

Health and Wellbeing Board

11 January 2023

Preventing Homelessness in Warwickshire Report – a multi-agency approach

Recommendations

That the Health and Wellbeing Board

1. Notes and supports the contents of this report; and
2. Endorses the ongoing review of the action plan

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Health and Wellbeing Board Members endorsed the [Preventing Homelessness in Warwickshire Strategy](#) in March 2021 to support the development of an action plan underpinning recommendations to reduce homelessness. This strategy links into the priority to *reduce inequalities in health outcomes and the wider determinants of health* in the [Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2026](#).
- 1.2 Since the adoption of the strategy, the strategic group have met quarterly and working groups for each of the chapters have met regularly to progress actions for each of the chapters. These are health, financial inclusion, young people, domestic abuse and offending. Updates on key actions for each workstreams are presented in this report.
- 1.3 In progressing the strategy, the group will gather data from a number of sources including from Experts by Experience, which provides a space for people experiencing homelessness/rough sleeping to communicate their views and experiences across a range of topics and services highlighted in the Preventing Homelessness in Warwickshire Strategy. The data gathered will be used to inform and where appropriate, amend the actions for each chapter of the strategy.
- 1.4 The strategic group will review the current action plan set for March 2021-March 2023 and revise accordingly to reflect actions moving forward.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 More work needs to be undertaken to understand the financial implications for each workstream. From a Warwickshire County Council (WCC) perspective,

any costs that emerge from this work will either be covered within existing budgets; or existing budgets will be reprioritised to accommodate these costs.

3. Environmental Implications

3.1 None.

4. Supporting Information

4.1 In January 2019, Warwickshire's Housing Board sought approval from Warwickshire's Health and Wellbeing Board to:

- Form a Homelessness Strategic Group that reports directly to the Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board.
- To begin to work on a countywide strategy on tackling and reducing homelessness.

The strategic group worked collaboratively across a wide range of partners, writing a countywide strategy on preventing homelessness.

The [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-26](#) has identified reducing inequalities in health outcomes and the wider determinants of health as one its three main priorities. Health and Wellbeing Board Members endorsed the [Preventing Homelessness in Warwickshire Strategy](#) in March 2021 to support the development of an action plan underpinning recommendations to reduce homelessness.

4.2 Strategic priorities included in the strategy are:

- Health – to reduce the inequalities and improve the health of people at risk of homelessness, homeless or sleeping rough.
- Financial inclusion – to ensure that a wide range of appropriate services are available to support those at risk of homelessness due to financial difficulties.
- Young people – to enhance and improve services that prevent homelessness among young people.
- Domestic abuse – to prevent domestic abuse and the crisis homelessness resulting from it wherever possible.
- Offending – to deliver better-focused housing and related support services for those at risk of homelessness when leaving prison.

4.3 The strategic group have met quarterly and working groups for each of the chapters have met regularly to progress actions.

4.4 Key highlights from each priority:

Homelessness and health

The Homeless Street Outreach Physical Health Nursing Service

- The Homeless Street Outreach Physical Health Nursing service has proved to be invaluable to the homeless population of Warwickshire. The service consists of a team of street outreach nurses hosted by South Warwickshire University NHS Foundation Trust (SWFT) Out of Hospital services, to provide healthcare to the local homeless population in Warwickshire. The nurses aim to respond quickly to emerging health needs and engaging individuals in wider health services. Referrals can be made to the team for any individual in need of healthcare who presents as homeless, including supporting hospital discharge to reduce the likelihood of readmission.
- Since the service began in Jan 2020, the service has built successful relationships with other NHS services, voluntary sector and community services, benefitting patients and the timely care and support they receive.
- The service works closely with the Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust (CWPT) Homeless Street Outreach Mental Health Nursing service to provide holistic healthcare provision, often working together at the same clinics or location. CWPT has funded the acquisition of a vehicle that has been specially adapted to enable all aspects of treatment.
- The Rough Sleeping Initiative has allocated funding to support the Physical Health Nursing Service for 3 years (2022-2025).
- This service has successfully expanded with an additional band 7 practitioner and two additional band 3 support workers appointed in Autumn 2022.
- A qualitative evaluation of the homeless nursing service was completed by Coventry University and has been published (March 2022): Nurse-led mental and physical healthcare for the homeless community: A qualitative evaluation <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/hsc.13778>. Findings from this evaluation included benefits of homeless healthcare in reducing health inequalities and promoting a more accessible, flexible and person-centred approach to holistic care.
- A qualitative study to explore the experiences of people who were homeless during the governments 'everyone in' directive and an evaluation of the Physical Health nursing service was led by Coventry University but has not yet been published.

Pathway

- Pathway are a homeless healthcare charity, helping the NHS to create hospital teams to support homeless patients. They were commissioned to undertake the Pathway Needs Assessments for homeless patients for the 4 NHS hospital trusts in Coventry and Warwickshire: SWFT, University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust (UHCW), George Eliot

Hospital NHS Trust (GEH) and CWPT. The 4 needs assessments are now complete. The aim of the Pathway needs assessments is to review the number of homeless people attending the hospitals and make recommendations for how a better care co-ordination approach could be implemented.

Dual Diagnosis

- 'Dual diagnosis' covers a broad spectrum of moderate to severe mental health and substance misuse that an individual might experience concurrently and includes both illicit drug use and alcohol abuse. Although dual diagnosis infers there are two diagnoses, the policy recognises that the relationship between mental health and substance misuse can be both controversial and complex. Dual Diagnosis workers are embedding themselves into the inpatient settings.

GP Drop-in Clinic Pilot

- Public Health, in partnership with the commissioned services, including Change Grow Live (CGL), SWFT and CWPT homeless nurses, Housing Related Support (HRS), are piloting a project commencing January 2023 within the Leamington Primary Care Network (PCN) area for a GP clinic session specifically for the homeless.
- In addition, Public Health are working in partnership with the Personalisation Programme Manager for Coventry & Warwickshire to review how to embed personalised care into the engagement with patients for this project.

Housing Liaison Service

- The Housing Hospital Liaison Officers promote liaison and provide practical support for hospital discharge arrangements in circumstances where 'housing' has been raised as an issue preventing timely discharge. 'Housing' is a broad term and issues can range from homelessness to hoarding or the need for adaptations or an environmental clean. It could include room clearance to provide space for hospital equipment to enable safe care to be provided.
- This service is funded from Warwickshire Cares Better Together funding. There are three liaison officers covering hospital discharge across the County at UHCW/St. Cross, GEH, SWFT and CWPT. Each has a designated area, but they work together to support colleagues who need assistance to resolve housing issues.

Financial Inclusion

- The strategy recognises that financial circumstances can lead to homelessness. It seeks to provide services which can support and advise to prevent this. Housing Options Teams provide advice about housing and homelessness and services are delivered by the districts and boroughs. They use their early contact with applicants to explore their financial circumstances and if necessary, refer into specialist services such as PHIL

(Preventing Homelessness and Improving Lives) and the Citizens Advice Bureau.

- In this Chapter the strategy seeks to co-ordinate information about services that act to promote financial inclusion initiatives particularly to prevent homelessness. It encourages proactive relationships with services that support families and individuals (such as Family Information Services and the Department of Work and Pensions) to support customers to maximise their income, manage their expenditure & deal with debt. Currently there is a particular attention on services that can support those struggling with energy bills.

Young People

- The refreshed 16/17-year-old homeless protocol and the Care Leaver Homelessness protocol are in final version and have now been approved by the districts and boroughs through their own governance routes.
- Upcoming proposal from the Young People's working group to Warwickshire Heads of Housing and WCC Social Care for rolling out multi-agency training.
- The House Project (funded through WCC Children & Families Service) are aiming to expand the service in 2023.
- Increased payments of 2% (in line with inflation) to carers for 'Supported Lodgings'.

Domestic Abuse

- Commissioning response to Warwickshire's Safe Accommodation Strategy: Commissioners are evaluating the appropriate accommodation options and developing appropriate support to ensure that domestic abuse support (and accommodation) is in place for all victim-survivors who need it.
- A new Domestic Abuse Counselling and Therapy Service went live on 1st September 2022 to support all victim-survivors supported by the Warwickshire Domestic Violence and Abuse (WDVA) Service. Warwickshire's Dispersed Safe Accommodation Service will also provide advocacy and support for those who are in accommodation.
- Key messages are being linked up to ensure a countywide approach towards communications around domestic abuse. Future communications will be developed around the dispersed model.

Offending

- Introduced Registered Social Landlords to the Offenders and Accommodation Task and Finish Group to get more active involvement.

- Completed Duty to Refer Training for Probation and the Pre-Release Teams in the Prison Service.
- Devised a protocol which has been signed off by housing authorities within the five districts and boroughs within Warwickshire that agreed to changes to deal with the transfer of cases for offenders who may have exclusions in our own areas.
- Completed a survey with the Registered Social Landlords and district and borough Councils in Warwickshire as housing authorities to get more information with regard to their housing allocation policies and providing tenancies to offenders.
- The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has now included homelessness and housing within their Police and Crime Plan.
- Currently looking to run a pilot project with the Pre-Release Teams in our local Prisons to receive Duty to Refers on the Unconvicted Cohort who have not yet been sentenced, but are currently on remand, which should help with dealing with any homelessness issues before their release dates cutting down on crisis management.

4.5 Experts by Experience

- The Experts by Experience groups in Warwickshire provide an opportunity for members to communicate their views and experiences. The main objective of this project is to engage with the homeless and rough sleeper population in Warwickshire about their experiences and needs across a range of topics and services highlighted in the Preventing Homelessness in Warwickshire Strategy. Data will be used to inform/amend actions devised from each chapter of the strategy. Warwickshire County Council Research Governance has been completed for this project and an Equality Impact Assessment will also be completed.

4.6 The Housing, Homelessness and Covid-19 Working Group

- The Housing, Homelessness and Covid-19 working group was set up to respond to the needs of the homeless population during the pandemic which met online on a weekly basis from March 2020 – March 2022. The working group comprised of members from housing teams from Warwickshire district and borough councils, Warwickshire County Council, Public Health, WCC People Strategy and Commissioning, and SWFT. Partners in this working group had already begun working together and forming relationships from the WCC Homelessness Conference in Autumn 2018, which meant there was a solid working foundation already established which grew with the work on the Preventing Homelessness in Warwickshire Strategy.
- See Appendix 1 for a summary of the Housing Homelessness and Covid 19 Report

- Partners have provided case studies that reflect the response to supporting people experiencing homelessness. See Appendices 2-5.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 The strategic group will review the current action plan set for March 2021 – March 2023 and revise accordingly to reflect actions moving forward.

Appendices

1. Appendix 1 HHC19 Report Summary
2. Appendix 2 Case Study PH Outreach
3. Appendix 3 Case Study PH and MH outreach
4. Appendix 4 Case Study Change Grow Live
5. Appendix 5 Case Study Rugby Hope4
6. Appendix 6 Case Study Mental Health

Background Papers

None

| | Name | Contact Information |
|---|--------------------|--|
| Report Author | Isher Kehal | isherkehal@warwickshire.gov.uk |
| Assistant Director | Shade Agboola | Shadeagboola@warwickshire.gov.uk |
| Strategic Director for People | Nigel Minns | Nigelminns@warwickshire.gov.uk |
| Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care & Health | Cllr Margaret Bell | margaretbell@warwickshire.gov.uk |

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s):

Other members: Cllrs Bell, Drew, Golby, Holland and Rolfe