

Shelter

Delivering on Homelessness

2006

2012 - What Councils need to do

John Mills

Housing Manager, Fife Council

Introduction

- 2012 – Key questions
- 2012 – Key Challenges for Councils
 - Leadership
 - Strategy
 - Policy
 - Resources
 - Partnership
- Meeting the 2012 requirements
 - Planning what needs to be done
 - Getting Buy-in
 - Measuring Progress

2012

The Key Questions

- Will homelessness get worse?
- Will homeless applications increase?
- Will we need to increase B&B usage?
- Will we have more resources to deal with homelessness?
- Will we have more houses to let?
- Will all houses for let go to the homeless?
- Will we have the required supporting people grant to succeed in sustaining tenants in tenancies?

Yes!

No!

2012 - Implications for Housing Strategy

- **Homelessness Strategy (2003-08)**
 - Currently at mid-term point
 - 2012 Statement confirms need for review
- **Local Housing Strategy**
 - Review of Housing Supply
 - Review of Supporting People Strategy
 - Review of Social Inclusion Theme to ensure correct focus on homelessness & sustainability

2012 - Key areas of challenge for Local Authorities

- **Policy**

- **Allocations & Homelessness**
- **Executive will produce new guidance on operation of allocations policy**
- **Emphasis on need to balance homelessness and general needs allocations**
- **Pressure on services from increased applications and need for temporary accommodation**

2012 - Key areas of challenge for Local Authorities

- **Resources (financial and human)**
 - Local Government working to Central Government efficiency targets - “doing more with less” a reality now
 - Uncertainty on continuation of Homeless Outcome Agreements (SE Grant)
 - Cuts in Supporting People Grant 2005/08
 - Less staff

2012 - Key areas of challenge for Local Authorities

- **Partnership**

- **Doing less directly as a Local Authority Housing Service**

- buying in services to plug gaps
- outsourcing services

- **Working with other Council Services, RSL's, Voluntary Sector, & Private Sector**

- **Need to re-focus on section 5 Referrals**

Meeting the 2012 requirements

- **Planning what needs to be done**
 - **2005 - As part of the Consultation on the Ministerial statement Councils submitted projections of housing supply, homeless applications, temporary accommodation requirements**
 - **Some Councils have completed detailed analyses using consultants**
 - **2006 – we need to start detailed planning with Partners on what needs to be done**
 - **Effective local leadership role**

Meeting the 2012 requirements

- **Each Council will need to chart own path to 2012**
- **Some have further to travel than others**
 - % on non-priority need decisions vary
 - % of allocations to homeless households vary (9-54% in 2004/05)
- **Local Flexibility requested by COSLA**
 - Councils need to reduce non-priority need decisions by 50% by 2009
 - Varying approaches across Scotland?

Meeting the 2012 requirements

- **What do Councils need to do?**

- **Housing supply**

- Maximising new build for rent, shared equity, low cost ownership options
- Councils contend that significant new investment is required – 10,000 new homes for rent each year

- **Prevention of homelessness**

- We don't know enough of what works
- **Need for all Council Services and Partners to invest in reconfiguring services to prevent homelessness**
- **Welcome for idea of demonstration projects**

Meeting the 2012 requirements

- **What do Councils need to do?**

- **Temporary accommodation**

- Increase stock
- Minimise reliance on B&B
- Increase reliance on private sector
- Reduce length of stays overall

- **Permanent Accommodation**

- Most contentious for members, communities and housing applicants
- Some Councils are already tackling the “balance” issue
- Need for acceptance that homeless applicants need to receive equality of treatment with housing list
- Focus on percentages ?

Meeting the 2012 requirements

Getting Buy-in

- Members
- Corporate
- Communities

Meeting the 2012 requirements

Measuring progress – Fife Draft Milestones

| Main Challenges | 2004/05 Position | 2009 Position | 2012 Position |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| % on non-priority need | 58 | 29 | 0 |
| Homeless applications | 3631 | 4,800 | 6,000 |
| Temporary Acc. | 600 | 800 | 1100 |
| Permanent Acc. | 24 | 45 | 63 |
| % prevention of homeless | Not known | 15 | 25 |

Meeting the 2012 requirements

Final Comments

- **Councils need to take strong local lead in making progress to 2012**
- **Councils are working in difficult financial environment**
- **Significant housing supply gaps across Scotland**
- **Getting Buy-in from all will be a major challenge**