

Falkirk Council

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

Executive Summary

2019/20 – 2023/24

Introduction

“Build a Scotland, where people are treated with fairness, dignity and respect, there is no place for homelessness or rough sleeping”

This is one of the key statements within the Scottish Governments Ending Homelessness Together action plan published in November 2017 which sets out measures for national and local government and the third sector providing frontline services to work together to eradicate rough sleeping, transform temporary accommodation and fundamentally seek to end homelessness.

To achieve this, they have recommended that:

- homelessness should be resolved through effective prevention wherever possible;
- homeless applicants should be rapidly resettled in a permanent housing solution;
- homeless applicants should have access to the widest range of housing options;
- temporary accommodation should only be used as a stop-gap;
- effective support should be available from day one to enable the homeless household to sustain their own tenancy, and
- supported accommodation should be available for that small minority of applicants who are not able to sustain their own tenancy at the present time.

As part of the redress towards homelessness, recommendations were approved by the Scottish Government to establish Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans (RRTP). This has introduced a new planning framework for local authorities and their partners from April 2019 to March 2024 to transition to a rapid rehousing approach. The Scottish Government will release a national funding pot of £50 million over the period to allow Local Authorities to progress their plans in addition to a commitment from authorities Health and Social Care Partnerships and third sector partners to contribute resources to deliver the RRTP.

Rapid rehousing is about rehousing those who have experienced homelessness as quickly as possible, reducing the time and trauma of being in temporary accommodation. Although prevention will be at the heart of Falkirk’s transition plan, we will not be able to prevent all homelessness. Where homelessness cannot be prevented then rapid rehousing approach will be adopted which will mean that

- A settled, permanent housing outcome is achieved as quickly as possible
- That time spend in temporary accommodation is kept to a minimum and multiple moves within this are avoided
- That temporary accommodation meets the need of the household, taking into account their housing and support needs.

For those who have complex and multiple needs beyond housing they will be supported by

- Implementing a Housing First approach
- Providing trauma informed accommodation, where permanent accommodation and Housing First support is not suitable.

Falkirk's Rapid Rehousing Plan

Prevention of homelessness will be at the heart of Falkirk's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.

Why do we need a Rapid Rehousing plan?

Falkirk's RRTP has been developed taking into consideration the Strategic Outcome Local Delivery (SOLD), the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) over the recommended five year cycle.

What are Falkirk's challenges?

- *Shortfall of affordable accommodation.*
Our Housing Need and Demand Assessment within Falkirk's Local Housing Strategy has identified that we need 219 affordable houses each year to meet demand.
- *Increasing time in temporary accommodation*
The length of time taken to rehouse those who are homeless and we have a statutory duty to rehouse with over half our applicants requiring temporary accommodation there is a demand on our temporary accommodation alongside longer periods spent in temporary accommodation with homeless applicants waiting over 6 months to find a housing solution
- *Increase in the number of children in temporary accommodation*
The number of children housed in temporary accommodation has increase from 71 in March 2017 to 87 in March 2018. This increase is much higher than the national average
- *Increase in rough sleeping*
Double the number of homeless applicants reporting sleeping rough over the last 5 years

What does the Rapid Rehousing Plan aim to achieve?

The core Objectives for our action plan are:

1. The prevention of homelessness in the first place

Prevention will be at the heart of our transition plan as well as reducing recurring homelessness and making any experience of homelessness a singular experience.

2. Clear housing support pathways for at risk or who have experienced homelessness

We will ensure that anyone struggling to maintain or moving into their tenancy for the first time are positively assisted to sustain their tenancies.

We will offer people who have experienced long-term repeated homelessness access to whatever support or treatment is needed in their local community through a Housing First model. This support will be delivered in a flexible and person-centred way to help reduce the risk of another period of homelessness.

3. Increase access to settled accommodation

In order to increase access to settled accommodation, we will review the impact of our choice based Allocations Policy on people who are at risk of homelessness and in the most housing need. We will adjust our approach to best meet this demand appropriately and therefore reduce the time that any households needs to spend in temporary accommodation.

4. Fit for the future temporary accommodation

We will continue to ensure that, where temporary accommodation is required, that it is of a suitable standard and that it is used for the shortest time possible, is affordable and that the number of children in temporary accommodation is reduced.

5. Improving the health and wellbeing of those affected by homelessness

We will enable households to feel at home in their new accommodation by addressing basic needs such as furniture and flooring. We will connect people to local services, primary health care, physical and mental health services, education, cultural and leisure activities, training, volunteering and employment opportunities.

Whilst developing our objectives, we will commit to involving those who have experienced homelessness to help identify barriers, and assist in designing future services and approaches to support resettlement and connect people to their new communities.

Resourcing the RRTP

As part of the draft RRTP submission to the Scottish Government, Falkirk Council has indicated that an additional £1.6 million will be required over the next five years to deliver our ambitious plan. This funding will help us establish our Housing First Project and provide services that will address the needs of some of our most vulnerable citizens. Our key areas of focus for funding are detailed in the table below.

RRTP Funding Action	2019/20 - 2023/24
Develop an education information programme in secondary schools	£ 40,000.00
Continue to provide housing advice services within Prisons	£ 88,996.72
Develop a Housing First resettlement model ensuring that all partners (housing, offender services, mental health services and substance misuse services) are committed to, and provide appropriate support for individuals	£ 911,590.22
Establish a Peer Mentoring Service for a Housing First model	£ 309,231.86
Commit to a permanent resource that identifies and addresses the needs of those sleeping rough and at risk of sleeping rough	£ 325,000.00
Total RRTP Funding Requested	£ 1,674,818.80

Additional Services required to deliver the plan will come from existing resources where service are currently being delivered. We have indicated within our plan that we will review and

augment these services to improve the outcomes for our customers particularly in regards to prevention services. We will utilise a confirmed funding stream of £57,000 from the Scottish Government to assist in the development of Falkrik's plan and establish the needs of our customers through extensive consultation.

We will also work over the coming months to ensure a commitment from other agencies and services resources to move our Rapid Rehousing Plan forward.