Appendix D – Action Plan

Ref	Objectives	Measure of Success	Year/Progress	Status		
Objective One: Early intervention for homeless prevention						
1.1	Improve awareness and public knowledge of housing shortages and options to prevent homelessness	Awareness raised through events, websites and general public. Improve health links i.e. by host housing surgeries in GPs to ensure early referrals from health partners Introduce housing advice and budgeting skills presentations into schools	 Year Two – Updated and improved content on the website ensuring that we are legally compliant with the Homelessness Reduction Act. Advertised and marketed the sustainment services to support those financially impacted by COVID-19. Year Three – appointment to the Housing Navigator role to increase awareness across the voluntary sector, including the re-launch of the Homeless Task Group. Successful Rough Sleeper Initiative bid (RSI) to appoint a social prescriber specialising in housing. To do Introduce housing advice programme to schools. Pandemic reduced ability to deliver. 	On track		
1.2	Introduce a landlord route to notify us of issues with tenants Use web based technologies to support landlords and tenants to sustain their homes	Landlord route or referral process in place to allow early notification of a housing issue	Year Three – Updated corporate website designed and easier accessibility for landlords to notify the Council of available private properties to rent. Increased social media presence, advertising the need for landlords on social media channels through the Communication team	Ongoing		

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1.3	Partners notifying RBC of potential housing issues early so that proactive work can be undertaken to prevent homelessness. Introduce a referral mechanism to enable early identification	Early notification received into the Council by expanding on the duty to refer to non- statutory partners Joint working and joint projects with partners to resolve housing issues early	To doIntroduction of a landlord portal through new Northgate module if system ableYear Two - Attendance at the Strategic MAPPA Board, weekly COVID-19 meetings with health partners, improvements to the Duty to Refer form and general website information.Year Three – Successful RSI bid and appointment to Housing Navigator role, joining up services and relaunch of the Homeless Task Group (FUSE).Additional Gov funding to reduce arrears within the private rented sector awarded Oct 2021. Joint working with Citizen Advice to clear arrears and prevent homelessness.To do:Establish a training programme for Housing officers to receive detailed guidance about negotiating with landlords to maximise opportunities for successful prevention outcomes.	
			Improved joint working protocols in place for Hospital Discharge, Care Leavers, Prison	
1.4	Improve links with social services to meet the needs of households	Social Services involved early to support households in need	Year Three – Positive case working for a couple of complex homeless households to resolve complex and	

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		Referral pathway for homeless households who may be intentionally homeless so that social services can support to relieve homelessness Attendance and development of the Council's health and wellbeing group	 multiple needs, including attendance at SAM (Surrey Adults Matter). Meetings held with Children Services managers and point of contact agreed for any shared cases, including those in temporary accommodation facing eviction. To do: Invite Social Services representatives to Housing meetings to get a mutual understanding of the challenges faced by both and establish ways of greater collaborative working. 	
1.5	Focus on sustaining homes and keeping people in existing accommodation, where appropriate	Package developed to keep young people at home, such as mediation Expand on budgeting advice and debt management. Ensure DFG (Disabled Facilities Grant) is used to resolve housing issues, including improving discharge from hospital services. DFG policy to be reviewed to achieve value for money and short timescales in procurement of DFG works.	 Year One – Amendments to operational procedures to remove TA management from sustainment to ensure Sustainment Officers can focus on sustainment work. Sustainment away day held 20 August 2019 to focus on sustainment role Year Two – Updated information on the website, Council newsletter, social media campaigns to encourage engagement and awareness. Despite working remotely, the Sustainment Team built up good working relationships with the Foodbank, StepChange, Salvation Army, Helping Hands, CAB, both jobcentres, Children's Services and internal teams including Family Support, Social Prescribing, Housing Benefit and Council Tax. Work was also done to encourage referrals from other teams within Housing Solutions. This has all raised 	

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			 awareness of the service and encouraged referrals to be made. Linkage between MCL and sustainment, including a referral to sustainment services to support new tenants at the start of their private rented tenancies (known in the team as 'tenants who find'. All direct let tenancies are also referred to Sustainment to ensure that the tenant has the best start to the tenancy and to ensure that the good relationship with the landlord is maintained. Any complex managed MCL tenancies are also referred to Sustainment where additional input is needed. To do Leaflets and fliers have been started with the communications team, to finalise and distribute. Develop NEC Support Services Module. Introduce a "settling in service" Investment in software that identifies households who are not claiming all the benefits they are entitled to and helping them to do so, in order to maximise income 	
1.6	Ensure there is a saving scheme option available to households so that they can plan towards rent in advance, deposits, furniture	Ensure an easy to use and accessible saving option is available to homeless households	Personalised Housing Plans are constantly kept under review and kept up to date in accordance with the legislation. This includes signposting and advising applicants to appropriate services, including for budgeting and savings.	Action required

Ref	Objectives	Measure of Success	Year/Progress	Status
		Explore joint matching savings up to a certain value to encourage savings Improve awareness through Personalised Housing Plans (PHPs) and advice to household's approaches of the costs associated with housing and moving.	To doTo review the advice we give on saving money now that tenants are not staying in TA for as long and include an option for a saving schemeIntroduce an incentives scheme to encourage tenants to keep their rent accounts up to date and to save for move on.	
1.7	Grow the sustainment package, support with budgeting advice, ensuring households are in receipt of the correct benefits, signposted to debt services, encouraged into work, training, volunteering or education	Customers are provided with a holistic service when approaching for housing advice, this will include detailed advice in the PHP Expand support to customers placed through Magna Carta lettings, regular viewings and support for both the tenant and landlord Produce leaflets and handouts explaining how to sustain their tenancy A pathway to assist homeless households into work, training and volunteering is established	See 1.5	

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1.8	Improve the availability of good quality, easy to understand information	Leaflets and handouts produced Improved and details advice included in PHPs	 Year One – PHPs have been amended to provide greater advice around holistic support such as smoking secession advice Year Two – Improved the quality and layout of homelessness decision templates and improved access to contact details Year Three – The Housing Navigator has started to draft and develop pathways and referral routes for rough sleepers. <u>To do</u> Northgate implementation Produce handout and leaflets 	
1.9	Redesign website to include self-serve tools	Updated website to reflect legislative changes, easy to use referral mechanisms for duty to refer and early notification of housing issues Website that provides advice so that customers can self- serve	Year One - Work has started to identify issues with website content Year Two – Complete review of all information on the website and redesigned pages, moving all content onto the corporate website, away from Living&Homes. Year Three – Further review of detail and information on the website to ensure content is up to date and accurate.	
1.10	Establish clear and up to date pathway plans within the area	Pathway plans are clear, up to date and in place in Runnymede for referrals from	Year One – Prison leaver approach procedure in place. Hospital discharge procedure in place. Duty to refer inbox in place and monitored daily.	

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		hospitals, prison, care leaving services	Year Two - Procedures established for every aspect of Housing Solutions (Homelessness) work including referrals to supported housing providers, B&B procedure etc	
			Regular meetings between Housing and Looked After Children/Leaving Care as well as attending Age 17 Accommodation Panel has led to an improved working relationship.	
			<u>To do</u>	
			To keep these under review and up to date.	
1.11	Monitor, review and evaluate data to predict future trends of homelessness	Regular data collection through HCLIC and internal reporting mechanisms	Year One – H-CLIC data captured quarterly and submitted to Government through Delta. A Monthly performance data for housing solutions collected	
			Year Two & Three - Weekly and monthly reporting on rough sleepers and the Government's everyone in scheme.	
			The monthly performance data has enabled us to make several bids to Government funds which have been successful.	
			Year Three – Additional funding awarded for Protect and Vaccinate in response to COVID-19. All Government returns submitted on time.	
			<u>To do</u>	

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			Invest in software which helps to track and map trends in use of temporary accommodation, breakdown of applicants to ensure targeted intervention	
1.12	Sustain tenancies at threat due to financial difficulties through a Prevention Fund provided by RBC from the Flexible Homelessness Grant	Households assisted to remain in their current home where it is suitable for their needs.	 Year One - Prevention budget agreed £20,000 Draft prevention budget procedure and money monitoring spreadsheet created Year Three – Government grant of £72K provided to assist those in rent arrears due to Covid-19 to reduce rent debt and prevent homelessness. Officers improving early referrals to prevention funds, discretionary housing funds (including the introduction of a DHP sign off recommendation sheet) and applying for the Household Support Fund. Refreshed the prevention fund scheme, updated the procedure and application form. 	

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2.1	Set up shared houses for single homeless people	Two shared house projects set up and operational, one for males and one for females Support to move on and	Year One – The first shared house has been set up and let to tenants and tenants have successfully moved on from the accommodation. Year Two – Second house successfully set up. Model	
		provide a holistic service to single homeless and rough sleepers	has been recognised by MHCLG as an example of good practice	
		Explore a pilot for housing first model – providing accommodation and low level support.	The shared houses are now a key part of our provision for single people and those that we may not have a full duty towards. They also play a valuable role in our winter provision for rough sleepers as well as being a key tool in keeping B&B numbers low.	
2.2	Continue to make best use of existing housing stock	Mutual exchanges Downsizes	Year Two & Three - Thorough review of historical data and development of a new Housing Allocation Scheme.	
		Reciprocals	Good work by the Housing Allocation Team to prioritise voids and ensure households on the housing register are accommodated in accordance with the written scheme.	
		to attract active downsizers. (Independent Retirement Living)	Initial work started on an Older Persons Strategy	
			Improve incentives for downsizing. Explore a mobility scheme within Surrey in response to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021	
2.3	Review Allocation Scheme	New/updated Allocations Scheme in place and effective in ensuring households in need are given priority and	Year One - Schedule for reviewing the policy starting to be devised	

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		there is access to Social Housing through the Register so as to not incentivise homelessness.	 Year Two - Full review of the existing scheme undertaken, drafting of the new scheme and a list of proposals developed. Consultation commenced, including member workshop and public questionnaire. Year Three - Full scheme taken Housing Committee in June 2021 and received approval for implementation <u>To do</u> Ensure new system in Northgate is fit for purpose to deliver the Scheme. Complete thorough reregistration exercise and encourage applicants to use the online portal. 	
2.4	Review nomination agreements and maximise opportunities for future development	Regular monitoring of nominations agreements Maximum Affordable Housing achieved in all Section 106 agreements New social housing	 Year Three – New units of social housing bought on board including 34 units of Affordable Rent at Egham Gateway with Accent. 9 units of Affordable Rent accommodation at St Peters, provision at Parkside in partnership with Accent. We have reviewed and recorded the nomination agreements for new schemes to ensure we are receiving our entitlement at re-lets. To carry out a review of all existing nomination agreements to ensure we receive 100% of voids we are entitled to in accordance with the nominations 	

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			agreement, are provided to the Council from registered providers	
2.5	Focus on reducing tenancy and social housing fraud	Expand existing fraud prevention and detection work for housing cases	Year One – RBC has entered into a contract with RBBC to assist with fraud prevention work. This has been successful to date.	
			Year Two – The Housing Allocation Team and Fraud department meet regularly to discuss timeframes for assessments and the quality of the service provided to ensure that it meets with the service requirements. A good working relationship has been established.	
			Year Three - An applicant provided a fraudulent document which was identified during a section 202 homeless application review and the case is being prepared for prosecution. Publication in Council newsletters of our stance on fraud has been published.	
			<u>To do</u>	
			Improve technology through NEC and I@W to ensure all documents are adequately checked for fraud and to launch additional awareness campaigns, including anonymous reporting/no sanction returning of accommodation obtained fraudulently.	
2.6	Explore estate regeneration	Regeneration started of estates within the borough	Year Three – Parkside properties returned to use through a lease agreement with Accent to enable successful homeless prevention.	

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			Appointment to the Housing Development Manager position.	
2.7	Implement the Tenancy Strategy	Tenancy strategy implemented and being used by registered providers Tenancy policy introduced for RBC tenancies	Tenancy strategy written and approved at Committee <u>To do</u> This falls within the Housing & Neighbourhood Services team and is being presented to Housing Committee.	
2.8	Expand and develop Magna Carta Lettings	 Explore new incentives for landlords to assist tenants such as those without access to a guarantor or 6 month's rent up front Explore options for those found to be intentionally homeless Expand the service to meet the needs of more households and to get new landlords on board 	Year One - Successfully applied for grant aid funding previously provided to Rent Start to provide a service for single homeless through MCL, adding £20,000 per year to the budget. Year Two - Two successful Government funding bids approved to the value of £17,691 for no priority covid applications to enter the PRS. Year Three - A successful bid for £18,607 to the AEFO fund. Advertising and engagement with landlords as part of the £72K rent arrear reduction grant has led to successful outcomes and new landlords joining the scheme. <u>To do</u> Review the scheme to ensure that we mitigate the financial risks of the scheme to the Council, whilst ensuring the package remains attractive to landlords.	

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2.9	Focus on tenancy sustainment package and improve relationships with landlords	Continue to host landlord forums and events Provide information to landlords of the services we can provide encouraging early notification of issues to sustain tenancies. Introduce tenancy training for tenants and ensure tenants are ready for move on before securing accommodation	 Year One – Landlord forum hosted on 30 July at RBC, 25 landlords attended. New landlord folders and leaflets have been ordered. Year Two – Research has been undertaken into the types of tenancy training available. The findings suggest that online training may work best and is financially viable compared to face to face. Year Three – Development of a support star module and NEC Support Services system to capture progress made against defined objectives. <u>To do:</u> Introduce tenancy training and/or educational videos. Provide a "settling in service" to new tenants. 	
2.10	Explore shared ownership housing and access to within the borough	Explore the opportunity of matching a tenant's deposit to buy a home up to a certain limit by way of an interest free loan Encourage customers to prevent their homelessness by exploring home ownership offers	Options for a Council loan towards a deposit for shared ownership have been discussed internally but so far this has not been achievable. <u>To do:</u> Develop the shared ownership model including provision for First Homes – a Government scheme to provide home ownership with a 30% reduction in sale price up to £250K.	

Ref	Objectives	Measure of Success	Year/Progress	Status
2.11	Develop support for rough sleepers	Introduce shared house scheme for single homeless Explore a model of donation point to fund towards FUSE activities. Introduction of access to a shower for rough sleepers Access to food, clothing, health checks. Developing links with charities such as Haircuts4Homeless on a local scale.	 Year One – Shared houses now introduced. The availability of showers now in place through Bessom and The Salvation Army Year Two - Successful Government funding bid to install two emergency sleep pods approved and installed. Year Three – Further successful funding bids for a Housing Navigator to develop pathway plans for rough sleepers. Successful bid to purchase 3 properties and deliver a housing led service for rough sleepers. Bids made for additional funding to extend the Navigator post and scope of the role. 	
2.12	Continue to apply for relevant government funding for new initiatives	Funding bid submitted for all relevant government funding or other funding streams to improve the homeless service Successful bid achieved and implemented including monitoring of outcomes.	Year One - Funding bids previously applied for prior to the strategy commencing have been determined and unfortunately no funds were awarded to RBC Year Two - Four funding bids approved by MHCLG, for sustainment officer, covid response, B&B costs, emergency sleep pods, PRS incentives. Total: £65,290 Year Three - Further bids made and approved, AEFO, RSAP, RSI, Surrey CC. Total £488,607 To date a total grant award of £553,897 has been generated. <u>To do</u>	

Ref	Objectives	Measure of Success	Year/Progress	Status
			Continue to implement the initiatives we have successfully bid for and to continue to bid for further funds in year four as they become available.	
Obje	ctive Three: Partnership W	orking and Holistic Support		
3.1	Enhanced Personal Housing Plans, incorporating more than just housing advice	Enhanced PHPs produced and given to households facing homelessness. These to include information about health, gambling advice, drink, drug and smoking secession. To include signposting to debt and credit unions and to generally give more information than just housing advice	Year One - PHPs have been updated to take into account other factors. PHPs have been drafted to be used by the sustainment team as well as housing officers. Year Three - Further improvements to PHP including local services to help provide a holistic and targeted package of advice for applicants such as Youth Hub details	
3.2	Develop the FUSE group to give meaningful assistance to vulnerable groups	Introduce access to showers for homeless Set up a winter shelter (action 3.3) Research best practice Nationally and abroad to develop our own projects	 Year One - Regular FUSE group meetings are now in place, this included providing a presentation on the HRAct on 16 July 2019 Covid-19 significantly impacted the frequency of these meetings. Year Three - Appointed a Housing Navigator to relaunch the group with first meeting held and regular meetings set up for the future. 	

Ref	Objectives	Measure of Success	Year/Progress	Status
			Closer partnership working with key stakeholders including monthly meetings with emergency pod facilitators	
			<u>To do</u>	
			Continue to explore initiative and measures that the Council and the community and local services can work together to improve the lives and opportunities for those that are at risk of or become homeless.	
3.3	Introduce a winter shelter within the borough	Winter shelter set up and operational Develop a package of move on support available to those in need of a winter shelter	Year Two - Winter shelters were not appropriate due to Covid-19, but we have introduced two emergency sleep pods and eight bed spaces across the two shared houses. Year Three – Covid-19 has meant that shelters continue to be inappropriate and go against government guidance, so we have not continued with this objective. Instead, we have developed a year round options for rough sleepers rather than just for winter, including the drafting of a No Second Night Out Scheme and move on pathways through the Housing Navigator.	
3.4	Work with foodbank to give support to the users so that they can become independent of this resource	Develop a package to include budgeting advice and support to households in need of foodbank support Signpost to services to support affordable and healthy eating	Work started on this with the Sustainment Service meeting with organisations such as "Eat well spend less" and helped to run the course but the pandemic paused these initiatives as face to face contact stopped. Sustainment officer has been set up as a superuser on the food voucher system and works closely with the service. Have also built a good working relationship with	

Ref	Objectives	Measure of Success	Year/Progress	Status
			homeless. We have successfully bid for £1000 for this charity and have access to a supply of rucksacks for rough sleepers we support.	
			<u>To do</u>	
			Relaunch this work through the sustainment team	
3.5	Continue and improve strong partnership relationships	Continue to work together and develop services for the benefit of our mutual client groups Develop new incentives and projects to best meet the	Year One – Work with Citizens Advice has commenced to review the SLA and to improve working relationships Year Two - Better partnership facilitated through inviting partners to disseminate information about their services and strategies improved collaborative working. See 1.5.	
		needs of households	Year Three – Relaunched FUSE group	
Obje	ctive Four: Meeting the ne	eeds of those in temporary accor	mmodation	
4.1	Ensure B&B use is minimal	Set up of shared houses for single people	Year One – We have kept B&B usage to a minimum and well within budget with B&B use.	
		Maintain low levels of B&B usage by earlier intervention to prevent homelessness	Year Two – B&B use has continued to remain low despite "Everyone In" scheme requiring all rough sleepers be moved off of the street. B&B funding bid approved to cover some costs of B&B placements.	
		Ensure efficient move on from B&B to more sustainable housing	Year Three - Better utilisation of emergency sleep pods, shared houses and early intervention at Prevention stage	

Ref	Objectives	Measure of Success	Year/Progress	Status
		Assess levels and trends of homeless approaches to ensure appropriate levels of housing are available, both private, social and temporary	to keep B&B usage low. Additional funding secured to cover B&B costs, minimal cost to the CouncilBetter engagement and move on plans for those who are placed in B&B, thus reducing the length of their stay.	
4.2	Provide realistic advice to those entering TA	Develop PHPs to provide advice and assistance going beyond just housing advice. Ensure households are aware of limited social housing and that they need to explore all housing options such as private rental Ensure households are ready to move at short notice	Year One – PHPs amended and subject to regular review. Realistic advice being provided to customers that they need to consider all options. This is quality checked by the Housing Solutions Manager Year Three - Greater emphasis on move on plans and working actively with the applicant to identify suitable PRS properties for move on We have started to develop licenses for those that go into temporary accommodation, instead of non-secure agreements and will enable us to give realistic advice about how long the license will last in every outcome of a case. <u>To do</u> Further improvement in the reduction of time spent in TA, savings for rent in advance, rent arrear reduction and settling in scheme support.	
4.3	Introduce tenancy training and life skills to those in need in TA	Explore the opportunity to provide tenancy training	Year One - Pre tenancy training working group organised and working on this. Year Two – Housing & Neighbourhood Services started work on tenancy videos.	

Ref	Objectives	Measure of Success	Year/Progress	Status
		Explore the opportunities for online training for tenants to prepare them for a tenancy Assess income and expenditure to provide budgeting advice	To do Develop modules in NEC to ensure these can be actioned.	
4.4	Ensure TA households are ready and prepared for move on and households are moved on promptly	 Tenants are supported to save towards the initial costs needed to move i.e. rent in advance, this could be through a credit union Tenants in debt will be signposted to debt advice services to help manage their debts and provide budgeting advice Tenants are given the advice and tools to be able to look for their own housing solution i.e. in the private sector or home ownership 	Tenants are supported to maintain their temporary accommodation and prepare for move on <u>To do</u> Applicants to have access to saving scheme for rent in advance. Support services module implemented to provide tailored advice and support plans, as well as measuring success through the support star	
4.5	Ensure rent arrears are kept to a minimum and addressed effectively when they occur	Active monitoring of rent payments and support for customers to ensure their rents are paid in full and on time. Efficient action taken when rent arrears form to ensure	Year One - Management of TA day to day functions and arrears moved into Housing & Neighbourhood Services team. Year Three – we have started the drafting of a temporary accommodation license to be used instead of non-secure tenancy agreements, these licenses will enable much	

Ref	Objectives	Measure of Success	Year/Progress	Status
		they are supported to clear their accounts	greater control of temporary accommodation stock and the ability to take action against rent arrears.	
		Regular visits to TA to give support and assistance to ensure there are no tenancy breaches	To do Potential to move the management of temporary accommodation back into Housing Solutions and to utilise the rent analytics to keep on top of rent arrears and refresh the eviction escalation procedure.	
4.6	Provide a Solutions approach, not just housing. I.e. support to get people back to work, education, training or volunteering. Signposting to relevant service such as debt and health	Households supported into employment, volunteering and training Households receive a benefit assessment to ensure in receipt of all appropriate benefits and supported to register for those entitled to but not receiving.	Year One - Customers signposted where appropriate. Development of a directory of services and charitable fund in process to ensure all options are known and utilised by all officers. <u>To do</u> Ensure applicants are assessed against the support star, ensure correct benefits are in place, supported with education, employment and volunteering.	