

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Early Intervention and Support (Deputy Chief Executive) (Introduced by the Executive Member for Homes and Housing)	Executive Cabinet	18/06/2020

HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY AND REVIEW 2019-2024

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To set out the legal responsibility placed on the council to carry out a review of homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough and to produce a homelessness strategy based on that review.
2. To outline the homelessness and rough sleeping review and strategy for which approval is sought.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

3. That the draft homelessness and rough sleeping review (appendix 1) and strategy (appendix 2) be approved.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

4. Since the Homelessness Act 2002 Local Authorities have had a statutory duty to formally review homelessness and rough sleeping within the borough and to publish a strategy based on the review at least every five years.
5. The review indicates that Chorley is ahead of the national shift towards a preventative focus with a positive ratio of prevention to crisis-point casework. It further shows that Chorley has withstood rising trends of rough sleeping seen elsewhere. The key areas identified to offer further improvement are:
 - Mental health and substance misuse support
 - Budgeting support
 - Addressing housing stock imbalances
 - Strengthening support for those in the private rental sector
6. The strategy aims to ensure the right support is offered to anyone facing homelessness in the borough and takes an early intervention and preventative approach to building resilience to the underlying causes of homelessness from the community level. To benefit from the synergy of aligned objectives the action plan is integrated into the existing priorities of the wider housing strategy:
 - Securing quality across all housing tenures
 - Supporting people to remain independent in their own homes
 - Preventing homelessness and rough sleeping
 - Supporting a balanced housing market

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Reason Please bold as appropriate	1, a change in service provision that impacts upon the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more	2, a contract worth £100,000 or more
	3, a new or unprogrammed capital scheme of £100,000 or more	4, Significant impact in environmental, social or physical terms in two or more wards

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

- Publishing a Homelessness Review and Strategy are statutory requirements and the previous document is due to be renewed, the draft review and strategy meet these requirements.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- Due to statutory requirements for a homelessness review and strategy no other options could be considered.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	✓	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy homes and communities	✓	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	✓

BACKGROUND

- The current Homelessness Strategy and Review was released in 2015 and is due to be refreshed. There have been significant changes to legislation related to homelessness since the release of the previous strategy, most notably the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The draft review and strategy consider these changes alongside the current local situation updating the action plan while bringing it into line with the councils wider strategic focus.

REVIEW

- The draft review highlights that homelessness is often a consequence of more complex underlying problems and that an effective solution does not simply focus on the immediate housing problem but takes account of these underlying causes and sets in motion the correct support mechanisms.

12. The local situation is illustrated by considering current and likely future levels of homelessness against the wider regional and national context which highlights that Chorley is ahead of trends elsewhere.
13. In the review current homelessness resources are mapped against presenting reason data to identify how the council meets various needs and to help identify areas where there is potential for further improvement.
14. The key areas identified for strategic focus are:
 - Mental health and substance misuse support
 - Budgeting support
 - Addressing housing stock imbalances
 - Strengthening support for those in the private rental sector

STRATEGY

15. The draft strategy takes an early intervention and community resilience approach to homelessness. It recognises the complex nature of the problem and seeks to ensure the correct support is offered for underlying issues alongside resolving the direct housing need.
16. The actions set out to further improve homelessness prevention and support in the borough. These are aligned within the existing housing strategies priorities, this allows for cohesion with wider council strategy and benefits from the synergy of aligned objectives.
17. The key actions of each priority take an asset-based approach to enacting the findings of the review, seeking to mobilise community resources to deliver support at the earliest opportunity before formal thresholds are met.
18. Legislation from the Homelessness Act 2002 mandates that the strategy meets three key objectives:
 - Preventing Homelessness
 - Securing sufficient accommodation
 - Ensuring satisfactory support is available
19. How each mandatory requirement is met is shown in the action plan with a breakdown of each action and the corresponding requirements it meets.
20. The action plan also points out the connections between the review and the strategy by giving justifications for each action based on findings from the review.
21. There should be no financial impact based on the draft action plan as it aims to deliver new processes using community-based assets and existing resources.

CONSULTATION

22. The draft review and strategy have been shared with partners and other stakeholders and a consultation was held from 17th February 2020 to 17th April 2020.
23. The consultation included registered housing providers, other public service providers and voluntary and community sector groups which offer homelessness services.
24. As a result of the consultation feedback received it has been agreed that an assessment for any further necessary changes caused by covid-19 will be made prior to the next formal review in 2024.
25. This further assessment will be completed once it is reasonable to distinguish between temporary and long-term impacts from covid-19 on homelessness.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

26. Given the legal requirements to have and update the homelessness strategy as set out above and the need to seek consultation with partners, failure to approve the draft may risk the Council failing to meet statutory requirements.
27. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	✓
Legal	✓	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	✓
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	✓

COMMENTS OF THE SERVICE LEAD FOR TRANSFORMATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

28. An Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed for the strategy to consider its implications, particularly for different equality strands. The assessment indicates that the strategy should not negatively impact on any groups and includes specific actions to achieve positive impact for those with protected characteristics. The strategy reinforces the councils commitment to ensuring clean, safe and healthy homes and communities, and equality of access for all.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

29. The strategy will be delivered within existing budgets and Government grant support.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

30. The legal responsibilities of the Council are correctly identified in the report.

CHRIS SINNOTT
DIRECTOR OF EARLY INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT (DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE)

Report Author	Ext	Date
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