



INFORMATION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTORATE	ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE	5 JUNE 2018	8
FYLDE COAST HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION TRAILBLAZER			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

DCLG Homeless Trailblazer Funding was awarded to the Fylde Coast Housing Authorities in December 2016 to develop innovative approaches to preventing homelessness by carrying out prevention activity earlier and reduce the number of people who face a homelessness crisis in the first place. Fylde were awarded £120,000 (£60,000 2017/18 and £60,000 2018/19). This report provide statistical information on the outputs, outcomes and cost saving analysis from the Trailblazer project within Fylde.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Quarterly returns by local authorities on progress.

LINK TO INFORMATION

Report attached.

WHY IS THIS INFORMATION BEING GIVEN TO THE COMMITTEE?

Update on Year 1, Trailblazer project 2017/18

FURTHER INFORMATION

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Fylde Coast Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer

Fylde BC Statistical information, case studies and good practice –2017/2018

Trailblazer Outputs, outcomes and cost saving.

In December 2016 Fylde BC, working jointly with Blackpool Council and Wyre Council were awarded two year Homeless Trailblazer funding from DCLG. The aim of the funding was to develop innovative approaches to preventing homelessness by carrying out prevention activity earlier and work with a wider group of people and reduce the number of people who face a homelessness crisis in the first place. Fylde were awarded £120,000 (£60,000 2017/18 and £60,000 2018/19).

1. Tenancy Support Worker

A tenancy Support Worker was appointed to support a case load of vulnerable tenants across all client groups who are at high risk of tenancy failure to maximise their independence and minimise the risk of tenancy breakdown within both the social and rented sectors and the homeless. The role delivers a support service and coordinating packages of support for customers with complex needs such as mental health, drug or alcohol misuse issues, offenders and rough sleepers. Since June 2017 the post has dealt with 75 complex needs clients presenting with either drug, alcohol, mental health, history of offending, rough sleeping and failed tenancies.

Additional charitable funding of £9,946 has been sourced to allow tenancies to be established and given a chance to become sustainable to provide match funding to support the Local Authority's Invest to Save fund for Rent in Advance or Rent Bond into the private rented sector, furniture, electrical goods and essential home packages.

COMPLEX NEEDS TENANCY SUPPORT WORKER

2017/18	Referrals made	Outcomes
Qtr 1	Post started 01/06/2017	
Qtr 2	32	Homelessness Prevented 5 Evictions prevented 8 Reduced requirement for temporary accommodation 5 Reduced rough sleeping 2 Clients found employment 2 On-going support 3
Qtr 3	18	Homelessness Prevented 2 Evictions prevented 0 Reduced requirement for temporary accommodation 1 Reduced rough sleeping 3 Clients found employment 0 On-going support 11 No contact 1
Qtr 4	25	Homelessness Prevented 7 Evictions prevented 0 Reduced requirement for temporary accommodation 1 Reduced rough sleeping 3 Clients found employment 0 On-going support 11 No contact 3

2. Housing Options Customer Services Specialist

A post was established within the Customer Services Team to provide a first point of contact, information and advice on Housing Options in respect of Fylde BC Homelessness, Housing Advice and Private Sector services, in a professional and courteous manner. During the last 3 quarters of 2017/18 this post has assisted and signposted 326 clients.

Customer Services Housing Specialist enquiries from 29/06/2018	326 enquiries dealt with. Housing Benefit forms Discretionary Housing Payments MyHomeChoice applications Invest to Save applications Fact finding of initial housing enquiry Signposting to support agencies
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3. Tenancy Training

A Tenancy Training Service was already established within Fylde and the Trailblazer funding has been used to continue this service and develop an e-learning module for working households facing homelessness. A certificate of completion of the course is required before Housing Services will provide funding for either a rent in advance or bond payment to enter a private sector tenancy. During 2017/18, 20 clients have completed this course by attending sit down sessions and a further 9 have completed the e-learning module.

2017/18	Referrals made	Outcomes
Qtr 1	17	Engaging groups – 1 Course complete – 6 Never attended – 7 E learning complete - 3 Engaging e learning – 0
Qtr 2	21	Engaging groups – 13 Course complete – 3 Never attended – 1 Engaging on-line – 3 On-hold - 1
Qtr 3	18	Engaging groups – 3 Course complete – 6 Never attended – 4 E learning complete - 4 Engaging e learning – 1
Qtr 4	16	Engaging groups – 1 Course complete – 5 Never attended – 4 E learning complete - 2 Engaging e learning – 4

4. Smile Mediation

A 12 month trail was undertaken of Smile Mediation Services across Community Safety, Environmental Health Services and Housing Services with a purpose to prevent the causes of homelessness, for example landlord disputes and anti-social behaviour and provide individual mediation where individuals or households are struggling to engage with support services available to understand the barriers preventing engagement. The Community Safety Partnership provided a contribution of £3,000 towards the total costs of £6,000 for 100 units of mediation support. Training was provided for staff using the service to develop their skills in recognising when mediation could provide a solution and referring into the service.

During 17/18 only 2 cases were referred into the service. The main reasons for refusal by clients was an unwillingness to engage with mediation as an approach to resolve conflict. A decision was made to not continue the service into the second year of the Trailblazer project. This service will still be offered routinely when staff feel mediation could be a possible way forward to resolve conflict.

5. Cost savings

As part of the submission for funding to DCLG the Fylde Coast Authorities were asked to estimate the savings per case from additional support available from the Trailblazer funding. The savings per case come from the New Economy unit cost table V.1.4 updated in 2015.

<http://www.neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/unit-cost-database>

Temporary Accommodation costs assume that on average, people accessing temporary accommodation will stay there for 3 months before permanent accommodation is found, in line with current trends in the Fylde Coast. The eviction costs used are for simple, uncomplicated evictions.

Table 1, overleaf provides cost saving information across the Fylde Coast authorities from the new measures brought in and Table 2 cost saving in Fylde as a result of the Homeless Trailblazer funding with an emphasis on prevention, and better services for people with multiple and complex needs including rough sleepers.

No further benefits were included that could not be easily quantified, but it is expected that in reality there would be significant further benefits to Health services and Police costs resulting from homelessness being prevented and individuals supported in more stable accommodation.

The analysis is based on the number of clients and the cost saving from the outcome of the support provided.

Across a range of services provided by Fylde Coast Authorities the cost saving analysis estimates a saving of £570,037 from the additional Trailblazer projects and within Fylde the cost saving estimates £156,964.

Table 1 – Complex Needs cost saving analysis Fylde Coast Authorities

Type of Cost saving	Saving per case	No of cases p.a Collective	Average cases per quarter	No of cases per quarter				Total saving (2 years)	Public service getting saving
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Homelessness prevented	2,724	100	25	11	16	43		190,680	LA Housing
Evictions prevented	752	50	12.5	4	11	4		13,536	RPs /other landlords
Reduced requirement for Temporary Accommodation	1,404	25	6.25	4	20	17		57,564	LA Housing
Reduced rough sleeping	8,605	20	5	0	6	15		180,705	Range of services
Clients find employment	7,972	25	6.25	1	2	13		127,552	DWP
TOTAL	£21,457							£570,037	

Table 2 – Complex Needs cost saving analysis Fylde

Type of Cost saving	Saving per case	No of cases p.a Collective	Average cases per quarter	No of cases per quarter				Total saving (2 years)	Public service getting saving
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Homelessness prevented see Note 1	2,724	14	4		2	5	7	38,136	LA Housing

Evictions prevented See Note 2	752	11	4		8	3	0	8,272	RPs /other landlords
Reduced requirement for Temporary Accommodation See Note 3	1,404	7	2		5	1	1	9,828	LA Housing
Reduced rough sleeping See Note 4	8,605	8	3		2	3	3	68,840	Range of services
Clients find employment See Note 5	7,972	4	2		2	0	2	31,888	DWP
TOTAL	£21,457	44						£156,964	

Notes

1. Homelessness prevented

The complex needs tenancy support officer has enabled us to proactively work with clients facing homelessness. The role has worked alongside the Homelessness and Housing Advice Officer to take on more complex cases of vulnerable households. Barriers have been the need to review the customer journey within Fylde, to introduce a rota system and clear lines of communication between the two roles. Positive stories provided as case studies.

2. Evictions prevented

During Quarter 1, the Tenancy Support Worker worked with complex needs clients to prevent repossession, once the Section 21 notice had been served. The majority of cases were around housing benefit claims that had been suspended. This included applications to DHP and the local authorities' repossession prevention fund. This work load has lessened off and we are in a more proactive rather than reactive stage when dealing with threats of evictions.

3. Reduced requirement for Temporary accommodation

The Tenancy Support Role is increasing the prevention work of the local authority. In addition we have implemented changes in the customer journey in Fylde, by using resources from the Trailblazer to enhance the housing role in Customer Services. This has resulted in us picking up households sooner. This is having a knock on effect of reducing the requirement on temporary accommodation. This was especially evident in Qtr 1, due to the number of evictions prevented and again as with evictions prevented we are finding we are working with households sooner to prevent the crisis situation.

4. Rough Sleeping

The Tenancy Support Service has enabled us to have a dedicated resource to deal with rough sleepers. All reports are responded to and clients engaged with and supported to come and work with us. In terms of support we offer is around assisting them to access a tenancy and support required to sustain that tenancy. We run a tenancy training course and all clients are requested to attend this course as it helps to provide a reference for Landlords where clients may previously lost or not held tenancies. In addition we work jointly with F2F YMCA to run a rent bond scheme where we source private sector tenancies with private landlords and support clients into the tenancies. This is the support worker who responds to all reports of rough sleepers within Fylde and if we have a location we will go out and engage with them.

Once a tenancy is secured we will then ensure furniture and white good are provided with charitable funding or organisations and we also help clients to access the Foodbank which is located in the old council offices on Clifton Drive opposite M&S. <https://fylde.foodbank.org.uk/>. We also operate a No Second Night Out policy for all 'new' rough sleepers which enables them to have emergency temporary accommodation or up to 5 nights to give them time to look for alternative options. This can be extended if clients are actively looking for accommodation and engaging with our services to give more time.

The rough sleeper count in Fylde in Nov 17 was 2, and 1 of these has been found accommodation and 1 we have not been successful with engagement. In addition we have 2 new rough sleepers, one has been secured complex need accommodation on a crisis basis in Lancaster and the other we are sourcing accommodation while they engage with us. We have already resolved their benefit issues. The authority is experiencing street begging, from people claiming to be homeless, but when their circumstances have been checked they are housed and in receipt of benefits.

5. Clients find employment

In Quarter 2, due to Universal Credit Sanctions we supported 2 clients into employment. This has included referring into the appropriate agencies but in addition attending job centre interviews. One client was sanctioned for 526 days and the other client needed to source employment for 16 hours in order to be above the benefit cap. In Quarter 3 we have been working quite extensively with the client provided as the case study to assist them to access employment over 16 hours, but unfortunately they have stopped engaging and will be facing eviction shortly. We will continue to try to engage with this client as the private landlord we have a long standing relationship with and wish to demonstrate that the support is available, if the client will engage. In Qtr 4 we have managed to sustain employment for one client and one client has gone into employment.

COMPLEX NEEDS CASE STUDIES

Complex Needs Tenancy Support Worker	
Presenting Issues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Below the knee amputee • Use of one arm • Dependent child aged 9 • Mental health issues due to disability, suicidal tendencies and history of self-harm • Staying with friends – overcrowded • Lost employment • Section 21 notice and lost tenancy 	
Prevention actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the family to make an application to MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast. • Provided temporary accommodation for the customer and his family while their MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast application was processed. • Awarded the family Priority Banding so that their housing needs could be met quicker. • Applied for funding once the family had been allocated suitable accommodation so that they could pay for the required rent in advance (Awarded) • Applied to Glasspool Charity for funding for flooring for the property as customer uses a wheelchair indoors (Awarded) • Applied to Swallowdale Children's Trust for bedroom furniture for daughter's bedroom (Awarded) • Applied to Lancashire Care and Urgent Needs Scheme for furniture and white goods for the property (Awarded) • Referral made to Fylde Council's Disabled Facilities Grant Scheme for assessment and funding for a free standing bath to be fitted in the property (Pending) 	
Summary/Outcome	
After a significant period of homelessness where the family did not have a place they could call home, they are now in adapted, stable accommodation and happily settled in their new home.	

Complex Needs Tenancy Support Worker
Presenting Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street homeless rough sleeping, suspected victim of modern day slavery. • Mental health and alcohol issues • Estranged from immediate family and son • History of roaming street homeless across the Country to try to get a better life
Prevention actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referred into Tenancy Training • Initiated attendance at substance misuse service • Assisted to source private rented accommodation in Fylde with rent bond and rent in advance • Charitable applications to Vicars Relief and Invest to Save • Successfully negotiated with Landlord to have all admin fees removed from application • UC47 for direct payment completed • Affordability assessed • Ongoing support to Landlord and Tenant
Summary/Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street homelessness prevented • Probably priority • Accommodated into PRS with landlord incentive

Complex Needs Tenancy Support Worker
Presenting Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to reside at family address due to ongoing Police investigations • Personal element of UC sanctioned for 520 days over 2 years • Autistic traits
Prevention actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sourced temporary accommodation • Tenancy Training completed • Assisted into employment including travel to Liverpool for interview • Employment sourced in Blackpool • Sourced private rented accommodation in Blackpool • Affordability assessment completed • Charitable application's completed to Vicars Relief and Invest to Save for rent in advance and rent bond • Successfully negotiated reduced admin fees with Landlord • Ongoing support via Invest to Save checks
Summary/Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threatened with homelessness within 28 days prevented • Accommodated into PRS with landlord incentive • Support into employment