

Case Study – Financial, Housing, Fuel and Food bank, Partnership working

An individual visited the Community Hub relating to Housing issues. The person stated that they were a recovering alcoholic with anxiety and depression. The individual was frank and honest and was transparent in sharing the issues and barriers that had been created to maintaining their tenancy. The individual shared that they hadn't been paying rent for some time whilst struggling with addiction and now found themselves in large debt.

In order to help the customer I liaised with the landlord over the telephone and a Housing Sustainability Officer. We agreed to put together a plan so the client could continue the tenancy and not be evicted. A Discretionary Housing Payment application was made to help the client with paying the rent going forward. Usually the Discretionary Housing Payments applications are looked at in date order, this would have meant the customer continued to not pay the full amount of rent. Due to the risk of homelessness if this situation wasn't resolved I contacted the Council's Benefits Managers to request the Discretionary Housing Payment be prioritised, this was agreed and the application was looked at quickly and awarded. I also contacted Universal Credit to arrange for the client's rent to be paid directly to the landlord to avoid lack of payment. This multi-agency approach supported the client to remain in their home and promoted their independence by keeping them involved in the process.

The customer was pleased that they could speak to someone face to face and receive help, as they felt unable to deal with the whole situation alone. They were very self-aware and knew that they needed to resolve the situation which made the interaction a really positive one. I logged the outcome of the interaction on the My Council Services system so my colleagues were aware of what was agreed and they could further support if they saw the customer again. To further support the customer a fuel voucher of £49 was issued along with the organisation of a food parcel via the Trussel Trust food bank.