

Briefing Note for the Use of the Former Bus Station

This note lays out the Winter Night Shelter's efforts to enable the charity sector to contribute to the alleviation of Homelessness, mental health issues and addictions through the use of the former Bus Station (the Buszy).

Use of Short-Term Proposition November 2016 to March 2017

Winter Night Shelter

The Winter Night Shelter will use the ground floor of the former Bus Station between 0800 and 0900 and 1700 and 1930 to provide:

- Pre-assessment of potential guests via a Welfare Office;
- An Assessment reception centre from 1730 to 1915;
- An evening reception centre from 1730 to 1915;
- Follow up support between 0900 and 1930 for 30 hours each week;
- Lockers for storage of guests' possessions, which can be accessed between 0800 and 0900 and 1730 and 1915 each day;
- Potentially lockers for the storage of other Homeless people's possessions, which can be accessed between 0800 and 0900 and 1730 and 1915 each day;
- Storage for sleeping bags and some food stuffs that can be handed out to the Homeless whom we are unable to accommodate.

Other Service Providers

We are looking at other possible short-term uses where the providers can justify the transfer or enlargement of their activities without the certainty as yet of any tenure after 31st March 2017:

- Day-time drop in services (Open Door);
- Connection with those exiting the criminal justice system (P3);
- Storage space for the soup runs (Soup Run);
- Training and a job club for those homeless seeking employment (SieveMK);
- Advice services (Citizens Advice Bureau).

Costs of providing services

The set up costs for the Winter Night Shelter are relatively low, and include:

- **Lockers:** Transport and installation of already owned lockers into the Buszy and removal after the project finishes **£600**
- **Screening:** Windows to be screened either with wall hangings or movable partitions to provide some privacy **£250**
- **Welfare Officer's office:** Fit out and relocation of desks and chairs and purchase of electric heating **£200**
- **Making good storage areas:** Refitting doors and locks **£150**
- **Contingency** **£200**

- **Total for the Winter Night Shelter**

£1,400

The costs of transferring or enlarging services from other providers are as yet unknown.

Long Term Proposition Through MKDP's Bidding Process

We intend assembling a bid to address as many as possible of the charity sector's contributions to addressing Homelessness, Mental Health issues and addictions as can be accommodated in the former Bus Station, which will be submitted to the Milton Keynes Development Partnership by 26th October and will include use of both floors.

One of our arguments, for which we are keen to encourage support, is that our proposed use of the former Bus Station will draw away from the train station entrance the Homeless and those with mental health and addiction issues (other than the most hardened beggars), and will contribute significantly to the improvement of the appearance of this gateway to the city. The former Bus Station itself, being 200 metres away, on the far side of the busy Elder Gate, and with only its roof clearly visible from the station entrance, is too far away to form an effective part of that gateway. It is ideally situated to assist in drawing these vulnerable people away from the station entrance itself.

Input to this bid is being assembled during the week commencing 3rd October 2016, and the Chair of the Housing and Community Committee will be consulted on any adjustments and refinements during week commencing 17th October.

Recommendation

We seek the support of the Housing and Community Committee at Milton Keynes Council in principle to the use of the former Bus Station for addressing as much as possible of the charity sector's contribution towards provision for the Homeless and those with mental health and addiction issues.

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