



Although a formal committee of Brighton & Hove City Council, the Health & Wellbeing Board has a remit which includes matters relating to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the Local Safeguarding Board for Children and Adults and Healthwatch.

Title:	Options for Expanding Housing First
Date of Meeting:	11 September 2018
Report of:	Sue Forrest, Commissioning Manager
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Email:	Sue.forrest@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Wards Affected:	ALL
FOR GENERAL RELEASE	
Executive Summary	
<p>This paper advises the Board of the opportunity to scale up the current Housing First service in the City by the provision of services to add 10 additional individuals. The service currently supports 10 clients (2 are young people funded by FC&L) in a service delivered by St Mungos which is contracted until 2021.</p>	
Glossary of Terms	
<p><i>MHCLG – Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government</i> <i>SIB – Social Investment Bond</i> <i>FC&L – Families, Children & Learning</i> <i>H&ASC – Health and Adult Social Care</i></p>	

1. Decisions, recommendations and any options

That the Health & Wellbeing Board:

- 1.1 Notes the report.
- 1.2 Instructs officers to identify the options to enable up to 10 units of accommodation to be identified and secured as required for the expansion of Housing First and report the findings to the Health & Wellbeing Board.

2. Relevant information

- 2.1 The Housing First model is founded on the principle of housing being a basic human need and that its primary objective is to provide permanent accommodation for people straight from the street without attached conditions around behaviour or engagement. This is usually dispersed general needs accommodation away from other homeless and vulnerable people.
- 2.2 Support for homeless people with multiple and complex needs in the UK is offered through a number of supported accommodation services such as hostels or intensive floating support, however there remains an ongoing problem of finding long-term and sustainable housing solutions for them. It is evident from research to date and local analysis that no single model of housing is effective for all homeless people with complex needs. However we can improve outcomes for homeless people by making personalised offers of support and accommodation.
- 2.1 The Housing First model provides homeless individuals with a home and 'wraps' flexible and personalised support around the individual, giving them control and choice over their lives, linking them into their local community and developing their strengths and interests. Contact with support workers is often daily. The support provided is not dependent on behaviour or rehab goals for example. Long term support is provided which only disengages with clients when they no longer need the service.
- 2.3 Housing First is a model that many European cities and countries including Amsterdam, Dublin, Barcelona, Lisbon, Venice, Scotland, and Finland are adopting for rough sleepers and/or homeless people with complex support needs. This model has been mainstreamed across cities with similar accommodation pressures as Brighton and Hove.
- 2.4 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government recognises the model as good practice and is funding large scale models in several metropolitan areas.¹

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/215-million-boost-for-council-homelessness-services>

- 2.5 Brighton & Hove has funded a successful small scale Housing First service since 2014. This is 10 people at present, and focuses on the most entrenched and complex clients, those who have been through the hostel system a number of times and have been repeatedly evicted or are unsuitable for shared supported accommodation. The range of needs that the clients have include: mental health issues (diagnosed and undiagnosed), learning disability, alcohol/substance misuse, behavioural problems (resulting in anti-social behaviour), head injury, trauma, victims of domestic violence, victims of financial exploitation.
- 2.6 This model provides a highly personalised approach to working with individuals with multiple and complex needs recognising the cross department, cross agency impact of these clients and the integrated service response required. The cost of this service per person to date is comparable to that of a high support accommodation service.
- 2.7 This model of accommodation and support fits with the aims for the remodelling of single homeless services, the statutory responsibilities of the Care Act and the stated objectives of the Rough Sleeping Strategy:
- To reduce rough sleeping
 - To provide multi agency personalised support to single homeless people
 - To improve outcomes for vulnerable homeless people and support them to develop the skills for independent living
 - To improve health outcomes and prevent deaths
 - To support recovery from homelessness, substance misuse, ill health and mental ill health
 - To reduce revolving door homelessness
- 2.8 The service currently uses social housing (accessed through the housing register in the normal way), supported accommodation and has used temporary accommodation in the past. Supported accommodation has not proved successful due to the shared nature of the accommodation, temporary accommodation has been unsettling for clients as it has proved short term with staff spending a lot of time transitioning clients between accommodations. Trying to source new accommodation takes up a lot the services' and commissioning teams time.
- 2.9 An estimated 26% of the people currently sleeping rough in Brighton & Hove (46 people) would benefit from a Housing First type model (i.e. long term support and housing). In addition there is a significant number of people in supported housing and short term accommodation funded by H&ASC who are 'stuck' due to their needs, with no clear sustainable accommodation plan in place for them. An expanded Housing First service offers an opportunity to free up some supported accommodation (for which there is significant quantifiable demand) and sustainably move people into accommodation with the required personalised support.

- 2.10 Providing people with multiple and complex needs with long term secure housing and flexible support reduces street homelessness, anti-social behaviour and heightened use of public services such as the police, courts, prisons, probation, and health services. This also improves people’s wellbeing, supports their recovery from homelessness and substance misuse, and offers a stable base from which to access services in a planned way and engage with the local community. There is evidence to support a reduced call on the use of emergency services.
- 2.11 A bid has been submitted to the MHCLG to expand Housing First by 10 units, this is specifically for people rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping for the financial year 2019/20. The funding is for support only for 1 year at a cost of £101,955.00 to expand the existing service for people either rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping. If we cannot source 10 units of accommodation, the funding will have to be returned.
- 2.12 By the nature of this long term service model, additional funding will be required to sustain the expanded service beyond this one year of funding which will form part of the commissioning plan going forward as funding for 2020/21 onwards will be required to continue to fund all 20 Housing First clients.

Accommodation Options

- 2.16 Housing First principles require that ideally clients are able to exercise some choice about their accommodation and that the accommodation provides stability, i.e. that it is not short term.

Private Rented Sector (PRS)	
Assured shorthold tenancies obtained on the open rental market from private landlords.	
Existing services using exclusively private rented sector accommodation;	Camden (Mungo’s) 10 people Camden & Islington (FLIC) 9 people
Barriers; Unaffordable ² , Camden (FLIC) has been unable to expand beyond the original cohort in part, due to affordability. Lack of security; No fault loss of PRS creates instability and disruption for clients plus landlords are increasingly unwilling to take tenants on welfare benefits therefore limiting the supply of accommodation.	
Recommendation; It is difficult to secure PRS accommodation for people with multiple and complex needs. No properties have been secured through this route to date despite discussions with landlords. This route is unlikely to facilitate an increase in provision of accommodation for Housing First but will continue to be pursued.	

² The average cost of a one bed in Brighton & Hove in the first quarter of this year was £52 a month above local housing allowance levels.

Social Housing

Accommodation let via the Local Authority or a Housing Association at social or affordable rents. Properties are let on assured or secure tenancies (after an initial 12 month period).

Existing services using Exclusively social housing;	Westminster LBC (Mungo's) 25
Lewisham (Bench) 15	Hammersmith and Fulham (Mungo's) 5
Reading (Mungo's) 10	Oxford (Oxford Homeless Pathways) tbc
Basingstoke (Two Saints) 10	Southampton (Two Saints) 8
Barriers; The current allocations policy requires applicants to be 'tenancy ready' with 5 years local connection which excludes people with multiple and complex needs who cannot demonstrate that they are tenancy ready. Public perception may be against clients with multiple and complex needs accessing social housing.	
Positives; affordable, provides security, fidelity to the model and good outcomes ³	
Recommendation; Explore whether up to 10 units of accommodation can be identified for Housing First.	

2.17 We continue to explore PRS options for clients, and we are also exploring the option of congregated models similar to Finland, and the skaeve haus model in Norway (bespoke modular housing for this client group). This would require a small block of self-contained properties.

2.18 In order to scale up the Housing First service utilising the MHCLG funding, it is proposed that officers be tasked with identifying available options and securing 10 units of accommodation as necessary for the delivery of the additional service.

Evaluation

2.19 An evaluation of the existing service has been commissioned with the University of Salford and will be published in November 2018. Reporting for the 10 Housing First additional placements will be monthly to the MHCLG in line with the funding criteria to reduce rough sleeping.

³ https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/ce833a_7305a06001ce4897bba859a1f9fa5616.pdf

Telephone call 09.07.18 with Two Saints Chief Executive Steve Benson

3. Important considerations and implications

Legal:

- 3.1 As is made clear in the body of the report the funding made available by the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government to enable the expansion of the Housing First service model in Brighton & Hove is dependent on the securing of an additional 10 units of suitable accommodation. Should the Council not be able to identify and provide the required accommodation the funding will be withdrawn and any monies already received must be repaid. This may have an adverse effect on future funding applications.
- 3.2 Units of Council owned accommodation made available to those in receipt of the Housing First support services will be let initially under the terms of the Council's Introductory Tenancy scheme. Such probationary tenancies are for an initial period of one year. The scheme applies to the tenancies granted to all new tenants of the Council. After successful completion of the probationary period the tenancy will become a secure tenancy.

Lawyer consulted: Judith Fisher

Date: 28.8.2018

Finance:

- 3.3 Any services commissioned for Housing First will need to be within the funding awarded from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. As per paragraph 2.13, if the accommodation cannot be sourced then the funding will have to be returned.

Finance Officer consulted: Sophie Warburton

Date: 24/08/2018

Equalities:

- 3.4 Housing First is an evidence based model of personalised support for homeless people with complex needs (including mental and physical health conditions and other vulnerabilities) who are unable to manage in traditional supported accommodation settings. This innovative model is now regarded by the MHCLG as an example of good practice for entrenched rough sleepers and as part of the wider service offer to rough sleepers and single homeless people. Brighton and Hove have been part of the evaluation of this model nationally.
- 3.5 This is a model which Health & Adult Social Care Commissioning is keen to continue and evaluate hence the tender of Housing First and its inclusion in the newly developed model of accommodation and support for single homeless people recognising the very personalised support models required for people with multiple and complex needs with a history of revolving door homelessness.

Equalities Officer consulted: Sarah Tighe-Ford

Date: 24th August 2018



Sustainability:

- 3.6 Housing First is highly effective in ending homelessness among people with high and complex needs. The evidence suggests that Housing First services should be a part of an integrated homelessness strategy to be truly effective.
- 3.7 Further research is being undertaken by the MHCLG in the funded pilot areas and in the SIB funded areas.

Supporting documents and information

Supporting Documents:

St Mungo's housing first report

https://www.mungos.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/ST_Mungos_HousingFirst_Report_2018.pdf

Housing First in England An Evaluation of Nine Services February 2015, University of York

<https://www.york.ac.uk/media/chp/documents/2015/Housing%20First%20England%20Report%20February%202015.pdf>

Crisis Report Liverpool

https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/237544/housing_first_feasibility_study_for_the_liverpool_city_region_2017_es.pdf

Housing First Principles

<https://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/Housing%20First%20in%20England%20The%20Principles.pdf>

