

Brent Homelessness Forum

Wednesday 10 Feb 2023, 10:00 – 12:30

Minutes

Agenda item	Action
<p>1. Welcome and introductions</p> <p>Apologies from Shaheen Pathan, DWP; Cllr Neil Nerva; Penny Karioki, NIA; Chris Dutton, Homeless Link; Glaiza, Rumi's Cave.</p> <p>In attendance: Laurence Coaker, Brent; Atara Fridler, Crisis; Tara Murray, DWP; Sandra Ademola, DWP; Jacqui Crane, Groundswell; Ali Bello, Pathway; Steve Davies, Mungos; Ryan Fuke, Mungos; Lucien Lawrence, Housing Justice; Versha Varsani, NHS; Kristine Wellington, CVS Brent; Maddy Barber, Crisis – SHPS; Jacopo Bisagni, Crisis – SHPS; Minta Sakaria, Crisis; Sharon Graham, Centrepont; Annette Davis, Centrepont; Gerard Kelly, NHS ICB; Rabia Abbas, Ashford Place; Lola Falana, DWP; Ali Feroz Shafi, DWP; Carolyn Connage, SMART; Beth O'Dell, SMART; Matt Donald, Homeless Link; Conor Sullivan, SHPS – BOP; Coco Khan, Brent; Jason Alexander, WDP; Babs Taylor, WDP; Jodi Cooper, Brent; Stephen Kyle, EACH; Jatin Patel, EACH; Pauline Jones, Brent; Holly Cooper, Crisis.</p>	
<p>2. Rough Sleeping in Brent: Update</p> <p>Ryan presented slides:</p> <p>28 rough sleepers on caseload - figure is double the same as last year but this is skewed due to differences in winter provision this year. Same amount of people at risk of rough sleeping as last year – when it's not cold, people are rough sleeping more.</p> <p>No high support winter shelter this year. Current building used for SWEP was used as it happened to be empty and is unlikely to be used in future.</p> <p>Demand has not outstripped local supply – not had to refer into pan-London. Good results from female only SWEP provision – WLWS using communal area to accommodate someone without extra cost. Ryan suggested inviting WLWS to attend a forum and explain how their service works. Brent recently kept SWEP open whilst GLA were opening and closing it off and on.</p> <p>Many people have accommodation linked with work which is on and off – 40% increase in intermittent rough sleeping due to this. Increase in begging around Willesden Sainsburys – perception of homelessness may be changing due to this.</p> <p>Finding it more difficult for people to document their time in the country for late EUSS applications. But have good links with North Ken law centre to assist with this.</p> <p>Laurence mentioned that SWEP was very early and sudden this year – 1st call lasted 10 days. TA relied on during COVID has dried up and no longer available.</p>	

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<p>Craven Park provision will be gone as will be used by council for complex male rough sleepers – council are currently looking for premises for SWEP next year.</p>	
<p>3. Homeless Link</p> <p>Matt plugged London PLUS – funded by councils and run by Homeless Link and Shelter – running for approx. 4 years. It runs free training and events for homelessness work in London. 2 upcoming webinars by Homeless Link in March on measuring impact and good practice. Shelter are also running webinars on housing issues. Next stress training session is full but another one will be put on date TBC. Email London.plus@homelesslink.org.uk to be added to mailing list.</p>	
<p>4. Homeless Health Plan for Brent: Update</p> <p>Versha and Gerard presented slides with draft Homeless Health Plan:</p> <p>Advanced access hub on weekends and evenings. Emphasis on making adjustments for vulnerable people. BHM doing outreach health checks around the borough.</p> <p>Want to expand work with Pathway service; working with GPs to get safe surgery accreditation – currently 39 of 51 – want the others to get accredited and those who are accredited to advertise this more. Want MDT approach for complex patients. Community-based nursing teams do care-planning for those with complex needs – funding request put in for 3 community nurses to cover Brent and Ealing – awaiting outcome. If they don't get the funding for extra nurses, the community lead will train existing nurses to work in trauma-informed way. Plan for nurses to do outreach from places such as Crisis Skylight.</p> <p>SMART service had a successful bid for complex needs practitioners targeting rough sleepers – should be in place in next few months.</p> <p>Want to update population health management via dashboard with correlated and up-to date data. Ryan and Atara have assisted to update rough sleeper demographics -current data in health says rough sleepers mostly middle-aged white men which doesn't reflect what is seen in practice.</p> <p>Atara asked when the plan will be reviewed and kept accountable – homeless health steering group will feedback and inequality committee within NHS will own this plan and assess effectiveness and ensure regular feedback.</p> <p>Laurence asked how to ensure there is no duplication and whether there is a criteria for referral – Gerard advised anyone can refer in, does not have to be an in-patient. Can link in with SMART to ensure working alongside and not duplicating.</p>	<p>Gerard and Versha to link in with Carolyn to map work with SMART service</p>

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<p>5. Re-shaping of Brent's Single Person's Service</p> <p>Laurence presented slides.</p> <p>Identified that family and single homelessness are very different. Many people who approach are already homeless so unable to prevent – not normally through eviction, often through family/friends/risk of violence. Currently have 13430 people awaiting 1 bed property on list but average supply is 250 per year showing importance of using PRS as main option for ending homelessness.</p> <p>Council currently accommodating 18 people with NRPF but funding for this comes to an end at the end of March, at height had approx. 70 people NRPF. Of the 18, 12 people should have their status remedied, 6 may not. Affordability is the biggest barrier – council can pay RIA and deposit but only if property is affordable. Even if main duty is accepted, remedy is still likely to be PRS over social housing due to lack of supply.</p> <p>Current homelessness application process is not working – online form with light-touch triage – many are digitally excluded eg don't have email. Current appointment slots are full for 12 weeks. In the time waiting for appointment, situations change and people present in-person at crisis point – lost opportunity to prevent and relieve. Appointments mostly over the telephone since COVID, in-person hasn't returned as normality. SHPS want referrals as they have an outcome-based contract but these are slow as takes so much time for a case to get to that point.</p> <p>Brent wants to move to Greenhouse model like Hackney – take away single homelessness from civic centre. Have identified a suitable building to move the service to – homelessness demand is in south of borough so want to move to a hub in this area – Designworks in Harlesden. Drop-in service instead of appointments. Westminster have a similar model – The Passage – which Laurence will be visiting. Also in process of redeveloping IT systems to become fit for purpose.</p> <p>People with support needs may not engage with other services but will often engage with housing – easy for other services to walk away but not possible for housing. If housing is sorted, the underlying issues are often not addressed, this can lead to people losing their properties down the road.</p> <p>Hub model was set up in Cricklewood some years ago prior to HRA – it was so successful that demand for single homelessness service dropped off so they stopped the service.</p> <p>Target to go live is April.</p> <p>Andrew from Westminster Council gave overview of their service: went into partnership with Shelter and with The Passage resource centre – on-site support eg nurses, substance misuse workers, employment team etc. This worked pre-HRA, post-HRA they set up structured service that allowed drop-ins</p>	

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<p>– 9 appointments per day. If hit capacity, had duty officers on site to deal with this. Pandemic came along and work shifted to online. Now going back to pre-COVID model. The Passage work alongside council officers via referrals. Telephone assessment only where it is needed eg when someone is in hospital. 2-300 people attending every month. Many people come in asking for case updates which needs to be prevented to allow more capacity for on-site workers to deal with urgent issues. Also good as managers can see what is going on and support staff more. Person-centred, psychologically informed service. When cases are referred to the Passage it takes away bureaucratic process and time constraints when working with clients. Currently in conversation with commissioned services as people coming via them for homelessness assistance – eg supported housing placements breaking down – next goal is trying to prevent emergency housing situations for complex cases.</p> <p><u>Activity – Identifying Challenges, Opportunities and Logistics for remodel</u></p> <p><u>Group 1</u> – Challenges: getting people in the building and marrying IT systems up with new face-to-face service. Opportunities: immediate engagement, more inclusive and already have some relevant services in the building. Logistics: appearance of the building, car park is used by locals, not the residents - could use an entrance to extend the building for more interview space. Lack of people with different language skills – will these be catered to face-to-face? Laurence advised can look into this as currently language line is used over the phone.</p> <p><u>Group 2</u> – Challenges: information sharing and Consent, comms will be critical to ensure people know to go to new building instead of civic centre. Opportunities: people would benefit from single support plan rather than multiple, common assessment form/tool to avoid asking same questions, better collaborative work.</p> <p><u>Group 3</u> – Challenges: keep online access too, job centre is 5 minutes from civic centre – could use space here for those in north of borough to access service. Opportunities: DWP happy to have space at hub and are happy to take overflow as have jobcentre 3 minutes from new building, can offer funding for those digitally excluded. ‘Assessment passport’ for staff to prevent asking same questions.</p> <p><u>Group 4</u> – Challenges: inadvertent messages due to state of the building, triage may be too quick. Opportunities: could look at creating a shared information service similar to chain database.</p> <p><u>Group 5</u> – Challenges: forcing people to engage with other services isn’t housing-led or housing first and will not encourage clients. Opportunities: having the other services so close will increase organic engagement anyway. Allows better cross-agency working. Annette Suggested Laurence visit Watford</p>	<p>Sandra (DWP) to link council with gang violence mapping service.</p>

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<p>to look at PIE design. Logistics: integrate into Brent Hubs model with changing locations, design building layout with PIE in mind.</p> <p><u>Group 6</u> – Opportunities: Look into Brent Hubs model to address any challenges, should nail triage process and signposting will be crucial, have a community space to deflect tension from council – suggestion of ‘community café’ with low-cost or no-cost food available. Logistics: need to assess accessibility of building. Laurence advised there is a ramp into entry and there is no lift but clients will not be going upstairs.</p>	
<p>6. Update of Forum subgroups</p> <p>a. Winter Shelter:</p> <p>Glaiza from Rumi’s Cave was unable to attend but provided the following update:</p> <p>Approaching end of week 5. We have 12 guests currently, a few left early because they weren’t keen with the sharing model. A few guests have moved on already. All venues are in full swing now and all volunteers have voiced being happy to be able to contribute in this way again. We still have a few arriving late, but now they are used to the venues it has been better.</p> <p>Crisis have helped with showers and laundry which has helped during the day to occupy their time. Guests are getting along very well and are supportive of each other in the evenings if one has had a tough day.</p> <p>Laurence advised Housing Justice may have up to 40k grant for winter night shelters. There are some criteria for this: if winter shelter ends and some people are left without move-on plans the funding can help tide this over. Prospectus to be released in next week or so.</p> <p>b. Rough Sleeping and BfZ</p> <p>Built for Zero methodology originated in USA – create a by-name list of rough sleepers to track. Crisis is recruiting a local improvement lead in 2-3 weeks – will be based in Council working under Jodi’s supervision (transformation team, specific to housing). Planning 2 workshops to nail operational process. USA BfZ developer will be visiting in March for this. Can consider secondment for role.</p> <p>c. Women with Complex Needs</p> <p>Holly advised the meetings so far have demonstrated the need for increased knowledge of services available but many group members don’t have the capacity to meet every month. The resource mapping has been helpful. Currently looking to move meeting to become a quarterly session during which we can discuss provisions available for women, look at opportunities for joint-working and identify any themes arising across the sector relating to women with complex needs.</p>	<p>Anyone interesting in joining quarterly meeting to contact Holly: holly.cooper@crisis.org.uk</p>

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7. AOB	