



CABINET: Tuesday, 26 March 2024

**EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW &
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 14th March
2024**

LSC: 20th March 2024

Report of: Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing & Resources

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor Portfolio Holder for Housing

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SUBJECT: DRAFT HOMELESSNESS & ROUGH SLEEPERS STRATEGY 2024-29

Wards affected: (All Wards);

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To consider and agree the Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Strategy 2024-29 subject to consultation

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 2.1 That the Strategy be considered and any agreed comments be referred to Cabinet for consideration.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

- 3.1 That subject to consultation the Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Strategy attached at Appendix 1 of the report be approved.
- 3.2 That the Head of Housing, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, be given delegated authority to make updates and changes as required following public consultation, and thereafter to implement and deliver the strategy.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 introduced a duty on local authorities to regularly review homelessness in their area and to produce a Homelessness Strategy.

- 4.2 To inform the strategy the Council is required to carry out a Homelessness Review.

This review must cover:

- The current and future levels of homelessness
 - The provision of services to prevent homelessness, provide accommodation for homeless households and support those at risk of homelessness
 - The resources available to prevent and tackle homelessness.
- 4.3 The 2023 Review considered the legislative and policy context, and the impact of demographic change, the economy and the housing market on homelessness: identifying key issues and any gaps in service.

5.0 HOMELESSNESS REVIEW FINDINGS

- 5.1 Some of the key findings from the Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Review 2023 were:

- Demand for housing is increasing.
- In line with the national trend, homelessness in the Borough is increasing.
- The numbers of homeless people needing to go into temporary accommodation is increasing as is their length of stay.
- Rough sleeping in the borough remains low, but those at risk of rough sleeping is increasing.

6.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 6.1 The draft strategy has been developed taking account of the Homelessness Review, consultation with partners and feedback from customers.
- 6.2 The Draft Homelessness Strategy 2023-28, as attached at Appendix 1, outlines
- the Council's duties to homeless people.
 - the national and local context including the recent changes in legislation which impact the way that homelessness is assessed and responded to,
 - the progress we have made since the last strategy.
 - how we work with partners to prevent and relieve homelessness.
 - our vision and priorities.
 - an action plan outlining the task we will undertake to achieve our strategic aims.
- 6.3 The vision outlined in the strategy is 'to prevent homelessness in West Lancashire, helping residents to find and keep their home'. To achieve our vision and stop the cycle of homelessness we will strengthen and build on our work with partners,

seeking out funding opportunities and develop new and innovative solutions to prevent and relieve homelessness.

6.4 The key objectives set out in the draft strategy are:

- Preventing Homelessness
- Relieving Homelessness
- Improve Support to Prevent, relieve and stop reoccurring homelessness.

6.5 The Action Plan which forms part of the draft strategy, details the actions that will be undertaken to ensure these objectives are met.

6.6 Following Cabinet approval of the Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Strategy there will be a further period of public consultation, to allow stakeholders and the public to provide feedback. Authority is therefore sought for the Head of Housing, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to be given delegated authority to make updates and changes as required following the aforementioned consultation, and thereafter to implement and deliver the strategy.

6.7 In the event that feedback from the consultation requires a fundamental change to the Strategy a further report detailing the changes will be brought back before Members for consideration.

7.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The actions contained in the draft strategy will help to improve the services provided to all who are faced with homelessness with the aim of preventing households becoming homeless.

8.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are some financial/resource implications arising from this report in respect of specific tasks within the action plan. Where possible, these will be met using existing resources and external funding bids.

8.2 At present whilst some staffing costs are funded via the GRA, 3 temporary posts, and our homelessness prevention activities eg provision of temporary and hotel accommodation, Rough Sleepers Support Service, the provision of Sanctuary measures for victims of violence, payments toward rent in advance and deposits; are funded through the Homelessness Prevention Grant from central government and a successful bid to the Rough Sleepers Initiative 2022-2025.

8.3 The Homeless Prevention Grant is provided to the authority each year to support its delivery of services to prevent and tackle homelessness, funding for the next year will be:

Local Authority	Homelessness Prevention Grant - 2023-24	Homelessness Prevention Grant - 2024-25
West Lancashire	£147,238	£155,412

- 8.4 To complete many of the actions within the strategy we will work in partnership with key stakeholders in the voluntary sector to identify opportunities to seek external funding and deliver better outcomes.

9.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 The actions referred to in this report are covered by the scheme of delegation to officers and any necessary changes have been made in the relevant risk registers.

10.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Strategy aims to promote the wellbeing of our residents by providing help and support to those who are, or may become, homeless. People who have experienced homelessness are more likely to have poor physical and mental health, with poor health being both a cause and consequence of homelessness. By delivering the actions within the strategy to prevent, relieve and support those at risk of homelessness there will be a direct positive impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

There is a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders, therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is required. A formal equality impact assessment is attached as an Appendix to this report, the results of which have been taken into account in the Recommendations contained within this report.

Appendices

1. Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Strategy
2. Equality Impact Assessment