**Hoarding – brief note Jan 2022**

Elements:

* A countywide protocol in place including clutter scale to enable people to gauge extend of hoarding and monitor progress
* Hoarding Forum in place, chaired by Stuart Brown, proving very successful / helpful
* Early Help Team practical experience and advice on how to approach
* Some excellent links to other advice and support, including specialist cleaners
* P3 pilot in Huntingdonshire – we have the 6-month progress report, looking forward to seeing final report and any conclusions
* Fire Service stats showing a doubling in numbers for C&P
* Reports of increased hoarding from a number of partners (incl older peoples visiting service, voluntary sector, SSAFA)
* List of people who know about hoarding at local agencies (starting from housing, can be expanded) – champions / contacts
* Some examples / links to RP web pages on hoarding
* Training offers from Fire Service and on-line training for health, thoughts of possibly developing a SWAY
* Potential page of resources on Cambs Insight

**Why might numbers be increasing** (very briefly)**?**

Lockdown – isolation – increased bereavements – general trauma - no reason to clean up if no one visiting.

**Why is hoarding not very well catered for at present?**

Hoarding is unusual in that you can’t just offer support for 3 or 6 months and leave. To tackle the causes of the hoarding there is most likely going to need to be some long-term input / support and some in-depth mental health support.

It’s possible to diagnose hoarding as a mental health condition but it’s not usual, more commonly health services diagnose OCD or other conditions before hoarding.

Hoarding has also prevented hospital discharge, or delayed it, and the obvious approach is to clean and clear the hall, kitchen, stairs etc (not all rooms) to enable support staff to safely enter. This is not idea as would prefer to take a therapeutic approach with the individual, but it’s a balance.

The person may be able to pay for support and services themselves, the whole thing doesn’t necessarily need full funding. Some people obviously won’t be able to afford though.

**Why is it important?** (to be added to)

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| **Caring for the person** | **Responsibility of an organisation** |
| Person is unlikely to “sort themselves out” without help | The property eventually becomes very poor condition or uninhabitable |
| It’s quite likely a deep seated issue and needs working through.  Having said that there re a variety of reasons and situations so can’t generalize too much | There is a risk to anyone visiting (friends, family, officers, staff, carers) from tripping and crushing |
| If it’s rushed i.e. property is simply cleared, the trauma causing the hoarding is possibly going to be made worse and the hoarding behaviours more than likely will repeat | Fire risk from the hoard, to the hoarded property, neighbours and wider community |
| Risk of slips, trips, crushing, support staff (carers, fire and ambulance for example) being unable to access safely | Risk of fire due to electrical damage or use of e.g. fryers, the hoard can be very combustible. |
| General lack of health, restricted ability to move about, to ventilate, to cook safely etc |  |

*Work in progress*

*Sue Beecroft 13/1/22*