



# Leicester City Council

## Housing Related Support Substance misuse consultation

### Frequently asked questions

#### Information about proposed change

#### Context and Background

Having somewhere to live that is safe and comfortable can help people recover from drug and alcohol problems. Housing related support offers people the opportunity to tackle their use of drugs or alcohol by providing them with support in their own home, or in residential accommodation.

The support that people might be offered could be:

- Help with somewhere to live
- Help with managing your money and benefits
- Help with health issues like looking after medication
- Help to do practical tasks like cooking or cleaning

If people can get the right support they will hopefully find it easier to carry on with any treatment they may be having for alcohol or drug use. In Leicester, 30-40% of people who use drug and alcohol treatment services say they need extra support with housing.

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Leicester City Council knows that it is important to offer a housing related support service that helps people recovering from drink and drug problems.

### **1) What housing related support is available now?**

Leicester City Council currently has two contracts for housing related support one with Midland Heart who provides support within Heathfield House and the other with Action Homeless who provide floating support for six people.

- Heathfield House (set up in April 2008) is a dedicated 24-bed facility for people with drug problems that require supported accommodation for up to 2 years. This contract was due to end on 31<sup>st</sup> march 2014 however it has been extended in to 2014/15 to ensure that there is seamless transition to any new provision.

### **2) What changes do the council want to make?**

We would like to offer a service that offers floating **support** and somewhere to live (approximately 10 bed spaces).

#### **Floating support**

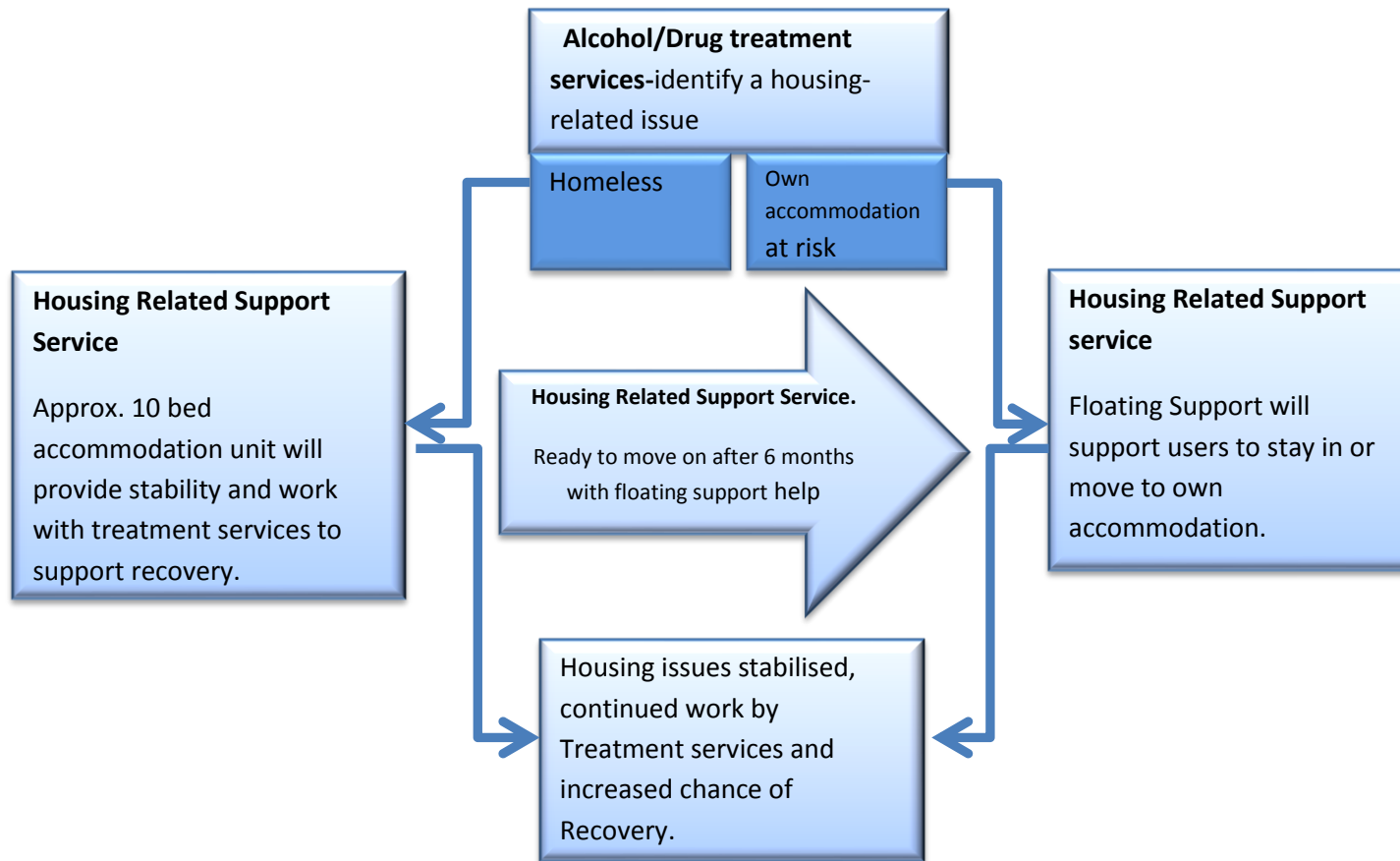
This type of support would be offered to people who are taking part in a treatment programme and living within the community. The floating support would help these people to live on their own and help them to get or keep their own rental tenancy.

#### **Somewhere to live**

This part of the service will provide a supportive, safe, community place where people can learn skills like cooking, cleaning and looking after their money so they can live on their own. They can also start looking for somewhere to live in the future. We propose that people would be able to stay for up to six months. Once they have left we can then offer another 6-9 months of floating support.

We want to make sure that the new housing related support service works with the Leicester City community based drug and alcohol services. Referrals for housing related support would only be accepted if the people were receiving ongoing treatment from these services. An overview of how they will operate in the new proposal is outlined in figure 1 below:

Fig 1 The New Housing Related Support Model for adults with drug/alcohol issues.



**3) Why does the council think that change is necessary?**

As the current contracts for housing related support are ending in 2014 we have the chance to look at how we can improve the service.

We are keeping the following things in mind:

- The new community substance misuse services opened in July 2013. They are focusing on recovery through Leicester Recovery Partnership and criminal justice drug and alcohol services. We need to make sure that housing related support links properly with these services.
- We know that the way housing related support is provided now is not the only way to help people. Floating support is used in other areas of the country.
- The government has cut the money available to provide housing related support so we need to make sure we can provide a good service for less money.
- Changes to housing benefit mean that people may not be getting as much money as they were before.

**4) What is the proposed timetable for this to happen?**

It is proposed that the consultation period will run from 17th February to 31st March inclusive and then the decisions regarding the new model will be agreed in the Council.

**5) What other options have the council thought about?**

We have thought about a number of options which included the following:

1. Continue, with current provision – We cannot do this as the current contract will expire in March 2015 and we do not have enough money in our budget to carry on providing the service as it is.
2. 100% Floating Support Service – this would mean that the service would not offer somewhere to live as part of the service.
3. A mixture of both floating support and providing somewhere to live.

The mixture of floating support and providing somewhere to live is the preferred option. This consultation exercise will help us get more information so we can develop this model for housing related support.

**6) What support will the new project offer?**

Housing related support aims to help people to live independently. It also helps people recover from drink or drug problems by providing them with the right support in their own home.

The service will provide people with somewhere to live. This place will be supportive, safe and based in the community. The residents will be able to develop skills that will help them live on their own like cooking, cleaning and looking after their money. They can also start looking for somewhere safe and affordable to live in the future.

They will also develop confidence and self-esteem. They can look into training, education and employment opportunities which will help them to get more involved with their local community.

The project would be linked into the current community based specialist drug and alcohol services and staff will support service users to deal with their alcohol or drug issues. This proposal will support the work done in these services for adults with housing-related needs.

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**7) What will happen to the current housing related support services if this proposal goes ahead?**

For residents at Heathfield House – we know that some residents will be ready to move on at the time of the change. For anybody still needing housing related support there will be work done looking at the support that can be offered to them in time for new services to start.

We want to make sure that residents are given full support to cope with any change that will affect them.

**8) Who might be affected by the changes in services?**

All people currently using housing related support, in particular people living at Heathfield House when the current service stops. We will work with the providers at Heathfield House and the landlords NCHA to find somewhere else that is suitable for these residents to live and to make sure the move goes smoothly.

**9) How you can tell us what you think**

We are running a consultation from 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2013 – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014..

In this time we will contact everyone living at Heathfield House to ask their views and concerns about the proposal.

People can also make comments about the proposal by writing to us, over the phone, or by e-mail - contact details are on the last page of this document.

People can also go the council's consultation web pages at [leicester.gov.uk/asconsultations](http://leicester.gov.uk/asconsultations)

**10) How can I keep up to date with what is happening?**

We will be arranging meetings with those directly affected by the projects as well as the service providers to make sure we are sharing the information correctly.

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We will be arranging focus groups so you can find out more detail about how we think the service could be run in the future.

### **11) What happens next?**

When the consultation has finished we will produce a report of the findings. A decision will then be made by the assistant city mayor or the executive.

We will write to people who are affected and tell them the results of the consultation. You will also be able to find the results on the city council's website.

It is important that service users know support is available throughout this process. We want to make sure that any worries or concerns they may have are fully understood and addressed.

We will work with service users through every stage of the process to make sure that any change is as smooth as possible and that views and concerns have been listened to.

### **12) Who can I contact?**

If after this, you would like to talk to us, or comment on what is proposed, please contact the consultation team:

By post:

Substance Misuse Commissioning  
Adult Social Care  
Leicester City Council  
A1, New Walk Centre  
Leicester, LE1 6ZG

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By email: [drugs@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:drugs@leicester.gov.uk)

By phone: 0116 454 4157    (8am to 4pm Monday to Friday).

Website: [leicester.gov.uk/asconsultations](http://leicester.gov.uk/asconsultations)