

**Questions for criminal justice stakeholder group meeting
Monday 3 February 2020**

Introductory questions

Q: What is your current experience of working with people with insecure housing or at risk of homelessness?

Q: What is your experience of working with housing and homelessness services?

Q: What is working in practice now to prevent homelessness?

Identifying people with unstable or insecure housing or at risk of homelessness

Q: How do you (or could you) identify when people have unstable housing or are at risk of homelessness? What steps would you then take?

The briefing suggests a number of points where there may be particular risks to someone's housing and opportunities to prevent homelessness could be identified:

- In the community, including as victims of crime
- Pre-arrest
- Arrest
- In court and during sentencing (including risks for families of offenders)
- Remand
- Approaching release

Q: Are these the right points? What could be done at these points to prevent homelessness or make accommodation more stable?

Working with persons to prevent their homelessness

The following public bodies and organisations in this field may have roles in addressing housing insecurity or loss of accommodation.

- Police Scotland (including community policing role)
- Scottish Courts and Tribunals
- Community Justice services
- Criminal Justice Social Work
- Scottish Prison Service
- Third Sector Organisations

Q: Do you agree with those? Are there other organisations who might be involved?

Q: What are these bodies already doing to prevent people becoming homeless? Are there other things they could be doing?

Q: Are you aware of good practice or interesting examples of work in this area? Are there lessons we can learn from current approaches, e.g. SHORE standards for prison leavers?

Q: The role of Criminal Justice Social Workers has been identified as particularly effective in terms of ability to engage with people and services and “stickiness” of support. What is it about criminal justice social work that makes it so effective? Are there aspects of the statutory framework that support this? Are there lessons for other services (including beyond criminal justice)?

Specific groups

Q: How do we make sure people on short sentences or on community justice disposals do not fall into homelessness?

Q: How can we best support people on remand so that they don't lose their homes?

Q: There may be particular barriers for young people and women. What are these and how might homelessness prevention and support for accommodation be improved for these groups?

Legal duties

The Group have been asked to consider legal duties on a range of public bodies.

Q: Should criminal justice bodies have a requirement to ask about any risk of homelessness?

Q: What do you think of the proposal for a duty that prisons and other criminal justice settings must not discharge people into homelessness? How could this work?

Q: Should the SHORE Standards for prison leavers have a stronger statutory basis?

Q: Should there be stronger requirements for different agencies to collaborate and plan to prevent homelessness for people in contact with criminal justice services?

Q: What data would support this?

Q: What would success look like for new duties to prevent homelessness? How would we measure it? What sort of targets would be appropriate?

Q: What would be needed to implement new duties effectively?

Working with other agencies

Q: Offenders are more likely to experience other forms of severe disadvantage including homelessness and substance abuse. What opportunities are there for shared working to prevent homelessness for people in contact with the criminal justice system?

Q: What do criminal justice bodies need from housing and homelessness services to prevent homelessness? How should this be done to ensure prevention at the earliest stage?

Q: What is the best way to make strategic connections between criminal justice and housing / homelessness services or other organisations, for example, DWP or health and social care?

Q: How best could we promote communication and cooperation between organisations? What are the barriers to this?

Q: What would make the difference to make homelessness prevention more successful and systematic?

Q: Anything else you would like us to consider?