleep rough. The study was on-going, and while it did show some evidence of people sleeping rough, the consultants view was that Hartlepool didn't have a particular problem.

8. HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS TACKLING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

8.1 Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum were interested in learning the roles and responsibilities that the Local Authority had in relation to the issue of tackling youth homelessness. Members were also eager to learn how this responsibility was reflected in the provision of relevant information and appropriate accommodation.

8.2 The Portfolio Holders for Regeneration and Liveability and Children's Services were present at the meeting of the Forum on 27 January 2009 to highlight to Members the split responsibility for youth homelessness between

the Council's Regeneration and Planning Department and Children's Services Departments.

8.3 The Principal Housing Advice Officer highlighted to Members on 27 January 2009 that legal framework that ensured that the Council met its responsibility around youth homelessness and this was encapsulated in the Homelessness Strategy that had three major aims:-

- (i) Prevention of homelessness;
- (ii) Ensuring that there is sufficient accommodation available for people who are or may become homeless; and
- (iii) Ensuring that there is satisfactory support for people who are, or may become homeless, or who need support to prevent them from becoming homeless again.

8.4 Underpinning the three major aims of the Homelessness Strategy were eight specific objectives these being:-

- (i) To improve access to advice and information;
- (ii) To improve access into social housing;
- (iii) To provide support and assistance to sustain tenancies;
- (iv) To encourage the development of further supported accommodation;
- (v) To improve information sharing and joint working between agencies;
- (vi) To improve services for people with complex needs;
- (vii) To tackle homelessness amongst substance mis-users; and
- (viii) To improve monitoring and evaluation of services.

8.5 The Forum were interested to learn that the Council only had a main homelessness duty to those young people who were unintentionally homeless, Members were advised that those young people who intentionally left their previous tenancy; whether that was family, foster care or other suitable accommodation; and where there were no barriers preventing their return, were considered to be intentionally homeless. In addition, those young people who had failed or asked to leave their tenancy due to unreasonable behaviour were also considered to be intentionally homeless, although Members welcomed that there were strategies designed to help counteract tenancy failures.

8.6 Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum were pleased to hear that the Council had access to a number of accommodation units in Hartlepool, with 21 being made available specifically for young people. To

supplement this coverage Members acknowledged that a number of 'floating' support workers helped young people who were living in other tenancy arrangements. The fact that the Homeless Act 2002 was making it illegal for the use of Bed and Breakfast establishments for longer than 6 weeks by 2010, unless in emergency circumstances, was warmly welcomed by the Forum.

9. RANGE OF ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR HOMELESS YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL

- 9.1 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum were very keen to examine in greater detail the provision of accommodation options available and used by young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Members of Hartlepool Young Voices had presented to the Forum on 27 January 2009 that many young people who find themselves homeless, eventually find accommodation at the many accommodation providers throughout the Town including Gainford House, St Paul's, Anna Court and 50 The Front. Gainford House was geared towards any homeless young person between the ages of 16 to 25, St Paul's catered for the 16 to 18 year old age groups and Anna Court provided accommodation for teenage parents. With the Government emphasis on reducing the usage of Bed and Breakfasts by 2010 Members were pleased to learn that there was a movement away from using 50 The Front. The evidence gathered by Members in relation to accommodation support and provision in Hartlepool is detailed below:-

Evidence from Nightstop Teesside in Hartlepool

- 9.2 Members were interested to learn from the members of Hartlepool Young Voices about the emergence of a Nightstop facility in Hartlepool. Nightstop Teesside had been operating for a number of years and the young people saw it as a facility that worked well in order areas and should be available in Hartlepool. Members were informed that Nightstop had applied for funding through the Supporting People Fund, but had been unsuccessful, although this had not stopped Nightstop Teesside from continuing to expand their remit into Hartlepool. Members were interested to learn more about Nightstop and at their meeting of the 3 March 2009 Members received verbal evidence from HVDA's Project Development Officer who is helping the setup of Nightstop Teesside in Hartlepool, evidence gathered by the Forum is detailed below:-
- 9.3 Nightstop, Members learnt, provides safe and secure emergency accommodation for single 16-25 years olds in the homes of approved volunteers. All volunteers receive ongoing training and have a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check before a young person can be placed with them. Members were informed that Hartlepool currently had three volunteers who were in a position to accept young people through the Nightstop scheme in Hartlepool, although there had yet to be an official launch.

- 9.4 The Project Development Officer informed Members that after forming a steering group those members had persuaded Nightstop Teesside to help set up the scheme in Hartlepool. Funding had been required to cover administrative and staff costs and Members were pleased to learn that Nightstop had been successful in achieving initial funding from Hartlepool Churches Together.
- 9.5 The Forum learnt that the Nightstop scheme worked on volunteers providing a bed for the night for homeless young people. All volunteers involved in the project would be subject to Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks. Hosts would be able to reject those they considered were under the influence of drink or drugs if they were concerned, which was reflective of an ethos of a duty of care to the host as well as the young person.
- 9.6 Members were curious to learn how many young people Nightstop were anticipating would present themselves to Nightstop's recognised referral agencies. The Project Development Officer indicated that Nightstop were estimating as many as four or five young people homeless at any one time in Hartlepool, with around sixty to seventy 'sofa surfers' staying with friends or extended family. Members were also concerned as to how young people would access the scheme.

Evidence from Site Visit to Supported Accommodation in Hartlepool



Supported Accommodation in Hartlepool - Shared kitchen.

- 9.7 In order to fully appreciate the range of facilities in Hartlepool, Members embarked on a site visit on 11 March 2009 to experience for themselves the Supported Accommodation available in the Town. Members who took part in the visit experienced accommodation provision at Scott Grange, St Paul's

Project and Gainford House, the evidence gathered from these visits is detailed below:-

Scott Grange

- (a) Scott Grange is operated by Stonham Housing and has 11 self contained flats each with their own kitchen. There is a communal kitchen which is used by residents for social / cooking training activities;
- (b) The majority of residents are aged 18-25, although the scheme can accept referrals up to the age of 65. All residents are male and the scheme is primarily aimed at ex-offenders or those at the risk of offending. Residents normally stay for two year, with outreach support available for an addition two years once they have left Scott Grange;
- (c) The scheme has been operating for over 20 years and the building itself had been in use for a range of social housing / hostels for longer. Neighbours are very accommodating and there have been no complaints about the behaviour of residents of Scott Grange;
- (d) Before being accepted at Scott Grange, residents have to undergo risk assessment and interview. Unsuccessful applicants are returned to homeless team at Hartlepool Borough Council; and
- (e) The flats are almost always at 100% capacity with a current waiting list of roughly 5-7 people, with 4-5 of these having been definitely accepted and waiting for current residents to move on.

Whilst at Scott Grange, Members of the Forum heard evidence from one of the residents and this is detailed below:-

- (f) The young person informed Members that they had a background of offending, but had recently been on remand for a conviction that was dropped due to wrongful identification. Without the accommodation at Scott Grange, the resident informed Members that they would have been on the street and possibly even dead; and
- (g) There had been delays in payment of benefits, but Scott Grange has managed to provide supervised finance and a loan until benefit came through. Went to support worker at Scott Grange who helped with temporary finances, as resident was concerned that they may steal to raise enough money for food. Without this level of support, the resident would have been on the streets, hungry and at a high risk of offending.

St Paul's Project

- (a) The scheme accepts young people aged 16-18 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. St Paul's has 5 self contained flats with

shared kitchen and bathroom facilities. There are four members of staff providing intensive 24 hour support to all residents;

- (b) Minimum length of stay is six months to one year and the current waiting list is six who have all been accepted. There are another two young people waiting to be interviewed. Some young people can be on the waiting list so long that they never actually achieve a placement at St Paul's; and
- (c) The scheme at St Paul's has been operating since 1984 and there have been no formal complaints from neighbours about St Paul's residents. The Manager periodically visits local residents to check that they have no concerns.

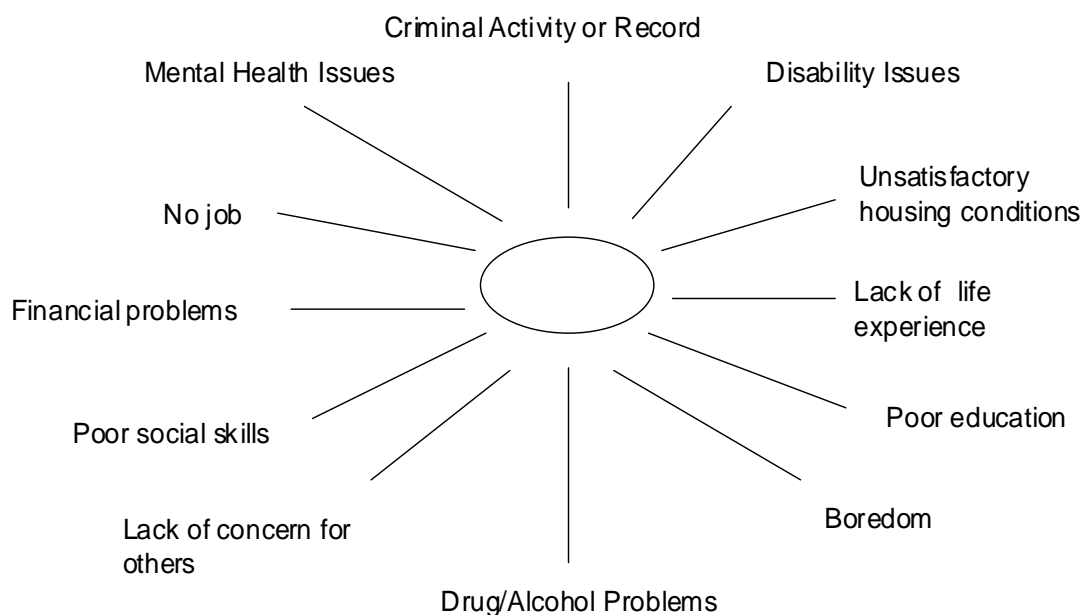
Gainford House

- (a) Operated by Stonham Housing, with ten units available for young people aged 16-25. The ten units are split into six higher dependency units and four 'move on' units. The majority of referrals are at lower age range of 16-17, with the young people staying from six months up to two years, with an average of around ten months;
- (b) The facility has been operational since 2006, but faced major planning controversy and objections over the building. However, currently there have been no complaints from neighbours about residents in Gainford House. The residents and staff at Gainford House are currently investigating improving the surrounding area, waste ground and building an enclosed area for their bins;
- (c) There is currently 100% occupancy of the ten units, with the waiting list varying at anyone time between two and nine young people; and
- (d) There is a current development to create an emergency bed provision to open in April 2009. The facility will initially operate as weekday on-call service with plans to expand to 7 days a week, once facility can be properly tested.

Evidence from Housing Hartlepool

9.8 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum met on 24 March 2009 and received evidence from Housing Hartlepool, in its role as a Registered Social Landlord in Hartlepool. The Supported Living Manager informed Members that Housing Hartlepool were very concerned about solving the problems associated with tenancy failures and had discovered a number of issues that were faced by applicants under 25 that could cause tenancy failures. Diagram 1 (below) highlights the issues faced by applicants presenting themselves to Housing Hartlepool:-

Diagram 1: Issues Faced by Applicants (under age of 25) Presenting Themselves to Housing Hartlepool that can Lead to Tenancy Failures



9.9 In order to help solve the problems that applicants faced, Members were informed that Housing Hartlepool worked with a number of service providers, including DISC, Norcare, Stonham, to help tackle the potential barriers to becoming a tenant and to avert the opportunity for tenancy failure. The Forum approved of the provision of Skills for Life training by Housing Hartlepool at school aged young people, along with the assistance provided to acquire furnishings through assistance with grant applications and referrals to Settlement Furnishings. Members were also pleased to learn that a Supporting People grant had been made available to enable Housing Hartlepool to run pre-tenancy training courses called Keys to Success, which could be accepted as part of the Good Tenancy Scheme that is recognised inside and outside of Housing Hartlepool.

10. FINANCIAL SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

10.1 When the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum met to agree their Work Programme for the 2008/09 Municipal Year on 21 July 2008, Members received a presentation from the members of Hartlepool Young Voices which indicated some of the financial difficulties facing young people in Hartlepool. Members received evidence that one young person who earned £1000 per month, was potentially being charged almost their entire monthly income for a private landlords bond, four weeks advanced rent, administrative costs and a reference fee.

10.2 In the absence of a representative from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Benefits Liaison Officer gave a presentation to Members on 3 March 2009 in relation to the benefits available to young people. Members were disappointed to learn that there was limited scope to make payments to young people who were under 18 and homeless.

- 10.3 The Forum recognised that young people could, dependent on their circumstances, qualify for a range of benefits including Income Support, Job Seeker's Allowance, Job Seeker's Severe Hardship or Education Maintenance Allowance. These benefits were accessible through the Department for Work and Pensions and there were no restrictions on what the benefits could be spent on.
- 10.4 The Local Authority managed the other benefits accessible to young people and these surrounded the cost of housing, either through the provision of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit or Discretionary Housing Payments. Young people particularly benefited from Council Tax Benefit, as they were not eligible to pay any Council Tax until they turned 18 years old.
- 10.5 Members learnt from the Benefits Liaison Officer that Housing Benefit was payable to those young people on low income and with savings of less than £16,000. The amount that a young person qualified for through Housing Benefit was commensurate to the applicable amount; that is the minimum amount of income that the young person needs to live on each week. In addition to Housing Benefit, some young people qualified for Discretionary Housing Benefit, which was limited funding available to a Local Authority to help those tenants who find themselves with a shortfall between the Housing Benefit awarded and the rent being charged. For those older tenants who paid Council Tax, Discretionary Housing Benefit could be awarded to help with the shortfall between the Council Tax and any calculated Council Tax Benefit.

11. HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL'S STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY IN RELATION TO CARE LEAVERS

- 11.1 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum felt it was important to understand the statutory responsibility that the Council had towards care leavers as this related directly to the provision of supported living or support for the transition into independent living. Members sought a evidence from a number of sources that are detailed below:-

Evidence from Children's Services Network Conference

- 11.2 On 28 November 2008, the Chair of the Children's Services Forum and the Participation Officer, Barnardos attended the Children's Services Network Conference on 'Accommodation and Care Leavers – Pulling together', the findings of the members attending the conference was presented to Members of the Children's Services Forum on 24 March 2009 and are detailed as follows:-
- (a) Every year around 8,000 young people leave care with varying levels of need and support to help them live independently. The key to providing the most appropriate supported accommodation is not to ask 'what would you like' as this can be unrealistic, it is more sensible to concentrate on what is available;

- (b) Pre-tenancy programmes that introduce young people to independent living are extremely beneficial in reducing tenancy failures. 'Training Flats' can not only enhance pre-tenancy programmes, but can allow young people in a secure environment to realise, that independent living maybe is not for them just yet, how they can budget more effectively and the pitfalls that can result in tenancy failures;
- (c) That Pathway Plans for young people should be constantly monitored and evidenced by all groups involved with the young person, including the young person themselves.
- (d) At the moment the definition of 'suitable housing' is varied and guidance does not make implicit what would constitute as suitable. Although the Government's definition of suitable housing is not clear, there is an increasing demand nationally for sufficient suitable accommodation for young people.

Evidence from the Children's Services Department

- 11.3 At the meeting of the Forum on 27 January 2009, the Head of the Business Unit (Young Persons) informed Members that the Council had a responsibility for those young people leaving care until they reached 21 years of age. Members were interested to learn that accommodation provision continued until the young people reached 18 and support continued until they turned 21.
- 11.4 When the Forum met on 24 March 2009, Members received a detailed report supplemented by verbal evidence on the statutory responsibilities that the Council had towards accommodation provision for care leavers. The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 had placed a responsibility on Local Authorities to ensure that no young person should leave care under the age of 18 and they do leave, they should be prepared for and able to cope with the transition to independent or supported living.
- 11.5 The Forum were notified that the 60 young people who were eligible for leaving care services were supported by the Leaving Care Team which constituted four members of staff. Members were delighted to learn that not only were there no young people in unsuitable accommodation, but that the Council's constantly exceeded the national average when it came to placing care leavers in suitable accommodation by the time they had turned 19. Members were provided with a detailed list of the accommodation on offer in Hartlepool and potentially accessible by the Leaving Care Team and these are as detailed overleaf:-
 - (a) Housing Hartlepool – 1 / 2 bedroom houses / flats;
 - (b) Tees Valley Housing Association – 6 flats at Anna Court, 5 beds at St Paul's;

- (c) Stonham Housing Group – 11 flats at Avondene, 11 flats at Scott Grange, 6 rooms and 4 flats at Gainford House;
- (d) Richmond Fellowship – number of flats for young people with mental health needs;
- (e) Endeavour Housing – 12 flats split between two properties;
- (f) Accent Homes – 1 bedroom flat, although not necessarily for care leavers;
- (g) Guinness Trust – 1 / 2 bedroom properties;
- (h) Three Rivers – 1 / 2 self contained bedroom flats; and
- (i) Nightstop – 3 providers (see sections 9.3-9.5).

12. EVIDENCE FROM IAIN WRIGHT, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR HARTLEPOOL



Members of Hartlepool Young Voices, Councillor Jane Shaw and Iain Wright MP at the Houses of Parliament 24 March 2009.

- 12.1 As part of the evidence gathering process, members of Hartlepool Young Voices supported by the Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum were invited to London to meet with Iain Wright MP on 18 March 2009 in his capacity as MP for Hartlepool, as part of this Forum's investigation into 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason'. The findings of those young people and the Chair who attend the site visit were fed back to the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on 24 March 2009 and are as follows:-

- (a) The MP felt that the topic was very important and was directly related to his role as Parliamentary under Secretary of State in the Department for Communities and Local Government; which covers homelessness. This had resulted in the publication of the strategic document 'No One Left Out' which aimed to put an end to rough sleeping by 2012;
- (b) There was a feeling by the MP that there was a wider issue about housing, where more suitable homes needed to be built for everyone, this included the elderly, families and young people (particularly those young people just leaving home). Certainly the message of securing 'appropriate accommodation' was an issue that the Prime Minister was also very interested in, but that Central Government cannot do this alone and needs to work together with local authorities to achieve changes. We need to work together to be stronger was a message that came out of 'No One Left Out';
- (c) The MP believed that there were three strands to solving the homelessness issue Prevent; Partnership; and Personalisation. Personalisation related to the needs of the individual, including both their health and employment needs. In the MP's opinion, Hartlepool had a shortage of appropriate homes for the needs of the people in Hartlepool. The MP had a desire for the young people to have input into the shaping of the housing policy in the Town. With an aging population and an aging Hartlepool, so it was important that young people felt that the accommodation available in the Town was appropriate to them. Without this appropriate accommodation the MP felt that there was a danger that young people would leave Hartlepool, set up families elsewhere and their talents would be lost to Hartlepool; and
- (d) The MP touched on the subject of opposition from within to new housing developments, support accommodation and other social housing. The MP voiced this question to people who raised these objections "Where do you want your children and grandchildren to live?"

13. EVIDENCE FROM A NEIGHBOURING LOCAL AUTHORITY

- 13.1 In order to further enhance their investigation into 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason', Members sought evidence from another local authority that was considered to be demonstrating good practice. Evidence gathered by Members from this source is detailed overleaf:-

Evidence from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

- 13.2 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum met on 24 March 2009 and in attendance at their meeting were the Housing Options Manager and Modernisation Manager from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council. Members were interested to learn that Stockton had been recognised as a Centre of Excellence in the North East for tackling youth homelessness by the Department for Communities and Local Government in 2008 and 2009.
- 13.3 The Modernisation Manager reported to Members that Stockton had decided on a desktop evaluation exercise to determine if there was a problem, where there was a problem and once this baseline had been achieved Stockton could move forward onto how to solve the problems of youth homelessness.
- 13.4 Members of the Forum were particularly interested to hear about the development of a young people's group called Homeless on Teesside, which enabled those young people to have direct engagement with the Local Authority to influence the homelessness strategy.
- 13.5 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum heard that the biggest barrier to solving youth homelessness was the change in attitude towards the classification of the young people. Instead of considering homeless young people as statutorily belonging to one particular support group, such as youth or probation service, and by adopting a partnership approach Stockton now find a solution for the needs of that individual young person with the idea that someone within the partnership will have a responsibility for them. This has led to the Children's Services Department taking the lead role for the development and continuation of the youth homelessness strategy in Stockton.
- 13.6 Members asked a question about solving the problem of NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) attitudes towards the creation of new supported accommodation. The representatives from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council informed the Forum that their solution was to hold meetings in the community with resident associations, where homeless young people could talk to these groups about the benefits of supported accommodation. There has also been some provision of community facilities within the supported accommodation, which has helped dispel community fears.

14. CONCLUSIONS

- 14.1 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum concluded:-
- (a) That the supported accommodation on offer in Hartlepool is of extremely high quality, but young people suffer from waiting lists that can result in them not securing a residency at the most appropriate supported accommodation for themselves;

- (b) That despite the superb supported accommodation on offer in Hartlepool and the lack of associated problems, there exists NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) attitude towards the creation of new accommodation;
- (c) That before new supported accommodation is set up, the fears of local residents opposed to the creation of the accommodation needs to be addressed. Information that is upfront and proactive is required to dispel concerns and that maybe the introduction of smaller three or four bed accommodation may reduce some of the 'real' fears that local residents have;
- (d) That when resources are pooled, there are no real financial restraints stopping the creation of more supported accommodation in Hartlepool;
- (e) That there is no real evidence of habitual rough sleeping amongst young people in Hartlepool, although unsubstantiated anecdotal evidence does contradict this statement;
- (f) That it is extremely difficult to quantify the number of young people who are 'sofa surfing' in Hartlepool and therefore being unsuitably housed;
- (g) That there is a demand for emergency accommodation in Hartlepool that is currently not being adequately met;
- (h) That appropriate accommodation for young people, may actually be one of the most important factors in tackling youth homelessness;
- (i) That skills for life training and training flats are extremely useful in enabling young people to adapt to independent living and can be a solution in reducing tenancy failures;
- (j) That support for young people moving into independent living is vital to stop the causes of tenancy failure; and
- (k) That in order to tackle youth homelessness and assist with the transition into independent living the Local Authority needs to ensure that partnership working is at the centre of any strategic plan.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum has taken evidence from a wide range of sources to assist in the formulation of a balanced range of recommendations. The Forum's key recommendations to the Cabinet are as outlined below:-

- (a) That supported accommodation providers be encouraged to set up more facilities in the Town, although before this occurs:-

- (i) Residents in an area where a scheme is planned be reassured that supported accommodation is not only beneficial, but is to be encouraged;
 - (ii) Any scheme should include the provision of at least one if not two emergency beds or 'crash pads'.
- (b) That support is given to assist young people in the transition into independent living;
- (c) That the Children's Services and the Regeneration and Planning Services Departments examine Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's 'Homelessness Strategy 2008-2011' and
- (i) Adopt those examples of good practice which can assist the tackling of youth homelessness in Hartlepool; and
 - (ii) Where partnership funding is insufficient for the creation of supported accommodation in Hartlepool, that the Council considers the allocation of additional resources.
- (d) That during the planning stages for new housing developments in Hartlepool:-
- (i) Consideration be given to appropriate accommodation for young people; and
 - (ii) Young people are consulted about accommodation that would be appropriate for their needs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Committee is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of our investigation. We would like to place on record our appreciation, in particular of the willingness and co-operation we have received from the below named:-

Hartlepool Borough Council:

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability;

Councillor Cath Hill – Portfolio Holder for Children's Services;

Lynda Igoe – Principal Housing Advice Officer;

Siobhan Rafferty – Supported Housing Co-ordinator;

Jim Murdoch – Head of Business Unit (Young Persons);

John Robinson – Children's Fund Manager;

Tracey Rudd – Benefits Liaison Officer;

Ian Wakefield – Team Manager.

External Representatives:

Iain Wright – Member of Parliament for Hartlepool;

Kelly Goulding – Participation Officer, Barnardos;

Leigh Bradley – Participation Officer, Barnardos;

Judith Kelsey – Hartlepool Young Voices;

Beth Hawkridge – DCSM (Participation), Barnardos;

Jill Bousfield – Hartlepool Young Voices;

Lindsey Holmes – Hartlepool Young Voices;

Peter Gowland – Project Development Officer, HVDA;

Michelle Summersgill – Supported Living Manager, Housing Hartlepool;

Caroline Wood – Housing Options Manager, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council;

Lynn Sparrey – Modernisation Manager, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council;

Derek Brown – Manager, St Paul's Project;

Sylvia Tiplady – St Paul's Project;

John Bruschetti – Manager, Gainford House;

Nicola Dent – Project Worker, Gainford House;

Anthony Preston – Client Representative, Gainford House;

The staff and residents from Scott Grange, St Paul's and Gainford House who welcomed Members and provided evidence during the site visits held on 11 March 2009.

COUNCILLOR JANE SHAW
CHAIR OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

April 2009

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were consulted or referred to in the preparation of this report:-

- (a) Department for Communities and Local Government (2006) *Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities*, Available from: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/152056.pdf> (Accessed 4 December 2008).
- (b) Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2008) *Housing Choices and Issues for Young People in the UK*, Available from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/2220-homelessness-young-people.pdf> (Accessed 20 November 2008).
- (c) Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (c. 23), Available from: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2008/ukpga_20080023_en_1 (Accessed 3 December 2008).
- (d) Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 (c. 35), Available from: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts2000/ukpga_20000035_en_1 (Accessed 3 December 2008).
- (e) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Scoping Report,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 13 January 2009.
- (f) Written evidence of Hartlepool Young Voices entitled 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 13 January 2009.
- (g) YMCA (2008) *Breaking it Down: Developing Whole-Family Approaches to Youth Homelessness*, Available from: http://www.ymca.org.uk/SITE/UPLOAD/DOCUMENT/Breaking_it_Down.pdf (Accessed 5 January 2009).
- (h) Ford, J., Rugg, J., Burrows, R. (2002) 'Conceptualising the Contemporary Role of Housing in the Transition to Adult Life in England', *Urban Studies*, Volume 39, Number 13, 2002, pages 2455-2467.

- (i) Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2008) *Youth Homelessness in the UK: A Decade of Progress?*, Available from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/books/hop/eBooks/2220-homelessness-young-people.pdf> (Accessed 3 December 2008).
- (j) Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 (c. 35), Available from: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts2000/ukpga_20000035_en_1 (Accessed 3 December 2008).
- (k) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Setting the Scene – Covering Report,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 27 January 2009.
- (l) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability and Portfolio Holder for Children's Services – Covering Report,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 27 January 2009.
- (m) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence on the Reasons Behind Youth Homelessness – Covering Report,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 27 January 2009.
- (n) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence from Housing Hartlepool and Nightstop Hartlepool – Covering Report,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 3 March 2009.
- (o) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence on the Benefits and Financial Support Available for Young People – Covering Report,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 3 March 2009.
- (p) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council – Covering Report,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 24 March 2009.
- (q) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence from Housing Hartlepool – Covering Report,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 24 March 2009.

- (r) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence on Supported Accommodation – Covering Report,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 24 March 2009.
- (s) Report of the Head of Business Unit (Young Persons) entitled 'Homeless Young People,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 24 March 2009.
- (t) Department for Communities and Local Government (2008), *No one Left Out: Communities Ending Rough Sleeping*, Available from: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/endingroughsleeping> (Accessed 1 April 2009).
- (u) Minutes of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 21 July 2008, 13 January 2009, 27 January 2009, 3 March 2009 and 24 March 2009.