

## **Alliance exCHANGE, Thursday 19 August – Flash Report**

### **Introduction**

On Thursday 19 August, the Glasgow Alliance to End Homelessness hosted the first Alliance exCHANGE event; a fast paced series of drop-in sessions open to service providers, people with experience of homelessness and other relevant organisations. Facilitated by Alliance Director, Mark Kelvin and supported by the Alliance Leadership Team, over 60 people joined us on the day to find out more about who the Alliance are, what our upcoming priorities will be, and feedback on our process for awarding and delivering services.

Below are some insights, themes and reflections from discussions on the day.

### **‘The scale of the solution represents the scale of the challenge’**

#### **Open communication**

There was a general consensus that change is needed, but open communication is vital to this. Attendees asked for:

- Ongoing communication in a range of different formats
- Transparency about how decisions are made

#### **‘We identify people by their living status – we need to see the person first’**

- Support for people should be based on the principle that everyone is tenancy ready, and it’s about the support that the person needs to help them maintain it.
- People are having to tell their story over and over again, retraumatising them. It’s important that any change manages that uncertainty for the individual (e.g. for example, people not knowing who the service provider would be, or if their support worker will change etc.)
- Whatever part of an outreach service that a person enters into, it needs to be as joined up and seamless as possible.
- ‘People should be able to live in the community they want to live in.’

## Support for Frontline Staff

There were ongoing concerns regarding the wellbeing and retention of frontline staff across the sector, with some concerned it will reach crisis point.

- When speaking about homelessness we need to not only acknowledge the trauma of those we support, but the vicarious trauma experienced by some frontline staff.
- Call for the November Alliance exCHANGE to be focused on frontline staff wellbeing.
- The Alliance shared plans to establish a Frontline Forum that would be a protected space for frontline staff to come together, capture what's working, discuss challenges, and share learning. More details on this will be shared shortly.
- 'We need to work to change how people see/understand what staff do, to really value them and help them gain confidence in themselves not 'just a support worker'

## Innovation and a movement for change

- Recognition that 'more of the same won't do'
- Participants valued the Alliance's focus on making decisions in-line with what's 'Best for People'
- Recognition that the pandemic altered the way services were delivered and how people were able to support – what can we learn from this?
- There's lot of things happening across the wider landscape that we can look at, explore what's working well, and how it could be adapted for the homelessness context.
- Conscious that our work is part of a bigger structure – 'there's no point in having a culture change in homelessness if it's not happening across the whole system'.
- The Alliance shared our ambition to help nurture conducive relationships, and to support the workforce in the difficult journey ahead. We will welcome honest and robust discussions.

## Contact

For a copy of the slide deck from the session, or regarding any further questions please email [hello@glasgowalliance.org](mailto:hello@glasgowalliance.org)