

Housing Options Hub Update for RRTP Sub-group: South West Hub

HUB Update on RRTP

RRTP is an ongoing item on the agenda for the 8 weekly HUB meetings. At the meetings each authority provides an update on progress and the group share experiences etc.

The HUB is currently organising a Service User Event for March 2020 (Time for Change) that will focus on the progress of Rapid Rehousing and Housing First. Invites have been sent to key partners. HUB members have been working alongside Scotland Homeless Network for the event preparation. A draft agenda is being drawn up.

Training events have been arranged to empower frontline workers with Motivating Interviewing in preparation for Rapid Re-housing measures. Turning Point Scotland are also carrying out Housing First Training for Practitioners and Manager towards the end of February 2020.

Hub members are looking forward to sharing ideas and best practice with other local authorities at the National RRTP Coordinators and Leads event on Wednesday, 26 February 2020 in Perth.

Below is an update from each Authority within the Ayrshire and South HUB.

NAC

RRTP Co-ordinator now in post. The Co-ordinator will be implementing year 1 actions that have been endorsed by the Homelessness Task Force within North Ayrshire.

Homeless Task Force Group led by HOS and is now meeting 6 weekly with a focus on RRTP discussions with all partners (Health Public, Mental Health, Social Work – Justice Services, Addictions, Housing and Police Scotland).

Steering Group set up with key operational staff/managers for each partner to help drive change for frontline services. Meetings to take place 4 weekly.

Reducing time in temporary accommodation – 26 weeks average to reduce to 23 weeks in Year 1. Looking at Common Housing Register – 25% of lets to Homeless and in discussion with Local Housing Offices/RSL partners to look at an average of 33% lets to Homeless to clear backlog and manage new presentations. A Rapid Re-housing pilot has been implemented with North Ayrshire where vulnerable groups of homeless people (Women fleeing Domestic Abuse, Families and people in Financial Hardship) are currently receiving 75% of all lets for a 3 month period (Jan- Mar) and 25% of other lets are going to other homeless applicants and other households in housing need.

Health & Homelessness data linkage for Ayrshire being discussed with the Health Board and Health Improvement Scotland. A PAN Ayrshire Health & Homeless Group is led by HOS for Mental Health – further discussions to be held at this group in relation to the health & homeless data linkage projects. Meeting arrangement for 10th March with Health Improvement Scotland.

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Housing First tenancies - 20 per year, aiming for 15 in year 1 due to timescales. In discussion with RSLs regarding plans HF and support provision. We have increased temporary furnished accommodation to 200 with a plan to flip 15/20 to Housing First. Steering Group has been asked to take this forward from the Homeless Task Force. Developing Housing First protocols around addictions, mental health and justice. Framework for measuring success of the Housing First Project is being drawn up via the Steering Group.

Currently we have a dedicated Housing Advice Officer post that works between HMP Kilmarnock, Greenock and Barlinnie in engaging with Prisoner prior to discharge. Pathways have been drawn up in an Integrated Prison Discharge Protocol in line with the SHORE standards.

Our Throughcare Housing Protocol for Care Leavers is being reviewed with colleagues within the Health & Social Care Partnership to ensure positive housing outcomes for young people leaving a care environment. A short life working group is being set up to look at the Housing Needs of all Young People within North Ayrshire.

Decommissioned hostel at Green Street on 31 July 2019.

EAC

The Rapid Rehousing Transition Lead is working alongside all partners to implement Year 1 actions and monitor progress as we work on our next iteration which is due for submission by 30 June 2020.

Lets to the Homeless Group are being monitored following the increase to 50% in August 2019 for the Kilmarnock area which is the area of highest demand. Conversations continue with all partners within the Common Allocations Policy with regard to their allocations to the Homeless Group and support with the RRTP.

A Housing First project will commence in Year 1 with the appointment of Housing First Support Officer and establishment of a multi-agency Core Group to determine criteria and select tenants. The Housing First Support Officer post is currently within the recruitment process. Turning Point Scotland are in the process of delivering training to our senior management team, Elected members, Housing and Communities colleagues and Rapid Rehousing Partners with sessions booked through to March 2020.

In June 2019, East Ayrshire Council was invited by the Centre For Homelessness Impact (CHI) alongside Southend-on-Sea Council in England and Pembrokeshire Council in Wales to participate in a What Works Community of Practice Pilot. Working alongside experts with extensive knowledge in behavioural science, evaluation, data science and design, we have joined a programme that takes the three local authorities through a journey to explore a common Challenge theme.

The CHI supports local authorities to see more rapid and sustainable reductions in homelessness by becoming evidence and data driven by more effectively prioritising resources and efforts by embracing a culture of collaboration. Following the successful Pilot Kick-off with Leadership in Council Chambers in October 2019, the Core Pilot Team have two attended residential events, collaborating with the CHI, the other local authorities and

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the industry experts on our Challenge to design solutions to promote the Private Rented Sector as an attractive, affordable and sustainable housing solution to people who have or are at risk of experiencing homelessness. Our participation in the pilot is enhancing our rapid rehousing activities within the private rented sector, empty homes and the deposit guarantee scheme.

An online self-diagnostic Housing Options toolkit and improved online housing and support resources are currently being developed in collaboration with Housing colleagues and our housing software provider with a view to being live in Year 2.

The role of Neighbourhood Coach has expanded with a further cohort of 11 Housing Officers recently completing training to incorporate the new FACE corporate values.

Along with HMP Kilmarnock, our Housing Advice Provider and Community Justice Ayrshire we are developing a set of performance standards to monitor how we will collectively achieve the SHORE standards.

A Joint Housing Options Protocol for Care Leavers is being finalised with colleagues at Health and Social Care to ensure positive housing outcomes for young people leaving a care environment.

SAC

- The Health and Homelessness Working Group has been established to improve health and housing outcomes through early interventions and prevention.
- The Housing First Pilot (1 year) is now complete and the project is now funded through RRTP. 17 places in Housing First have been filled. The staffing structure has been reviewed and three vacant posts are now advertised. There is an increasing interest in the project from staff and from people who are homeless. The tenancies are decorated and furnished to a high standard. There are interesting developments as many are supported to successfully sustain. Door-keeping has been identified as an issue for some.
- The Social Letting Agency was approved in December 2019. An assistant is to be recruited. In year one we are expecting 10 tenancies to become available for homeless households. The service will not focus solely on homeless cases. The challenges accessing the private sector in South Ayrshire impact on the Council's rehousing lists. The Broad Rental Market Area calculation, Universal Credit and demand result in many low income households being excluded from the private sector in South Ayrshire.
- The Allocations Policy is under review as it is out of date. The Scottish Government guidance has been very helpful during the review.
- There is a need for South Ayrshire to focus on prevention and reducing the numbers of households occupying temporary accommodation.
- A review is underway of Section 5 and Nomination process.

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- The review of housing support services is underway to ensure that going forward services are aligned with our Rapid Rehousing agenda. This review will reach a conclusion early 2020.

D&G

TA Reprofiting

Reprofiting of our temporary accommodation is progressing as planned. We have achieved a reduction in the use of shared accommodation units and increased the number of RSL properties whilst starting a program to remove PSL properties from the portfolio which fall short of our TA Standards.

Loreburn Housing Association recently provided us with a property in a new development to we are due to add 3 new properties within Cunninghame Housing Association developments over the next few months.

We now have a Framework agreement in place with the major RSLs in the region which sets out the responsibilities for both parties in terms of the furnished accommodation. A new lease agreement with each RSL is now in place. The single lease agreement covers all units provided for furnished accommodation.

We have taken the opportunity to update the Occupancy Agreement for the furnished accommodation in line with the Framework.

We are now working on a similar Framework for the Private Rented Sector which will form the basis of a Private Sector Leasing Scheme going forward.

Our new accommodation for Emergency Out of Hours presentations has been well received.

Protocols

We recently had our 1st discharge directly into settled accommodation through the Prison Discharge Protocol.

A working group set up to develop Protocol for Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control involving all relevant agencies and services.

Work on a Young People and Care Leavers Protocol is being led by Leaving Care colleagues. now This will be based around the recently published Youth Homelessness Prevention Pathway.

New development Core & Cluster –

We are still working on the business case for this with Health & Social Care. Buy-in at a higher level within NHS and H & S is proving more challenging than originally anticipated.

Prevention

The work of the Welfare and Housing Options Team continues to contribute to our prevention strategy with the team now having helped to prevent approximately 80 evictions.

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Housing Support

Work is ongoing around reviewing and commissioning Housing Support.

Housing First

Staff will be attending Housing First Training through the SW HUB shortly. Initial talks are being held with prospective partners to allow us to start planning a model for Housing First within Dumfries and Galloway. Meeting with Turning Point was postponed but a meeting is arranged for week commencing 17th February 2020 with DGHP/Wheatley Group to discuss.

Review of RRTP

We are currently undertaking a review of our RRTP as we are due to approach year 2.

Inverclyde

Inverclyde Council has decided to implement a collaborative and proactive Housing Options model across all housing providers, public and third sector agencies who meet the needs of homeless households locally. This follows their temporary accommodation review and takes inspiration from the Glasgow model, with plans for common tools for needs assessments, named contacts in Health and Social Work services, consent to share information and referral pathways, and shared training and skills transfer on risk and prevention.

The Council hopes this will reduce demand by up to 15%.

We have additionally been given approval for a RRTP co-ordinator post, to be appointed. Governance arrangements are in place and the formation of a RRTP Steering Group chaired by the HSCP director will oversee two working groups (Housing First and Housing Options).