



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Scrutiny Commission 26 January 2023

Wards affected: All Wards

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Review and Strategy

Report of Director (Community Services)

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To present the Homelessness Review and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 1.2 To update on feedback following consultation.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That members endorse the strategy and subsequent approach to the prevention of homelessness, in all its forms.
- 2.2 That members note the action plan and associated work streams that are now in progress.

3. Background to the report

- 3.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 requires all local authorities to have a Homelessness Strategy in place. The National Rough Sleeper Strategy 2018 extended this requirement to include rough sleeping. Ongoing implications from the Covid-19 pandemic compounded by the emergent cost of living crisis continue to result in more people being at risk of homelessness due to increased financial hardship. In order to focus our approach to the prevention and management of both homelessness and rough sleeping within the borough a recent review was completed and the results of which have informed the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The review is set out in Appendix A and provides a summary of current pressures, customer

profiles and wider risks that will impact our ability to support those who are homeless, rough sleeping or at risk of either.

3.2 In May 2022 a stakeholder event was held to ensure that agencies involved in preventing and addressing homelessness, both indirectly and directly, had an opportunity to inform the proposed strategy. During the stakeholder event 5 priority themes were identified which have provided the basis for our 3 year Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (Appendix B) and the 5 key priorities are set out below:

1. We will continue working to prevent all forms of homelessness
2. We will take action to prevent rough sleeping
3. We will work towards increasing the availability of affordable and suitable rented accommodation, reducing our reliance on temporary accommodation
4. We will take action to establish greater local collaboration between partners
5. We will ensure that our services and solutions are personalised

3.3 Consultation findings

In order for our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy to be effective and relevant, feedback from our customers and stakeholders is essential. As such, the draft strategy has recently been out to consultation and the key finding from the consultation are set out in Appendix C, with 94% of the 109 people that responded to the consultation agreeing with the 5 key priorities identified.

3.4 In order to meet the objectives set out within our strategy Appendix D provides an action plan that will be kept under review and provides a focus for our service in order to meet our overall ambition; to prevent homelessness and eradicate rough sleeping.

3.5 Subject to member approval, it is recommended that the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy is taken forward for formal approval.

3.6 Pressures on the service

Pressures and demands on the homelessness service have been sustained since the beginning of Covid-19 and these pressures continue to be exacerbated because of the cost of living crisis that is now affecting most households, including home owners and renters, as people are no longer as able to meet their financial liabilities in respect to their mortgage or rent commitments alongside other living costs. We are also seeing many private sector landlords withdrawing from the market due to their own financial situation. As such, we expect to see a rise in people accessing our services for housing advice and assistance over the coming months, and an increase in the number of homelessness cases next year, as our residents struggle to balance their financial commitments in the face of excessive living costs. This

will result in additional financial challenges for the council which will be picked up in future budget reports.

4. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules

4.1 Open session.

5. Financial implications [CS]

5.1 Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council received £231,567 in flexible homeless funding for 2022/23. Additional grant funding of £36,379 has been announced by DLUHC to support homelessness pressures over the winter.

5.2 The current levels of demand for homelessness is higher than historically experienced indicating this may need a higher level of financial support in the budget setting process for 2023/24 in order to fully fund this service.

6. Legal implications [ST]

6.1 Please see detail in the Background to the Report.

7. Corporate Plan implications

7.1 The Homelessness Review and draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy aligns with the following corporate objectives;

People:

Ensure that vulnerable residents are supported and the capacity of the local voluntary sector is sustained and developed

Give children and young people the best start in life and offer them the opportunity to thrive in their communities

Place:

Improve the quality of existing homes and enable the delivery of affordable housing

Prosperity:

Work with partners to raise aspirations and boost opportunities for training, employment and housing

8. Consultation

8.1 None

9. Risk implications

9.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

9.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) risks

Risk description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Efficacy of service delivery	The proposed strategy identifies agreed priorities to ensure that service delivery is effective and relevant to the needs of customers, wider objectives etc.	Head of Housing
External short term funding arrangements	A number of key posts within the Housing Options team are contingent on the continuation of government funding, to mitigate this we will review resources and ensuring that they remain appropriate to business need.	Head of Housing
Lack of accommodation	Mitigations identified through the accompanying action plan.	Head of Housing

10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

10.1 Implementation of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy and action plan will ensure that the Housing Options Service provides a focussed approach to meeting the needs of the most vulnerable in our communities.

11. Climate implications

11.1 The strategy will be delivered to ensure that Carbon Reduction principles are prioritised.

12. Corporate implications

12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data protection implications
- Voluntary sector

Background papers: None

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