

Rough Sleeping Conference

11 July 2018

What was talked about?

Welcome by Cllr Woodward

Cllr Woodward discussed the aims of the conference:

- Sharing experiences.
- Raising awareness of challenges and what we can learn from them.
- Address how the residents in Fareham Borough can best work together with agencies already working with rough sleepers to attend to needs.

1. Paul Doran, Managing Director of Fareham Housing

Paul explained the role of Fareham Housing and then went into many of the reasons why people become rough sleepers. The options for engagement with rough sleepers and the potential outcomes of non-engagement were also discussed. Examples of engagement with rough sleepers in Fareham were also highlighted.

Q. Margaret Chappell, St Peter and St Paul Church – what are the numbers in Fareham of homeless?

A. 11 people last year, six 3 years ago, 8-12 core people in Fareham.

2. Police Inspector Mark Hull

Discussed the work of the Partnership Action Group (PAG) to minimise the risk to rough sleepers and to members of the public. Also discussed the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) which is the process through which the Police, Probation and Prison Services work together and in particular releases to Dixon House.

There are 20-25 homeless people in Fareham currently and only 2 of those are not using controlled substances. If people are in possession of Class A drugs, arrests can be made.

The people currently begging are not being aggressive in Fareham centre. The police perspective is that money will go towards a new hit, and not towards money for food for their stomach.

We do have to deal with threat, harm and risk. We have limited resources.

It doesn't help when members of the public take photos of them on social media. They can cause harm, and should not be posted online.

We would prefer the public to donate towards a trained agency directly rather than to the rough sleeper who may pay for their next fix.

Rest assured with limited resources I have, I am trying to address the issue.

Q: Andy Kennedy, Y Services, we have agency workers who work with the police. We are concerned about young people hanging around rough sleepers who are taking drugs.

A: Their safety is important. We have a Park Gate team who feed into care plans around the vulnerable children and young people that are caught up in these instances. Our role is to minimise the risks.

Q: Cllr Cartwright is there an update on what's happening in the Gillies?

A: We are also looking at various police actions as there are a lot of drug dealing down there and it is a public amenity space. Our officers are delegated a few of the rough sleepers each and they are responsible for regularly checking up on them. We also need information from members of the public.

3. Georgina Shane, Two Saints

Discussed their work with people aged 18 and upwards. We have room for 20 people in our Fareham shelter. We get 6-7 referrals per day. Rough sleepers' needs are complex and there is often deep rooted trauma. We have the Prevention and Early Intervention Resettlement Service (PEIRS) and work with 220 people in the community across Fareham and Gosport who have debts and face being homeless. We also move people into supported housing, local authority tenancies.

The issues we have are limited resources, the impact of welfare changes and the stigma attached to people being re-housed. Our future aims are to engage with individuals with very complex issues. They are less likely to come in and see us because they are getting food from members of the public. It would be better that people came back to their beds, but in this heat they will remain outside.

Q: The Venerable Gavin Collins Archdeacon of the Meon, is there enough capacity at the moment?

A: Referrals are daily, not everyone needs 24 hour care and we can sign-post to other services.

Q: In an ideal world, would you have a second shelter?

A: It is complicated. We focus on working with partners to find suitable accommodation.

Q: Cllr Keeble, are you approaching other charities for funding or help?

A: Absolutely, we do have specialised support from other services, for example to support post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Q: Cllr Trott – What would be the single most helpful thing to help you?

A: We want more money and because it's not there, we need to work collectively together with our partners and we need to promote it to the area. We also need to look at other options, for example, housing for those with complex needs.

Inspector Hull, The hostel is robust, but a lot of people can't cope without getting a fix.

Georgina Shane, Two Saints, We do need to provide specialist care to help stop the stigma and end things. We can't force people to stay overnight.

4. Inclusion presentation (NHS)

Kelly Palombo and Amanda Winetroube, our agency oversees the Fareham Hub (covers Fareham to Havant). We have 39 service users actively engaging at the Fareham Hub. We link to Two Saints, and 101 Hostel. Catch 22 work closely with us. Issues are that we can't force engagement with our services.

BREAK

5. Fareham and Gosport Adult Mental Health (Hampshire County Council).

Katja Vinnurva-Shepherd and Emma Turnbull, Referrals can be made to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). If there is an added need for mental health support, this can also be referred through GPs to our department.

Joint working is encouraged with other agencies. Our nurses should be linking up and have an interest in joint-up multi-agency working. Often works outside of normal hours. 150-180 service users across Havant to Winchester, including Fareham. We can't force people to engage, recovery model – people have got to be willing to come forward. It's important we all link to support people. Emma Turnbull additionally chairs a local youth group, and reviews care plans. There is a lot of joint working and communications around the homelessness.

No questions from the floor.

6. Other agencies and groups to talk about their work.

Sue Harrower, SDAS (Southern Domestic Abuse Service) – We are working in the Fareham area, with adults, children and women. If you want to know about the referral pathway, we have a process. We have refuges, and work with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence.

Kerry Snuggs, Acts of Kindness (Mayor's Charity) – Multi-agency approach that offers community support whilst people await for provision. Kerry who runs the group is also a trained police officer. Referral and demand basis. We encourage working with Two Saints. We ask for homeless people to come in and work with us. We use social media to ask for donations. We have 4.9k followers on Facebook. We are looking to add services to help with loneliness.

Paula Wright, HOME - HOME is a voluntary organisation. We provide a hot meal each night and we offer supportive communication. We are a friend, we are different to the agencies. We are forming relationships, we are not trained. We encourage them to go to services.

Andy Brown, Partnership Manager, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Universal credit will roll out in November in Fareham/Gosport. It will change the way housing benefit is managed and the way it works may come as a shock to service users. We work closely with Hampshire County Council and strategic substance misuse group. Part of the conversation is to support those going through rehab.

Questions from the floor for the DWP

Q: Cllr Cartwright - How do you work with service users already?

A: We are starting to work with support workers who offer guidance on managed payments. Housing will be paid to the Landlord direct, instead of people's accounts where normally they would use that money for the fix or addiction.

Q: Cllr Woodward, Is it true there is often a 12-day delay with housing rent? If there is a delay in payment this means that people can face eviction.

A: Average time to get payment in Hampshire is between 10-12 days. It is on a monthly roll over normally. It's still early days for Hampshire to use Universal Credit.

Q: Pay and benefits to the homeless when they don't have an address – how does that work?

A: That should not be a barrier to claiming benefit, it's those sort of myths we want to break down.

Erika Paradise, P3 Charity, Probation has now been privatised and we work with the community rehabilitation unit. We are based at the Civic Offices with our probation colleagues. It's been interesting and I think we have expertise to work with complex clients. Communication is vital, we cannot work in isolation. We have to work in partnership. There is no quick fix, it would be great to have sustainable accommodation and more housing. It's not just the box of providing a house, it's also putting in the support for the individual. They don't necessarily know how to live in a community, and it's about supporting that transition.

Steve Dent, Friends of the Homeless - Fareham & Gosport Basics Bank We give practical support to the homeless. We also work with 'HOME' volunteers to provide a chat. We try to engage with the homeless and signpost to other services that are available. We already work with 40-50 referral agencies.

Hayley Hamlett, One Community– 16 different agencies use our shop at Fareham Shopping Centre. We also work with Two Saints, we encourage people to give and get the correct support. We are happy to provide a location where people can donate in a controlled way.

7. Question Time Session

Q: Erica Paradise, P3 – What is Fareham Housing doing in response to the Homelessness Prevention Act?

A: Paul Doran, Fareham Housing, we are aware of it and are fulfilling it, but it is in the early days of working out its implications.

Q: Andy Kennedy, Y-Services, is there a strategy in place to audit the young people, my concerns are around the young people often on the tip of the iceberg without much support?

A: Katya Vinnurva-Shepherd, Fareham and Gosport Adult Mental Health, Follow up is required with vulnerable people who are known to HCC. The Early Help Hub (EHH) work with families to encourage the nature -nurture type of support, depends on the level of risk and care what category of care support is provided.

Q: Cllr Price, Does it cause confusion if there are so many approaches from outreach workers? Is there a place for joint-up thinking, for people to have one person to deal with? Is the current situation overwhelming for the individuals?

A: Georgina Shane, Two Saints, We work out who will be lead the contact and which agency to sign post them with. The individual service user is aware of each professional's work. If one agency is not talking to the other agencies involved, then there are going to be problems.

A: Inspector Hull, A lot of individuals have a mobile number of the police officer working with them and will call if they need to.

Q: Cllr Bryant, Dixon House, I feel is working extremely well, and there are caring staff to help people. I feel there are very awkward people there. Asked Inspector his thoughts.

A: Yes it does work well, we work with some people there and not everyone in there reports to us. There are people there that mix with hard-core drug dealers. Some people that end up there are from out of county, and are sometimes more of a concern because we are on a catch up with probation if they are from other counties.

Q: Narinder Bains, Community Safety Manager, Fareham Borough Council, Just to reassure that we are the body of that iceberg, and we are trying to provide a prevention. We work with a range of services to deliver the Troubled Families programme, so that hopefully in the future we are supporting young people and families to steer them away from vulnerability and risk.

Q: What else is on offer from the Council?

A: Paul Doran, Fareham Housing, We work with a range of housing options, including B&B's. We are constantly looking for solutions. What we currently have on offer isn't the total solution. So, we are looking to support initiatives such as Housing First.

Q: If there is particularly cold weather coming up, will it be counter-productive or not to assist rough sleepers?

A: Inspector Hull, the worry is when we see adverts online through social media, for example shelter offered for the night. This person may be vulnerable, they may be extremely violent, they may be unsafe to be around. So it is in the interest to keep society safe by working with the agencies who can best support with specialised trained support. We need to get agencies together to work as a single forum.

We don't want to help people to live on the streets, we want them to live off the streets.

Q: Sarah Smith, Vivid Homes, there are landlords in the area that take advantage of situations, how do you deal with that?

A: Paul Doran, Fareham Housing, we are trying to work with Landlords in the area to co-ordinate consistent messages to the public.

A: Inspector Hull, we are trying to safeguard and keep safe members of the public. There are a lot of people here that get invited to attend Partnership Action by Hampshire Police and they don't attend.

Q: Who is looking after the people that fall out of normal services, i.e. complex mental health needs?

A: Emma Turnbull, Fareham and Gosport Adult Mental Health, The Richmond Fellowship gives specialised support for people with mental health needs. We currently have two supported accommodation properties in Fareham.

Q: I am impressed with people who are supporting issues, I don't mean to drop a grenade, but how can we support the community when they are victims of inappropriate public behaviour and littering of drug paraphernalia?

A: Inspector Hull, Police will do surveillance. If people make it comfortable for people to stay on the streets then they will stay there.

Cllr Woodward, Final Messages

I believe we have general agreement that people should not sustain people on the streets by donating money, food, drink, clothing, sleeping bags, tents, etc to them directly. We need to get them to engage with the right organisations with trained individuals who understand their care and support needs. We need to make it clear how to deal with vulnerable people. We can offer guidance on where to channel the desire to help. Help and support is available to rough sleepers to help them get off the streets. One Community has offered a location for people to make donations of money and other items.

Fareham Street Aid is a way forward by creating a single forum with consistent messages is being launched. The Partnership Action group can also hopefully expand to include the organisations here today.

We need to all be working together and consistently advising members of the public to help these vulnerable people off the streets not help them to live on the streets.

Keep in touch on the go

'Like' us on [Facebook](#)

'Follow us on [Twitter](#)