

Subject:	Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 – Extract from the proceedings of the Housing Committee meeting held on the 17 June 2020		
Date of Meeting:	9 July 2020		
Report of:	Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance & Law		
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Wards Affected:	All Wards		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of Policy & Resources Committee:

To receive the recommendations of the Housing Committee for consideration.

Recommendation: That the formation of a Member led Homelessness Reduction Board as outlined with terms of reference detailed in Appendix 2 to the report be approved.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

4.00pm 17 JUNE 2020

SKYPE MEETING

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Williams (Chair) Fowler (Deputy Chair), Gibson (Opposition Spokesperson), Mears (Group Spokesperson), Atkinson, Barnett, Hugh-Jones, Knight, Osborne and Phillips.

PART ONE

10 HOMELESS & ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY

- 10.1 The Head of Tenancy Services introduced the report for the adoption of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2025 following the final consultation in the city. It was noted that the consultation had received a good response.
- 10.2 Councillor Atkinson commented that they felt the report was very important and congratulated the Housing team, the Committee Chair and St Mungo's. The report covers a huge issue and progress has been made. The Homeless Reduction Board is welcomed, as is the rise in Housing Allowance. It was noted that Universal Credit may still have an impact on the allowance. The Councillor expressed concerns regarding funding and felt that reconnecting Rough Sleepers should be a focus. The meetings between the authority and landlords was a positive step, along with Housing First initiative. The financial fall out from COVID-19 Pandemic may lead to Government lobbying. The support for substance abuse should continue through the Pandemic with alcohol needs being met by the National Health Service (NHS). The Councillor also noted that were Rough Sleepers had been accommodated in student accommodation they needed to be good neighbours to the local community. The Councillor felt the report was good and thanked the officers.
- 10.3 Councillor Mears thanked the officers for the report and expressed concerns that the Homeless Reduction Board would be a 'talking shop' and officers could have got on with the issues. It was noted that the connection with local prison had been a benefit to prevent those leaving prison becoming homeless. It was also a concern that all Rough Sleepers will be moved by September 2020.
- 10.4 Councillor Gibson thanked the officers for the report, the consultation and welcomed the strategy. The Councillor hoped the Homeless Reduction Board will focus on action with this huge task ahead and work with the community. The opportunity to work with Rough Sleepers needs to be seized. Lobbying the Government will be need and to make the best use of resources. It was noted that Housing First are good at solving needs and

that the number of Housing First placements has increased to 12. The Green Group and Labour Party are committed to moving towards removing Rough Sleeping in the city. Councillor Gibson agreed that the reconnecting Rough Sleepers was a matter of urgency and they supported the report.

- 10.5 Councillor Hugh-Jones welcomed the focus on prevention of homelessness and noted the Select Committee's questions to the Minister for Housing regarding the process for procurement. The Councillor was informed that the operational board will include activists. The strategy can be reviewed at any time and changes need to be agreed at Committee.
- 10.6 Councillor Knight thanked the officers for the report and stated the importance of the focus on evictions. The rise in Housing Allowance may put some residents above the Benefit Cap and this was a concern. Support should be given to those in temporary accommodation with any homelessness being pre-empted. The Councillor commented that hearing that people had been housed during the Pandemic was interesting and a good argument for Housing First. The Councillor also cautioned against thinking that all homeless are the same as this was not true and that people needed a 'warp around' service to cover all aspects of being homeless. It was noted that Government funding will be needed.
- 10.7 The Chair put the recommendations to the vote and they were agreed unanimously. (Councillor Phillips was not able to hear the entire debate or cast a vote due to technical difficulties).
- 10.8 **RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the work in developing the Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2025, including, Homelessness Review and Consultation Feedback Report be noted;
 - (2) That the Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 - 2025 be adopted and
 - (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.

