

# Homelessness

A systems approach for Cambridgeshire

## Homelessness – a systems approach for Cambridgeshire

The purpose of this document is to set out an approach to continue with the delivery of the ongoing initiatives to support people at risk of – or experiencing – homelessness, whilst also developing a longer-term more systemic approach to tackling homelessness in Cambridgeshire.

2.1	Section one provides a brief overview of current work taking place across the County, and some of the pressures and changes across the system which impact on outcomes and ultimately public sector expenditure. It is recognised that getting 'up stream' in tackling demand management into Council services has to include a consideration of whether there is a new and different way of tackling housing demand and homelessness. Acting preventatively with our partners to secure homes for people is a first step and presents opportunities for public sector reform across the system.
2.2	Key strategic developments at a national level include a £2 billion fund for housing

2.5	Alongside this, it is proposed that the County Council continues to pursue, with partners, the opportunities for system redesign work in relation to homelessness prevention, building on the work of the Trailblazer. These two areas of work will form the basis of a County Council operating model, which can be used to inform further developments at a District, County and Combined Authority level. To support this approach, it is important that we complement the work of our District Council partners, supporting them to deliver their existing strategies and plans. The section below gives examples of homelessness prevention activity being undertaken by each District Council, and suggests some tangible actions that the County Council could take to further support and enhance this work.
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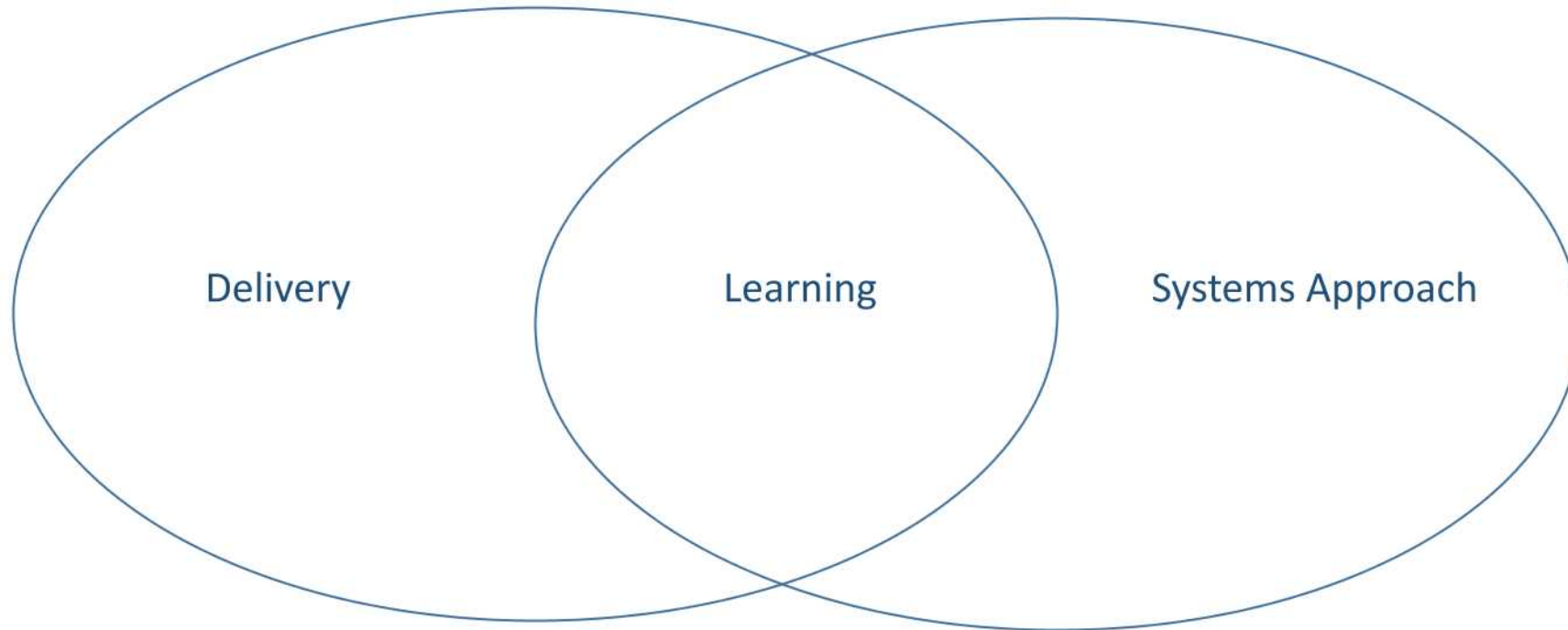
	wide network to identify and prevent potential homelessness
2.6	If agreed by Members, a cross council working group will be formed to develop the operating model, led by the Assistant Director for Housing, Communities and Youth, to fully scope the work and lead the activity, with further reports being submitted to Members. Given the cross cutting nature of the work, it is proposed that the work is overseen by and reports to the Communities and Partnership Committee, but with reporting lines back to all other relevant Council Committees. This work will be informed by the partnership approaches and proposals being developed under The Housing Board.
2	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Excerpts from *Developing a county council operating model for tackling homelessness in Cambridgeshire*, Communities and Partnerships Committee Paper, November 2018

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We need to develop an approach that enables us to:

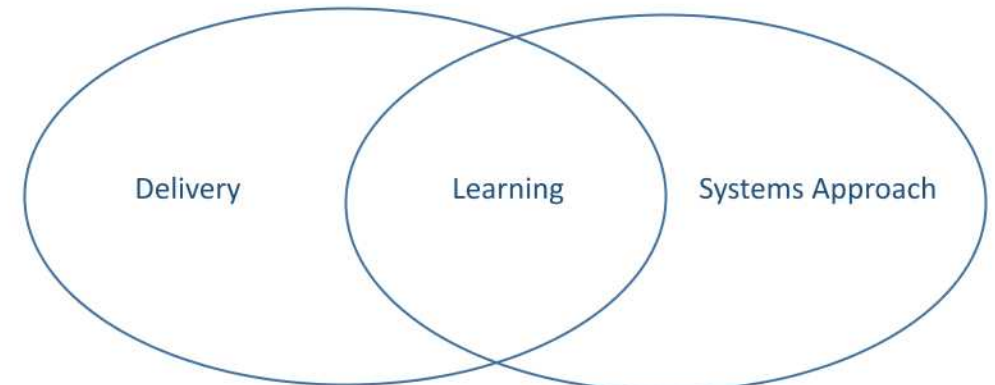
- continue to work on those things that are helping to address homelessness in Cambridgeshire in the **here and now** [Delivery];
- take a longer **systems approach** to addressing homelessness and the causes of homelessness in Cambridgeshire [Systems View]; and
- be able to **capture and share the learning** of both approaches [Learning].



## Homelessness – a systems approach for Cambridgeshire [Delivery]

Work is already in progress to get on with the Delivery of a range of initiatives. These include:

- A comprehensive review of future accommodation needs of vulnerable clients, in order to shape local provision and the roll out of the Combined Authority's Housing Strategy, and to influence the allocation of County Council assets and resources
- Review of Housing Related Support in conjunction with District Councils, in order to ensure that the Council's investment is directed towards clients in ways which make the greatest difference to their long term housing options
- Driving innovation through investing in transformative approaches
- Ensuring that commissioned (or provided) advice and information services are effectively signposting people at risk, and supporting the delivery of district based homelessness prevention strategies
- Equipping front line workers in children's and adult services with the necessary information and tools to effectively divert a household from becoming homeless in a timely way



## Homelessness – a systems approach for Cambridgeshire [Systems View]

To enable us to take a longer view, we need to be able to take a broader look at the issues around homelessness in Cambridgeshire. Separating this work from ongoing initiatives will give us the time and space to think about this collectively.

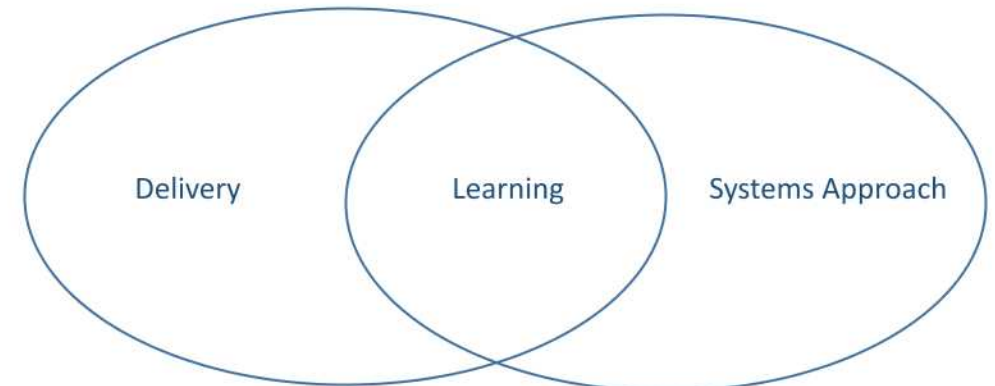
A way in which we could structure this work would be to:

- **Understand the ‘facts and figures’ about homelessness.** What are the costs? What are the numbers of people affected?
- **Map the current pathways available.** How do we currently support people at risk of homelessness or who are homeless? What is their experience of the support that they receive? Where are the gaps?
- **Understand the system infrastructure.** What are the building blocks that need to be in place to help change how the system works? What’s already in place? What needs to be developed?
- **Map the levers that are available to us to help change the system.** Where do our current interventions sit? How can we move from tinkering at the edges? What are our future investments in the system?

We will not be ‘starting from scratch’ as some of this information will already have been gathered.’

Working through these stages collaboratively would help us to build a shared knowledge of the causes, impacts and costs of homelessness in Cambridgeshire.

It will also help us to collectively develop investments that will help to influence how the system can change.



## Homelessness – a systems approach for Cambridgeshire [Learning]

Joining together the *Delivery* and *Systems view* approaches will be a focus on *Learning*. We will take the same approach to learning as we are as with Think Communities.

It is fundamental to all of these pieces of that we are able to learn by doing. It is therefore vital to ensure that there is time and space for everyone involved in the work to be able to reflect on the progress that has been made.

Central to our support will be a series of events and artefacts that will enable us to capture, analyse and share our learning.

The central spine of this work will be a series of prototype learning events. These events will take place every six weeks and will bring together colleagues working across both Delivery and the Systems view work to reflect on and capture learning from the previous period. Following each learning event, a series of artefacts – for example, reports, slide-decks, videos, blogs – will be created to enable us to capture and share our learning.

