



REPORT TITLE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2015 -19
REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (COMMUNITY DIRECTION)

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To obtain approval of the Homelessness Strategy 2015 – 19, attached in appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Council approves the Homelessness Strategy 2015 – 19

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

- 3.1 There is a statutory requirement for the council to have a Homelessness Strategy which details their approach to dealing with homelessness and the actions required to further develop services and address issues in their particular area.

- 3.2. The Homelessness Strategy attached in appendix 1 details the following priorities:

- 1 Close liaison with, and increased use of the private rented sector to meet the need of priority housing applicants, including through the use of the Tailored Housing Solutions service;
- 2 Proactive engagement with people at risk of homelessness, particularly with those from vulnerable and disadvantaged groups;
- 3 Increasing work with partners in the voluntary and private sectors to ensure a joined up service is offered to people at risk of homelessness;
- 4 Maximisation of the delivery of new affordable housing in the right place, of the right type;
- 5 Identification of funding sources to grow the service.
- 6 Review of temporary accommodation.

- 3.3 To inform the Strategy consultation was carried out with service users and stakeholders. There were four responses to the consultation, all from service providers and / or stakeholders. Respondents were asked to identify the three key priorities for the future of service. All agreed that two of the priorities are priorities 2 and 3, with opinions split between priorities 5 and 6 for the third priority. In addition, a comment was received by a support provider on the importance of Health Partnerships and the link between ill health and homelessness, including poorer outcomes for children. These comments have been incorporated into the final draft of the Homelessness Strategy.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (KP)

- 4.1 The production of this Strategy has been met within existing budgets.

- 4.2 The Council has a dedicated budget set up for fulfilment of its homelessness obligation within the General Fund. The total net budget for 2014/2015 is £163,323 which is broken down as follows:

	2014/2015 Latest Budget
	£
Salaries	60,110
Prevention Bonds	50,535
Bed and Breakfast	37,000
Domestic Violence Sanctuary Scheme	1,000
Universal Credit Preparation	7,982
Supplies and Services	41,640
Recharges	33,260
Total Expenditure	231,527
Bonds/B&B Contributions	-5,700
Housing Benefits	-12,000
Homelessness Grant	-50,004
Total Income	-67,704
Net Expenditure	163,823

4.3 A number of the initiatives outlined in this Strategy may have further financial implications. These will be assessed upon delivery.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [EH]

5.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 placed a duty upon local authorities to carry out a review of homelessness in their area and formulate and publish a strategy for the future based on the results of that review, outlining how the council and their partners would work to prevent homelessness and ensure accommodation and support for those who were homeless or at risk of homelessness.

5.2 The strategy is not only for preventing homelessness in their district but also for securing that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in their district who are or may become homeless and for securing the satisfactory provision of support for people in their district who are or may become homeless or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.

5.3 The Council as local housing authority must take their homelessness strategy into account in the exercise of their functions.

5.4 As required, consultation has been conducted prior to bringing the strategy forward for adoption.

5.5 A new homelessness strategy must be completed every five years and a copy of the published strategy must be made available at the council's principal office for inspection and copies provided on request on payment of a charge if required

6. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The adoption of the Homelessness Strategy meets the Corporate Plan Aim 3 – supporting individuals – to identify and support the most vulnerable people and Aim 4 – providing value for money and pro active services – move towards early intervention and prevention.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultation took place between 19 January 2015 and 16 February 2015. Groups consulted are service users, stakeholders, voluntary organisations and Registered Providers.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

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

8.2 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.

8.3

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
No Homeless Strategy in place identifying priorities and future actions for improvement of services, impacting on customers.	Ensure adoption of Homelessness Strategy	Chief Officer (Housing, Community Safety and Partnerships)

9. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Homelessness Strategy is concerned with assisting the most vulnerable people in the Borough who may be at risk of homelessness. This covers both urban and rural settlements as the risk of homelessness affects residents in all areas of the Borough.

10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

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

- Community Safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset Management implications
- Human Resources implications
- Planning Implications
- Voluntary Sector

Background papers: Appendix 1: Homelessness Strategy 2015 – 19

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