

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**ASSET MANAGEMENT, CULTURE AND HOUSING
CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING**

**THE GOLD STANDARD SCHEME FOR
HOMELESSNESS SERVICES**

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Cabinet Member on the Gold Standard initiative for homelessness services and the progress of the Housing Advice Team towards achieving the standard.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In April 2013 the government announced a new support and training scheme for homelessness services called the Gold Standard. This standard requires local authorities to pledge to “strive for continuous improvement in front line housing services” through peer review, expert support and professional training. The National Practitioner Support Services Team with the National Homelessness Advice service administer the standard.
- 2.2 The National Homelessness Advice Service is a partnership between Shelter and Citizens Advice. The Gold Standard is based on the ten local authority challenges set out by the Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness.
- 2.3 Expert help is available to provide support together with free training on the more complex areas, including assured shorthold tenancies and housing law. Participating councils benchmark against neighbouring authorities. They learn from examples of good practise to achieve the gold standard award together.
- 2.4 An online toolkit is available to help councils identify areas for Improvement and expert tailored support to make services run more efficiently.

GOLD STANDARD

- 2.5 To attain the Gold Standard Status, the service needs to meet a number of key commitments, including:

- Offering a comprehensive prevention service, with advice and support for single people as well as families,
- Work with local agencies to provide employment, education and training opportunities,
- Help householders facing the threat of repossession by providing support and access to mortgage debt advice,
- Adopt a local No Second Night Out scheme to help prevent new rough sleepers from becoming entrenched into a street lifestyle

2.6 The Gold standard helps councils learn from each other to deliver the best possible service, and ensure that those facing the threat of losing their home get the best support possible.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 The Housing Advice Team has signed up to the Gold Standard, along with Hull City, North East Lincolnshire and the East Riding of Yorkshire Councils.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

4.1 Financial – there are no financial implications arising related directly to the Gold Standard.

4.2 Staffing – the Gold Standard is about continual improvement and the investment in our staff to achieve that. The Gold Standard aims to improve the service provided using existing staff resources.

5. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

5.1 Meeting the housing needs of people with challenging behaviour contributes to the reduction of crime and other anti-social behaviour.

6. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

6.1 This report is for information only.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 That the Cabinet Member notes the content of this report.

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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Date: 17th January 2013

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: N/A