

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET		
SUBJECT:	HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION STRATEGY 2018 - 2023		
DATE OF DECISION:	20 NOVEMBER 2018		
REPORT OF:	Cabinet Member for Homes and Culture		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY			
NOT APPLICABLE			

BRIEF SUMMARY

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires the Local Authority to review all forms of homelessness in the city and produce a new Homelessness Strategy, based on the review findings, every five years.

This is the fourth Homelessness Prevention Strategy the city of Southampton has produced since the Homelessness Act 2002. The strategy builds on the successes of the previous strategy (2013-2018) and has been developed in the context of the new provisions and duties of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which came into force in April 2018.

A Homelessness Prevention Review for Southampton was completed and published in June 2018. This determined the extent to which Southampton's population is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, whether this is likely to change in the future, what is currently being done and by whom, and what resources are available to prevent and tackle homelessness.

The draft strategy has been developed in partnership with key stakeholders involved in homelessness prevention across the city. Evidence from the review, as well as a number of surveys and stakeholder engagements have been used to inform and develop the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018 – 2023. The new objectives reflect our findings, focusing on 4 key themes:

1. Early Intervention to stop people becoming homeless or having to sleep rough;
2. Providing support to people who are homeless to address their needs and avoid repeat homelessness;
3. Provide adequate temporary accommodation for short periods only; and
4. Maximise access to affordable and appropriate homes in the city.

The Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018 – 2023 is included at appendix 1.

The strategy takes account of evidence from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the new and emerging challenges and opportunities created by the

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. This Act strengthens the duty to prevent homelessness and intervene earlier by developing a homeless prevention and relief plan for those where homelessness is threatened, as well as introducing a new requirement for public authorities to refer service users who they think are threatened with losing their home for housing advice.	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
(i)	To approve the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018 - 2023
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	<p>It is a statutory requirement for Local Authorities to review homelessness within its district every 5 years and produce a strategy which focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preventing homelessness in their district; • securing that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in their district who are or may become homeless; • securing the satisfactory provision of support for people in their district.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
2.	None
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
Background	
3.	<p>There is a legislative requirement under the Homelessness Act 2002 for Local Authorities to develop a Homelessness Prevention Strategy every 5 years. It must detail how the council intends to prevent homelessness within its district and secure sufficient accommodation and support for those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Local Authorities must inform the strategy by conducting a review of local homeless needs in its area. It should set out the levels, and likely future levels of homelessness in the district and include any activities which the local authority are contributing to, to prevent homelessness.</p>
4.	<p>The Southampton Homelessness Prevention Review 2018 was completed and published on the Southampton Public Health Intelligence website in June. A link to the report is shown here: http://www.publichealth.southampton.gov.uk/healthintelligence/jsna/homelessness-prevention.aspx</p> <p>The review highlights a number of successes Southampton has achieved through the last strategy, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southampton City Council currently manage roughly 148 family units of temporary accommodation across the city; • Southampton City Council further commission an additional 153 bed spaces for single adults, Young People and young parents who are homeless, with support; • Southampton has a higher rate of cases where positive action, such as mediation and intervention, was taken to prevent households becoming homeless, compared to the England average; • There was a 24% decrease in homelessness acceptances in Southampton between 2012/13 - 2015/16, from 196 acceptances to 149. This is better than the national average, which saw a 38% increase in the same period. However, latest figures indicate that this has risen again in Southampton to

	<p>258 homelessness acceptances for 2016/17;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of young people referred for Housing Related Support (HRS) has decreased from 140 in 2012/13 to 97 in 2016/17; • The average length of stay in bed and breakfasts in 2016/17 was 11.6 days, which is much shorter than the statutory limit of 6 weeks; • 146 people were offered a bed and support to secure other accommodation through our Severe Weather Emergency Provision between November 2017 and March 2018; • A cross sector homelessness group comprising individuals from faith groups, voluntary sectors, businesses and statutory agencies have recently launched the Southampton Homelessness Charter and a Street Support website designed to work to combat street sleeping and begging.
5.	<p>The review, however, also identified a number of challenges for Southampton going forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National evidence shows that rough sleeping is often associated with alcohol, substance misuse and complex mental health needs. In Southampton, hospital admissions for both alcohol and poisoning by illicit drugs are higher than the national average. In total, 683.4 hospital admissions for alcohol related conditions per 100,000 population compared to the national average of 610 per 100,000 population and 45.9 illicit drug related admissions per 100,000 compared to the England average of 25.4. • The numbers of people sleeping rough in Southampton is higher than the national average (0.20 per 1,000 household compared with Southampton 0.28 per 1,000 household) but better than other South East cities such as Portsmouth at 0.46 per 1000 households, according to The Department for Communities and Local Government 2017 • The most common reasons for homelessness in Southampton is the end of a private rented Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST – rising from 43 acceptances in 2015/16 to 103 in 2017/18) a situation that is common across many other areas. • Increasing housing costs across the county contributes to increasing levels of homelessness. According to the affordability ratio (Public Health England) Southampton has less housing which is considered ‘affordable’ to local residents than England as a whole, but is more affordable than the wider Hampshire area. • Nationally, advice services indicate that some landlords may be increasingly reluctant to rent to benefit claimants due to the changes introduced with welfare reforms, which could put more pressure on housing • Local Housing Allowance (LHA) does not cover the average cost of rent in Southampton, for example LHA for a one bedroom property is £506 but the average rental amongst the lower priced properties is £550 (Valuation Office Agency). • People with dependent children make up the largest ‘priority need’ group of people who are homeless in Southampton. • Southampton has a higher proportion of children living in poverty (30.3%) than the England average (27.3%) according to The Centre for Research in Social Policy 2017 (CRSP).
	<p>Strategy Development</p>
6.	<p>In reviewing the strategy, an initial survey was developed and circulated to key stakeholders across the city, who have first-hand experience in addressing issues</p>

	around homelessness in Southampton. The survey was live from 30 th January 2018 until 1 st March 2018.
7.	<p>A total of 33 stakeholders completed the survey, including representatives from Southampton City Council, No Limits, Go Southampton, Solent NHS Trust, The Salvation Army, Society of St James and many other organisations. The engagement included a face-to-face meeting with the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Company to ascertain their views. The feedback from this survey identified a number of considerations for developing the new strategy. They said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We need to maximise the number of available homes in the city to all sectors of the community including homeless people, including more temporary accommodation.” • “Housing needs to be affordable and of a suitable standard that promotes health and wellbeing, with a view to sustaining a tenancy.” • “We need services that can offer early interventions and support to individuals and families starting to experience problems that could lead to them becoming homeless.” • “There should be more cooperation with private landlords to encourage confidence and balance the demands of accommodation for homeless.” • “We should support those with complex needs to engage with services and improve outcomes for all vulnerable people, including those people who find themselves sleeping rough.” • “We should adopt a citywide, multi-agency approach to homelessness prevention.”
8.	<p>As a result of the feedback gathered from both the homelessness review, a number of stakeholder workshops and the survey, a list of objectives for the draft strategy was developed. The draft Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018-23 focuses on four key objectives. They are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Early Intervention to stop people becoming homeless or having to sleep rough; 2. Providing support to people who are homeless to address their needs and avoid repeat homelessness; 3. Provide adequate temporary accommodation for short periods only; and 4. Maximise access to affordable and appropriate homes in the city.
9.	<p>A further survey went live to the public and stakeholders from 31st August to 17th September 2018 to gather feedback on the objectives and commitments which are proposed for the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018-2023. A total of 229 people responded to the survey, including residents and visitors of Southampton, employees or volunteers working with people who are homeless and people who are currently homeless or who have been homeless. The results of the survey were very positive, with the overall majority of respondents in favour of the proposed objectives, and the commitments behind them. A summary of the results of the public and stakeholder survey can be found at appendix 2.</p>
10.	<p>Findings from the survey were then taken to a stakeholder engagement workshop which was held on 5th October 2018. Representatives from organisations across the city attend this meeting, including delegates from Southampton City Council, Solent NHS Trust, Department for Work and Pensions, The Salvation Army, Society of Saint James, Street Pastors, Citizens Advice, Two Saints, Avenue Church Deposit Scheme, No Limits and more. At the workshop, delegates were given an</p>

	opportunity to review and give feedback on the draft strategy through a round table discussion, as well as exploring how partners can work together to deliver the strategic objectives.
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11.	The Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018-2023 will be monitored over the course of its 5 year implementation by the Southampton Homelessness Steering group, where the action plan will be regularly monitored and annually reviewed.
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RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

12.	There are no direct financial implications arising from the adoption of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018-2023. Any indirect financial implications will need to be contained within existing budgets.
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Property/Other

13.	None
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LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

14.	The duty to undertake a homelessness review is set out in section 2(1) of the Homelessness Act 2002.
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15.	The duty for Local Authorities to develop and implement a Homelessness Prevention Strategy is set out in section 3(1) of the Homelessness Act 2002.
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Other Legal Implications:

16.	Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended), requires responsible authorities to consider crime and disorder in the exercise of all of their duties, activities and decision making. Such authorities must exercise their functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can, to prevent crime and disorder in its area. The Strategy will be delivered in accordance with this section 17 duty, as well as the Council's duties under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.
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RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

17.	No implications at this stage.
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POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

18.	The Strategy is consistent with and not contrary to the Council's policy framework. The Homelessness Prevention Strategy will support the delivery the following strategic outcomes, as set out in the Council Strategy 2016-2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people get a good start in life • People in Southampton live safe, healthy, independent lives • Southampton is a modern, attractive city where people are proud to live and work.
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KEY DECISION?	No
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WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All wards
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018 - 2023
2.	Southampton Public and Stakeholder Engagement summary

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	Yes
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Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	<p>Southampton Homelessness Prevention Review</p> <p>http://www.publichealth.southampton.gov.uk/images/homelessness-prevention-review-june-2018.pdf</p>