

National Practitioner Support Service

HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION ACT FORM TEMPLATES

FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Version 1: May 2018

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The National Practitioner Support Service

NPSS is a service that was set up to support all local authorities across the country with early intervention and prevention advice and assistance. The team members are embedded within front line services across the country and can provide general advice and assistance to all authorities, host and administer free sounding boards, have developed a self-assessment HRA checklist and related toolkits free of charge, the team also provide any wider support to authorities and partner agencies at cost. This includes a National annual conference at the University of Warwick, training courses on a range of housing related topics, practitioner one to one support and a comprehensive I.T package.

One of the training courses we are currently delivering is the 'introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act', as a team we have now delivered this course over 130 times to 85% of all local authorities in England. This has highlighted the requirement for not only for a toolkit on the Homelessness Reduction Act but a templates form pack to assist local authorities and their partners with the implementation of the Act.

The forms within this toolkit are based on the forms used within Housing Jigsaw our HRA solution built on an I.T platform and compliment the NPSS HRA toolkit including template letters that are also embedded within Housing Jigsaw PRAH. Housing Jigsaw PRAH is available for all local authorities to trial free of charge and includes a customer and partner agency portal to enable authorities to provide an open and transparent service to customers, allowing informed decisions to be made and supporting the ethos of the legislation to empower customers.

The member and customers briefing are provided for local authorities to use as a template and share with members and customers in advance of the new legislation explaining clearly the changes the legislation will bring and the role of all partner agencies in providing an early intervention and prevention service to customers.

Template Triage Form

Customer details

Basic information:

Title		First name		Last name	
Date of birth		Gender:			
Pregnancy due date					

Address:

Address					
Accommodation type		Move in date			
Housing circumstance		Settled?			
Accommodation provider					

Correspondence address (if different from above)

Address					
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Phone and email:

Home phone		Mobile			
Work phone		Email			
Preferred contact method					

Reasons for approach

Detail the reason for approach today

--

Detail any steps which have already been taken to resolve current housing issues

--

Detail any assistance which would be helpful

--

Have you previously approached a local authority for help with your housing/homelessness?

--

When did you most recently approach an LA for assistance with your housing/homelessness?

--

Additional factors

Tick all those that apply:

Drug/alcohol use	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	Served in the armed forces	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Care history	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	Prison history	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Health issues	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic abuse/harassment	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>

Residential status

UK resident	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non UK resident	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Detail current medication and dosage for all household members

Household member	Medication	Dosage and frequency

Detail any members of the household who are receiving support including the support provider, nature and frequency of the support

Household member	Support provider	Type of support given

Triage outcomes

Is there reason to believe that the applicant is homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days?

Yes No

If yes, detail why there is reason to believe the applicant is homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days:

Initial triage outcome

No reason to believe homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
- No application taken	<input type="checkbox"/>
- General advice provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reason to believe homelessness or threatened with homelessness within 56 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Homeless application triggered	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Full assessment booked	<input type="checkbox"/>
No show at triage/ initial approach	<input type="checkbox"/>

Briefly detail reasons for the above decision:

Detail the initial advice provided today:

Detail any agencies the customer has been signposted to:

--

Appointment information

If a full assessment has been booked, detail this below:

Date of assessment		Officer name	
Time of assessment		Office contact details	

Detail any agencies the customer has been signposted to:

Name of agency	Reason for signposting	Contact details

Consent and declaration

I/We confirm the details given to be true.

XXXX has a duty to protect personal information and will process personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and any amendments to the act. The personal data you provide on this form will only be used for the purpose of **XXXX** making inquiries relating to your housing situation and related purposes; it may also be used for the prevention or detection of fraud or crime and in an anonymised form for statistical purposes. The data will be stored on a shared computer system and/or manual files. You have a right to a copy of your information held by any organisation, with some exemptions. To gain access to your personal data held by **XXXX**) or if you have any data protection concerns, please contact the Data Protection Officer at The Council.

I/We authorise those contacted by **XXXX** to provide such necessary and relevant (including confidential) information sought by them under this declaration.

In order to administrate this, we may share your personal data with:

GPs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Revenues & benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Landlords	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solicitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Banks/financial institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>
HMCS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Police/probation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other local authorities	<input type="checkbox"/>
MHCLG	<input type="checkbox"/>	Support agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Schools/collages/youth services	<input type="checkbox"/>

Detail below any other organisations or individuals you consent to us sharing your data with:

Detail below any other organisations or individuals you do not consent to us sharing your data with:

Declaration

Customer name (please print)	
Customer signature	
Customer name (please print)	
Customer signature	
Triage officer name (please print)	
Triage officer signature	

Assessment Form

Customer details – (please note this is a replica of the triage customer details so only required if triage form is not used)

Basic information:

Title		First name		Last name	
Date of birth			Gender:		
Pregnancy due date					

Address:

Address					
Accommodation type			Move in date		
Housing circumstance			Settled?		
Accommodation provider					

Correspondence address:

Address					
---------	--	--	--	--	--

Phone and email:

Home phone		Mobile			
Work phone		Email			
Preferred contact method					

Circumstances – About homelessness -

Is the customer homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days? Y N

Detail the reason the customer has approached for assistance today:

When is the customer likely to become homeless?

Has the customer approached this or any other local authority before? Y N

If yes, and this authority, please provide the date:

If yes, and another authority, please provide the name and date of approach:

Explain why the customer homeless or threatened with homelessness:

Circumstances – About previous homelessness

Has the customer been homeless before? Y N

If yes, when did the applicant first become homeless? < 3 months <12 months > 12 months

How old was the customer when they first became homeless?

Has the customer ever slept rough? Y N

If yes, for how many nights did the customer sleep rough last year?

If yes, how old was the customer when they first slept rough?

Has the customer been placed in temporary accommodation before by this authority? Y N

If yes, detail further information about this placement here:

Circumstances – Current housing details

What type of property does / did the customer live in?

House	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	Mobile home	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Flat	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	Caravan or boat	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Bedsit/Studio	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	Bungalow	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Sheltered	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	Other	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>

If the customer's accommodation is a flat, what level is the accommodation located on?

If the customer's accommodation is a flat, is there a lift in the property? Y N

How many bedrooms does the customer's accommodation have?

How many bedrooms are for the sole use of the customer's household?

How many living rooms does the customer's accommodation have?

How many living rooms are for the sole use of the customer's household?

Does the customer's accommodation have a kitchen? Y N

If yes, is the kitchen for the sole use of the customer's household? Y N

Does the customer's accommodation have a garden? Y N

If yes, is the garden for the sole use of the customer's household? Y N

Housing need – Tenure details

What is the tenure of the customer;

Owner/occupier Y N Tenant Y N Licensee Y N

Lodger (including residing with parents) Y N No accommodation Y N

If tenant/licensee or lodger;

Landlord name:

Landlord address:

Letting agent name (if applicable):

Letting agent address (if applicable):

Is the property in disrepair? Y N

Is the customer suffering harassment at the property? Y N

If yes, provide details below:

Is the customer overcrowded at the property? Y N

Has notice to leave the property been served? Y N

Are there reasons why the customer thinks the property is not fit for purpose Y N

Is the customer's property located within the local authority area? Y N

Was a deposit paid? Y N

Is there a valid EPC in place? Y N

Is there a valid gas safety certificate in place? Y N

Housing need – Health and Wellbeing

Does the customer or any household members have any self-reported vulnerabilities - including physical or mental health needs? Y N

Does the customer or any member of the household have any confirmed medical conditions? Y N

Is the customer or any family members on any medication? Y N

Does the customers current housing situation impact on any medical condition? Y N

What is the name of the customers family GP?

Does the customer or any family members have any other health care professionals working with them? Y N

Does the customer use alcohol and/or drugs? Y N

Does any member of the household require any assistance with addiction (gambling, drugs or alcohol)? Y N

Does the customer or any member of the household need support to be able to live independently or to develop independent living skills? Y N

Has the customer or any member of the household ever been in local authority care? Y N

Does any member of the household have any of the following mobility or support issues?

Household member	Difficulty Walking	Difficulty Bathing	Use a stick/frame	Use a wheelchair	Difficulty with steps	Any adaptations in the current accommodation

Additional information on mobility and support issues

Housing need – Education and Employment

Is this member of the household in full time education or employment? (tick those that apply);

Working: 30 hours a week or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	Registered unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working: less than 30 hours a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not working because of long term sickness or disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retired (including retired early)	<input type="checkbox"/>	At home/not seeking work (including looking after the home or family)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training scheme/apprenticeship	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know/refused	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full time student	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Housing need – Financial Assessment

What is the regular household income. Under frequency please use the following key: -

- Weekly - W
- Fortnightly - F
- Monthly - M
- Four-weekly – 4w

HOUSEHOLD INCOME.	Amount	Frequency	Proof Requested?
Main applicant wages	£		
Partner's Wages	£		
Company Pension	£		
Universal Credit	£		
Income Support	£		
Job Seekers Allowance	£		
Child Benefit	£		
ESA	£		

DLA/PIP	£		
Working Tax Credit	£		
Child Tax Credit	£		
Incapacity Benefit	£		
Pension Credit	£		
Bereavement Benefit	£		
Carers' Allowance	£		
Other State Benefits	£		
Maintenance	£		
Student Loan/Grant	£		
Housing Benefit	£		
Council Tax Support	£		
Total Income (A)	£		

HOUSEHOLD OUTGOINGS.

A. Priority Outgoings	Amount	Frequency	Arrears (how much)
Mortgage	£		
Mortgage Protection Policy	£		
Secured Loans	£		
Court Fines	£		
Court Maintenance Payments	£		
Benefit Repayments/Deductions	£		
Rent	£		
Council Tax	£		
Gas/Oil	£		
Electric	£		
Water	£		
TV Licence	£		
Total Priority Outgoings	£		

Non-Priority debts are debts owed to credit cards, unsecured loans, shop or catalogue cards etc. Refer to debt advice agency for renegotiation if necessary.

B. Non-Priority Debt: Creditors Name.	Balance Outstanding	Monthly Repayment	Proofs Requested
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
Totals (C)	£	£	

Total Household Income (A)	
Deduct Total Priority Outgoings (B)	
Deduct Total Non-Priority Debts (C)	
Disposable Income is:	

Is the household managing financially? Y N

Do either the applicant or joint applicant have an interest in a mortgage? Y N

Housing need – Pets

Does the household have any pets? Y N

Please provide details of the type and age of the pets

Are any of the pets expected to be rehoused with household? Y N

Is an assistance dog to be rehoused with household? Y N

Accommodation Required – Supplementary Information

What type of accommodation is required for this customer?

Detail any appointments made, including agency, date of appointment and time

Detail any leaflets or websites provided to the customer

Any other information / advice provided

Support - Support needs and support network

What support needs have been identified within the household?

Young person aged 16-17 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	Care leaver aged 21+ years	<input type="checkbox"/>	At risk of/has experienced sexual abuse/exploitation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Young person aged 18-25 years requiring support to manage independently	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical ill health and disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	At risk of/has experienced domestic abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Young parent requiring support to manage independently	<input type="checkbox"/>	History of mental health problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	At risk of/has experienced abuse (non-domestic abuse)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Care leaver aged 18-20 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drug dependency needs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alcohol dependency needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Offending history	<input type="checkbox"/>	History of repeat homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>
History of rough sleeping	<input type="checkbox"/>	Former asylum seeker	<input type="checkbox"/>	Old age	<input type="checkbox"/>
Served in HM Forces	<input type="checkbox"/>	Access to education, employment or training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other – give details	<input type="checkbox"/>

What kind of support do you receive from family members?

What kind of support do you receive from friends?

Do you receive any other additional support and if so from which agencies?

Is there any other support you feel you would like?

Do you provide any support to anyone in your household? Y N

Support – Criminal Behaviour

Has any member of the household any criminal convictions including unspent or pending, cautions or final warnings? Y N

If Yes - add any further details here:

--

Has any member of the household been in prison? Y N

Support – Risk Assessment

The risk assessment should be filled in directly after housing assessment (it should not be used as a set of questions for the customer) but with information based on the interview to include

- Information provided by the customer in the assessment process
- The professional judgement of the assessment team
- Observed behaviour
- Referral information (if any)
- Information from other services who have worked with the individual
- PNC check information

Incidents of violence? Y N - If yes, to whom?

Friends/Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Users	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Most serious damage caused

None	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minor Injury	<input type="checkbox"/>	Serious Injury	<input type="checkbox"/>
Death	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Emotional / Mental health problems

Detained under the MH Act	<input type="checkbox"/>	Known suicide attempts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Known self-harm	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dual diagnosis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bizarre behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Self-care / Risk from others

Incidents of serious self-neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>	Incidents of being harassed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Persistent provocative behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Incidents of being abused/exploited	<input type="checkbox"/>	Accidental harm (e.g. Kitchen fires, careless smoking)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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Other risk factors

Substance/alcohol abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Known danger to children	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual assault / exposure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Known incidents of abuse or harassment of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	Problems managing anger/impulsive behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	Arson	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tenancy risks

History of losing tenancies due to arrears	<input type="checkbox"/>	History of tenancy related ASB orders or ABCs	<input type="checkbox"/>
History of losing tenancies due to abandonment	<input type="checkbox"/>	History of exploiting tenancy conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>

PNC Check Information and other additional information: *If you have indicated yes to any question above, please describe behaviour/incidents in detail. Please also list any risk assessment work previously undertaken with this individual*

Who is at risk?

What are the risks?

Where is the risk greatest?

What factors might increase risk?

What risk strategy / actions should be put in place as a direct result of this form?

Equal Opportunities Monitor

The Public-Sector Equality Duty does not expressly require the Council to collect equality information. However, collecting, analysing and using the information helps us to see how our policies and activities are affecting various sections of our communities. In employment and service provision, it helps us to identify any existing inequalities and where new inequalities may be developing and take any action identified to tackle them.

In addition to the nine “protected characteristics” (Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Sex [formerly Gender], Race, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation) identified in the Equality Act 2010, we have added categories of Refugees and Asylum Seekers and Language to reflect the full diversity of the district.

We will be grateful if you could take a little time to complete and return this form. Please go through it and tick all the categories that most accurately describe you. The information you provide on this form will be held in the strictest confidence and only be used for the purpose stated above.

Name of applicant		Age			
Sex		Male / Female			
Disability					
Deafness of partial loss of hearing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Blindness or partial loss of sight	<input type="checkbox"/>	Developmental disorder	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mental ill health	<input type="checkbox"/>	Long term illness or condition	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	No disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nationality					
UK National Habitually resident in the UK	<input type="checkbox"/>	UK national returning from residence overseas / in UK for the first time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Czech Republic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Estonia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hungary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Latvia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lithuania	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slovakia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Slovenia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bulgaria	<input type="checkbox"/>	Romania	<input type="checkbox"/>
Croatia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ireland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other EEA country national	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-EEA country national	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Ethnicity					
White - British	<input type="checkbox"/>	White - Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	White Other – Greek / Greek Cypriot	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Other - Turkish	<input type="checkbox"/>	White Other – Turkish Cypriot	<input type="checkbox"/>	White Other - Kurdish	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Other –	<input type="checkbox"/>	White Other – Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	White Other – Other	25 <input type="checkbox"/>

Gypsy/Roma		Traveller			
Mixed – White and Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed – White and Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed - Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British - African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British - Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black or Black British - Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian or Asian British - Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian or Asian British – East African Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian or Asian British - Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chinese or other ethnic group - Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese or other ethnic group - other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion					
Christian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sikh	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rastafarian	<input type="checkbox"/>	No religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation					
Heterosexual	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesbian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Pregnancy and maternity					
Has any member of the household been in prison? Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>					
Have you had a baby in the last 12 months? Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>					
Marriage and Civil Partnership					
Single	<input type="checkbox"/>	Married	<input type="checkbox"/>	Co-habiting	<input type="checkbox"/>
In a same sex civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	Separated	<input type="checkbox"/>	Divorced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Widowed	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Refugees and Asylum Seekers					
Are you a refugee or an asylum seeker?					
A Refugee	<input type="checkbox"/>	An Asylum Seeker	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither	<input type="checkbox"/>
What country or region are you a refugee/asylum seeker from?					
Language					
Please describe which language you speak:					

Consent and declaration

I/We confirm the details given to be true.

XXXX has a duty to protect personal information and will process personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and any amendments to the act. The personal data you provide on this form will only be used for the purpose of **XXXX** making inquiries relating to your housing situation and related purposes; it may also be used for the prevention or detection of fraud or crime and in an anonymised form for statistical purposes. The data will be stored on a shared computer system and/or manual files. You have a right to a copy of your information held by any organisation, with some exemptions. To gain access to your personal data held by **XXXX**) or if you have any data protection concerns, please contact the Data Protection Officer at The Council.

I/We authorise those contacted by **XXXX** to provide such necessary and relevant (including confidential) information sought by them under this declaration.

In order to administrate this, we may share your personal data with:

GPs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Revenues and benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Landlords	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solicitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Banks/financial institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>
HMCS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Police/probation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other local authorities	<input type="checkbox"/>
MHCLG	<input type="checkbox"/>	Support agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Schools/collages/youth services	<input type="checkbox"/>

Detail below any other organisations or individuals you consent to us sharing your data with:

Detail below any other organisations or individuals you do not consent to us sharing your data with:

Declaration

Customer name (please print)	
Customer signature	
Customer name (please print)	
Customer signature	

Assessment officer name (please print)	
Assessment officer signature	

Template Personalised Housing Plan

Title	DOB	Relationship	NI Number
First name	Surname	Gender	Customer ID

You attended the local authority and a personal assessment of your current housing circumstances was undertaken by **<insert officer name>** on the **<insert date>** because you have a housing need and approached the authority for assistance. As part of the assessment the local authority has taken into account:

- The circumstances causing your homelessness
- The housing needs of you and your household
- The type of accommodation your household requires
- Any support needs you or your household need to secure and retain accommodation

Set out below is the personalised housing plan detailing the outcome of the assessment including steps that we discussed and the actions that will be taken by you, the Housing team of the Local Authority and any third party agencies in order to address your housing situation.

Appointment Today

You attended the appointment **alone/with family members/with an advocate/ with a support agency**.

Other agencies

This plan can be shown or shared with any other agencies/relatives/friends who are helping you so they are aware of your housing need and how the local authority is trying to assist you. The details below are the support needs identified as part of your assessment and who is currently providing support to your household.

Basic assessment information

From our basic assessment we believe your situation to be as follows:

When you think you will become homeless (or threatened with homelessness):

Actions already taken

The action you have already taken to resolve your housing issues is:

Wishes to resolve your housing situation

Your wishes to resolve your housing situation:

Actions/reasonable steps

What actions/reasonable steps the Housing Options Officer will do next:

- 1. Customer agrees with action Y N
- 2. Customer agrees with action Y N
- 3. Customer agrees with action Y N

Actions/reasonable steps

What actions/reasonable steps you need to take:

- 1. Customer agrees with action Y N
- 2. Customer agrees with action Y N

Actions/reasonable steps

What actions/reasonable steps the third party agency will do next: (name of third party agency):

- 1.
- 2.

Actions that would be a 'good idea' for you to take

What actions/reasonable steps would be a 'good idea' for you to take:

- 1.
- 2.

Date PHP to be reviewed by Officer and Customer

<insert date>

Appointments arranged

Any appointments arranged for you will be listed here:

Leaflets/website information

Details of any leaflets / website information provided to you will be listed here:

Any other information / advice provided

Any other information / advice provided to you will be listed here:

A checklist of additional information required

Please can you provide documented proof of the following to the Council:

Agreement

The Personal Housing Plan has been drawn up for both you and the council to carry out all the steps that have been agreed on the plan.

You should make sure you attend any appointments that are arranged for you and take any action that you agreed to do on the plan.

If you cannot do something that is on the plan then make sure you tell the council straight away and explain why you cannot do it.

We will review this plan on the **date to be determined** - in order to evaluate the appropriateness of the plan and any steps recorded.

If your circumstances change, for example you become homeless or your health needs change, then your Personal Housing Plan must be reviewed. Make sure you inform the council of any changes in your circumstances so that they can look at the plan with you again, agree new actions or add to the existing actions to be taken.

I _____ confirm that this is an accurate summary of my housing options interview and I understand the options available to me.

Signed and agreed by Housing Officer

Signed by Housing Officer on this date

Signed and agreed by customer

Signed by customer on this date

You have a right to a review of a decision made by the Council in relation to its duties and responsibilities towards you. If you are unhappy with a decision that has been made, you should tell us why, in writing, within 21 days of receipt of the decision or offer. You have the right to request a review of the following aspects:

- the steps taken to prevent you from becoming homeless

- the steps taken to relieve your homelessness

THE HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION ACT 2017

Customer information

THE HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION ACT – WHAT IS IT?

The Homelessness Reduction Act is the most significant change to the legislation governing homelessness in over 20 years. The Act places a duty on local housing authorities to intervene to prevent homelessness or to take steps to tackle homelessness once it has occurred. These duties apply for **all** eligible people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness when they ask the council for help. The Act means that councils are changing the way they provide services.

NEED HOUSING ADVICE?

Councils have a duty to provide free information and advice to any person in their area on:

- preventing homelessness
- securing accommodation when homeless
- the rights of homeless people or those threatened with homelessness,
- the help that is available from the local authority or anyone else in the district, and
- how to access that help

You can find contact details for your local authority online: <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

ASSESSMENT

If the council is satisfied that you are eligible for assistance and threatened with homelessness or homeless, an assessment of your circumstances will be carried out. The assessment must consider:

- The circumstances causing you to be at risk of homelessness, or
- The circumstances that caused you to become homeless
- Your housing needs, in particular the type of accommodation that would be suitable for you
- What support you need to secure new accommodation, or to retain the accommodation you live in.

When the council has completed the assessment, you will be notified of the outcome in writing.

AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

If the council is:

- Satisfied that you are eligible for assistance
- Satisfied that you are 'threatened with homelessness' within 56 days

They will owe you a 'prevention duty' for up to 56 days and have a duty to take steps to prevent you from becoming homeless. The council will do this by either helping you to remain in your existing accommodation or, where this is not possible or safe to do so, by helping you to find a new home before you become homeless.

The earlier you contact the council for advice, the more opportunity they will have to work with you to prevent your homelessness.

HOMELESSNESS

If the council is:

- Satisfied that you are eligible for assistance
- Satisfied that you are homeless

They will owe you a 'relief' duty for up to 56 days and have a duty to take steps to help you secure accommodation. The accommodation must be suitable for you and there must be an expectation that you will be able to live there for at least six months. If you are still homeless at the end of 56 days, the council will decide what further duties, if any, you are owed.

PERSONALISED HOUSING PLANS (PHP)

If the council owes you a prevention or relief duty they will work with you to develop a 'personalised housing plan (PHP)' which will be based on your particular circumstances. The plan will include:

- Reasonable steps that you must take to prevent or relieve your homelessness
- Reasonable steps that the council will take to prevent or relieve your homelessness

It may also include:

- Actions which the council think would be a good idea for you to take
- Actions for agencies you are engaged with which may support the prevention or relief of your homelessness

The Personalised Housing Plan will be issued to you in writing; this may be printed for you, emailed to you or available online for you to view and update. You will be expected to work with the council to achieve the steps set out in the plan and the plan will be kept up to date throughout the time that the council are working with you so that it stays relevant to your circumstances at all times. If your situation changes, make sure to let the council know as quickly as you are able to.

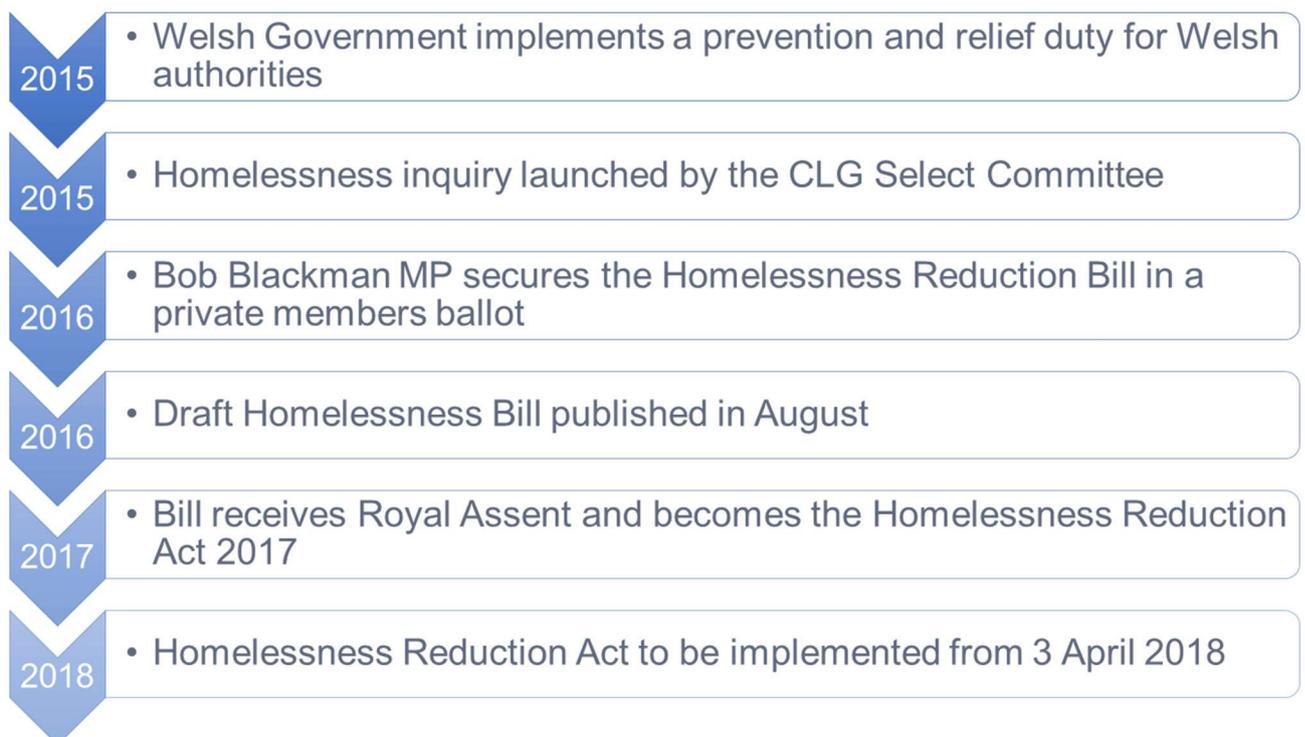
THE HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION ACT 2017

Member Briefing

CONTEXT

Prior to 3 April 2018, Local Housing Authorities worked to the provisions of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002). The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 amended Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. A total of thirteen clauses were enacted to amend and enhance previous responsibilities.

The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA 2017) received Royal Assent on 27th April 2018 but local authorities have been preparing themselves for a possible prevention and relief duty since April 2015 when the Welsh Government implemented the Housing (Wales) Act 2014:



On 8th August 2017, Marcus Jones MP, Homelessness Minister confirmed in a letter to local authority Chief Executives that it was the government's intention for the provisions of the Act will be implemented from 3 April 2018. A copy of this letter is provided at **APPENDIX XX**.

Importantly for local authorities, the Minister also confirmed an allocation of £61 million £72.7 million New Burdens funding, designed to support local authorities to implement the provisions of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. A formula has been applied to distribute this funding to all local authorities in England.

On 16th October 2017, the distribution of this funding was confirmed, with (*insert local authority name here*) receiving £XX of funding.

The funding was distributed in two stages. Stage 1 allocated new burdens funding to regions using RO4 finance data and national homelessness statistics. Stage 2 allocated this funding between the authorities within each region using Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2016 midyear population estimates and DCLG Index of Multiple Deprivation average scores.

The funding will be paid over 3 years, with the amount for (*insert local authority name here*) at each year being:

Local Authority	Allocation 2017/18	Allocation 2018/19	Allocation 2019/20	Total allocation
	£	£	£	£

PREVIOUS LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The previous legislation governing homelessness was set out in Pt VII of the Housing Act 1996. The Homelessness Reduction Act provides a safety net for persons who find themselves homeless or threatened with homelessness, and sets out the framework for the approach that local authorities have to take when providing assistance. The Act requires a local housing authority to, as the absolute minimum, provide advice and information on homelessness and the prevention of homelessness. The level of assistance local authorities are required to give to any individual or household is set out by following particular steps in the legislation and the application of tests within these.

Previous legislation provided for a distinction between those applicants who are considered to be in 'priority need' (generally families with dependent children) and those who were not (generally single people who are not considered to be vulnerable).

In order to decide what, if any, duty was owed, the local authority had to apply 5 tests in order. These were:

1. **Eligible for assistance (s.185):**

The local authority had to establish whether an applicant is eligible for assistance. Generally, an applicant will need to be a British or Irish citizen or have a right to reside in the UK in order to be eligible for assistance. If an applicant was not eligible, they were entitled to advice only

2. Homeless (s.175, s.176, s.177)

The local authority was required to establish whether an applicant was homeless or threatened with homelessness. The statute explains this, setting out a definition for homeless or threatened with homelessness, the meaning of accommodation and whether it is reasonable for a person to continue to occupy any accommodation

3. Priority need (s.189)

The Act specified that an applicant was in priority need if they were; a pregnant woman or have dependent children, if they were homeless as a result of an emergency, or if they were vulnerable as a result of old age, mental illness, handicap or physical disability or any other special reason.

The 2002 Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation)(England) Order expanded these categories to include applicants who were; aged 16 and 17 years old and not owed any duty as a child in care or a care leaver as set out in the Children Act 1989; aged under 21 years old who were in local authority care between the ages of 16 and 18; aged 21 and over who were vulnerable as a result of leaving local authority care; vulnerable as a result of leaving the armed forces; vulnerable as a result of leaving prison; and vulnerable as a result of fleeing domestic violence or the threat of domestic violence

Local authorities had discretion in determining if an applicant is 'vulnerable' and therefore fall into one of the categories of priority need. This has been, and remains, a contentious issue and is often tested in the courts with 'vulnerability' defined by case law (most recently in the Supreme Court in *Hotak v Southwark LBC*, *Kanu v Southwark LBC*, *Johnson v Solihull MBC* 2015)

4. Intentionally homeless (s.191)

If any applicant has deliberately done anything, or deliberately failed to do something, which has result in them losing their home, they were deemed to be homeless intentionally. If this was the case, and they were considered to be in priority need, the main homelessness duty would not apply and the local authority will only need to provide advice and assistance along with accommodation for a reasonable period only

5. Local connection (s.199)

Local connection was only considered if the main homelessness duty applied (i.e. the applicant was in priority need and was not intentionally homeless) An applicant could have a local connection to a local authority via normal residence, employment or family association. If the main duty applied and the applicant did not have a local connection, the local authority could refer the applicant and the duty to another area where a safe local connection had been established.

When a local authority accepted the main homelessness duty (s.193) that is; the applicant was eligible for assistance, homeless, in priority need and not intentionally homeless,³⁷ they were required to secure that accommodation was available for occupation by the applicant.

In most cases this duty was discharged via an offer of social housing made via the local authority allocation scheme. The Localism Act 2011 allowed local authorities to also look to discharge this duty via an offer of suitable accommodation in the private rented sector with a minimum fixed term of 12 months. Details of how (*insert local authority name here*) discharged the main housing duty in 2016/17 is provided at **APPENDIX XX**.

THE HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION ACT 2017: AN OVERVIEW

The Homelessness Reduction Act contains thirteen clauses; these are as follows:

- Clause 1: Meaning of “threatened with homelessness”
- Clause 2: Duty to provide advisory services
- Clause 3: Duty to assess all eligible applicants’ cases and agree a plan (*Personal Housing Plans*)
- Clause 4: Duty in cases of threatened homelessness (*the Prevention Duty*)
- Clause 5: Duties owed to those who are homeless (*the Relief Duty*)
- Clause 6: Duties to help secure accommodation
- Clause 7: Deliberate and unreasonable refusal to co-operate: duty upon giving notice
- Clause 8: Local connection of a care leaver
- Clause 9: Reviews
- Clause 10: Duty of public bodies to refer cases to a local housing authority
- Clause 11: Codes of Practice
- Clause 12: Suitability of private rented sector accommodation
- Clause 13: Extent, commencement and short title

A summary of the requirements of the Act is set out below:

Clause 1: Homeless and threatened with homelessness

A change to the meaning of “threatened with homelessness”

- The period at which a person is considered to be threatened with homelessness is changed from 28 days to 56 days
- The Act also specifies that local authorities are to treat households as threatened with homelessness if they are served a valid notice from a private rented sector tenancy and the notice expires within 56 days

Impact: Local authorities are required to intervene to assist households at an earlier stage, with the aim that homelessness prevention opportunities will be increased by working with households threatened with homelessness at an earlier stage.

Clause 2: Duty to provide advice

The Act removes the previous general duty to secure that advice and information on homelessness is available free of charge in their district, and replaces it with a duty on local

housing authorities to **provide** or secure the provision of free **information and advice to any person in the district** on:

- preventing homelessness
- securing accommodation when homeless
- the rights of homeless people or those threatened with homelessness,
- the help that is available from the local authority or anyone else in the district, and
- how to access that help

Impact: Local authorities are required to provide or secure the provision of information and advice to any person in their district covering the prescribed themes above. In addition to this, the Act requires that the service be designed to meet the needs of the following specified customer groups:

- Care leavers
- People released from prison or youth detention centres
- Former members of the regular armed forces
- Victims of domestic abuse
- People leaving hospital
- People suffering mental illness
- Any other group identified by the Local Authority as being at particular risk of homelessness

It is recommended that local authorities consult their Homelessness Strategy and Homelessness Review in order to identify customer groups who may be at particular risk of homelessness within their local area.

Clause 3: Personalised Housing Plan (PHP)

Local Authorities are required to carry out a detailed assessment on each household who is homeless or threatened with homelessness, setting out clear information on the circumstances leading to homelessness, and agreeing meaningful steps to remedy this in a written plan.

This clause is a significant change in practice for many local authorities, as they are now required to deliver personalised housing plans (PHPs) to all households who are eligible for assistance and homeless or threatened with homelessness. The PHPs must also be kept under review as long as a duty is owed to the applicant.

The Homelessness Reduction Act necessitates that Local Authorities must assess and provide meaningful assistance to everyone who is homeless or threatened with homelessness, irrespective of any priority need. This is likely to result in an additional resource burden on front line homelessness services in both developing and issuing PHPs and also being able to demonstrate that, once issued, PHPs are kept under review. Local authorities need to regularly review service provision to ensure the requirements of the Act are being met.

Clause 4: The Prevention Duty

The Act places a duty on all local authorities to prevent homelessness for all households who are threatened with homelessness. Where households are threatened with homelessness, local authorities are required to take reasonable steps to help to secure that accommodation does not cease to be available for their occupation.

The Homelessness Reduction Act ensures that prevention of homelessness is now a statutory requirement; it applies to all eligible households who are threatened with homelessness, and takes effect for a period of 56 days. Considerations as to whether an applicant is in priority need are not relevant at this stage. The duty to prevent homelessness applies to all eligible households who are homeless.

Clause 5: The Relief Duty

Where a household is homeless, local authorities are required to take reasonable steps to help to secure that suitable accommodation becomes available to them for at least 6 months. This duty to take steps to help to secure accommodation applies to **all** homeless households, and will apply for a 56-day period, unless the applicant is referred to another local authority.

The local authority does not need to satisfy itself that the applicant is in priority need at this stage. The duty to relieve homelessness applies to all eligible households who are homeless. The duty to secure interim accommodation under s.188 remains, and applies if the local authority consider that the applicant may be in priority need, eligible and homeless.

Clause 6: Duty to help to secure accommodation

The Act specifies the Local authorities can take action to help to secure accommodation under the new duties to help homeless households. There is not a duty to secure accommodation in every case, however it still remains open for the local authority to secure accommodation for applicants when appropriate, and in certain cases this may be the swiftest way to end the prevention or relief duties.

Help to secure means that the local authority will provide advice and support to households, who would then be responsible for securing their own accommodation. The steps taken to help an applicant to secure accommodation must be set out in the personalised housing plan (Clause 3) In all cases where the local authority secures or helps to secure accommodation in order to prevent and relieve homelessness, the accommodation must be suitable for the applicant.

Clause 7: Deliberate and Unreasonable Refusal to Cooperate

The Act contains a provision to bring the prevention duty and the relief duty to an end where the local authority is satisfied that the applicant is both deliberately and unreasonably refusing to cooperate with the steps set out in the personal housing plan. This process can take effect at both the prevention duty stage and the relief duty stage.

The Homelessness Reduction Act requires that local authorities and applicants both take steps to help to either retain accommodation or secure alternative accommodation. The steps are agreed and set out in a personalised housing plan; the steps being tailored to the applicants needs and reasonable and achievable for the particular applicant. If the applicant both deliberately and unreasonably refuses to cooperate with the steps agreed in the plan, the local authority can go through a process to bring the prevention duty or the relief duty to an end.

The bar is set high, at ‘unreasonably refusing to cooperate’ so that it does not penalise applicants who have difficulty co-operating, for example due to acute or multiple support needs. If the prevention duty is brought to an end due to this process, the local authority may still pick up a relief duty if the applicant goes on to become homeless.

Clause 8: Local connection for care leavers

The current legislation does not contain any provision to claim a local connection if a young person has been in care; s.199 allows for a local connection to be established only via residence, employment, family association or other special reason. As such, young people leaving care services can often find it difficult to establish a local connection to an area if they go on to become homeless.

The Homelessness Reduction Act allows that all young people leaving care will be deemed to have a local connection in the area of the local authority that is responsible for providing them with leaving care services under the Children Act 1989. Care leavers can also demonstrate a local connection via residence.

(IF A TWO TIER LOCAL AUTHORITY – DELETE AS APPROPRIATE)

Any young person who is owed a leaving care duty by the upper tier authority will be able to demonstrate a local connection to any of the lower tier housing authorities, if they approach for assistance as a homeless person when they leave care services.

Clause 9: Reviews

Applicants are provided with the right to request a review on the decisions made in relation to the new prevention and relief duties. Regulations governing the review process for the decisions made under the new duties were laid in the Homelessness (Review Procedure etc.) Regulations 2018 and came into force on 3 April 2018.

Details on the cost of our current review function, and the amount of review requests we dealt with in (*insert year here*) are provided at **APPENDIX XX**

Clause 10: Duty to refer

From 1 October, the Act will place a duty on specified public bodies to refer those household who are either homeless or at risk of being homeless to local authority housing service. Public bodies will have to consider a persons housing circumstances whenever they come into contact with them and, if they think the individual is homeless, or is at risk of become homeless they will have to notify the local authority. The person must give consent for a referral to be made, and they must identify any local housing authority in England where they want the referral to be sent to.

This clause will allow local authorities and public bodies to strengthen and develop their joint working arrangements. Public services should already be working with local housing authorities to identify people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. This clause will ensure that this practice becomes a statutory duty.

Homelessness is very rarely a singular issue, and individuals and households who are homeless will often come into contact with many different public services when they are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Homelessness Reduction Act will ensure that a person's housing circumstances are considered whenever they come into contact with wider public services and will encourage housing services and other public bodies to build relationships and work together to prevent and tackle homelessness.

Local housing authorities will need to ensure that they are set up to receive and act on any referrals that they receive from a public body. Referral routes and notification agreements will need to be established with public bodies locally and nationally.

Clause 11: Code of Practice

The Secretary of State has a power to produce a statutory code of practice to raise the standards of local authority homelessness services across the country. This is separate from the Homelessness Code of Guidance; the Code of Guidance has been updated to reflect the amended legislation.

Government will be monitoring local authority performance to meet the duty to prevent and relieve homelessness and will be able to issue more targeted advice on standards and practice; one way that this advice could be issued is via a code of practice, or a series of codes targeting on specific issues.

Clause 12: Suitability of Accommodation

All accommodation that the local authority secures or helps to secure must be suitable. Where the local authority secures accommodation for vulnerable households in the private

rented sector it must also satisfy itself that the suitability requirements from the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 are in place.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT

One of the fundamental aims of the Homelessness Reduction Act is that the council (*insert name here*) has a duty to carry out an assessment on all eligible people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, and then set out in writing what steps the local authority will do to help them to secure accommodation when homeless, or to help them to retain accommodation when threatened with homelessness.

The major impact of this legislative change is that the council (*insert name here*) must provide meaningful advice and assistance to all households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Act also introduced new 'prevention' and 'relief' duties that the council (*insert name here*) must meet; where a person is threatened with homelessness the council (*insert name here*) must take reasonable steps to ensure that they can retain accommodation, and where a person is homeless the council (*insert name here*) must take reasonable steps to help them to secure accommodation.

There continues to be an increased administrative burden on the council (*insert name here*) and an impact on casework associated with delivering personalised housing plans and meeting the prevention and relief duties. The prevention duty and the relief duty can remain in place for a period of up to 56 days (and longer in some cases) and so, in line with this, officers are keeping cases open for a longer period of time than previously with an increase in the overall amount of cases they are dealing with at any one time.

There are also additional administrative burdens from the requirement to record and report on performance and outcomes. The previous P1e reporting requirements were dramatically updated and replaced by a new Homelessness Case Level Information Collection (H-CLIC) reporting and data monitors requirements.

The H-CLIC data monitoring requirements require additional ICT development to ensure that local authorities are able to capture and record all the information required. We must also consider how ICT development can help to manage and mitigate the increased administrative burden, particularly regarding the requirements to issue Personalised Housing Plans and to keep them under review.

These additional burden may have ongoing resource implications that the council (*insert name here*) needs to monitor regularly to ensure that any changes to service demand are identified at the earliest opportunity.

The council (*insert name here*) must intervene to assist people at an earlier stage, with more duties to meet and reviewable decisions to make, so although there may not be an immediate increase in the amount of people who approach services for assistance, there will be an increase in the number of homelessness applications that are triggered, the amount of decisions that are made and the amount of reviews and challenges on these decisions. There will certainly be an increase in the case load of officers, as they will be carrying open

cases for a much longer period of time, and they will be required to undertake a greater amount of work and complete additional administration tasks on each case they have open. Key resource implications to consider include:

STAFFING RESOURCES:

(insert current staffing costs / profile – and include projected required increase for your service)

PHYSICAL RESOURCES:

Due to the increased administrative burden and the new the new duty to conduct an assessment and issue a personalised housing plan for every customer who is homeless or threatened with homelessness it is very likely that interview times and direct contact periods with customers is likely to increase. Some trailblazer authorities who have been trialing the new legislation have reported that most interview times have double – from 45 minutes to 90 minutes. The Homelessness Code of Guidance recommends that assessments will require at least one face to face interview. This may impact on the availability of interview rooms / space that the service has available to manage customer contact throughout the day **(insert any local info / data here)**

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION:

With more homelessness applications been taken, and with cases open for a longer period of time, it is likely that the council's **(insert name here)** overall use of temporary accommodation will increase **(insert current temporary accommodation costs & profile – and include projected required increase for your service)**

ALLOCATIONS POLICY:

The Homelessness Reduction Act also requires a review of the local authority's allocation scheme **(insert local info here)** – with the scheme amended to reflect the new legislation and the new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND THE DUTY TO REFER

The Act places a duty on specified public bodies to refer those household who are either homeless or at risk of being homeless to the local authority housing service (Clause 10)

This duty to refer is likely to result in an increase in the number of contacts for assistance that the council **(insert name here)** will have to respond to. It will probably result in an increase in the number of homelessness applications that are triggered, as people who are referred will be homeless or threatened with homelessness. The code of guidance is clear that a referral made by a public authority to the housing authority will not in itself constitute a homelessness application but housing authorities will always need to pick up and respond to any referral that is received.

Although likely to increase the number of cases the council **(insert name here)** has to deal with, this duty to refer also brings many positive opportunities that the council **(insert name**

here) should embrace. As households will have to be referred to the council (**insert name here**) when they are threatened with homelessness, this should facilitate an early intervention approach and increase the opportunities to achieve a successful homelessness prevention outcome.

The duty to refer also brings increased opportunities to develop effective relationships and joint working arrangements with partner agencies. Although the duty is a 'duty to refer' and not a duty for another organisation to assist, the customer will already have been in contact with another public body prior to the referral being sent. As homelessness is rarely a problem that occurs in isolation, the referral should allow for joint working arrangements to develop in order to take steps to resolve the customers problems. A joint working approach to prevent homelessness or help to secure accommodation for the customer is likely to assist other public bodies in their attempts to provide assistance to the customer. It is always cheaper to look to prevent homelessness rather than to spend money on services and interventions to tackle homelessness once it has occurred, so it is vital that the council (**insert name here**) are able to use the duty to refer to develop relationships or build on existing working relationships with public bodies in order to successfully prevent homelessness.

CULTURE CHANGE

The Homelessness Reduction Act is the most significant change in the legislation governing homelessness since 1996. It requires a substantial change in the way that the council (**insert name here**) services respond to requests for housing assistance and homeless applications and how they work with other services and partner agencies to do this.

An understanding of the legislative changes and their impact should be strongly and widely articulated at all levels and within all services within our local authority, with senior managers and members taking the lead in doing this.

The Homelessness Reduction Act requires a change in the way that partner organisations interact with local housing authorities so, it is vital that an understanding of the changes is also communicated to all partner organisations in the district.

The Act significantly changes the way that customers who are homeless or threatened with homelessness will access and interact with the council (**insert name here**), so it is also important that they have a broad awareness of the changes that the legislation will bring.

Please see the briefing paper for customers (**include any additional references, as required**) that can be published and used to support this approach (**AT APPENDIX XX**)

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

