**Homeless and Rough Sleeper action – Press Release 17-4-2020**

**Providing accommodation to those in need**

Following a request from central government that people who are either homeless or sleeping rough should be found temporary accommodation for the duration of the COVID 19 lockdown, both Broadland and South Norfolk Councils have taken action.

Director of Place, Phil Courtier said: “Both Councils have consistently offered the highest level of housing services, ensuring that those in most need receive support. It’s vital in our fight against the spread of the virus that no-one should face a lack of suitable accommodation during the COVID 19 outbreak and it is our aim to provide people with a settled place to live, for the duration of the lockdown.”

At the moment, a number of Broadland and South Norfolk residents are being housed in bed and breakfast accommodation.  This accommodation is not designed to support people for long periods of time and is not an ideal place to live, especially for families, while having to keep to social distancing guidance.

To help solve this issue the two Councils have rented 20 rooms in the Officers’ Mess at the old RAF Coltishall site.  The building is owned and run by a charity that will provide support for the new residents, including delivery of food and other supplies, and each person will also have an allocated housing officer from the Council to provide additional support if needed.

Phil Courtier added: “It is our duty to find suitable accommodation for people who have nowhere else to live. The health and wellbeing of all our residents is a priority for both Councils and we will do everything we can to make sure that these men, women and children have a safe place to stay. This is only a temporary move and each household will be found longer term accommodation, if they don’t already have one, to move to following the end of the lockdown.”

To reduce some potential concerns that the community may have people moving to the officers’ mess will be asked to stay within the confines of the site for 7 days and the Councils will be providing support to make this as easy as possible for them.

All moves will be arranged for the week commencing 20 April 2020

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