

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MINISTERIAL WORKING GROUP ON PREVENTING AND TACKLING HOMELESSNESS</b></p>
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**4pm - 5pm Tuesday 6 May 2014  
Committee Room 20, House of Commons**

**Attendees**

Kris Hopkins MP, Minister for Housing, DCLG (Chairman)  
Jeremy Wright MP, Minister for Prisons and Rehabilitation (MoJ)  
Edward Timpson MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families (DfE)  
Jane Ellison MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Public Health (DH)  
Lord David Freud, Minister for Welfare Reform (DWP)  
Baroness Stowell, Minister for Faith and Communities, DCLG  
Nick Hurd, Minister for Civil Society (Cabinet Office)

**Officials**

Caroline Pusey, MoD  
Stephen Hall, DWP  
Eoin Parker, BIS  
Christian Papaleontiou, HO  
Dora Addei, MoJ  
Martin Gibbs, DH  
Paul Downie, DCLG  
Katie Hewett, DCLG  
Anita Edwards DCLG

**Guests**

**Agenda Item 2 only**

Howard Sinclair, St Mungo's Broadway  
Alexia Murphy, St Mungo's Broadway  
Beatrice Orchard, St Mungo's Broadway

**Apologies**

Anna Soubry MP, Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans  
Norman Baker MP, Home Office  
Matthew Hancock MP, Minister of State for Skills (BIS)  
Nicky Morgan, Minister for Women, Government Equalities Office

**Agenda item one: Welcome and Introductions**

1.1 The Chairman opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

**Agenda item two: St Mungo's- Broadway *Rebuilding Shattered Lives* Report**

- 1.2 The Chairman welcomed Howard Sinclair, Alexia Murphy and Beatrice Orchard (St Mungo's-Broadway) to the meeting to present their research into women's homelessness, *Rebuilding Shattered Lives*.
- 1.3 St Mungo's-Broadway drew Ministers' attention to the statistics on women's homelessness and the recommendations for government departments in their report.

- 1.4 St Mungo's-Broadway highlighted the fact that homeless women often face significant and complex problems and have a history of trauma, domestic violence, addiction and children in care. There are opportunities to identify those at risk and address these problems before they escalate into homelessness.
- 1.5 Ministers asked whether there were any examples of good projects which offer a holistic approach for young people to help them avoid homelessness.
- 1.6 St Mungo's-Broadway spoke about their Chrysalis Project, a south London women only project where women are brought in as a crisis measure and can stay for up to two years until they are ready to move on to supported accommodation and eventually to semi-permanent housing. The project was unique in terms of the structured housing and support pathway for women exiting prostitution. Women are supported to reduce substance misuse, improve their mental health and live safer, more independent lives. The project has also helped some women avoid having their children taken into care.
- 1.7 Ministers asked what else was essential to help women who experience homelessness. St Mungo's-Broadway recommended support services that recognise the individual's past and take a gender sensitive approach. St Mungo's-Broadway also said they would like to work with DCLG's Troubled Families team to help young women stay with their families and ensure that their specific needs are met.
- 1.8 Ministers asked how far it was possible to identify in advance the factors that led to homelessness among women, and how far it would be possible to provide evidence about effective interventions. St Mungo's- Broadway said that more work was needed to understand the contributing factors, and more could be done to share data so that girls and women at risk could be more easily identified at an early stage.
- 1.9 The Chairman thanked St Mungo's-Broadway for their research and offered a full response once he has had the opportunity to discuss the recommendations further with other government departments.

**Action: DCLG to work with Departments to co-ordinate a response to the recommendations**

### **Agenda item three: Single Homelessness**

- 1.10 The Chairman explained that too often vulnerable people fall through the net and end up on the streets because opportunities to prevent treatable problems (such as addiction, a mental health problem or offending) from escalating into homelessness are missed. It is also hugely costly. This group of people place a significant burden on our health services and our criminal justice system.
- 1.11 People can and do recover from homelessness and lead meaningful lives, working and contributing to society. We need to help them into stable

accommodation, help them tackle their underlying problems, and help to get them into work.

1.12 The Chairman asked for Departments' support to develop a programme which would draw on the expertise of the voluntary sector and use both payment by results and social investment to ensure that we achieve the best outcomes for vulnerable people.

1.13 Officials would be commissioned to work together to scope and develop a proposal for consideration at the next Working Group meeting in September. Caution would be needed to avoid double payment and overlap with existing payment by results schemes operating in a similar policy space.

1.14 The Cabinet Office would be keen to be involved in developing the proposal.

**Action: KH to meet with Nick Hurd to discuss the proposal further.**

**Action: All departments to work together to develop and scope proposals for the single homelessness programme.**

**Action: All departments to nominate an official to join the scoping group.**

**Action: DCLG to arrange a Working Group meeting in September to consider proposals.**

#### **Agenda item four: STRIVE pre-employment and skills pilot update**

1.15 The Chairman said that the pilot is now up and running and feedback will be provided at the next meeting.

#### **Agenda item five: Policy update and actions from the last meeting**

1.16 The Chairman said that the only outstanding action was for DfE to consider collecting data on children in B&B accommodation.

**Action: DCLG and DfE to take this up outside of the meeting**

#### **Agenda item six: Homelessness Statistics**

1.17 The Chairman explained that latest statistics show that homelessness acceptances had declined outside of London but had risen in London. The Homelessness Statistics update paper provided a summary of the latest statistics.