

Date: 21 August 2014

Agenda item number: 5

Title: Housing priority update

Summary: Glasgow Homelessness Network (GNH) has facilitated two surveys about people's experiences of poverty and received over 750 responses. Issues around 'housing and the local area' featured very prominently - either poor quality housing being a defining condition of poverty, or better housing seen as offering people a route out of poverty.

At the April meeting, the Panel agreed that further scoping on this issue was required and that 'housing and the local area' may become a seventh priority in the Action Plan.

As a consequence, GHN undertook some preliminary discussions with the housing sector and others. A report of their work is attached.

This report is for: Decision.

Recommendation: The Panel agrees that:

- (i) Consultations take place more broadly with the RSL network via the Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Association to take its view on areas of collaboration;
- (ii) the principle of 'people-first' place-making and regeneration is the right way forward for Glasgow.
- (iii) It will consider an action plan which incorporates local people involvement in local housing matters at its November meeting.



for tackling poverty in Glasgow



Report on Roundtable Discussion: Poverty, Housing and Local Places August 2014

1. Introduction

1.1 A roundtable discussion on poverty, housing and local places was held on 23 July 2014. It was attended by representatives from the Poverty Leadership Panel and from four key Housing Associations (Registered Social Landlords) - Cassiltoun, GHA, Southside and Wellhouse.

1.2 This is a report to the Poverty Leadership Panel on the outcomes of that discussion, with some suggested next steps.

2. Why a Roundtable Discussion?

2.1 The geography of affluence and poverty across Glasgow is well understood but is also resistant to change. While there are successful regeneration examples, poverty remains concentrated and tends to affect the same groups of people in the same places.

2.2 We facilitated two surveys about people's experiences of poverty and received 751 responses. Issues around *housing and the local area* featured very prominently - either poor quality housing being a defining condition of poverty, or better housing seen as offering people a route out of poverty.

2.3 As the work of the Poverty Leadership Panel has not yet had a specific focus on housing and the local area, the purpose of this initial roundtable discussion was:

- To enable the Poverty Leadership Panel to hear directly from social housing providers about investment in housing and other initiatives to tackle poverty locally;
- To create an opportunity for social housing providers to advise the Panel on priority areas;
- To invite social housing providers to participate in the Panel's Poverty Plan.

2.4 The broad question underpinning the roundtable discussion was:

What should the Poverty Leadership Panel prioritise in order to address the role of housing and the local area in supporting people's routes out of poverty?

3. The Roundtable Discussion

3.1 The roundtable participants agreed the following principle as a starting point:

The space we live in affects our health, happiness and well-being. There is also a strong link between the quality of where we live and our social and economic circumstances.

3.2 The opening discussion session focused on work that housing associations are already doing across the city that supports the aims of the Panel. Housing providers described that tackling poverty is fundamental to their work. In addition to providing high quality affordable housing, action on poverty is further achieved through a broad range of activity, including:

- The provision of welfare benefits advice
- Budgeting advice
- Focus on tenancy sustainment (e.g. access to furniture)
- Bursary schemes
- Employability programmes
- Modern Apprenticeship programmes
- Advocacy and mentoring programmes
- Community participation projects

3.3 The second discussion focused on the issue of place-based poverty and we considered the approach of Jan Gehl, Danish architect and international consultant on 'people first' place-making. Successful regeneration, he argues, is that you start with the people, then the spaces that they occupy and then the buildings that they inhabit:

"First life, then spaces, then buildings – the other way around never works"

3.4 Roundtable participants discussed whether this is broadly the right approach for Glasgow and the extent to which Glasgow already adopts this sequence when regenerating places that experience poverty across Glasgow.

3.5 The key advice from RSLs is that tackling place-based poverty requires a significant emphasis on local knowledge, local contexts and local people. However, it was their experience that some initiatives to tackle poverty and regenerate places don't effectively harness local expertise, experience and wisdom, nor follow the 'people first' sequence of regeneration.

4. Considerations for Poverty Leadership Panel

4.1 RSLs contribute significantly to tackling the individual and household poverty experienced by their tenants and members of their wider community. A key role for the Panel might be in harnessing the expertise of the housing sector to collectively progress shared aims:

- Should we first consult more broadly with the RSL network via the Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations (GWSF), to take their view on areas of collaboration?
- Can we endorse the Gehl principle of 'people-first' place-making and regeneration as the right way forward for Glasgow? By doing so, we can propose workplans that adopt this principle.