

<b>Subject:</b>	Homelessness Strategy Development and Consultation		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2014		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Geoff Raw Executive Director Environment Development &amp; Housing</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>James Crane</b>	<b>Tel: 29-3316</b>
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<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

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

- 1.1 The Council is required under the Homelessness Act 2002 to have in place a homelessness strategy and the strategy must be based on a review of all forms of homelessness within their area.
- 1.2 The Council considers that homelessness has a significant impact on many local authority and other statutory services such as Adult Social Care and Children's Services, Mental Health, Substance Misuse, Probation, Police and Public Health in addition the strategy is being supported by a partnership of local providers in the voluntary and private sectors.
- 1.3 The Homelessness Strategy is a sub strategy of the Housing Strategy and there are a number of other strategies that have been developed to deal with particular issues of importance in Homelessness area including Single Homelessness & Rough Sleeping, Youth Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation Strategies. It is intended as part of the Homelessness Strategy Development to incorporate these sub strategies into an over arching Homelessness Strategy 2014 – 2019.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That the Committee note the contents of the Homelessness Review 2008 – 2013
- 2.2 To endorse the approach to producing a homelessness strategy 2014 – 2019 incorporating all related sub strategies contained in paragraph 1.3.
- 2.3 That the Committee notes proposed Community Engagement Strategy being used to develop the new Homelessness Strategy 2014 – 2019

**3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 provides that the Council must have in place a Homelessness Strategy, based on a review of all forms of Homelessness in its district. The Housing Act 1996 s182 informs Councils that they must have due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State in exercising if any functions relating to Homelessness. The current Code of Guidance, The Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities, was issued in July 2006 and remains in force.
- 3.2 Both the Local Housing and Social Services authorities must have due regard to the Homelessness Strategy in the exercise of their functions; Homelessness Act 2002 section 1 (5) & (6).
- 3.3 The Code of Guidance gives general advice on what the Government considers should be included when the Council reviews homelessness in its area. This includes levels of homelessness, activities which are carried out in the district which contribute to
- a) Prevention of homelessness
  - b) Securing accommodation for those that are homeless
  - c) Providing support for those that are homeless, who may become homeless or to support those that have been homeless to prevent repeat homelessness.

- 3.4 A Review has been completed using data from 2007 to 2012 and a number of documents have been produced

- a) Homelessness Review 2007 -2012
- b) Housing and Support for young people aged 16 – 25
- c) Rough Sleeper and Single Homeless Needs Assessment 2012

Copies of these documents can be found in the member's room.

- 3.5 The Code of Guidance also gives advice that in order to develop a homeless strategy the Council must consult such public or other local authorities, voluntary organisations or others that the Council consider appropriate before adopting the strategy. It goes on to state that in order for a strategy to be effective it will need to involve every organisation and partnership whose activities contribute or could contribute in some way to achieving its objectives.
- 3.6 The advice continues that it is also important to consult with service users and homeless people themselves, along with ethnic minority and faith based groups and addressing those that may face a disproportionate effect of becoming homeless in the area. For Brighton & Hove therefore it will be important that we consult with our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community.

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

- 4.1 This is the third strategy that has been produced since the introduction of the Homelessness Act 2002 and each of these strategies has used detailed data on the trends of homelessness in a number of key areas. It is considered that continuing to use evidence based data is the best way to formulate this strategy and it also complies with guidance in the Homelessness Code of Guidance 2006.

- 4.2 The Council has well developed mechanisms to consult with local residents, customers, voluntary & private sector organisation in order to achieve feedback for the development of this strategy. Additional thought will be given to engage with those parts of the communities that are traditionally do not respond to consultations with officer setting up specifically targeted events with the trans community and Gypsy and Travellers.

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

- 5.1 The Council is now in the consultation phase in developing this strategy. This was launched at the Homelessness Strategy Consultation Event held at Hove Town Hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013. This event attracted 170 delegates from a number of statutory, voluntary and private sector organisations where homelessness has a significant impact for them and their customers. Work is currently under way to produce a conference report with early indication of what we are learning from the consultation.
- 5.2 This report has attached the Community Engagement Strategy which will be used to consult organisations and individuals across the City and includes the use of the consultation portal to ask a range of questions on the Council's Vision, Objectives and Guiding Principles and to consult on how we will deliver these aims in the City over the next five years.
- 5.3 The Council will also utilise the Housing Register to reach people that are currently in Housing need directly and look to gain valuable feed back from people in temporary accommodation and in the City's Hostels.
- 5.4 There will be a number of events that will aim to reach out across the city to faith, BME, LGBT and traditionally hard to reach groups to ensure that people feel that they have had an opportunity to voice their opinion on the strategy and its development.
- 5.5 The consultation period will last for three months and the information will be compiled into a consultation report that will inform the development of the new homelessness strategy. We will also take on board the feedback and recommendations of the cross party Overview and Scrutiny panels on Homelessness and Transgender in relation to housing.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The next five year period is without a doubt going to be challenging. The full effects of Welfare reform coupled with the anticipated rise in rents and house prices in the City will give rise to greater numbers of residents that are priced out of the housing market in the City
- 6.2 With a decrease in resources generally available to the Council it will be important to continue to develop a city wide partnership approach to homelessness in the City that includes the ability to resource activities from alternative sources. In order to do this it is vital that customers, voluntary and private sector are consulted in the development of the strategy and that can sign up to the partnership to steer this strategy forward in difficult financial times.

## 7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

### Financial Implications:

7.1 The financial information for the Homelessness Review is embedded in the Homelessness Review 2008 – 2012 document in the members rooms

7.2 The development of the Homelessness Strategy for 2014 – 2019 will be managed within existing resources

*Finance Officer Consulted: Name Neil J Smith*

*Date: 09/12/13*

### Legal Implications:

7.2 The legal framework for a homelessness review and strategy are set out in the main body of the report.

7.3 It is noted that the report recommends, among other things, that there be a single overarching Homelessness Strategy for 2014-2019 that incorporates all the current existing homelessness sub strategies. This is permitted by the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities 2006 as it specifies at paragraph 1.2 that it is open to local authorities to produce either separate housing and homelessness strategies or combine these in a single document where it is consistent to do so.

*Lawyer Consulted:*

*Name Amma Boateng*

*Date: 09/12/13*

### Equalities Implications:

7.4 Homeless people are amongst the most excluded groups in the City. Tackling Homelessness goes beyond meeting the individuals' housing needs. Loss of the home has an impact on health, education, social care and other support needs.

7.5 The population of the City is growing, and predicted to grow further with rising birth rates, and people moving into the area. There has been a notable increase in BME and LGBT communities in particular.

7.6 The equality duty was created by s149 Equality Act 2010 and replaces the race, disability and gender equality duties. The duty came into force in April 2011 and covers age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. To comply with this duty an equality impact assessment will be carried out on all of the groups classified as having protected characteristics in the development of this strategy.

### Sustainability Implications:

7.7 None

### Any Other Significant Implications:

7.8 None

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. Community Engagement Plan

### **Documents in Members' Rooms**

1. Homelessness Review 2008 – 2012
2. Housing and Support for young people aged 16 – 25
3. Rough Sleeper and Single Homeless Needs Assessment 2012

### **Background Documents**

Crime & Disorder Implications:

1.1 The Crime and Disorder Act (s17) obliges the Council to consider the implications of Crime and Disorder in the discharge of any of its functions. The Council is a partner in the Safe in the City Partnership Board and has key working relationships in a number of areas including Domestic Violence, Suicide Prevention and Reducing Drug related Deaths.

1.2 There are also links to rough sleeping, street drinking & begging, anti social behaviour that need to be considered, this includes protecting members of the street community from crime as well.

1.3 The Council also has a partnership role in reducing re-offending in the City and is a partner on the Reducing Re-offending Board. There are a number of project that look to assist offenders on release from prison and multi agency public protection arrangements exists between Housing, Police & Probation to ensure public safety from high risk offenders.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

1.2 None

Public Health Implications:

1.3 There is well established evidence that homelessness can have a detrimental effect on people's mental and physical wellbeing. It is also known that the health outcomes for rough sleepers and insecurely housed people are significantly poorer than the general population as a whole.

1.4 To ensure that we have a better understanding of the needs of rough sleepers and hostel residents a health audit has taken place to indentify what heath needs are reported by this group. The aim of the audit is to also influence commissioners of health services to meet indentified need and look at any emerging gaps. 302 surveys have so far been returned, which represents a 40% sample of rough sleepers and hostel residents. The results are being analysed by Public Health and will be used in the Development of this strategy.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

1.4 None