

## Hon Michelle Lensink MLC

Minister for Human Services

Friday 6 March 2020

### **Bold reform of homelessness system will improve outcomes for most vulnerable**

The Liberal Government is embarking on long overdue and much-needed reform of the state's homelessness system, with the aim of reducing homelessness.

Over the next 12 months the government will consult and work with the specialist homelessness sector to design a new system that will better meet the needs of South Australians experiencing homelessness.

The reform aims to better provide service to:

- Prevent people from falling into homelessness
- Ensure people get the right support they need, when they need it
- Rapidly rehouse people into safe, stable and long-term housing so they don't cycle in and out of homelessness

The reform will focus on prevention and early intervention to break the cycle of homelessness, with the first stage of reform establishing a new consolidated advisory and advocacy service and a tender for the new service will be out this month.

To enable further reform, specialist homelessness providers will be given 12-month contracts to allow adequate time for engagement and consultation.

***In 2020-21, a total of \$71.5 million will be committed to specialised homelessness services this financial year, up from \$67.9 million the previous year.***

In addition to this funding, the Marshall Liberal Government released its new \$550 million housing and homelessness strategy *Our Housing Future 2020-30*, which includes an additional \$20 million injection towards a new Homelessness Prevention Fund.

Minister for Human Services Michelle Lensink said it was time to reform the state's homelessness system and to be more innovative in how we deliver services.

"For too long, we have focused on the crisis end and people spend years and years cycling in and out of homelessness – our ultimate aim is to get people off the streets for good," said Minister Lensink.

"This is an exciting opportunity for service providers to help redesign the system and put forward creative ideas so we can better meet the needs of our most vulnerable.

“Currently, we have a system that is outdated, expensive and does not achieve real outcomes for South Australians who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

“South Australia’s homelessness system has not been updated or refreshed for more than a decade and people who have used these services say the system is not working for them.

“It will be important that the new system provides supports that are streamlined, better coordinated and tailored to individual needs so that more people can get safe and stable accommodation and keep it.”

The newly created Office for the Homelessness Sector Integration, led by Ian Cox, will work closely with providers and stakeholders to drive the reform process.

Mr Cox said he was looking forward to working with the sector in the reform process.

“We’re looking forward to working with the sector in the reform process to shape a system that will better respond to the complex needs of our most vulnerable South Australians,” said Mr Cox.

“As part of the reform process, we will maintain existing services but provide the sector with the opportunity to work together over the next 12 months on new innovative ways to deliver services to shift the emphasis to prevention and early intervention.”