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| <b>Subject:</b>          | <b>Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Development and Consultation</b> |  |                          |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>  | <b>18 September 2019</b>   |  |                          |
| <b>Report of:</b>        | <b>Executive Director for Neighbourhoods, Communities &amp; Housing</b>      |  |                          |
| <b>Contact Officer:</b>  | <b>Name:</b>   | <b>Justine Harris</b>                      | <b>Tel: 01273 293772</b> |
|                          | <b>Email:</b>  | <b>Justine.Harris@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b> |                          |
| <b>Ward(s) affected:</b> | <b>(All Wards);</b>  |  |                          |

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE/ NOT FOR PUBLICATION****1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask for approval to commence work to consult on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025. This is in line with government requirement to review, rewrite and combine the Homelessness Strategy and the Rough Sleeping Strategy.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That the Housing Committee give approval to commence consultation on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025.

**3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 There have been many changes since the last Homelessness Strategy and Rough Sleeping Strategy s were written. The Welfare Reform Act 2012 is continuing to be rolled out and the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 saw the biggest changes to homeless legislation since 1996. Increasingly complex issues have emerged in terms of supply, demand, affordability and barriers to accessing housing, in part this is due to a particular demographic of vulnerable households on low incomes. In response, Brighton and Hove has seen the emergence of many new community activists and groups across the City.
- 3.2 The Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016-2020 sought to ensure that the city's commissioners, service providers and advocates were working in partnership to a clear strategic plan to reduce rough sleeping in the city and improve outcomes for rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping. It focusses on five priority areas:
- Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping – to provide a consistent message about housing options that helps services prevent homelessness and moves people away from sleeping rough.
  - Rapid Assessment and Reconnection – outreach to assess the needs of people sleeping rough to plan support, and where appropriate, reconnect people with

friends, families and support networks, before they are fully immersed in street life.

- Improving Health – to ensure people sleeping rough are supported by health and social care services that help them to regain their independence.
- A Safe City – making sure people sleeping rough, residents and visitors are safe and free from intimidation.
- Pathways to Independence – making sure supported accommodation offers solutions appropriate to residents needs.

3.3 The Homelessness Strategy 2014-19 was Brighton and Hove Council's third Homelessness Strategy and formulated following a statutory review of the previous strategy and citywide consultation. It sets out a strategic approach to responding to and preventing homelessness it is underpinned by five objectives:

- Provide Housing and Support Solutions that Tackle Homelessness and Promote the Health and Well-being of Vulnerable Adults.
- Provide 'whole families' housing and support solutions that tackle homelessness and promote the well-being of families and young people.
- Develop Access to Settled Homes.
- Reduce Inequality and Tackle Homelessness amongst Our Communities of Interest.
- Provide Integrated Housing, Employment and Support Solutions as a Platform for Economic Inclusion.

3.4 Progress towards delivery against the objectives of the current Homelessness Strategy and the Rough Sleeping strategies will be reviewed as part of our consultation on development of the new draft Homeless and Rough Sleeper Strategy.

3.5 Strategy development will also align to consultation, consideration and decisions over adoption of a Homeless Bill of Rights for the city following the recent petition to Council and report being brought back to November 2019 Housing Committee.

3.6 The Government has committed to ending rough sleeping by 2027. The Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy will take into account the three core pillars of the National Rough Sleeping Strategy: Prevention, Intervention and Recovery

3.7 The new strategy will set out information about the scale and causes of homelessness and rough sleeping the City and how we will seek to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.

3.8 The Strategy will align with other strategies and programmes that link to homelessness. It will be co-ordinated with the Health and Needs Wellbeing Strategy and informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. It will be developed jointly with partners who will have responsibility for its delivery.

3.9 In formulating the strategy we will need to recognise that for some households, homelessness cannot be tackled, or prevented, solely through the provision of accommodation. Some households will require a range of support services, which may include housing related support to help them sustain their accommodation, as well as personal support relating to factors such as

relationship breakdown, domestic abuse, mental health problems, drug and alcohol addiction, poverty, debt and unemployment.

- 3.10 One of the purposes of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be to ensure a sufficient supply of accommodation for people who are or may become homeless. It will include within the Strategy actions required to ensure sufficient supply of accommodation to meet the estimated need.
- 3.11 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy action plans will be formulated to help ensure that objectives set out in the Strategy are achieved. The action plans will include targets, milestones and arrangements for monitoring and evaluation.

#### **4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1 Under the terms of the Homelessness Act 2002 it is a legal requirement to formulate and deliver a Homelessness Strategy.

#### **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Stakeholder input will be central to the success of the Strategy, community consultation will inform its development. This will come from a wide range of stakeholders including residents, faith groups, community activists, third sector and public sector organisations and the business community. As part of the consultation we will be holding a summit and forming a cross sector steering group, this will include elected members. There will also be opportunities for stakeholders to take part in an online survey. The strategy will published and shared once approved.

- 5.2 The objectives will emerge from the consultation process

##### **5.3 Time line**

- **Sep 19** Review current Homeless Strategy (2014-19) and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2016-20).
- **Sep 19** Begin City wide Consultation (September –October 2019).
- **Sep 19** Create Consultation plan.
- **Dec 19** Analyse findings of the consultation.
- **Dec 19** Create Draft Strategy.
- **Jan 20** Present draft strategy to Housing Committee.
- **Feb 20** Consult on draft strategy.
- **Mar 20** Present final Strategy to Housing Committee.
- **Apr 20** Publish new strategy.
- **2020-25** Monitor and Review.

#### **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 It is a legal requirement to develop a new strategy by virtue of the Homelessness Act 2002 and current guidance.
- 6.2 In order to develop the Strategy we need to consult with the community which will include the homeless themselves.

#### **7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report as the cost of consultation will be met from current budget resources. Any financial implications arising from the delivery of the strategy will be reported to the appropriate committee for consideration, prior to implementation.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks*

*Date:28/8/2019*

Legal Implications:

Section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 imposes a duty on the council as a local housing authority to carry out a homelessness review for their district; and to formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of that review. The new strategy must be published within 5 years of publication of the previous one. The proposals outlined in the report will assist the council in discharging its obligations under the Act.

*Lawyer Consulted:*

*Name Liz Woodley*

*Date: 28/08/19*

Equalities Implications:

- 7.2 Will be considered as part of the development of the strategy. An equalities impact assessment will be carried out on the new Strategy.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.3 None identified at this time.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 7.4 Reducing and resolving homelessness should have a positive impact for crime and disorder in the city. This will be reviewed further in development of the Strategy.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 7.5 None identified at this time, This will be reviewed further as part of the development of the Strategy.

Public Health Implications:

- 7.6 Reducing or resolving homelessness should have a positive impact for public health. This will be reviewed further in the development of the Strategy.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 7.7 Reduction in homelessness would have city wide implications as there are positive benefits for residents and public services. This will be reviewed further in the development of the Strategy.