

Scrutiny Committee – 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012

## 7. Temporary Accommodation Strategy: Update Report

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### Purpose of Report

This report updates Scrutiny on the progress made on actions set out in the Temporary Accommodation Strategy since its adoption.

The confidential appendices for members are attached at the back of the agenda.

### Action Required

That the Scrutiny Committee note the contents of the report.

### Background

The Temporary Accommodation Strategy was adopted by the District Executive at its meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011, having been looked at by Scrutiny Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2011. Scrutiny Committee asked District Executive to ensure that any specific decisions arising from the strategic actions listed in the document come back before the relevant body and the District Executive duly agreed that this should be the case.

The Temporary Accommodation Strategy was initiated by the Portfolio Holder, having identified this element of the (statutory) Homelessness Strategy as most urgent for review. A revision of the County-wide Homelessness Strategy is now underway and the issues raised in the SSDC Temporary Accommodation Strategy are being taken into account.

The Temporary Accommodation Strategy lists twelve strategic actions and the Scrutiny Committee, when meeting at the end of November 2011, requested an update report on these in six months.

### Demographic changes

There is no evidence from recent data to suggest that the longer-term assumptions made in the Strategy (about the number and type of temporary accommodation units required) need to be adjusted in any way. Wherever possible, it is primarily the reliance on bed and breakfast (B&B) that should be reduced, with the existing range of other specific temporary accommodation being retained (in part to assist the reduction of reliance on B&B).

Over recent months there has been a continued reduction in the reliance on bed and breakfast, both in terms of numbers and length of stay. A longer-term view is reproduced at appendix two. The table below is an extract from the appendix showing the use of B&B over the most recent reported quarters.

**Table: Extract showing LI026 - Average length of stay in Temporary Accommodation (Bed & Breakfast) (BV183a)**

Reporting Period	Value (weeks)	Target (weeks)	Status	Comments
Q2/11/12	2.0	4.5		
Q3/11/12	2.8	4.5		
Q4/11/12	1.9	4.5		

In April 2012, there were nine households in B&B and the average length of stay for those leaving bed and breakfast in that month was just over one and a half weeks. This represents a reduction of two households (on a snapshot basis) and a reduction of over four and a half weeks compared with April 2011.

Whilst the reduced usage of B&B is good news (both in terms of the families involved and the cost to the Council), it would not yet be prudent to deliberately reduce the level of other Temporary Accommodation available.

### **Strategic Action Update**

The strategic actions listed in the document cited different lead officers from both the strategic housing unit and the operational housing team. One of these cited lead officers has since gone on maternity leave, but her actions have been taken up by other colleagues in her absence. Officers from both teams have worked together to compile the update that is shown at appendix one.