

## Prevention Review Group Stakeholder consultation

### Legal duties on housing and homelessness bodies Monday 2 December 2019

There is already much good practice going on to prevent homelessness across Scotland. However, confusion over how the Housing Options approach sits with legal duties, and growing pressure on temporary accommodation and homelessness services, means that there is an urgent need to reinforce homelessness prevention with clear and strengthened duties for local authorities and other public bodies.

This piece of work is focused on the following types of homelessness prevention:

- “targeted prevention” for those at high risk (for example people in high risk groups, or people facing high risk transitions such as leaving a prison or other institution)
- “crisis prevention” for those at imminent risk of homelessness – often considered to be within the next two months

It is not addressing “universal” prevention work, such as poverty prevention, measures to tackle housing supply or the welfare safety net, nor “emergency” or “recovery” prevention which are being taken forward in other ways (e.g. Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans).

The key questions the Prevention Review Group would welcome stakeholder put on are as follows.

#### Part 1: Duties for housing and homelessness bodies

- What is working in practice now to prevent homelessness?
- What would make the difference to make homelessness prevention more successful and systematic?
- What would success look like for new duties to prevent homelessness? How would we measure it? What sort of targets would be appropriate?
- What legal changes are needed to help achieve greater success in homelessness prevention?
- What can we learn from the prevention legal duties in England and Wales?
- What level of prescription should there be in the legislation? For example, should there be specified interventions that must or should be taken in order to prevent homelessness?
- Is there a role for increased cross-local authority working? Could the Housing Options Hubs or other structures be used as a starting point?

## Part 2: Role of other public bodies in prevention homelessness

- What do housing and homelessness bodies need from other public bodies to prevent homelessness? How should this be done to ensure prevention at the earliest stage?
- Which bodies would you need to work with to prevent homelessness? Do particular groups/routes into homelessness need input from specific bodies? For example
  - young people
  - people experiencing domestic abuse
  - women
  - people leaving institutions
  - people with complex needs
  - families with children
- What would you need each of these bodies to do? What kind of legal duty/ies should back this up?
- What benefits would accrue to those other public bodies by preventing homelessness that we could draw to their attention?