

**Report to:** East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board

**Date of meeting:** 19 July 2022

**By:** Director of Adult Social Care and Health

**Title:** Residents at Kendal Court, Newhaven and homeless people accommodated by Brighton and Hove City Council in temporary accommodation in East Sussex

**Purpose:** To update the Health and Wellbeing Board on the ongoing welfare concerns for unsupported homeless people placed in Kendal Court and other temporary accommodation in the Lewes and Eastbourne areas by Brighton and Hove City Council

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### ***RECOMMENDATIONS:***

The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

- 1) Note the additional information, ongoing concerns and actions set out in this report in respect of Brighton and Hove residents temporarily accommodated in East Sussex
  - 2) To receive a further update report on the situation, at its next meeting on 29 September, 2022.
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## **1. Background**

1.1 Reports concerning homeless people accommodated by Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) in temporary and emergency accommodation at Kendal Court in Newhaven have been presented to the last four meetings of East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board (ESHWB).

1.2 The reports highlighted the health and wellbeing risks that individuals with multiple and complex health and social care needs may experience whilst accommodated by BHCC at Kendal Court seemingly without adequate support arrangements, as well as the steps taken by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and partner agencies to ensure that BHCC minimises and mitigates those risks.

## **2. Supporting Information**

2.1 Since the last meeting of the ESHWB on 1 March 2022:

- A further person has tragically died at Kendal Court on 13 May 2022, bringing the total deaths of Kendal Court residents to eleven over the past four years.
- A number of the regular, BHCC convened, Kendal Court operational meetings have been cancelled with no alternative dates provided. The absence of these

meetings leaves ESCC and other partner agencies without a regular forum to raise and discuss concerns and issues relating to this accommodation.

- Preparatory work has been undertaken to formally escalate the ongoing concerns to the Secretary of State for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities and request his urgent intervention to prevent the risk of further harm to the vulnerable adults accommodated by BHCC at Kendal Court.
- ESCC has written to BHCC on three occasions, seeking information regarding the individuals placed at Kendal Court and assurances in respect of actions being undertaken to provide adequate support for individuals who are at risk of homelessness and are the responsibility of BHCC. A response was received on 27 May 2022.

2.2 Whilst the BHCC response of 27 May 2022 did not contain the requested detailed information regarding the accommodation dates of the individuals that have come to the attention of ESCC Adult Social Care, it did include a number of positive commitments and actions from BHCC in respect of their strategy for the provision of emergency accommodation, as follows:

- The number of individuals accommodated by BHCC in East Sussex has continued to reduce and stands at 118 (27 May 2022 - 75 in Lewes and 43 in Eastbourne). This includes a reduction in occupancy at Kendal Court from the 55 maximum to a current occupancy of 20. These figures represent a significant reduction in the numbers of people accommodated in East Sussex by BHCC from 314 in February 2021 (205 in Eastbourne and 109 Lewes).
- BHCC paused placements at Kendal Court in December 2021 (following the death of a tenth Kendal Court resident) and has not accommodated any new individuals at Kendal Court since that date. In their letter of 27 May 2022 BHCC has indicated that they currently have no plans to recommence placements at Kendal Court.
- Ongoing support to its residents at Kendal Court, with Welfare Officers maintaining regular contact and scheduled on site drop-in sessions.
- A restatement of BHCC's strategic commitment to continuing the sustained reduction in its use of emergency accommodation including the number of households accommodated in Lewes and Eastbourne. They have indicated their progress towards this strategic aim through commissioning more accommodation within Brighton & Hove, including greater use of council owned emergency accommodation.

### **3. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1 Despite the sad loss of another Kendal Court resident, since the last update to the HWB, there has been significant improvement in the situation relating to BHCC temporarily accommodating homeless people at Kendal Court and elsewhere in East Sussex.

3.2 On the assumption that this position is maintained, combined with an ongoing focus by BHCC on its future commissioning arrangements for emergency accommodation; ESCC's view is that the existing welfare and support mechanisms provided by BHCC would be adequate to support the reduced number of individuals it accommodates in East Sussex, providing they do not have any additional health and care needs.

3.3 If the trajectory and commitments are maintained for a further period of monitoring, it would provide reasonable assurance that BHCC has put adequate arrangements in place to support the people that it accommodates in East Sussex, avoiding the need for further escalation. The Board is therefore asked to note the updates contained within this report and agree to receive a further, final update at its next meeting on 29 September 2022.

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**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Report to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 1 March 2022

Report to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 13 July 2021

Report to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 30 September 2021

Report to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 14 December 2021