

Trafford Homelessness Strategy 2015 – 2018: Consultation Responses

December 2014

This report presents the full record of consultation responses made on the draft Homeless Prevention Strategy 2015-2017 which was held between Monday 27th October 2014 and Thursday 4th December 2014.

The report lists all responses to the draft Strategy made over the consultation period. The Council has taken all representations received into account in preparing Trafford Homelessness Strategy 2015-2018.

No	Respondents	Representations made.	Responses made.
1	Internal Council Departments and external Registered Provider and Voluntary Sector partners. Total attendance 14.	<p>A workshop was held on the 27th October 2014 with partners delivering operational homelessness services. Comments from the half day event were recorded as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The layout of the action plan should be in keeping with the rest of the document and be under the three headings, preventing, providing and supporting. • Stronger links to the private sector are needed • As domestic abuse is one of the main reasons for homelessness there should be increased targeted work • There needs to be corporate commitment across partner agencies, health etc not just within the Local Authority • Stronger links with Stronger families and Social Services. Clearer processes for exchanging and sharing information. • Have an SLA between Registered Providers and HOST for notifications of evictions prior to the action being taken. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure of Strategy amended around three overarching aims of preventing, providing and supporting. • Accreditation with National Landlords Association for Trafford landlords to be accelerated to better engage private landlords. • The several requests made for enhanced operational links to be part of commitment to four new/refreshed working protocols that are in the Action Plan. • Strategy amended to acknowledge need for commitment from all partners not just internal.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One standard referral form for all partners to refer into HOST • Move on from supported accommodation should be one offer any area • Earlier contact/referrals to other services not just at crisis point • Consider developing other protocols i.e. drugs and substance misuse • More proactive approach to housing offenders • Needs to be a reflection of corporate parent responsibility • Vulnerable homeless people should be provided life skills training/mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single referral form to be part of modernised Trafford Nominations Agreement to be agreed by 31.03.15. • The six last recorded requests opposite, in relation to enhanced operational links to be part of commitment to four new/refreshed working protocols that are in the Action Plan.
2	<p>Strategic Housing Partnership. Registered Providers and Homes and Communities Agency. Total attendance 9.</p>	<p>On the 7th November 2014 the draft Strategy was presented at the Strategic Housing Partnership. Comments from this meeting were:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic abuse cases seem to be on the increase and the Strategy will need to reflect this and the other main causes of homelessness • Support for tenants who are effected by the impact of welfare reform will need to be addressed within the Strategy • The Partnership were pleased that support for rough sleepers in Trafford was being acknowledged and dealt with under NSNO • A creative approach would be needed to engage with the private rent sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The commitment in the Action Plan to refresh the service working protocol for those who have experience Domestic Abuse but are not statutorily homeless. • Social landlords best practice in responding to Welfare Reform tenancy support to be shared. • Accreditation with National Landlords Association for Trafford landlords to be accelerated to better engage private landlords.

3	Homelessness Service users (families and single homeless people) Total attendance 14 in two sessions.	<p>Families and single young people were involved in separate workshops during November and December 2014</p> <p>A focus group with single young people aged between 16 and 19 years was held at Greenbank (supported housing for young homeless people)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group felt that there should be more information about what to expect if you are a young person who is homeless or is at risk of becoming homeless. Especially if the age of the customer is below 18. • There was not a clear understanding of why they would be referred to CYPS. Clear information around why this is should be given in leaflet form which is easy to understand. • Trafford Home Search was easy to use. • Stays in B and B were minimal most were 2 days. • Independent Living Workbooks were being completed and no problems raised. The group felt there was a lot of support available in the scheme to help them access employment and education. They were also accessing education and apprenticeships through connexions • Not a lot of one bed properties available in the borough so were interested in ideas around a shared accommodation scheme but would want to meet those would be sharing with at a match making event. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice for young people on line, on web site and social media links and in leaflet form to be enhanced this to apply to CYPS link for certain groups of presenters also. • Trafford Housing Trust shared household tenancies for young people to be piloted in Old Trafford in 2015/16.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group were happy in general and the only improvement they would like to be included would be to provide more clear information tailored to their age and to increase the supply of accommodation available to them so that they can move out of supported housing and into their own tenancies. <p>A further workshop was held at temporary accommodation Nansen Close used for homeless families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was felt that if being homeless had not been experienced before it was not clear what help there was. Especially around fleeing DV • Accessing private rent was difficult due to high deposits and not all are willing to accept tenants claiming benefits. If interviews could be arranged with private landlords it was believed that it may remove any pre conceptions about this particular group. • Shared accommodation would probably work with younger people but unsure it would work with anyone over 30 • Received support with dealing with their situation and finances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice for young people on line, on web site and social media links and in leaflet form to be enhanced. • The commitment in the Action Plan to refresh the service working protocol for those who have experience Domestic Abuse but are not statutorily homeless will cover the DV concerns. • Accreditation with National Landlords Association for Trafford landlords to be accelerated to better engage private landlords will include the Bond Scheme. • Trafford Housing Trust shared household tenancies to be piloted in Old Trafford in 2015/16 to test over 30's tenancies and financial support needs.
4	Salford Council Housing Options Service Trafford Team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further work to be done around nominations • Identify any unlawful evictions by RP's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These points will be covered by the Homelessness Champions Group monitoring of Registered Providers.

	Total attendance 6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint working with RP's i.e. re-establish the RSL Forum • Shortage of one bed properties • Priority private landlords engaged • DV protocol development needed • Refuge criteria needs looking at • Mental health support needed i.e. triage from those services • Improve move on from supported accommodation, one offer any area may need to amend allocation policy and Trafford Home Search • Increase in repossessions need to access court data from Altrincham and Manchester County Courts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Providers Forum to be re-established. • These points will be covered by the Homelessness Champions Group monitoring of Registered Providers. • The County Court activity will be covered by the Homelessness Champions Group monitoring.
5	Trafford Council Stronger Communities Board. Public and private sector partners. Total attendance 17.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to soup kitchens • Develop Mental health protocol • Increase support to Rough sleepers i.e. mentors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless ness prevention fund will consider the soup kitchen request for a one off donation. • The new night shelter provision for rough sleepers will develop links with relevant support agencies.
6	Transforming Futures. Probation Service. Total attendance 5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop further work with the prison service • Review the offender protocol • Forge partnerships with church groups for offenders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a specific protocol in the Action Plan covering service improvements for ex-offenders and will cover these areas..
7	Domestic Abuse. Council Departments. Voluntary Organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanctuary scheme to continue in Trafford • Raise awareness with other services • Provide training with other services • SLA's with RP's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The commitment in the Action Plan to refresh the protocol for those who have experience Domestic Abuse but are not statutorily homeless will cover these policy and practice concerns.

	Total attendance 4.		
8	Trafford Children and Young Peoples Service Departmental feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 2, Point 1 – To adopt a corporate commitment should include our corporate parenting responsibilities • On page 17 under the heading Supported Accommodation – clarification is needed within the Strategy regarding whether referrals will be accepted from clients who have substance misuse but must not to be currently using • Challenge 5 – In the Task Column – Can we have a specific task regarding CiC and Care Leavers – could be worded – To review the existing Joint Working Protocol for Care Leavers and to ensure that it reflects our Corporate Parenting Responsibilities. • In the lead column – it could read Housing Services and CFW. • In the Outcomes column – it could read – To clearly define what priority need means for care leavers including the additional support. To clearly identify housing options for care leavers when all avenues have been exhausted through existing provision - HOST/Housing Services i.e. what happens in emergencies. Discussion needed around whether care leavers are not deemed as Intentionally Homeless and are always given Priority Banding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger emphasis has been placed in the Strategy better reflecting the Councils parenting responsibilities. • Protocol to be enhanced as suggested for all comments received in this section.
9	Trafford Children Families and Wellbeing Departmental feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children, Families and Wellbeing Directorate support Trafford’s ambition to ensure that during the lifetime of the strategy the Council meets the key Government requirements and is delivering a ‘Gold Standard’ service. • CFW agree with and support the 10 step approach, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger emphasis has been placed in Strategy better reflecting the Councils parenting responsibilities.

		<p>particularly the steps relating to not placing any young person aged 16 and 17 in B and B accommodation and not to place families in B and B accommodation unless in emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFW will demonstrate its commitment to the strategy through its participation in the homelessness champions group, organizing and chairing the Supported Accommodation Steering Group, continuing to work with partners to commission supported housing options for particularly vulnerable people in Trafford including, people with a learning disability, mental health need, homeless people and those experiencing domestic abuse. 	
10	Trafford Compass. Supporting People Fund Partner. Total attendance 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to establish arrangements with private landlords, Improve Private Landlords awareness of stronger stance by HOST/Registered Social Landlords (RSL) • Domestic Violence recognised as major cause of homelessness in Trafford. Trafford “Sanctuary Scheme”, aiming to sustain victims at their current properties by increasing safety/security, and preventing flight from property. Currently access to this service limited in Trafford to referrals through MARAC. • Sanctions against Breach of Injunction Orders to be strengthened and enforced. • Individuals in temporary homeless accommodation who are awarded Band 1 may, in the future, only allowed one offer of a suitable property, and be banded a lower priority if this is refused. • Completion of Independent Living Skills Workbook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These points have been covered by the earlier commitments made above.

		<p>within homeless supported accommodation does not always mean that the individual has the tested skills to manage a tenancy, due to the vulnerability of the client group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgement of increase in employment by major RSL s in Trafford, of personnel to deal with tenancy difficulties, particularly debts with rent and Council Tax. • Shared housing options for vulnerable adults, particularly younger persons, via high rise housing stock in the borough and private sector renting. • Need to set up Champions Group re: Homeless Prevention Strategy. • Universal Credit roll out (new single claimants and now includes unemployed couples with No Dependents) 	
11	<p>Council web site consultation responses. Total number of responses 7.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All respondents agreed with the actions for the objective keeping accommodation • All respondents agreed with the actions for the objective temporary accommodation • All respondents agreed with the actions for the objective sustaining accommodation <p>Further comments include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and training should also include life skills • Corporate parental responsibilities to be included 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger emphasis in Strategy on the Councils parenting responsibilities. • Inclusion of life skills support and training has been added within the Action Plan.