



From: The Minister

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Claire Sugden MLA
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By email: claire.sugden@mla.niassembly.gov.uk

Dear Ms Sugden

AQW 5468/22-27 - INFORMATION TO BE PLACED IN THE ASSEMBLY LIBRARY

Due to the volume of detail required to answer AQW 5468/22-27, the information has been placed in the Assembly Library.

**Gordon Lyons MLA
Minister for Communities**



ANNEX A to AQW 5468/22-27

Due to the volume of detail required to answer AQW 5468/22-27, tabled by Claire Sugden MLA, the information attached within this Annex was placed in the Assembly Library.

The Housing Executive have informed me that their approach to addressing homelessness is guided by the Ending Homelessness Together, Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 and Homeless to Home, Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation. Both documents are guided by the development of annual action plans which are guided and implemented with key partners across the homelessness sector.

The Homelessness Strategy Year 2 Action Plan can be found here <https://www.nihe.gov.uk/getattachment/f82e2297-a070-4aad-ad8e-bdb6fc9668c9/HS-10-09-23-JG-Homelessness-Strategy-2022-27-Year-2-Action-Plan-Accessible.pdf> and contains 42 actions that support the Housing Executive's delivery of the following objectives:

- Prioritise homelessness prevention;
- Address homelessness by providing settled, appropriate accommodation and support;
- Support customers to transition from homelessness into settled accommodation.

The Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation Year 2 Action Plan can be found here <https://www.nihe.gov.uk/getattachment/e95603ed-bad9-47ca-90a2-1aef23659665/Year-2-Actions-Strategic-Action-Plan-for-Temporary-Accommodation-2022-27.pdf> and contains 25 actions that support the Housing Executive's delivery of the following objectives:

- Minimised need for temporary accommodation
- Customers receive appropriate accommodation and support at the point of need
- Customers moving on from temporary accommodation sustain their tenancies
- A sustainable supply of good quality, affordable temporary accommodation which is safe, warm and well managed.

While both of the above documents support the delivery of the Housing Executive's strategic approach to addressing homelessness, and both documents support a range of actions for those with addiction issues, the Housing Executive also supports the delivery of the DfC led Inter-departmental Homelessness Action Plan (IDHAP). While the Homelessness Strategy and Strategic Action Plan for Temporary



Accommodation seek to address accommodation based issues in respect of homelessness the IDHAP seeks to address non-accommodation issues such as supporting those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and have addiction issues.

In addition to the strategic direction noted above, the Housing (NI) Order 1988 (as amended) identifies the Northern Ireland Housing Executive as the agency tasked with responding to homelessness.

The Order places a statutory duty on the Housing Executive to provide interim and/or permanent accommodation for certain homeless households, dependent upon investigations and assessment of their circumstances. In order to be “accepted” as statutorily homeless, a household must meet the four tests of:

- Eligibility
- Homelessness
- Priority Need
- Intentionality

Any household that meets these four tests will be accepted as a ‘Full Duty Applicant’ (FDA) and will be owed a full housing duty. The full housing duty includes ensuring that accommodation is made available for the household as well as the provision of temporary accommodation where necessary and assistance with the protection of the household’s belongings. In 2022/23 the Housing Executive’s response to homelessness included funding of £55.6m, with this funding supporting a range of agencies across the voluntary sector and providing a total of 10,253 placements in temporary accommodation for households to whom the NIHE owe a statutory duty with or without addiction issues.

Additionally, the Supporting People (SP) Programme, which is administered by the Housing Executive on behalf of my department, provides grant funding to independent organisations for the provision of housing support services, to enable vulnerable people to live as independently as possible in the community.

The SP programme in Northern Ireland has an annual budget of £72.8million (2023/24) and is focused on four thematic areas; working with people who are experiencing homelessness, young people, older people and people with a disability (including mental health and learning disabilities). Over 19,000 people are supported through the SP Programme to live independently each year, across 15 primary client groups.

Provision within the SP homeless thematic area, which has an annual SP budget of £28.7million (2023/24), is detailed below. This includes; short-term accommodation-based support for those in housing need, short-term floating support to maintain



people's independence in their own home and support on an ongoing peripatetic basis for service users with more enduring or complex needs. Staff within these services are responsible for undertaking key work, engaging with clients through needs assessment, risk assessment and support planning in their provision of housing related support. This includes support to; develop domestic/life skills, develop social skills/behaviour management, find other accommodation, establish social contacts and activities, manage finance and benefit claims, set up and maintain home/tenancy, maintain the safety and security of the dwelling and gain access to other services to support a particular element of need.

	Accommodation Based Support		Floating Support		Peripatetic Support	
	Services	Units	Services	Units	Services	Units
Homeless Families with Support Needs	25	280	8	667	-	-
Offenders or People at Risk of Offending	4	68	2	229	-	-
People with Alcohol Problems	11	237	3	119	-	-
Single Homeless Crisis Accommodation	2	31	-	-	-	-
Single Homeless with Support Needs	30	342	7	487	1	55
Women at Risk Domestic Violence	14	139	9	1,003	-	-
People with Drug Problems	-	-	1	30	-	-
Travellers	-	-	1	31	-	-
Total	<u>86</u>	<u>1097</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>2566</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>55</u>

The Housing Executive's SP Strategic Plan and Covid Recovery Plan 2022-2025 considers the existing needs and emerging demands on housing support services. The SP programme will continue to play a pivotal role in assisting the Housing Executive to achieve its vision of ending homelessness and we will work together with our partners to ensure that those most in need receive the support required.