
SCOTTISH BORDERS RAPID REHOUSING TRANSITION PLAN 2019/2020 – 2023/2024

Report by the Service Director – Customer and Communities

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

28 March 2019

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for our initial Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) for the period 2019/20 – 2023/24, which sets out how Scottish Borders Council and its partners will seek to address homelessness in the Scottish Borders by moving to a Rapid Rehousing and Housing First model over the next 5 years.**
- 1.2 The Scottish Government is committed to making “radical changes to end homelessness in Scotland” and sees “Rapid Rehousing by default” as a cornerstone of this commitment.
- 1.3 Rapid Rehousing is a key element of a whole-system approach whereby the responsibility for tackling homelessness lies not just with Local Authorities but with housing providers, Health and Social Care Partnerships and the broad range of organisations that provide support.
- 1.4 The Scottish Government requested that all Local Authorities submit a 5-year RRTP for the period 2019/20 – 2023/24. A ‘first iteration’ RRTP was required to be submitted to the Scottish Government by 31 December 2018 and a finalised RRTP completed and submitted by the end of March 2019, ready for commencing implementation from April 2019.
- 1.5 Development of the Scottish Borders RRTP has been led by the Borders Homelessness and Health Strategic Partnership and has included consultation with key partners including the Borders Housing Alliance and the Health and Social Care Integration Strategic Planning Group. As required, a ‘first iteration’ RRTP was submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2018’ and further work has since been done to complete our RRTP for submission to the Scottish Government this month.
- 1.6 The Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan partners believe we can make significant progress towards achieving our vision for Rapid Rehousing from within existing resources. However, as described in the Resource Plan of the RRTP (Appendix 1) (section on pages 17 – 20), it is clear that without securing additional resources from, for example, the Scottish Government’s ‘Ending Homelessness Together Fund’, it will not be possible to achieve Rapid Rehousing in full.

- 1.7 The Scottish Borders Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/2020 – 2023/2024, along with the corresponding Action Plan and Equality Impact Assessment, are attached as Appendices 1,2 and 3 respectively.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Scottish Borders Council is asked to:-

- (a) Approve the Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24 and related Action Plan (Appendices 1 and 2).**
- (b) Note that delivery of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan in full will require securing significant additional resources from, for example, the Scottish Government's Ending Homelessness Together Fund.**

3 SCOTTISH BORDERS RAPID REHOUSING TRANSITION PLAN 2019/20 – 2023/24

- 3.1 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) was set up by Scottish Government in October 2017 to develop solutions to alleviate homelessness and rough sleeping across Scotland. HARSAG produced 4 sets of recommendations, all of which the Scottish Government accepted in principle, and these informed the joint COSLA/Scottish Government publication of 'Ending Homelessness Together – A High Level Action Plan, in November 2018. The Scottish Government has created a £50 million 'Ending Homelessness Together' fund to support this commitment. A cornerstone of the recommendations is a transition to a 'Rapid Re-housing', incorporating 'Housing First', approach to tackling homelessness.
- 3.2 The vision from the recommendations is of a whole-system approach whereby prevention of homelessness is paramount and the responsibility lies not just with Local Authorities but with housing providers, Health and Social Care Partnerships and the broad range of organisations that provide support.
- 3.3 When homelessness cannot be prevented, Rapid Rehousing should be the default response. Rapid Rehousing means:
- (a) A settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible;
 - (b) Time spent in any form of temporary accommodation reduced to a minimum, with the fewer transitions the better;
 - (c) When temporary accommodation is needed, the optimum type is mainstream, furnished and integrated within a community.
- 3.4 And for people with multiple complex support needs beyond housing:
- (a) Housing First is the first response for people with complex needs and facing multiple disadvantages;
 - (b) Housing First provides general settled housing as a first response for people with complex needs;
 - (c) It recognises a safe and secure home as the best base for recovery and offers personalised, open-ended, flexible support for people to end their experience of homelessness and address wider needs;
 - (d) The model aligns the provision of housing and support, offers choice and control to tenants and works to the principles of harm reduction.
- 3.5 The Scottish Government has given Local Authorities and their partners a 5 year timescale for transformation to "Rapid Rehousing by default" and requested that all Local Authorities submit a 5-year RRTP for the period 2019/20 – 2023/24. A 'first iteration' RRTP was required to be submitted to the Scottish Government by 31 December 2018 and a finalised RRTP completed and submitted by the end of March 2019, ready for commencing implementation from April 2019.

- 3.6 The Scottish Government has indicated that it will use the RRTPs to assess progress towards the 5-year vision of Rapid Rehousing and inform the allocation of resources (eg from the 'Ending Homelessness Together Fund'). It is expected that RRTPs will be jointly developed, implemented and resourced by Local Authorities, Health & Social Care Partnerships, RSLs, and other relevant partners (although led by Local Authorities). RRTPs should sit within the Community Planning Partners wider strategic planning framework of the Local Outcome Improvement Framework and the Local Housing Strategy.
- 3.7 Development of the Scottish Borders RRTP has been led by the Borders Homelessness and Health Strategic Partnership and has included consultation with key partners, including the Borders Housing Alliance and the Health and Social Care Integration Strategic Planning Group.
- 3.8 The Scottish Borders RRTP vision for Rapid Rehousing in the Scottish Borders is:
- (a) Homelessness is prevented wherever possible but where homelessness cannot be prevented a settled, mainstream housing outcome is secured as quickly as possible.
 - (b) When temporary accommodation is needed it will be mainstream, furnished accommodation within a community, and time spent in it will be minimal, with as few transitions as possible.
 - (c) Housing First will be the first response for people with complex needs and facing multiple disadvantages. We will work in collaboration with Health and Social Care Partnership, and other relevant services, to ensure tenancies are supported and sustained.
- 3.9 As required, a 'first iteration' RRTP was submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2018. Since December, further development work has been carried out on our RRTP in order to prepare it for submission to the Scottish Government this month and implementation from April.
- 3.10 Resourcing the Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is critical to its successful delivery. All the partners in the development of the Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan believe it offers opportunities to improve joint working and the quality of service for people who are threatened with homelessness or who become homeless, and that we can make significant progress towards achieving our vision for Rapid Rehousing from within existing resources. However, it is clear that without securing additional resources from, for example, the Scottish Government's 'Ending Homelessness Together Fund', it will not be possible to achieve Rapid Rehousing in full.
- 3.11 However, as described in the Resource Plan (section on pages 17 – 20 of the RRTP), it is clear that without securing additional resources from, for example, the Scottish Government's 'Ending Homelessness Together Fund', it will not be possible to achieve Rapid Rehousing in full. Scottish Government has awarded Scottish Borders £35,000 from the 'Ending Homelessness Together Fund' to assist with the development of the RRTP. However, Scottish Government is not expected to confirm the value of any further awards from the 'Ending Homelessness Together Fund' until the second quarter of 2019/20.

- 3.12 This first Scottish Borders RRTP is the start of our discussion about how to proceed with Rapid Rehousing in Scottish Borders. We will be reviewing, updating and amending the Plan on an ongoing basis in order to ensure that it serves as a focused and practical tool to help us to achieve our vision for Rapid Rehousing in the Scottish Borders.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

The Scottish Borders RRTP has been costed as per the Scottish Government guidance. Significant elements of the RRTP can be achieved within the partners' existing resources. However, delivery of the RRTP in full will require securing significant additional resources from, for example, the Scottish Government's Ending Homelessness Together Fund.

4.2 Risk and Mitigations

There is a risk that the Scottish Government will not provide the funding requested by our RRTP either in part or in full. This would lead to us being unable to provide the level of service identified to provide a transition to Rapid Rehousing for homeless households in the Scottish Borders within the 5 year target timescales.

4.3 Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on this proposal and it is anticipated that there are no adverse equality implications.

4.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no significant impacts on the economy, community or environment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

4.5 Carbon Management

There are no significant effects on carbon emissions arising from the proposals contained in this report.

4.6 Rural Proofing

Rural proofing applies to all areas of Scottish Borders classified by Scottish Government as 'remote rural' or 'accessible rural'. This applies to all areas of Scottish Borders out with the towns of Hawick, Galashiels/Tweedbank, Peebles, Selkirk, Eyemouth, Jedburgh and Kelso. The RRTP has been rural proofed and it is anticipated there will be no adverse impact on rural areas from the RRTP.

4.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Service Director Strategy and Policy, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR, and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the final report.
- 5.2 The RRTP was developed by Borders Homelessness and Health Strategic Partnership and included consultation with key partners, including the Borders Housing Alliance and the Health and Social Care Integration Strategic Planning Group.

Approved by

Jenni Craig **Signature**
Service Director – Customer and Communities

Author(s)

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Background Papers:

Homeless and Rough Sleeping Action Group Recommendations (June 2018):

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-action-group-final-report/>

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans: Guidance for Local Authorities and Partners (August 2018): http://www.ghn.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Rapid_Rehousing_Guidance1.1.pdf

Ending Homelessness and Rough Sleeping: Action Plan (November 2018):

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/ending-homelessness-together-high-level-action-plan/>

Previous Minute Reference: N/A

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24

Appendix 2 – Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24 – Action Plan

Appendix 3 – Scottish Borders Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24 – Stage 1 Equality Impact Assessment

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. David Kemp can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA.