Homelessness – COVID recovery

Communities Scrutiny Commission 10 – 12:30
Thursday 15th October

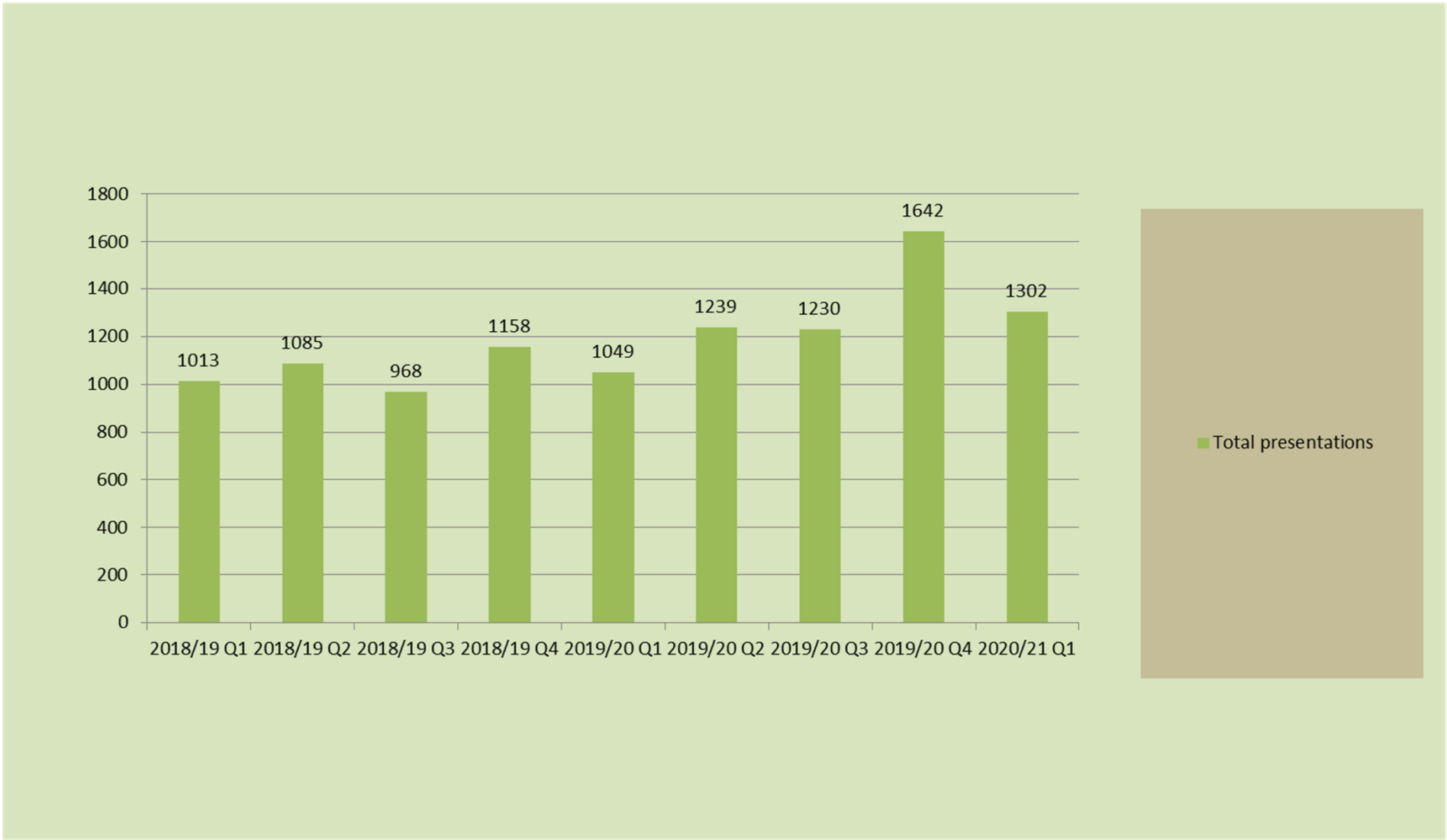
Content

- Homelessness pre-covid
- Update on rough sleeping and move on from hotels
- One City move on project and Change for Good
- Preparing for an increase in homelessness
- Next Steps MHCLG fund
- Funding
- What do we need?

Bristol's Homelessness Figures Pre-Covid

- 100 people rough sleeping on any night with 1200 people new to the streets in a year
- 140 people in night shelters (eg St Annes House);
- 600 households in Temporary Accommodation;
- 1100+ people in hostels and other supported housing;
- 13,000 households on waiting lists
- Social housing lettings down to 1800 from 3000 in a decade
- 6 or 7 affordable Private rented properties out of 1700 on right move

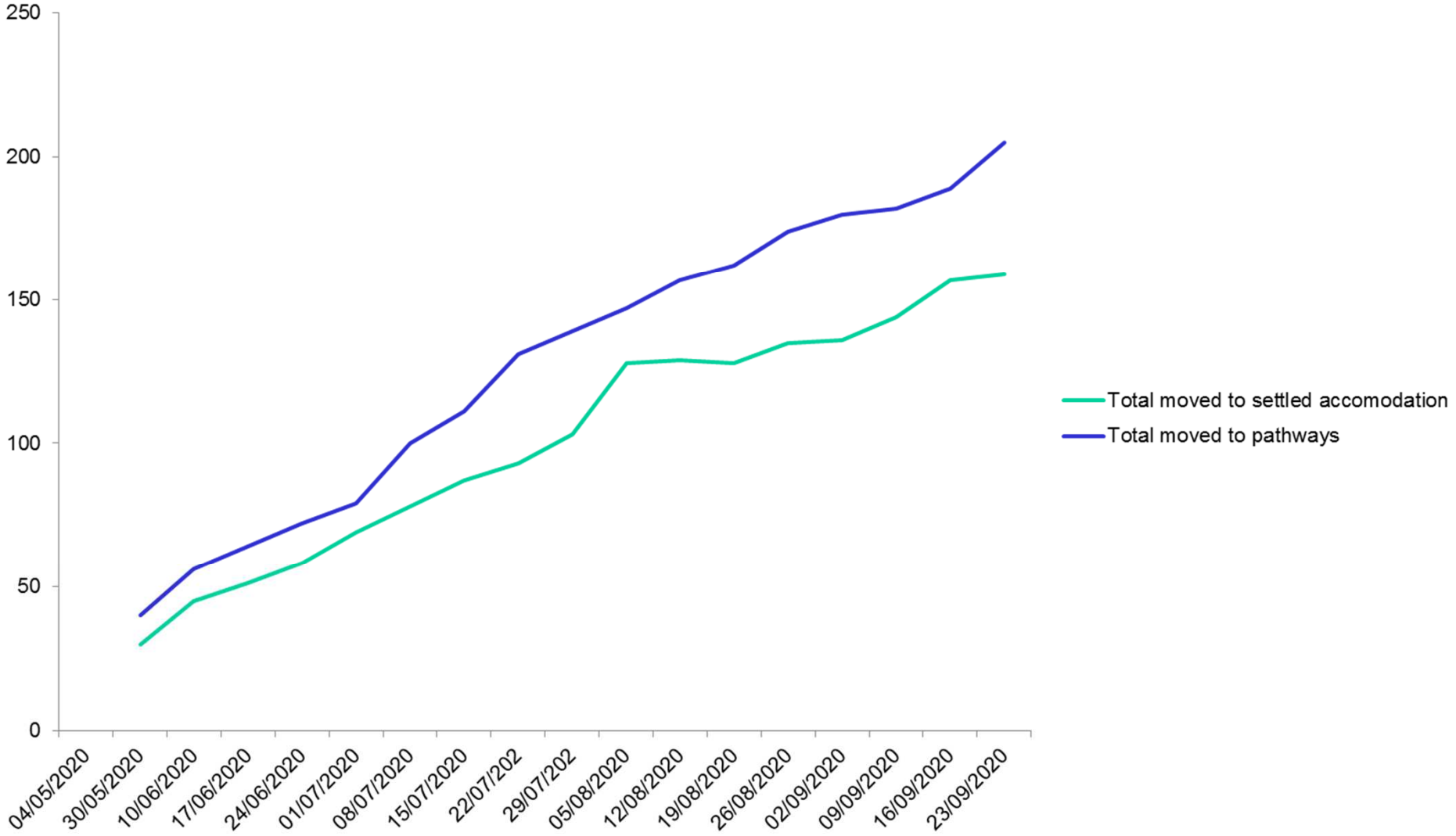
Homelessness presentations



Everyone in – last 6 months

- COVID response – get everyone off the streets/out of shelters
- Priority need assessments not applied
- People with no recourse to public funds (NRFP) housed
- Since lockdown over 950 people housed off the streets, out of shelters, prison and hospital
- 298 additional rooms in 3 commercial hotels and 2 hostels
- COVID Care facility created from 1/4/20 – 31/7/20
- Support teams based in hotels
- Working with Drug & Alcohol services and Health
- Cheers Drive (food) – Caring in Bristol initiative

Everyone in – move on



Everyone in - now

- Phasing out hotels and focussing on moving people on -
- 1 commercial hotel ended 28/9/20 another ending on 31/10/20
- 1 hotel extended to 31/3/21 – support team, clients with complex needs
- Negotiated hostel extensions for 12 and 11 months (re-allocated Rough Sleepers Initiative funding) – operating as supported housing

One City move on project

- Opportunity not to return people to the streets
- Dealing with the systemic bottle neck in supported housing – people ready to move on but not enough affordable accommodation
- Secure an ongoing supply of accommodation from various sectors to meet the long term need
- Moving people out of Temporary accommodation and supported housing.
- Create wraparound support services that are person centred and flexes to meet the needs of individuals.

Multi agency approach

- Housing Options (BCC)
- BCC landlord services
- Social Care (BCC)
- Community learning (BCC)
- Commissioned support services
- ROADS (drug and alcohol)
- AWP
- CCG and Health
- Voluntary sector
- Refugee sector
- Housing Associations
- Domestic abuse services
- Criminal Justice services

Change for good

- Aim - to change how agencies in the city work together to support people with complex needs, starting with people who are homeless and in the homeless pathway.
- This project is a partnership between Bristol City Council, BNSSG CCG and Golden Key. Golden Key is itself a partnership of ~20 organizations representing statutory and non-statutory organizations and people with lived experience.
- Golden Key is known as a catalyst for system change with years of experience
- Social care team established to work with people in hotel's - Care Act assessments

Change for good

Move on - PRS, Social and other opportunities

- Call out for private rented sector – on track to double PRS lettings in 20/21 (400) from previous year (200)
- Contracts with 2 organisations to provide rooms in shared houses to move people out of hotels
- Institutional investment in dispersed PRS portfolio
- Imperial apartments – 216 @ Local Housing Allowance in Whitchurch Park
- Modular through Bristol Housing Festival https://www.bristolhousingfestival.org.uk/
- https://www.hill.co.uk/about-hill/foundation-200/

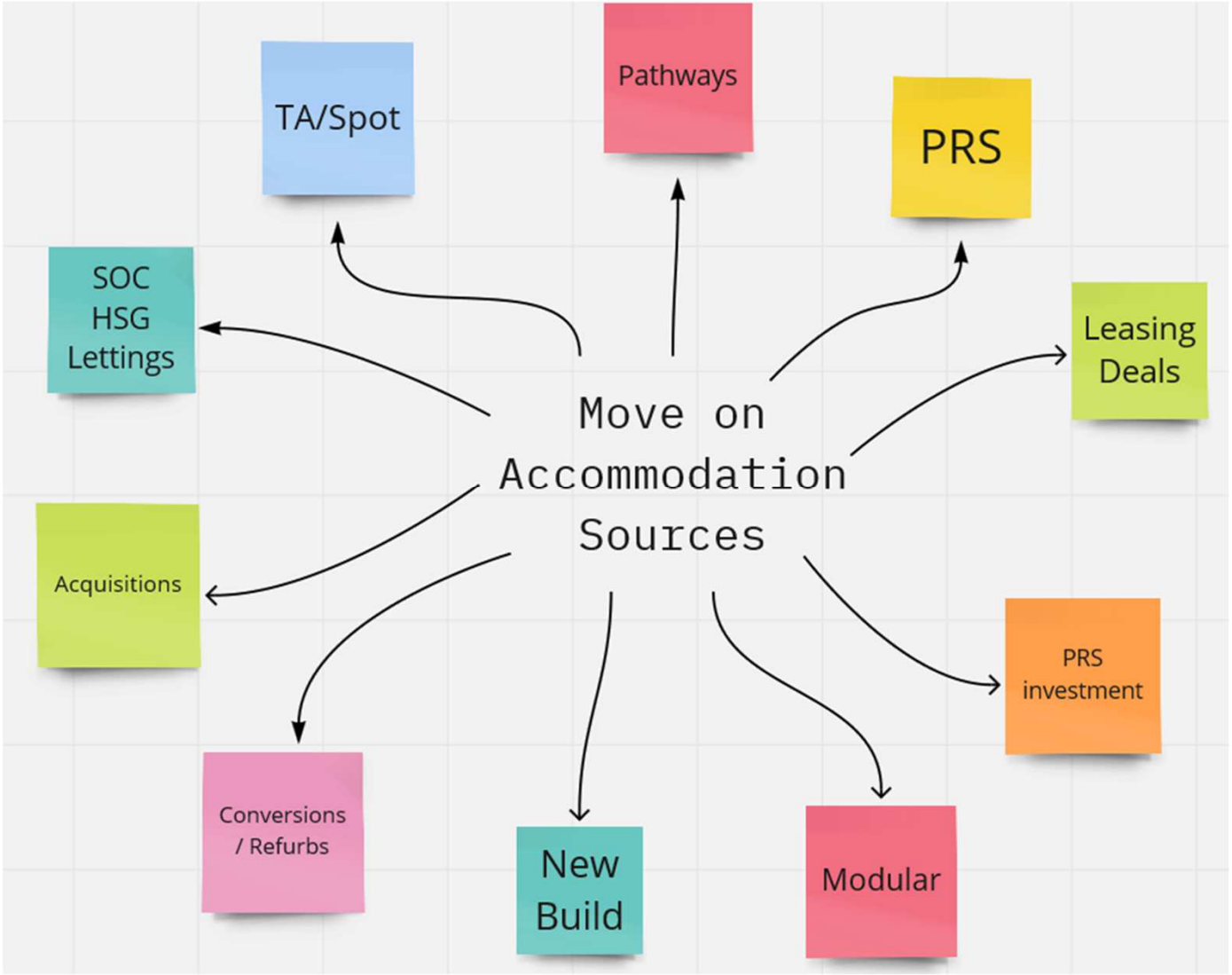
Move on - PRS, Social and other opportunities

- Meanwhile use and conversions (e.g care home waiting to be redeveloped)
- Increase social/affordable new build
- Property acquisitions – new build and ex-council housing.
- Over 800 units of supported housing for people who were homeless
- Social lettings and PRS prioritised for people coming out of supported housing to create vacancies
- Housing First type expansion – dependant on funding

Move on - EEA & Asylum NRPF

- Joint working with refugee sector and social care on refused asylum seekers in hotels
- Supporting expansion of Bristol Hospitality Network https://www.bhn.org.uk/
- St Mungo's to work on voluntary re-connection
- Specialist support to ascertain eligibility and claim welfare benefits
- Commissioning of employment support service for EEA nationals

Move on - Accommodation Sources



Next Steps Funding

- £266 million fund is divided into two strands.
- A total of £105 million - interim accommodation and support
- Remaining £161 million - first wave of the move-on accommodation funding, to provide 3,300 additional supported homes this year
- £130m capital and £31m revenue funding. This is the first part of a total of £433 million committed to provide 6,000 long term homes with support over the next four years.

Funding

- Projecting £4.8 million spend on COVID response in 20/21
- Small ring-fenced grant of £76k for homelessness
- We have secured £1.9 million from Next Steps interim fund
- Bid for capital and long term support funding - £7 million – decision October 2020
- No Autumn budget – uncertainty on government funding from 1/4/21

Planning for Increase in homelessness

- 2 Roundtable meetings with homelessness and advice sector
- Economic impact, job losses, end of eviction ban, increase in Domestic violence
- Joint work with advice sector promoting benefits of seeking help early
- Targeted support for those most at risk – private rented tenants
- Lobbying for additional protections for private rented tenants
- Discretionary Housing Payments increase from £1.3 million to £2.5 million
- Significant increase in Local Crisis and Prevention Fund
- Hardship fund – additional money for accessing PRS
- Next steps funding

What do we need?

- LHA rate to increase to 50th percentile….
- Ring-fenced long term revenue funding for projects:
  - giving supported housing providers confidence to run schemes
  - floating support available for those moving on into the PRS (and landlords confidence that this will not just be withdrawn)
  - enabling a housing first project to be viable (as longer term support committed for the tenants if they need this)
    - enables the development of bespoke schemes for those with more enduring support needs (currently blocking the temporary housing supply)

What do we need?

- Significant capital investment for property acquisitions
- Significant funding to intervene and prevent homelessness for households impacted by COVID 19
- A change to Right to Buy (RTB) regulations – keep more of the receipts and extend time to use
- Relaxation of grant rules so funding can be stacked e.g RTB receipts and grant funding
- Single assessment process and information sharing between agencies – people not getting “lost”
- Investment in preventative services – mental health, drugs and alcohol (reduces acute costs)