

Subject:	Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016		
Date of Meeting:	11 July 2016: Neighbourhoods, Communities & Equalities Committee 15 June 2016: Housing & New Homes Committee		
Report of:	Executive Director Health Wellbeing & Adults and Acting Executive Director Economy Environment & Culture		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 The issue of rough sleeping has become more acute recently with a visibly increased presence on the streets. This not only impacts on the individual's life chances, but also the city's reputation and costs to public services and business.
- 1.2 The city's current approach to rough sleeping has been re-assessed to ensure that the city's commissioners, service providers and those supporting people sleeping rough are working in partnership to a clear strategic plan. This plan will reduce rough sleeping in the city and improve outcomes for people sleeping rough and those at risk of rough sleeping.
- 1.3 This report presents the Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016 for approval.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Neighbourhoods, Communities & Equalities Committee:
 - (1) Approves the Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016 (Appendix 1).
 - (2) Authorises the Executive Director Health Wellbeing & Adults and Acting Executive Director Economy Environment & Culture to carry out any actions necessary to implement the strategy and respond appropriately to related Fairness Commission recommendations (see section 5.12).

3. CONTEXT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 People sleeping rough are a transient population and the city's street services work with more than 1,000 cases each year, 20 every week. Around a third of these relate to people being seen more than once (in 2014/15 there were 1,129

cases involving 775 people). In November 2015, a snapshot of a single night estimated there were 78 people sleeping rough in Brighton & Hove:

People living on the streets	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Street service cases (financial year)	588	732	1,163	1,066	1,129	awaiting data
Official street count (people on a single night)	14 (Nov'10)	36 (Nov'11)	43 (Nov'12)	50 (Nov'13)	41 (Nov'14)	x
Street estimate (people on a single night)	x	76 (Nov'11)	90 (Mar'13)	132 (Mar'14)	x	78 (Nov'15)

- **Official street count:** uses official guidance however, this is widely believed to undercount due to the strict criteria required
- **Street estimate:** people sleeping rough known to local services on a particular day

3.2 There are concerns that numbers could increase further over the next year with the natural draw of Brighton & Hove as the place to be, the impact of welfare reforms and the high cost of accessing and sustaining accommodation in the city's private rented sector.

3.3 Supported accommodation is generally prioritised for those in need with a local connection¹. As of the May 2016, the city has 272 hostel beds and 25 mental health hostel beds which are full. There are 215 clients on the waiting list for supported accommodation (82 of which are considered a high priority):

- 151 for hostel places with 24 hour support (43 high priority)
- 24 for young people's services with 24 hour support (20 high priority)
- 40 for mental health accommodation (19 high priority)

3.4 Information is not available for many of the hidden homeless in our city that may be living in squats, sleeping on sofas, and staying with friends and family.

3.5 Rough sleeping is rarely a lifestyle choice, but usually driven out of desperation, poverty and ill health. Police, prisons and health service report high levels of service need caused by rough sleeping:

- People sleeping rough are more likely to be the victim of crime and also more likely to commit crimes
- The City's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment² highlights a high prevalence of mental and physical ill-health and drug and alcohol dependency amongst people sleeping rough. Other common problems include physical trauma (especially foot trauma), skin problems, respiratory illness and infections

¹ Local Connection: The statutory definition of local connection is heavily shaped by case law stemming from the Housing Act 1996, Part 7, Section 199(1) which provides that a person has a local connection with the district of a housing authority if he or she has a connection with it: i) because he or she is, or was in the past, normally resident there, and that residence was of his or her own choice; or ii) because he or she is employed there; or iii) because of family associations there; or iv) because of any special circumstances. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/section/199>

² Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2014: Rough Sleeping and Single Homeless: <http://www.bhconnected.org.uk/sites/bhconnected/files/jsna-6.4.3-Rough-sleepers2.pdf>

- Nationally, it is estimated that the use of inpatient hospital care by people who are sleeping rough or living in insecure accommodation (such as hostels) is eight times higher than in the general population aged 16-64
 - The average age of death for a homeless person nationally is estimated to be 47 years old compared to 77 for the general population.
- 3.6 The rough sleeping and single homeless population is not representative of the wider city with the 2014/15 Rough Sleeper Annual Report showing that of the 1,129 cases (involving 775 people):
- 83% were male; 17% were female
 - 12% (136 cases) were aged 17-25; 7% (83 cases) were over 55
 - 81% (917 cases) indicated that they were UK nationals
 - 19% (212 cases) were not from the UK with the largest group from central or eastern Europe (86 cases, a 50% increase from this region on 2013/14)
 - 39% (438 cases) had a local connection
- 3.7 The council is facing significant budget reductions which have seen £77m saved in recent years and a further £68m needing to be saved between 2016 and 2020. The council budget for Housing Related Support linked to rough sleeping services is £4.3m for 2016/17. In addition there is £0.6m funding from Better Care, in partnership with the NHS. The Community and Voluntary Sector is estimated to contribute many more millions from other funding sources and in-kind support such as through volunteering.

What will our new strategy achieve?

- 3.8 The strategy is allowing us an opportunity to refocus and reprioritise services within the available funding to better meet the needs of those at risk. Amongst the range of actions in the strategy, we will see:
1. A new shared agreement, a **Pledge** backed up with a **Multi-Agency Protocol**, between the council, service providers, and other groups supporting people sleeping rough aimed at making sure we are all promoting the same consistent message, a single offer of support focussed on moving away from rough sleeping and street life.
 2. A new permanent **Assessment Centre** with a number of temporary (sit-up) beds to enable service providers to assess the needs of people sleeping rough in a stable environment.
 3. Each person having their own **Multi-Agency Plan** that will outline who is responsible for co-ordinating their care, which services are working with them and the support available. A key part of the Plan will be to outline the client's housing options to help them make an informed choice about their future.
 4. A **primary care led hub** with a multidisciplinary team delivering services in a number of settings in the city. This will to support homeless people to access primary and community healthcare services and include outreach to street settings where appropriate, day centres and hospitals to support care and discharge planning.
 5. **New accommodation** for older homeless people with complex needs following a successful bid to the Homes & Communities Agency for

£569,000. The accommodation which will offer at least eight en-suite rooms adapted for people with physical disabilities, they will be able to get the extra support they need to improve their lives. This will also free up much needed hostel space for others in need.

City's Vision

- 3.9 People sleeping rough die younger than the general population yet the cost of preventing rough sleeping or supporting someone back into independence is much less than the cost to the individual and society than a life on the streets . Our draft strategy vision is:

“To make sure no-one has the need to sleep rough in Brighton & Hove by 2020”

The City's Strategic Priorities

- 3.10 To help us come together as a city and deliver the strategic vision, we have focussed our strategy on five priority areas:

1. **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
2. **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
3. **Improving Health** – to ensure people sleeping rough are supported by health and social care services that help them to regain their independence
4. **A Safe City** – making sure people sleeping rough, residents and visitors are safe and free from intimidation
5. **Pathways to Independence** – making sure supported accommodation offers solutions appropriate to residents needs

Strategic Principle: Working together, a partnership

- 3.11 Within these priorities there is an underlying principle that, as a city, whether service commissioner, provider, community group, or individual with the desire to help, we need to work together to provide a consistent message and response to rough sleeping to support people to turn a corner and improve their lives.
- 3.12 The city's strategy needs to harness this expertise, energy and goodwill to enable all those with a stake in the city to work together and deliver our shared vision in partnership to make sure our combined efforts are not keeping people on the streets, but are focussed on getting people off the streets.

Timescales:

- 3.13 The Rough Sleeping Strategy has been developed in phases to give stakeholders opportunity to help shape the city's priorities and future action:
1. **Position Paper (Nov/Dec 2015):** this was published in November 2015 and summarised the city's current approach to rough sleeping. The Paper was

used as the basis for consultation in December 2015 which included a stakeholder summit attended by 78 professionals from a wide range of services across the community and statutory sector representing specialisms such as housing, health, care, community safety and advocacy.

2. **Draft Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016 (Mar/Apr 2016):** The results of the Position Paper consultation were used to write our draft strategy which was published for additional consultation.
3. **Final Strategy (June/July 2016):** This document. Stakeholders are encouraged to formally Pledge to the vision, aims and objectives of the strategy to ensure a unified and consistent approach across the city.
4. **Implementation 2016/17:** Delivery of the city's strategy and remodelling or redesigning services where necessary.
5. **Monitoring and review 2016/2020:** Action against the 12 goals within the strategy will be monitored and reviewed at regular interval to ensure that satisfactory progress is being made.

Approval and Adoption:

- 3.14 As the strategy has a far-reaching impact across all sectors, local people, and those sleeping rough, the final strategy is expected to be presented to a number of groups for approval, adoption and endorsement:
 - 15 June: Housing & New Homes Committee
 - 5 July: Brighton & Hove Connected
 - 11 July: Neighbourhoods, Communities & Equalities Committee
 - 12 July: Strategic Housing Partnership
 - 12 July: Health & Wellbeing Board
- 3.15 Leading figures representing organisations from the statutory and community and voluntary sector will be encouraged to sign a Pledge committing to working in partnership to delivering the vision of the strategy.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Options for service delivery and design have been reviewed as part of the development of the new Strategy and will continue to be considered and reviewed as the strategy is implemented.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Rough Sleeping Strategy was developed in stages to give stakeholders opportunity to help shape the city's priorities and future action.
- 5.2 During the Position Paper consultation (Nov/Dec 2015), a stakeholder summit was held which had 78 professionals attend, and there was online consultation through the council's consultation portal which received 36 detailed submissions covering all aspects of our proposals. The council's website, social media and press engagement was used to promote the consultation.

- 5.3 The results of the Position Paper engagement were used to write our draft strategy which was published for additional consultation in March and April 2016. Again, this was promoted through social media, local organisations and councillors and MP's.
- 5.4 The draft strategy consultation saw 85 responses were completed on the consultation portal and we received some written responses concentrating on particular aspects of the strategy (from politicians, organisations and residents).
- 5.5 We particularly wanted to encourage responses from those with an experience of rough sleeping and St Mungo's held a draft strategy consultation exercise over 2 days at The Synergy Centre that involved more than 30 people sleeping rough. In addition, 30 of those responding on the portal had an experience of rough sleeping or insecure housing.
- 5.6 Officers attended a number of stakeholder meetings to raise awareness of the consultation, stimulate debate and seek feedback on the draft strategy including:
- Health & Wellbeing Board
 - Homeless Integrated Care Board
 - Strategic Housing Partnership
 - Civil Military Partnership Board
 - Sussex Homeless Outreach Reconnection & Engagement (SHORE)
 - Equality & Inclusion Partnership
 - Better Care Board
 - Day & Street Services Working Group
 - Homeless Operational Services Forum
- 5.7 A petition³ was presented to Brighton & Hove City Council on 16 April 2016 in relation to Sussex Police, rough sleepers and begging. Whilst the petition is to the Police, there was a request that it be considered as part of the consultation on the draft strategy and passed to the Police & Crime Commissioner.
- 5.8 Those responding to the consultation recognised that homelessness and rough sleeping could happen to many of us with little warning, such as arising from the loss of a job or a relationship breakdown. These difficult times are compounded when other factors such as mental health, drug and alcohol, and other support needs may be present.
- 5.9 There was overwhelming support for the proposed vision and priorities of the strategy, with many suggestions for improvements to the way we work. Many respondents highlighted the significant challenges faced by the strategy from the fundamental issues arising from the shortage of high quality affordable housing and budget pressures. As these matters are picked up in plans such as the Housing Strategy 2015, Homelessness Strategy 2014 and the CCG Annual Operating Plan, this strategy has not replicated the actions needs to address these.
- 5.10 Other responses to the consultation reaffirmed the need for the strategy to take into account the specialist needs of particular groups who may be more

³ <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/576/913/589/sussex-police-stop-fining-rough-sleepers/>

vulnerable and require a slightly different approach, such as young people, women and LGBT* people.

5.11 As a result of feedback on the draft strategy we have refocussed our goals and strategic actions:

- **Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping:** Whilst this document provides the vision and strategic framework, we need a more detailed review of the way statutory services and community and voluntary sector groups interact on a day-to-day operational level to prevent homelessness and support people to move away from the streets. Whilst there are a large number of organisations doing incredibly good work in challenging circumstances, some organisations may need support to refocus their efforts to achieve the best outcomes for those they work with. Consultation also highlighted the need for homeless prevention work to happen much earlier as professionals and support groups may spot the signs of risk in someone before they do themselves. We will make it easier for those at risk to get advice before they reach a crisis point.
- **Rapid Assessment and Reconnection:** There was support for the permanent assessment centre and multi-agency plan approach to assessing and supporting someone's needs. Concerns were raised around the use of sit-up beds, how many, where and how long they can be used. This is being examined as part of the Integrated Support Pathway Review through 2016/17. Understandably, people were also concerned that those from outside Brighton & Hove may be reconnected either without effective support plans for their return or into a potentially dangerous situation. Through our strategy, reconnection is only to be used when a robust assessment of an individual's needs and history has been made to provide the individual with a genuine and safe route away from rough sleeping.
- **Improving Health:** Respondents welcomed the multi-disciplinary approach to tackling health needs so that people do not get passed across services. Concerns were raised about the specialist GP practice provider giving notice on the contract and pressures on mental health and substance misuse services. Through the strategy, there is a commitment to a more proactive and integrated healthcare model to support homeless residents. In addition, the Brighton & Hove Health & Wellbeing Board has committed, through the Charter for Homeless Health, to ensuring that local health services meet the needs of people who are homeless.
- **A Safe City:** This priority received the most polarised responses, split between those who wanted the city to take a harder line with enforcement against anti-social behaviour and begging, and those seeking to understand the personal circumstances that may have driven people to the street community. This priority is about keeping everybody safe – those sleeping rough, those in the wider street community, businesses, residents and visitors. We want to work with the street community to encourage them to seek the support they need and make it clear that some behaviours are not acceptable. With half of those begging being housed, people wanting to help those sleeping rough are encouraged to volunteer or donate to charities.

- **Pathways to Independence:** Concerns were raised about the quality of the temporary accommodation used with suggestions that some people are choosing to return to the streets rather than stay in the accommodation offered. The council carries out regular inspections of premises and is working with providers to ensure they understand their responsibilities and can achieve the required standards. Residents are provided information on how to report issues with the management of the accommodation. Due to the strength of the concerns raised from a variety of sources, we are carrying out further reviews with stakeholders and will take any necessary action that results from this. Services also highlighted that some of those sleeping rough have been evicted from temporary, hostels or other supported housing, and whilst inappropriate behaviour, particularly that which puts others at risk cannot be tolerated. The council will review eviction protocols to make sure they are balanced with the right level of support.

5.12 The Brighton & Hove Fairness Commission is due to publish its findings on 27 June 2016. The Commission has looked at how to make the city a fairer and more equal place to live and work. It was set up by the council, but is an independent body and has been listening to the concerns of residents, community organisations and businesses. The findings will inform the council's budgets and make sure resources are being used to tackle inequality. In response to the recommendations of the Fairness Commission, it may be appropriate to amend or add actions to the Rough Sleeping Strategy. Any changes will have due regard to the extensive engagement carried out as part of the development of this strategy and be managed through the council's formal response to the Commission's recommendations.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The issue of rough sleeping has become more acute recently with a visibly increased presence on the streets. This not only impacts on the individual's life chances, but also the city's reputation and costs to public services and business.
- 6.2 We are concerned that numbers could increase further over the next year with the natural draw of the city, the impact of welfare reforms and the high cost of accessing and sustaining accommodation in the city's private rented sector.
- 6.3 The city's current approach to rough sleeping needs to be re-assessed to ensure that the city's commissioners, service providers and advocates are working in partnership to a clear strategic plan that will reduce rough sleeping in the city and improve outcomes for rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 Any housing related costs associated with implementation of this strategy are expected to be within the £0.002m funding available.

Finance Officer Consulted: Neil Smith

Date: 24 May 2016

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks

Date: 23 May 2016

Legal Implications:

- 7.3 The Terms of Reference of the Neighbourhoods, Communities and Equalities Committee include the co-ordination of the Council's policies and actions in relation to street homelessness, and in conjunction with the Policy, Resources and Growth Committee, Housing and New Homes Committee and Health & Wellbeing Board to ensure that appropriate action is taken. It is therefore appropriate for 2016 Rough Sleeping Strategy to be put before the Neighbourhoods, Communities and Equalities Committee and the Health & Wellbeing Board.
- 7.4 It is good practice for there to be proper consultation when a new strategy is being formulated. Section 5 of the report sets out the extensive consultation which has taken place in the development of this Strategy.
- 7.5 There will be a significant portion of the cohort of street population who will have a range of issues which may then bring them under the umbrella of the Equalities Act and there may be some legal duties owed to them depending on their level of need. The Care Act may also apply in some instances. This should be noted in relation to the consultation process going forward. Reference to the Care Act is within the report – this creates a duty between bodies to co-operate where there is identified need.
- 7.6 The information in the report reveals groups covered by the Equality Act and in particular those within the LGBT umbrella, have been recognised. Their needs have clearly been identified and provision is being made for them. Ongoing monitoring for the life of the strategy will track the impact on these groups and consideration will need to be given on what actions are needed if this develops.
- 7.7 The proposals themselves are proportionate and reasonable in particular in relation to the financial background and in relation to the social / housing context within the city, which has been set out.

Lawyer Consulted: Abraham Ghebre-Ghiorghis Date: 2 June 2016

Equalities Implications:

- 7.8 Rough sleepers are a vulnerable group more likely to have contact with the criminal justice system, drug, alcohol and health conditions, be excluded from mainstream services and have much worse outcomes than other groups. Measures to reduce rough sleeping will have a direct impact on reducing inequality in Brighton & Hove. An **Equalities Impact Assessment** has been completed for this strategy which is included at **Appendix 2**.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.9 None directly arising from this report.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 7.10 Rough sleepers are more likely to commit crime and be the victim of crime. Measures to reduce rough sleeping will decrease the level of crime and perception of crime and increase the availability of the emergency services making the city a safer place for residents and visitors alike.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 7.11 Genuine good practice that does not simply result in rough sleepers being pushed to less visible locations appears limited and highlights the challenge faced by the city. We need to ensure that our approach does not view rough sleepers as a problem to move but provides real solutions to prevent rough sleeping and improve the lives of those affected.

Public Health Implications:

- 7.12 As part of the Better Care initiative overseen by the Health and Wellbeing Board, an integrated health and care model for the single homeless is being developed. Although the remit of this work is broader than rough sleeping, it will be closely linked with the emerging work to develop a Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 7.13 If we do not reduce rough sleeping there will be:
- More early deaths
 - Reputation damage as a caring city
 - Tourism impact from street begging
 - Crisis pressure on Police, A&E and other services
 - Crime / ASB associated with rough sleeping / street drinking
 - Increased costs to the local authority, Police and NHS
 - Increased use of acute services

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1. Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016
2. Equalities Impact Assessment

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016: Consultation Draft, Neighbourhoods, Communities & Equalities Committee, 14 March 2016:
 - Report: [http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000885/M00005952/AI00050039/\\$20160302152055_008525_0036609_ReportRoughSleepingStrategy2016ConsultationDraftctte.docxA.ps.pdf](http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000885/M00005952/AI00050039/$20160302152055_008525_0036609_ReportRoughSleepingStrategy2016ConsultationDraftctte.docxA.ps.pdf)
 - Draft Strategy: [http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000885/M00005952/AI00050039/\\$20160302152056_008748_0036610_RoughSleepingStrategy2016DraftStrategy.docxA.ps.pdf](http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000885/M00005952/AI00050039/$20160302152056_008748_0036610_RoughSleepingStrategy2016DraftStrategy.docxA.ps.pdf)
2. Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016: Consultation Draft, Housing & New Homes Committee, 2 March 2016:

- Report: [http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000884/M00005932/AI00050035/\\$2016022215134_2_008524_0036333_ReportRoughSleepingStrategy2016ConsultationDraftv3.docxA.ps.pdf](http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000884/M00005932/AI00050035/$2016022215134_2_008524_0036333_ReportRoughSleepingStrategy2016ConsultationDraftv3.docxA.ps.pdf)
 - Draft Strategy: [http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000884/M00005932/AI00050035/\\$2016022215134_2_008612_0036334_RoughSleepingStrategy2016DraftStrategypremeeting.docxA.ps.pdf](http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000884/M00005932/AI00050035/$2016022215134_2_008612_0036334_RoughSleepingStrategy2016DraftStrategypremeeting.docxA.ps.pdf)
3. Rough Sleeper Strategy Update, Neighbourhoods, Communities & Equalities Committee, 5 October 2015: [http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000885/M00005949/AI00047907/\\$20150923114229_007841_0032963_ReportRoughSleeperStrategyUpdate2015.docxA.ps.pdf](http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000885/M00005949/AI00047907/$20150923114229_007841_0032963_ReportRoughSleeperStrategyUpdate2015.docxA.ps.pdf)
 4. Housing Related Support Budget & Commissioning, Housing & New Homes Committee, 23 September 2015: [http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000884/M00005929/AI00047254/\\$20150914111457_007769_0032819_HousingRelatedSupportCommissioningUpdateforHousingNewHomesCommitte.docxA.ps.pdf](http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/Published/C00000884/M00005929/AI00047254/$20150914111457_007769_0032819_HousingRelatedSupportCommissioningUpdateforHousingNewHomesCommitte.docxA.ps.pdf)

