

Session 2: What do you want to see happen next in GM?

[facilitator to read out context section when break out room begins]

Context

In this session, we want to consider what could be included in the [time period] response to COVID, so that 'no one returns to the streets' and we 'build back better' to prevent homelessness and deliver long term systemic change. These should build on what we have seen happen during COVID and the new ways of working just described. COVID will remain a factor for months and probably years, so with that in mind what do you want to see happen to achieve these aims and avoid returning to a system we know is flawed?

You may want to consider ideas within these three themes:

Accommodation

Health

Support

Identify a note taker and someone to **feed back three key points** to the whole group.

We have limited time but want to hear from as many people as possible - there will be an opportunity to add extra outside of this session!

What has been previously identified as needing to be considered to achieve this?

GM's initial COVID response strategy identified the following priority groups:

- **Group A**
 - People who are currently rough sleeping
 - People in shared emergency accommodation where they are not able to maintain safe distancing if needed.
- **Group B** are other 'currently homeless groups', including
 - People in some unsupported temporary accommodation settings,
 - People who are sofa surfing.
- **Group C** are 'future homeless groups', including
 - People who will be evicted from asylum accommodation,
 - People leaving prison
 - People discharged from hospital
 - People who will experience domestic abuse.

The HAN Meeting on Prevention in March 2020 identified the following priorities:

- Move on Accommodation
- Emergency Accommodation
- No Recourse to Public Funds
- Families who are Homeless/At Risk of Homelessness
- People experiencing Multiple Disadvantage and Complex Needs
- Private Rented Sector and Landlords
- Criminal Justice

What has already been said about what needs to be done?

The Homeless Action Network outlined the following areas in its submission to the recent Parliamentary Committee Inquiry:

- Funding to meet the scale of need
- Providers must be able to sustain provision of existing services/support while meeting increased demand
- New sources of accommodation must be considered if we are to source enough to meet the need
- Flexibility of eligibility criteria maintained
- 'Hidden homelessness' considered alongside rough sleeping and visible forms
- Open procurement and commissioning to maximise responsiveness and partnership
- Early connection to prison/hospitals to prevent discharge to the streets
- Engagement is most effective when a variety of charities and providers are resourced to do so in a way that best suits them not narrow pathways
- Ongoing wellbeing, social connection and mental health are vital in preventing people's return to homelessness

The Combined Authority's submission identified the following actions which could be taken:

- Boost Rough Sleeper Initiative to recognise increased role of outreach, advocacy and support into accommodation
- Sufficient funding to ensure there is A Bed Every Night for anyone rough sleeping or at imminent risk of doing so
- Expansion of Housing Benefit budgets and Local Housing Allowance
- Package of humanitarian support for people with No Recourse to Public Funds, which at minimum meets the public health requirements for COVID-19
- Expansion (with funding) for Housing First pilots
- Application of 'Priority Need' and Rapid Re-housing approach used in Scotland
- Extra protections for private tenants and landlords to reduce impact of rent arrears and scrap 'no fault' evictions
- Accelerate delivery of truly affordable housing
- Suspend Right To Buy to prevent further reductions in social housing

[30mins]