

Appendix 1

Night Shelter Provision Brighton Centre, Brighton & Hove

Introduction

For the coming winter period, the council has committed to opening a short term night shelter to accommodate up to 30 rough sleepers. A range of buildings have been considered including both private and council owned premises. The Brighton Centre is viewed as the most suitable option due to the size, availability and location. This venue offers the opportunity for a shelter to be open from 7pm to 8am, on a referral only basis for up to 30 people who are rough sleeping in the city.

Venue

It is proposed to use the first floor East Wing (entrance and exit from Russell Road) for the night shelter. The venue is available from 10 December 2017 to 14^h January, then from the 20^h January 2018 to 20^h February 2018. The shelter will be open from 7pm to 8am.

An interim venue is being sought for the January dates and from 21st February to the end of March 2018 when the Brighton Centre is unavailable. The venue will accommodate 30 people in one large room. The foyer outside the main room has access to toilets and the area will also be used to serve food and drinks.

Access to the rest of the venue will be sealed off or locked. The building itself presents little risk. It is an operational building and has a good standard of housekeeping. The main stair access and rear fire escape stairs are in good condition with no obvious slip or trip hazards or unguarded falls. There appears to be adequate lighting for the proposed use. The whole area is on a system of emergency lighting so a level of lighting will still be available in the event of a fire affecting the main supply. The space is also covered by a comprehensive fire alarm system.

The proposal from the Brighton Centre is to lock the bottom doors into the entrance lobby to maintain separation with the building. This does not affect the means of escape. It will restrict access to the lift, however the key for the door will be with the night shelter manager so access can be provided if required. If we have staff or clients on site who require the lift, disabled evacuation chairs will need to be provided for use in the event of a fire. The disabled evacuation chairs and necessary training can be provided by the H&S team.

Insurance

Existing cover applies with some concerns which will be addressed in the risk assessment.

Staffing

The staff and service will be managed by experienced council employed managers. There will be a staff team made up of care and support staff who will be employed through an agency to run the service. Their role will be to manage the health and safety and welfare of all the people in the building. Security staff will manage the building, the door policy and access to the shelter.

Staffing will be:

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- Two support workers 6.30pm (for 7pm opening) to 8am
- A team leader from 6.30pm to 11.00pm
- Two security guards for the entire night shift
- On call council staffing is still to be decided

- Continuity of support for rough sleepers, from day to night, will be provided by the St Mungo's team (see "Referrals and service model" below)

We are working with the Councils HR department on expediting a fast track process to employ support staff from local services to work at the night shelter. The Guidant Group, the council's specialist recruitment agency, is leading on recruiting senior staff and agency support workers.

Volunteers

A significant number of enquiries have been received from people wanting to volunteer or donate goods. This is being coordinated by the Charity Link Project Worker (a council post funded through a successful DCLG grant) to determine how best this additional resource can support the work of the night shelter.

Referrals and service model

Referrals into the service will be made by the Rough Sleeper Outreach Team, which is a council commissioned service, delivered by St Mungo's. The St Mungo's team will identify people who need respite from rough sleeping and can manage in a shared environment. Most will have a local connection, but some may require shelter while reconnection options are explored. So far enough suitable people have been identified to run the night shelter at full capacity. Women are being prioritised, in recognition of their additional vulnerability while sleeping on the streets, and will make up a third of the clients offered night shelter accommodation.

St Mungo's will provide skilled and experienced support workers to work with clients on a housing plan and ensuring they are accessing appropriate services to meet their needs with the aim to move them off the streets. The individual plans and register of attendance will be recorded on the new multiagency ICT system Bthink. St Mungo's will also be present during sign in and at the start of the night during the first week at the night shelter. This is to provide continuity for rough sleepers from the support offered by St Mungo's during the day to the support provided by the newly established night shelter team.

It should be noted that staff will prioritise shifts for SWEP should that be opened due to severe weather. The night shelter will still open if there are sufficient agency staff. People staying at the night shelter will be eligible for SWEP as well so will have continuous night shelter.

The venue will be closed during the day. People will be directed to existing homeless and rough sleeper services in the city during this time. There will be no smoking or visitors while the service is open. People will be able to leave their belongings in the venue in the day, but will be asked to take anything valuable with them. Pets will not be a barrier to accessing the night shelter but will be looked at on a case by case basis.

Food

There are no cooking or kitchen facilities in the East Wing. Prepared food will be delivered to the venue and washing up will need to be taken off site each day. A number of options are being explored. Weekend provision is proving most challenging. As mentioned above, hot drinks and food will be managed by staff in the lobby area.

Bedding

The council will source beds (sun lounger or camp bed style) plus bedding for each person staying at the night shelter. 40 duvets have already been pledged by a donor. Laundry services for bedding and clothes are being arranged.

Risk Assessments

Risk Assessments are being compiled as living documents which will need to be reviewed and updated as the scheme progresses. This work is being done with the Corporate H&S team having oversight. The Fire Risk Assessment is also in the process of being compiled and we are confident that it will not present any significant issues. Council corporate H&S have been in touch with East Sussex Fire and Rescue to inform them of our proposals and will continue to liaise.

All Risk Assessments will be shared with the Brighton Centre to ensure compatibility with their processes and to ensure that the proposals do not impact on their business. The Brighton Centre is being very helpful and we are all working together to deliver this service in a positive and safe way.

Summary

The service will operate from 10 December 2017 to 20 February 2018. An evaluation of the night shelter will be carried and a report submitted to PR&G in the summer 2018. This report will look at the utilisation of the shelter and impact of its availability.

