



Selby District Homelessness Forum

Minutes of Meeting – Monday 28th January 2019; SDC Civic Centre

Attendees

Victoria Stoker	SDC	vstoker@selby.gcsx.gov.uk
Dawne Moat	Horton Housing	dawne.moat@hortonhousing.co.uk
Gerry Menzies	Foundation	Gerry.Menzies@foundationuk.org
Tom Jenkinson	NYCC Stronger Communities	tom.jenkinson@northyorks.gov.uk
Anna-Marie McGlanaghey	Horton	anna-marie.mcglanaghey@hortonhousing.co.uk
Beth Headley	NY Horizons	Elizabeth.headley@nyhorizons.org.uk
Simon Parkinson	SDC Housing Options Advisor	sparkinson@selby.gov.uk
Drew Fussey	SDC; Customer, Business & Revenue	dfussey@selby.gov.uk
Eric Davies	Project Nova	eric.davis@projectnova.org.uk
Jill Boak	NYCC	Jill.boak@northyorks.gov.uk
Charlotte Endacott	NYCC	Charlotte.endacott@northyorks.gov.uk
Sue Pattinson	Stepping Stone Tadcaster	tadcastersteppingstone@gmail.com susanpattinson@hotmail.co.uk
Kate Smith	IDAS	Kate.smith@idas.org.uk
Nick Tilney	SASH	Nick.tilney@sash-uk.org.uk
Belinda Snaith	N.Y.H	
Claire Canavan	Healthwatch North Yorkshire	Claire.canavan@healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk

1. Welcomes & Introductions

All introduced selves, and service representing

2. Apologies

Joanna Holmes – Foundation, Carol Armstrong – NYCC, Anna Foster – IDAS, Ruth Musson – YPS, Chris Cunningham – NYCC, Lucy Banintine - CAB

3. Minutes of Last Meeting & Matters Arising

Apologies due to staff changes unable to locate last meetings minutes.

4. Overview of Homelessness & Prevention Work (Vicky Stoker – SDC)

Terms of Reference

It has been a considerable amount of time since the last forum and due to changes to staffing in several services I feel it would be a good idea to have a quick overview of the TOR for the Selby Homeless Forum.

The aim of the Selby Homelessness Forum is to bring together all local agencies, organisations and statutory partners who have an interest in preventing homelessness and improving services for its customers.

An important role of the forum is to deliver and monitor progress in implementing the action plan of the Homelessness Strategy which has 7 primary priorities:-

To continue and improve partnership working to prevent homelessness

Improve access to prevention and Housing Options services

Improve support for young people & Increase suitable housing options

Reduce the use of temporary accommodation and improve quality

Identify new and improved opportunities to provide housing and support for households with specific needs

Continue the good practice and joint working across the sub region in relation to Gypsies, Travellers and Show people

The purpose of the Forum is to

1) To deliver and monitor the Homelessness Strategy and implement the objectives of the Action Plan

2) To commit to joint working and to co-deliver improved services across the district in order to prevent homelessness

3) Monitor homelessness levels in the District by sharing statistical and other information as appropriate

4) Share best practice and updates about local services and look outside of the District for examples of best practice to inform service development locally

5) Ensure the group remains relevant both locally and countywide

Staffing

- We have recently appointed a FT Housing Options Development Officer, Kim Dalby- Kim's role will predominately be procuring private landlords in the district In order to assist more people who approach our Housing Options team, Kim will be a sole point of contact for both prospective tenants and landlords and is working hard to source suitable properties for those in need.
- As part of this service we offer landlords & tenant, a tenant find service, bond guarantee scheme, tenancy support, proof of income/references, financial incentives, benefits and universal credit advice and a contact to speak to 5 days a week.
- In regards to housing options, we are now fully staffed; this includes 1 FT supervisor, 3 FT Housing options Advisors, 2 part time housing options advisors, FT Housing Options Development Officer and a FT Housing Options and Private Rented administrator. Some of these posts are on fixed term contracts to assist with the Homeless Reduction Act however we would be hoping to extend these posts further.
- Kerry Leather (Homeless Prevention worker) remains full-time based at Access Selby office, which means a Young Person's Worker is present all week.

Housing Advice

The third quarter of 2018 (Oct-Dec) saw 126 customers approach the service which is just 1 less than the previous quarter, which considering our reduction in surgery appointments due to the Christmas closedown shows how 'in demand' we remain to be in.

166 surgery appointments were made available to the public, 103 were taken up, which again highlights a high level of no shows, this equates to 38% of the non-attendance and over 47 hours of Housing Options time. For example, In November there were 64 appointments arranged but only 29 customers attended their pre-arranged appointment. In addition to this 11 customers presented as homeless that evening in November, this provides additional pressures on the service as our main focus is to prevent homelessness and we can only do this when a customer accesses the service as soon as there is a threat of homelessness.

At times within the quarter customers were waiting up to two weeks for a housing options appointment; this is a reduction from the three week wait the previous quarter. However our aim is to ensure a customer is seen within 7 days from their initial contact. On a positive note, for the next reporting quarter so far the longest a customer has had to wait for a housing options appointment is 5 days.

We are running surgeries four times a week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday), so the total offered over the week is 16.

The way we report our homeless stats has changed and we are now set to report more information to the government as part of the 'H-Clic upload.' Under the new legislation, cases are now placed in three stages –

- Triage (not homeless or at risk of homelessness and advice only),
- Prevention Duty (A 56 day period where we work with customers to ensure they do not become homeless)
- Relief Duty (another 56 days where we work with customers to relive their homelessness).

After this point, we will make our traditional duty decisions.

The end of Quarter three saw 18 in Triage, 36 under Prevention, and 21 under Relief. Within the quarter nearly 40% of our successful preventions in prevention stage have been through action from the housing options team to enable them to stay in their current accommodation. This is significantly higher than we have ever recorded and is a positive step to work towards the Government's aim is for LA's for at least 50% of successful preventions are to be by actions to make current accommodation available rather than looking at alternative options.

The Homeless Reduction Act extended the period in which a household is defined as 'threatened with homelessness' from 28 to 56 days, unfortunately the local data received evidences customers are still under the impression that the council do not assist until 28 days before and are therefore coming into the service at this point, can all services please reiterate this point to their service users.

We also had a further 16 customers homelessness relieved in the relief duty with over 60% of customers housed in the private rented sector and other accommodation such as family and friends with the genuine prospect of been available for over 6 months.

These statistics show that the team are working hard to look for alternative housing options for customers without relying purely on social housing.

Furthermore, it is important to know we have seen a large increase in B&B use; this is a combination of factors around suitability of Ousegate Lodge, accommodation size, complexity of customers, The Homeless Reduction Act and the demand on the service. Unfortunately we do not have a service level agreement with any B&B in the Selby District and as such use out of area accommodation. This has been highlighted and we are currently trying to acquire more local emergency accommodation.

Further Housing Options

We are now 9 months into working within the Homeless Reduction Act. As previously mentioned the focus is now on the LA to prevent homelessness as much as is possible, trying to maintain people in their accommodation rather than immediately look for an alternative.

Any customer now deemed under Prevention or Relief duty will be entitled to an assessment of their needs and a 'Personal Housing Plan'. A PHP is created between the customer and their Case Worker which will detail the various tasks required of both parties in order to try and prevent or relive homelessness. Tasks may also be given to external agencies, so please be aware that you may be asked to input into these plans, but you will be notified of this. It is important that customers work on their PHP's and please can agencies reinforce this with their customers.

Under the new legislation, we are able to close cases, even when some form of duty is owed, if customers are failing to, or refuse to, co-operate. This is largely being used when customers disengage from Housing Options, so again please ensure your customers working with Housing Options continue to update us regularly. Only one application was closed due to non-cooperation in the quarter.

As you may be aware, a duty to refer was created as part of the HRA. From 1 October 2018 certain named public bodies now have a duty to refer users of their service when they have reason to believe they are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days, to any local authority of the customer's choice.

The public authorities who are subject to the duty to refer are:-

- prisons;

- youth offending;
- secure training centers;
- secure colleges
- youth offending teams;
- probation services (including rehabilitation companies);
- jobcentre Plus;
- social services authorities;
- emergency departments;
- urgent treatment centers; and
- hospitals in their function of providing inpatient care

As a result of the duty to refer SDC have created a dutytorefer@selby.gov.uk email address and also a referral portal on the website for services to refer into, whilst some services may not be specified as a public body who has a duty to refer we are asking that all services refer into the service if they believe a customer is homeless within 56 days.

Finally, Homeless Link has created a standard referral form that they are encouraging services to use when referring. A copy of the referral form and a useful guide to the duty to refer will be added to the minutes and sent to the homeless forum mailing list

Moving Forward

Moving Forward training will be starting again Thursday 7th March.

This course takes place over 5 weeks and contains 5 different modules which all aim to deliver pre-tenancy training for people approaching the housing service. The main purpose of the scheme is to develop learners to a stage where they are 'tenant ready' and to prepare people for the transition to independent living and to create sustainable tenancies.

Customers will be required to attend if they are in a resettlement programme and if they are accommodated in temporary accommodation. It is also useful for customers who you feel need additional support prior to receiving a tenancy.

The course will take place at the Coultish Centre, Charles Street, Selby, YO8 4YQ from 1pm and will end no later than 3pm.

Could you please send over a referral form of anyone you want to attend the course to Danielle Sheldon (dsheldon@selby.gov.uk). The Housing options Service will contact all referrals to arrange attendance.

5. Presentation from Eric Davies Project Nova Coordinator York and North Yorkshire Project Nova.

Eric Davies is the Coordinator for the whole of Yorkshire, Humberside area (not currently in west Yorkshire but can help them into services in that area). Eric has worked for NY police PPU. Project Nova primarily works with ex-service leavers who have become tangled in the criminal justice system. Project Nova works with all ex-service leavers from all areas (Army, Navy, Royal Marines, RAF, TA) anyone who has taken the queens shilling no matter how long they have been in the service. Project Nova helps with support, mental health needs, employment and financial, they have many services they work alongside of for example head start which offer many sessions of mental health, TILS which is a NHS service and many other contacts. Project Nova can be a self-referral or a referral from other services via online form.

6. Update on UC And DHP spend (SDC – Drew Fussey)

The Housing Benefit caseload is slowly reducing due to natural migration of claimants onto Universal Credit, the CTR caseload is slightly increasing

DHP spend for SDC is currently £114,704.00 from the fund of £118,688.00, with £3984.00 remaining for the rest of the year.

Date	HB caseload	CTR caseload	Number claiming UC
Sep 2018	3247	4219	345
Jan 2019	3071	4237	558

The migration to UC will take place on a large scale in 2020 with a completion date of 2023. Currently a person with 3 or more children will be on UC from the 1st February 2019 and mixed aged couples (one in receipt of pension and one of working age) will still choose who will be able to claim but as of the 5th February 2019 they will have to claim UC until both claimants are at pension age. UC is all benefits into one except Council Tax which has to be claimed separate. For 12 months now SDC have been delivering budget information but from the 1st April this will now be taken on by CAB.

7. PRESENTATION: Horton Housing Well Being Cafe (Hannah Brown and Helen Bannister)

Dawne Moat from Horton Housing to present an overview of the relaunched cafes in the Selby district.

Dawne's presentation attached

<https://hortonhousing.co.uk/get-support/horton-wellbeing-cafe/>

8. Sharing Good Practice/Partner Updates (All)

Foundation – YP has moved out to York with Housing Association which has been positive. Also another YP has move on into private lettings again a positive success.

2 members are due to leave 8th February 2019, 2 posts have been advertised 20 hours each and interviewed from Scarborough which went well and now in discussion with Scarborough office about transfer.

Simon Parkinson SDC– We do have about 3 rough sleepers currently in Selby District. We don't have the housing required which is a massive challenge we are facing. We are currently looking into our temporary accommodation and are looking for something closer to Selby District.

“Do you work with sleep safe Selby?”

We are having various discussions; we are all in theory intending to do the same thing. We want to talk to all parties in working out how we can progress and work together.

Stepping Stone Tadcaster – Walk in sign posted services which sees 300+ clients per year in Tadcaster alone. This is totally anonymous unless other information is required for example help filling out a form or CV. The struggle is that there are a lot more complex problems which there is not enough of the other services available in the area, this can be a problems when people don't drive.

Commissioning Team – now fully staffed in locality team Carol Armstrong will deliver more locality. Young person's pathway has had 2 deaths over the past couple of months. We are now developing striates about dealing with a death and integrating this into pathway.

IDAS – have been successful in adult and young people's services. Any Referrals can be done via website.

Horizons – working more within the community supporting people with addictions.

Horton - staff changes, now fully staffed. A lot of people coming through relating to UC, a lot more triage work and drop in's. Foundation legal services is no longer at court so no legal rep at court for possessions. Due to the drop in at Tadcatser stopped for a little while but is starting again tomorrow 1-3pm manor farm, Tadcaster. IHM Horton has 5 and they are all full at moment.

9. AOB

10. Date of Next Meeting – Monday 29th July 2019