

Appendix I: Scoping session

Introduction

A scoping session offers a focused, high-level discussion to ensure that the main workshop aligns with the organisation's or partnership's strategic priorities. It can be particularly valuable to hold this meeting in advance of the primary workshop so that senior leaders and other essential stakeholders clarify the exact purpose of the Commitment to Collaborate (C2C) process in the specific context of their objectives. By exploring where collaboration on homelessness prevention and relief fits into existing objectives, participants can better define a realistic scope for subsequent discussions. This approach ensures that the subsequent workshop makes the most effective use of time and resources by homing-in on the areas of greatest strategic importance. Those areas are most likely to result in pledges and actions that contribute to existing priorities, which are then more probable to attract approval through governance processes.

Rationale and benefits

The core aim of a scoping session is to pinpoint the specific issues, themes, or challenges that the organisation or partnership wishes to address through C2C. It allows decision-makers to contemplate whether the focus should remain broad – covering the full range of homelessness prevention and relief – or whether it should narrow to a more specific dimension, e.g., issues such as hospital discharge planning, reoffending prevention, or data-sharing for earlier intervention would reflect common themes or strategic objectives.

Whatever the focus, the scoping session provides an opportunity for deeper reflection on the strategic value and feasibility of potential actions before participants gather in larger numbers for the workshop. By ensuring alignment with senior-level objectives, the session also helps secure executive endorsement and resources for the initiative and the specific pledges and actions that emerge.

Attendees and format

The scoping session works best as a 60 to 90 minute meeting of around three to eight people who hold senior roles or key decision-making responsibilities within the organisation or partnership. This might include a Director-level sponsor, relevant department heads, or other influential figures in homelessness-related services, e.g., data analysis, commissioning, or partnership management. These individuals bring knowledge of both strategic priorities and organisational constraints, ensuring the session's outcomes remain practical. Having a focused set of senior attendees also creates a “safe space” for frank conversation, helping surface potential barriers or competing demands without derailing the main workshop.

Structure and discussion points

The agenda should centre on identifying which strategic outcomes the organisation or partnership most wants to achieve.

This may include for example:

- Enhancing prevention through data
Exploring how better data collection and sharing might identify risks earlier and trigger timely interventions.
- Incorporating lived experience
Discussing how insight from people with first-hand knowledge of homelessness can inform smarter service design.
- Focusing on specific contexts
Determining if efforts should concentrate on particular touchpoints such as hospital discharge or prison release, where risk of homelessness can be especially acute.

If necessary, it may be worthwhile to utilise the prioritisation exercises described earlier in the toolkit to assist in the process of defining the scope for the workshop. This ensures that by the time the main workshop commences, participants can devote time to the most relevant, high-impact areas for discussion and problem solving. You will find a set of PowerPoint slides for an example scoping session on our [website](#).

If a narrowed scope is identified, then this should be defined by the facilitators as the focus in the two collaborative conversation sessions. It is possible, for example, to use the first session to focus on one topic (e.g., discharge from hospital) and the second session to focus on a different topic (e.g., prison release).

Outcomes

A successful Scoping Session results in a clear, shared understanding of the goals for the main workshop, along with preliminary ideas on which pledges or actions might be most beneficial. In turn, facilitators and workshop participants can more effectively shape conversations around those objectives, leading to a workshop that is productive, dynamic, and immediately relevant to broader organisational or partnership strategies for preventing and relieving homelessness.