

Subject:	Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025		
Date of Meeting:	17th June 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Communities		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Justine Harris and Emily Ashmore	Tel: 01273 293772
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The Housing Committee meeting on 15th January 2020 agreed to note the progress on the development of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2025. It also agreed for the draft strategy to be subject to a final consultation in the city.
- 1.2 The draft strategy takes account of the findings of the Homelessness Review and responds to the findings of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation. The full reports are available as appendices to the draft strategy.
- 1.3 The report submits the Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2025 for adoption.
- 1.4 On 29th April Housing committee passed the notice of motion “Homelessness and the corona virus” stating a commitment subject to funding to:
 - Declare its intention to consider how to provide appropriate move-on accommodation and support for all rough sleepers currently housed and supported in hotels/other accommodation in time to avoid them returning to rough-sleeping.
 - Consider how the current unconditional offer of accommodation to rough sleepers can continue once the hotel/other accommodation provided during the coronavirus outbreak is no longer available.
- 1.5 This report seeks to integrate the response to the notice of motion into the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Housing Committee

- 2.1 That the work in developing the Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2025, including, Homelessness Review and Consultation Feedback Report be noted.
- 2.2 That the Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2025 be adopted.
- 2.3 That the formation of a Member led Homelessness Reduction Board as outlined with terms of reference detailed in Appendix 2 to the report be recommended to the Policy & Resources Committee along with the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy being referred for information.

Policy & Resources Committee

- 2.4 That the establishment of a Member led Homelessness Reduction Board with the terms of reference as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report be approved.
- 2.5 Housing Committee notes that the Homeless Reduction Board will:
 - Over the next 3 months regularly monitor the progress toward achieving safe reconnection and rehousing of all rough sleepers currently housed in hotel/ other temporary accommodation.
 - In line with the joint commitment to work towards eliminating the need for rough sleeping, explore options for sustaining an unconditional offer of crisis accommodation for all people living on the streets and present costed options to Housing Committee (in September).
 - Monitor the progress and impact of:
 - Temporary 80% allocations for statutory homeless under the Housing Allocations Plan;
 - Maximise verified rough sleepers with support needs housed as part of achieving the CIQ quota set in line with the Allocations Policy (2018), review how meeting retrospective targets on housing of verified rough sleepers and others in the CIQ have progressed and report to Committee on options to remedy any shortfalls against the Allocations Plan.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Section 1(1) of the Homelessness Act 2002 requires housing authorities to carry out a homelessness review for their district, then formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review. The Council is required to take account of the Homeless Code of Guidance (2018), in particular Chapter 2: Homelessness strategies and reviews.
- 3.2 The Housing Committee, at its meeting on the 15th January, received an update on progress of the draft Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Strategy 2020-2025. The Committee noted the consultation on the Homeless & Rough Sleeper

Strategy undertaken to date; our response; and how this has shaped the development of the new draft strategy.

- 3.3 The committee approved the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for further consultation.
- 3.4 This report notes the result of the further consultation and submits the report with background documents.
- 3.5 This strategy has been further developed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is intended to be an agile document designed to respond to emerging needs in a national and local context. It also acknowledges the challenges and opportunities we're seeing now and anticipate to see in the future.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Homelessness Act 2002 Section 1(4) requires housing authorities to publish a Homelessness Strategy, based on the results of a homelessness review. This Review of Homelessness is summarised in the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Housing authorities must consult public or local authorities, voluntary organisations or other persons as they consider appropriate before adopting or modifying a homelessness strategy. Housing authorities will also wish to consult with service users and specialist agencies that provide support to homeless people in the district. The Homelessness Act 2002 Section 3(4) provides that a housing authority cannot include in a homelessness strategy any specific action expected to be taken by another body or organisation without their approval.
- 5.2 The second round of consultation was carried out on the draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy in a variety of ways to ensure all interest groups had opportunity to feed back. These included using the Council's consultation portal and holding a number of meetings with different groups. We also received some written submissions from 44 individuals and 28 organisations
- 5.3 For the consultation as a whole 204 people attended consultation events and 358 people responded to the online portal.
- 5.4 Further to this, 386 landlords and letting agents responded to a consultation on the private rented sector which was undertaken in relation to the strategy.
- 5.5 Details of the consultation are set out in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Consultation Feedback Report.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The routes into and out of homelessness and rough sleeping are complex and wide reaching. To enable prevention and solutions requires a multi-faceted response involving not only the council but partners such as health and voluntary

and community groups. The strategy and the governance through the Boards will enable the council to have oversight and drive forwards the changes required to minimise people becoming homeless and to expedite solutions where that is not possible.

- 6.2 The draft strategy places importance on accountability and transparency for the delivery of services across the city to everyone who is affected by homelessness.
- 6.3 The proposed governance arrangements will ensure we capture work being done and work collaboratively to keep a focused and deliverable approach over the lifetime of the strategy.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The costs associated with undertaking consultation to support this strategy have been met from existing resources within Housing General Fund budgets. Following the adoption of the strategy, action plans will link to the identified values and priorities. Any action plans requiring further financial resources will need to be reported to the relevant Committee(s) for approval.
- 7.2

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks

Date: 01-06-20

Legal Implications:

- 7.3 The legislative requirements for a Homelessness Strategy are included within the body of the report. Under the council's constitution, the setting up, review and abolition of Joint Committees, Sub-Committees, permanent member Working Groups, permanent Member panels, consultation forums and commissions is reserved to Policy and Resources Committee. Consequently, the establishment of the Homelessness Reduction Board and its Terms of Reference are matters for that Committee. As the Board is not being constituted as a Sub-Committee, it cannot legally have any decision making powers.

Lawyer Consulted:

Name Liz Woodley

Date: 03/06/20

Equalities Implications:

- 7.4 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out on the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025. The evidence supports facts that are already known to the council on a number of factors. For example, it is known that the life expectancy of a rough sleeper remains significantly lower than that of the general population. It is also known that the percentage of males found rough sleeping is much higher than that of females.
- 7.5 A number of equality themes emerged from the consultation. These themes have been imported into the EIA.

- 7.6 The EIA will be presented to the Homelessness Reduction Board who will take responsibility for ensuring that actions from the EIA are contained in the Annual Homelessness Reduction Action Plan.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 7.5 Rough sleepers are known to be victims of crime in the city. Cases are reported of rough sleepers being verbally abused and physically attacked. A proportion of rough sleepers will be in the judicial system and leaving prison without somewhere to live is a driver to rough sleeping. Some people rough sleeping are more likely to have chaotic lifestyles which involves criminal activities to fund substance misuse. By prevention homelessness where possible or moving to speedy solutions to help people, the impact for crime and disorder will lessen.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 7.6 Recent events of the covid-19 pandemic have seen a significant amount of work to protect rough sleepers and the general homeless population. This gives the council an opportunity to build on the work that has happened over the past months and include in the action planning process a sustainable exit strategy to find sustainable long term housing solutions to rough sleeping in the city.

Public Health Implications:

- 7.6 Reducing and resolving homelessness should have a positive impact for public health. In recognition of this fact it is proposed there will be representation from the Health & Wellbeing Board on the Homelessness Reduction Board to ensure a cohesive approach. This will be kept under review in the development of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 7.8 The Homelessness Code of Guidance is clear that for the Homelessness Strategy to be effective, we should ensure that it is consistent with other local plans and is developed with, and has the support of, all relevant local authority departments and partners. Corporate and partnership involvement in identifying strategic objectives will help to ensure all relevant departments and agencies are committed to supporting their delivery.
- 7.9 A variety of organisations have been consulted in the development of this strategy. It is envisaged that strategic actions identified during the development of this strategy will be delegated to the new Homelessness Reduction Board. The Board will have responsibility to drive the agenda forward over the lifetime of this strategy by developing annual actions plans. Oversight of the work of the Homelessness Reduction Board will be exercised by the Housing Committee.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Strategy 2020-2025.

2. Homeless Reduction Board Terms of Reference.

Background Documents

1. Review of Homelessness & Rough Sleeping 2020.
2. Consultation feedback Report: Homelessness & Rough Sleeping.