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Dyddiad / Date: 5th October 2017

Councillor Mary McGarry
Cardiff County Council
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
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CF10 4UW

Annwyl / Dear Councillor McGarry

CASC, 2017/18 Quarter 1 Performance

Thank you for the opportunity to present our quarter one performance and as always I value the input that this Committee provides.

On the points raised on rough sleepers and the wider homelessness, I completely agree that this is a major challenge for the City. The rapidly increasing rate of street homelessness across the UK represents huge challenges for us all and I have been very impressed by the way our own Council teams and our front line partners have worked together to help individuals to make a life off the streets.

The team do an amazing job and I have seen how challenging the role can be. Between April and August 2017, 74 people were assisted off the streets of Cardiff, however despite this, numbers continue to increase.

Rights to housing for rough sleepers

Under the Housing Act (Wales) 2014, everyone has a right to present for an assessment to the local authority and the right to advice and help to secure accommodation. If they are deemed to be in priority need, we have a duty to provide housing.

Rough sleeping is not a priority group of itself. However, a rough sleeper may have other circumstances which could make them eligible for priority need.

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Where people do not present for a multitude of reasons, the Council's Outreach service has been trained to conduct street based assessments.

Vitally, our provision in the City is not restricted to priority or non-priority need, all who are eligible can access the full range of services and support.

In the City, we operate the following provision with our partner agencies:

- 45 emergency bed spaces
- 216 frontline hostel spaces
- 390 spaces in a range of supported accommodation.
- 189 spaces for young people
- 52 additional emergency spaces provided over the winter months

Alternative Giving Campaign – To provide an alternative method of supporting vulnerable, homeless people.

The work is ongoing with the Cardiff BID in partnership with the Council and the Big Issue to implement the agreed plan for this campaign. We are currently working through the design brief, desired key messages and impact statements. This campaign is aiming to launch October to November period, but this is dependent on a number of other factors. We are looking at having an initial launch now but with multiple on-going launches as developments are made with the campaign, for example, as additional methods of providing payment come online.

We are in discussions with multiple local businesses and have provided a presentation at a recent conference with local partners to seek interest. Part of this campaign is also looking at supporting members of the public who wish to help out. We are creating a volunteer co-ordinator position to bring together the opportunities across the Homeless sector. We have re-designed the Authorities website to ensure the information is in a clear format to advise people on what opportunities there are.

Services available to rough sleepers

There is a range of support and advice services available to people who are rough sleeping, please see attached. In addition, the Authority has funded multiple pilot projects this year:

New Advice & Support service - An expanded service with extended operational hours to provide an additional drop in facility to those not accessing other services.

Female only accommodation project for women at risk of exploitation who are currently inappropriately placed in other frontline provision

Housing First scheme - A pilot project for 5 direct placements into tenancies (Council, RSL and PRS) with wrap around support.

Complex Needs Project - Referrals for rough sleepers into 4 self-contained units with intensive and specialist substance misuse support. Started June 2017.

Move on from Leased Accommodation & Hostels to PRS Accommodation - To improve move on from TA by promoting move on into the Private Rented Sector (PRS).

Enhanced Reconnection Service & EEA Scheme - The aim of the additional funding will be to increase the options to target client presenting homeless with no local connection at the earliest opportunity to prevent rough sleeping.

Oak House – Private Rented Sector Scheme - the Council will provide support with a Development Officer assisting on access to PRS accommodation and Into Work Services helping with developing pathways into training and employment.

Homeless Volunteer and Alternative Giving Campaign Co-ordinator – Will seek to address two important issues, which are very significant and noticeable increase in street begging in Cardiff and a need to provide added comfort for people moving on to independent accommodation.

Strengthening the Youth Homelessness Positive Pathway - To prevent Youth Homelessness by providing a respite and intensive meditation service and to enhance the positive pathway already operating in Cardiff by promoting independent living skills.

Taff Housing – Volunteering Project Preparing Young People for Work - To provide a service to support young people in homeless hostels to access volunteering opportunities and increase their chances of paid employment.

I would welcome the opportunity to come back to this Committee in the New Year at which point we will be able to fully further on the rights to housing for rough sleepers, the impact of our soon to be launched alternative giving campaign, and the evaluation of our winter provisions.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely



Y Cynghorydd / Councillor Councillor Lynda Thorne
Aelod Cabinet dros Dai a Chymunedau
Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities

Cardiff - Rough Sleeper Intervention

Cardiff Council and its Voluntary Sector Partners have developed robust rough sleeping intervention procedures over a number of years to engage with and link people into accommodation and support services.

- The Cardiff Council Outreach Team work from 7am up to Midnight to engage with people sleeping rough or who are at risk of sleeping rough. They work throughout the City providing direct support to assist people to access appropriate services. The service also manages a Rough Sleeper Project that provides direct access into temporary flats where people will not access other homeless provision.
- The Salvation Army Bus Project operates at night (near the National Museum) giving an access point for people to access support and to refer into emergency accommodation where this is identified as a need.
- The Wallich operate a Rough Sleeper Intervention Scheme (Breakfast Run) with HANR Outreach which operates first thing in the morning to engage with people who have slept rough the night before to ensure that no-one who wishes otherwise needs to sleep rough a second night.
- The Huggard manage a Day Centre where homeless people can go and access advice and support, in addition to food. They work directly with service users (to provide advocacy, support, activities etc) and to refer into other services as required. The Huggard Advocate Officer, based in the Huggard Day Centre, works closely with other service providers across Cardiff, assisting clients and covering a full range of issues such as benefits, physical and mental health issues, housing and support.
- Cardiff has 12 night-shelter spaces (managed by The Wallich) and 18 emergency overnight stay beds (managed by Cardiff Council and Huggard) that operate throughout the year.
- Cardiff has implemented a Gateway Scheme that provides a single point of access for single homeless people into accommodation, health and support services at The Council's Housing Options Centre. The scheme ensures that everyone has access to a statutory homeless assessment to establish whether the Local Authority has a duty to re-house (in accordance with legislation). HOWEVER, the scheme will access accommodation for people irrespective of whether there is a statutory duty or not. In addition to this, the assessment process also covers other health and support needs with partner agencies in place at the building to respond accordingly (health services, social services etc).
- Where the authority does not have a statutory duty and a person does not have a local connection to access accommodation, they are referred to our Reconnection Service. This is a partnership between the Council and the Salvation Army. The service is designed to support individuals to reconnect to their home borough, or to achieve another positive accommodation outcome through the service. Individuals who engage with this service can access emergency accommodation.
- Cardiff has a number of Frontline hostels managed by different agencies (Cardiff Council, Huggard, The Wallich, YMCA, Salvation Army and United Welsh

Housing Association) with the Gateway coordinating access into these and the emergency spaces.

- Cardiff operates additional bad weather provision spaces at the Huggard which runs from December through to March every year.
- The outreach services work extremely closely with health (physical and mental) and social services colleagues where issues are identified and their intervention is thought necessary. In addition to this, there are multi-agency procedures in place where specific cases can be discussed and intervention strategies agreed. These procedures allow planning from practitioner level through to senior manager level, escalating as the identified risk to the well-being of an individual increases.
- The City Centre Social Work team is based in the Housing Options Centre providing a Service to vulnerable homeless people and rough sleepers in Cardiff.
- The Homelessness Nurse provides surgeries to homeless vulnerable adults mainly via the new Medical Suite in the council's new Housing Options Centre. Additional Health services are now accessible from this centre, including Sexual Health Screening, Blood Borne Virus Screening, Dentistry and Cardiff Addictions Unit (CAU). Ongoing discussions are taking place to add additional services to those already mentioned above.
- The Street based Youth Outreach team aims to engage with young people between the ages of 11-25 who mix, gather and socialise within the City Centre. The team can offer individuals or groups information and guidance on issues affecting the lives of young people today including; sexual and emotional health, substance and alcohol misuse, education, training and employment, anti social behaviour, youth offending and housing.
- StreetLife is committed to protect children, young people and adults from prostitution, abuse and sexual exploitation and to help change the lives of those involved and affected by sex work; through mentoring, advocacy and access to services. An evening outreach service is delivered within the 'red light' area of Cardiff, providing condoms, health advice and small snacks.
- Homelessness can be a very complex issue. There are people where engagement is much more difficult to achieve for many reasons and who 'choose' to continue to rough sleep as a result (even in these freezing conditions). Our services operate a 'for as long as it takes' philosophy. This means we will carry on trying to provide appropriate intervention, which will include measures to help them stay safe on the streets whilst still trying to encourage them to access suitable accommodation and other support services.