



Somerset Health and Wellbeing

APPENDIX B

Proposal for a

Somerset Homelessness Reduction Board

Homelessness Reduction Board

A proposal from the Somerset Strategic Housing Group (SSHG), Public Health and Homelessness Managers Group (HMG)

National policy drivers and evidence

- MHCLG - Tackling Homelessness Together: A consultation on structures that support partnership working and accountability in homelessness (February 2019)
- LGA - Making homelessness strategies happen: ensuring accountability and deliverability (2019)
- St Mungos - <https://www.mungos.org/publication/tackling-homelessness-together-st-mungos-response-to-the-consultation/>

Homelessness Reduction Board

Local drivers and evidence

- Local need and demand for enhanced partnership working around rough sleeping and complex homelessness was summarised and discussed in the recent report to the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board (16th July 2020)
 - <https://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/documents/b3606/Rough%20Sleepers%20and%20Complex%20Homeless%20Report%2016th-Jul-2020%2010.00%20Somerset%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Board.pdf?T=9>

Rationale

- To eliminate rough sleeping and homelessness by looking at the issue systematically. To deliver strategic coordination to the development and delivery of services
- To centralise all key strategic decisions associated with rough sleeping and homelessness prevention (health, care, justice, employment)
- To involve all key strategic stakeholders to ensure that rough sleeping and homelessness is not just seen as a housing issue. Action to prevent homelessness needs to be taken in every aspect of society
- To tackle structural issues that impede the effectiveness of local services. To take a strategic view to design out homelessness - creating services and pathways that make it close to impossible to be rendered homeless

Purpose

- The HRB is responsible for tackling rough sleeping and homelessness across Somerset where local partners work together to end homelessness
- The HRB will agree the local strategic direction and vision required in order to support the prevention of homelessness and to tackle rough sleeping, particularly where issues require an integrated response across a range of organisations

Objectives

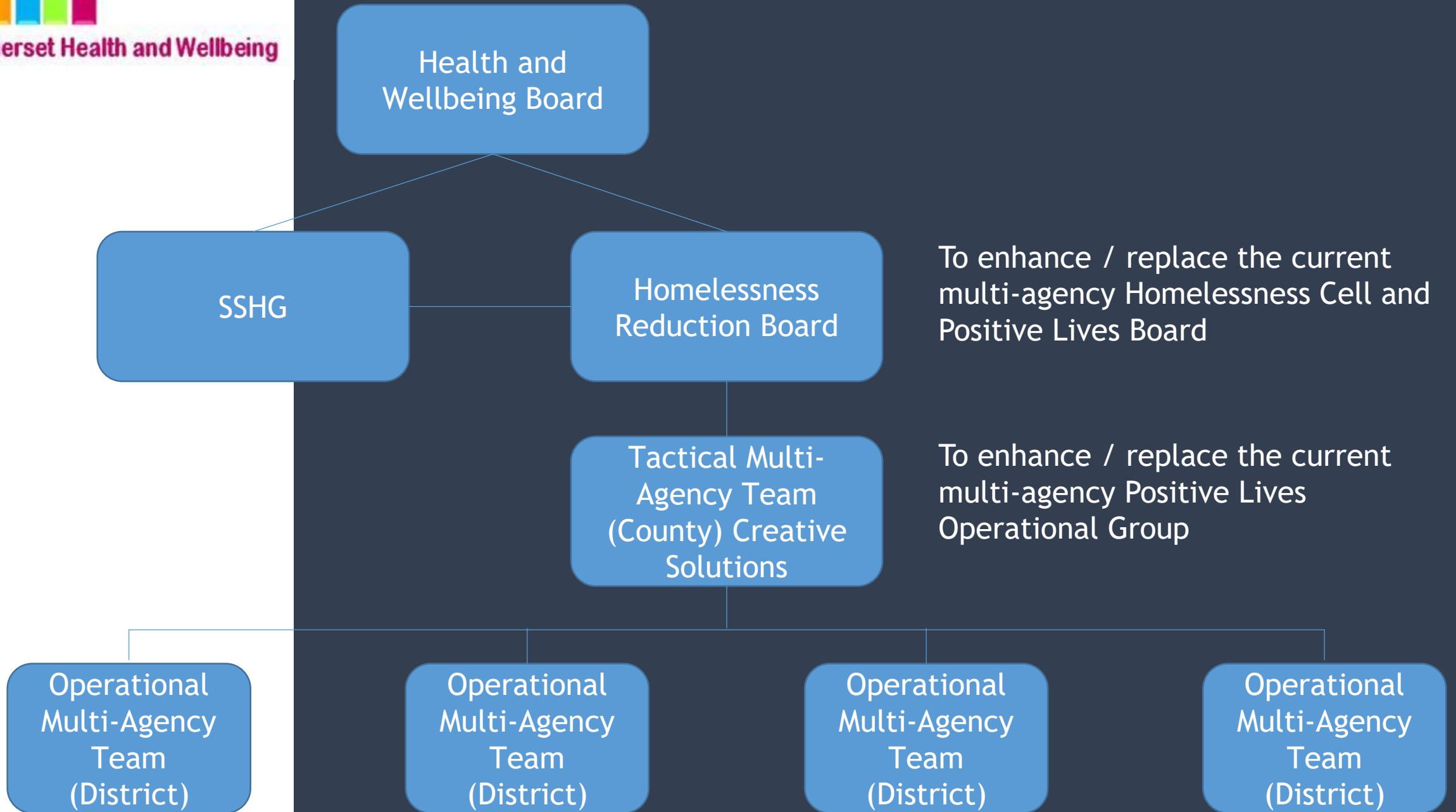
- Key elements to include:
- To ensure a clear and strategic collaborative approach is in place
- To agree the strategic vision and monitor progress
- To ensure that robust strategic links are in place to other strategies and boards
- To support and promote the coproduction of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, and provide the forum to implement and monitor the supporting action plan
- To use data, evidence, and user / lived experience (the client voice) to identify the homelessness challenges across the county
- To focus on preventative interventions
- To focus on person-centred / strength based interventions
- Ensure multi-agency operational forums are in place to help resolve complex cases (and safeguarding concerns)
- To identify and coordinate across all partners the effective use of funding
- To ensure appropriate sub-groups, task and finish groups and forums are in place

Membership

- Members of the Board could include the local authorities (district council housing / county council social services - elected members and / or senior officers), those responsible for other relevant statutory services (public health, CCG, NHS, probation, police), and voluntary sector organisations working with those who are homeless (or at risk of becoming homeless) or rough sleeping
- Board members would need to be sufficiently senior and influential in their own organisations to be able to take strategic decisions at the Board on their organisations behalf (including budget / commissioning decisions) and ensure that actions they commit to on behalf of their organisations are delivered
- Elected members could have positions on the Board to gain traction and galvanise action, or the Board could be purely lead by services
- It could be beneficial to have the voice of someone with lived experience of homelessness (an expert by experience) although this could be built in within other elements of the governance structure

Governance

- The following slide shows a simplified diagrammatic view of the proposed governance arrangements for the Homelessness Reduction Board
- The HRB will report directly to the Health and wellbeing Board
- Beneath the HRB are links to tactical and operational groups (many of which currently exist)
- It will be for the HRB to establish its relationship with tactical and operational delivery and the structure that sits beneath it
- *Note: the proposal before the HWB relates only to the HRB. It does not seek to influence any current or proposed structure that sits beneath it*



Accountability

- Reports annually (annual report) to the HWB
- Joint responsibility (alongside the district councils) for delivering the statutory Somerset Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy*
- Subject to Scrutiny

* District councils have the statutory responsibility to prepare a homelessness and rough sleeper strategy.

Resources

- No budget (initially - this may come later dependent on future commissioning arrangements)
- Time to attend meetings
- Cultural commitment to health, care and housing integration
- Will need to inform / help coordinate all strategic commissioning arrangements through a systems wide perspective, including:
 - P2I
 - Step Together
 - Positive Lives
- Will need to oversee any work relating to strategic integrated commissioning relevant to rough sleeping and complex homelessness
- Explore opportunities to apply in partnership for external funding to develop homelessness services
- There is a need to identify administrative support (each partner on a rotating annual basis?)

Other considerations

- It will be for the HRB to define its Terms of Reference
- A commitment to the coproduction of structures that sit beneath the HRB
- Meets as a minimum every two months initially
- Risks
 - Legislative changes
 - Unitary proposals (although the HRB is desirable in this context)

Consultation and Engagement

- The following have been contacted prior to the HWBB meeting (17th September 2020) and invited to comment:
 - Homelessness Cell
 - HWB Executive
 - SSHG / relevant housing PFH
 - Positive Lives Strategic Group, including providers such as Arc, Elim, Nelson Trust, YMCA etc
 - Safer Somerset Partnership
 - SSPC
 - Commissioners of support services
 - Homefinder Monitoring Board
 - Homelessness Managers Group
 - MHCLG