

MK Homelessness Partnership Briefing Note

In September 2016, Cabinet approved a report into tackling the needs of non-statutory homeless people. It made a number of recommendations, including the following -

'That the Council will lead in bringing together a range of partners with professional expertise in the homelessness and support sector to form the MK Homelessness Partnership (the Partnership) to work together to prevent and alleviate homelessness for non-statutory homeless people. Milton Keynes.'

That the Partnership should, in the first three months ensure that the Terms of reference are agreed, clarity of working and deliver arrangements, that a Homelessness Charter that will set out how all organisations will work together to tackle homelessness in Milton Keynes is agreed, that an analysis of any gaps in provision to meet the needs of non-statutory homeless people is undertaken, and an initial costed proposal is brought forward for consideration by the Cabinet in December 2016 detailing how best to support the aims of supporting non-statutory homeless people.

That the Council explore the options for the provision of emergency support for those without accommodation including sanitary facilities and an outreach assessment service.

That the Council explore the options for the provision of emergency short-term shelter for those in crisis and requiring immediate support.'

The MK Homelessness Partnership was formed on the 27 September 2016, and since then has met on two further occasions. The key stakeholders in providing services for homeless people and those at risk of homelessness in MK are represented in the Partnership. The Chair (Tim Marren, Chief Executive at Community Action:MK) was elected in October and the Terms of Reference were agreed.

At the meeting in November, the objectives of the Partnership were prioritised and a sub-group was set up to focus on the top 2 priorities which are:

- To explore options for the provision of emergency short-term shelter for those in crisis and requiring immediate support; and
- To explore options for the provision of emergency support for those without accommodation, including sanitary facilities and an out-reach assessment service.

The Partnership has supported a bid by the Winter Night Shelter in respect of the long-term use of the 'Buszy'. In brief, the proposal is for it to act as a homelessness hub and provide a range of support services and facilities for homeless people such as showers, washing machines, lockers, a café, and an increase in the number of bed spaces available for emergency shelter at various locations across the city.

Alongside this, in October the DCLG announced the launch of a Homelessness Prevention Programme. The Programme is targeted towards Homelessness Prevention and dealing with Rough Sleepers. Local Authorities have been invited to bid, preferably in partnership with key stakeholders and the deadline for bids is 28 November 2016. The Council and the Partnership is therefore working on a tight schedule to make a bid in time to meet this deadline.