

Health Improvement Partnership Board**23rd January 2018****Update Report on the Trailblazer Programme****Purpose / Recommendation**

The report is for information only.

Background

The Trailblazer is an ambitious programme, working with local areas and across government, to fundamentally reform the response to homelessness. Prevention is at the heart of this approach. Homelessness teams across the country are facing new challenges and so new responses are needed and a network of areas across England have been established who wanted to go further and faster with reform and develop innovative new approaches to preventing homelessness. Trailblazer areas will carry out prevention activity at the earliest point and with a wider group of people – not just those who are owed the statutory duty or in priority need.

To facilitate early intervention and solutions to prevent households from becoming homeless, MHCLG made £20m Trailblazer funding available for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Oxford City Council led on the preparation and submission of a successful Oxfordshire bid for Trailblazer funding. The bid was supported by other Oxfordshire Local Authorities, and partners to the bid also included Oxfordshire County Council, Health, Probation, Children's Trust Board, and a wider provider network of Voluntary and Community Agencies and local GP practice. The bid for £790,000 Trailblazer funding was approved for the period 2017-2019.

Please see attached a 1-page summary of the Trailblazer Bid.

The aim is for this project to be flexible and deliver dynamic responses to meet changing needs. With a rolling programme of data capture, monitoring of outcomes, and evaluation of activities, this project should deliver real learning and opportunities to share best practice with MHCLG and wider housing and homelessness service providers.

Progress Update**Governance and Accountability**

Despite some initial delay to the start of the programme, due to recruitment, the Governance and Accountability structures of the programme are now established with appropriate representation on the Steering Group and relationships established with central government. The first set of case-level data will be submitted in February 2018.

Appreciative Enquiry

The Trailblazer is based on the principles of an appreciative enquiry which is a strengths-based approach, giving value to front-line expertise, people with lived experience and building on the good practice that already exists within the system.

A range of workshops have been run with front-line staff, people with lived experience and a range of professionals across Health, hospitals, mental health hospitals, midwives, Bullingdon and Spring Hill Prisons, JCP Plus, Think Families and Care leavers' teams.

Date and Evaluation

Data benchmarks for the project have been established and a short hierarchy of evidence produced. An analysis has also been carried out of the qualitative information gathered during the appreciative enquiry and analysed for key themes.

Whilst the Trailblazer team does not carry case work, its current methodology of working is based on "value adding" and we are also beginning to gather stories or case studies to illustrate how a Trailblazer intervention changes the direction of a case, leading to a different outcome.

A specification for a third-party learning partner has been finalised and is currently being considered by a number of parties to ensure that time is spent learning and understanding with a view of re-designing the system to ensure that the Programme leaves a legacy.

Commissioning

a) Early Prevention Service

Over the last 3 months the team has taken time to think, build relationships, build trust, establish a coalition of the willing, as well as evaluate the qualitative and quantitative information being gathered related to systems. The team have taken advice and spoken to national experts to refine and think through the direction of travel for the programme and are keen to embrace the principles of a "study – experiment – re-design" approach to the programme and to the commissioning.

The concept of **embedded housing workers** has been repeatedly iterated by professionals and people with lived experience as something that they would like to see happening. We are fortunate that Mel Armstrong, the Homeless Champions Co-ordinator has considerable experience as a front-line options worker and this has enabled us to accelerate the roll out of this concept over the last months by placing one embedded workers at the John Radcliffe hospital and another with the CRC team based at Bullingdon and Spring Hill Prison (funded via another work stream but soon to be aligned with Trailblazer) with the following purpose:-

- Establish housing expertise within the discharge and resettlement teams who can provide "added value" to cases by providing advice on the suite of housing and prevention options.
- Skill up these teams and at the same time build relationships
- Test whether this approach works, and has value
- Collect observations and data in terms of hospital and prison systems work and interacts with housing and what we can learn
- Help us think through what might be a sensible cascading system to enable the earliest possible indications of homelessness as well as the development of a hospital discharge policy
- Provide accessible on-line information

This will now become the basis of the Trailblazer's commissioning approach going forward – a number of embedded housing experts based within the systemic knots that we are keen to unravel. We need to have greater presence across all the County's hospitals including the Horton, and mental health hospitals, we need to

expand our criminal justice work across the National Probation Service and in order to target the third stream of the Trailblazer's work we are recommending basing an embedded worker with Think Families.

b) Resilience Services

Commissioning of resilience services is still in development with work undertaken on a mapping exercise. Early indicators point to the need to commission navigators of services rather than any particular additional services. The team is looking at the correlation with social prescribing work before starting to design a specification that will also relate to the prevention service contract.

Champions Network

The team has drafted the approach to developing a network of homeless champions, based on a tiered approach similar to the safeguarding approach providing basic, generalist and specialist training. The specialist training for Tier 1 will form the champions' network and will link also to the duty to refer element of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

Budgetary implications

None

Equalities implications

None

Communications

N/A

Key Dates

Contact:

Nerys Parry, System Change Manager – Trailblazer Programme. 01865 529181