

CITY COUNCIL – 12 NOVEMBER 2018

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PLANNING, HOUSING AND HERITAGE

THE NOTTINGHAM HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION STRATEGY 2019 TO 2024

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 It is a statutory requirement for local areas to produce a strategy outlining how they will prevent and respond to homelessness. Nottingham's current strategy will expire at the end of 2018 and the new Homelessness Prevention Strategy for 2019 to 2024 (see Appendix 1) has been developed and agreed by a cross-sector partnership led by Nottingham City Council.
- 1.2 The content of the strategy is in line with the findings from the 2017 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment chapter on Homelessness and is further informed by insight provided by stakeholders in the public, community, voluntary and faith sectors during targeted engagement sessions.
- 1.3 The strategy sets out a partnership approach to the early identification of needs and delivery of a responsive and flexible person-centred system, involving comprehensive assessment and a mixed economy of support and accommodation solutions. Through addressing the causes and reasons for homelessness, the strategy aims to reduce the risk of homelessness in a way that is sustainable.
- 1.4 The new strategy contains four focussed themes, each with a set of priorities as follows:
1. Addressing the causes of homelessness
Priority areas include multiple and complex needs, violence and abuse, mental health issues, financial vulnerability and unsafe accommodation.
 2. Homelessness prevention
Priority areas include working with landlords, tenants and families to reduce evictions from parental home, private sector housing, social sector tenancies, supported accommodation and institutional settings such as prison or hospital.
 3. Homelessness Relief
Priority areas include maximising and further utilising existing provision and introducing a range of new accommodation and support to move people out of homelessness in a way that is long lasting
 4. Tackling Rough Sleeping
Priority areas include identification, assessment and appropriate response in order to engage and resettle rough sleepers and reduce rates of repeat homelessness
- 1.5 The new strategy will be supported by a sector-wide combined action plan, which will be informed by the activity identified by partners through their pledges to the new Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Charter. The Homelessness Prevention Strategy Implementation Group (SIG) will review progress against the action plan monthly and it will be refreshed annually, in line with the annual review of homelessness.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To approve the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2019 to 2024, as set out in Appendix 1.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2019 to 2024 fulfils the statutory duty to outline a localised approach to homelessness prevention and response.

3.2 A robust process of stakeholder engagement and analysis of data and insight has provided the evidence base for the content of the new strategy, to ensure it is tailored toward local need.

3.3 The Constitution of Nottingham City Council requires Full Council to approve and adopt the new strategy.

4 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To do nothing would leave the city without a strategy for homelessness prevention, which would leave a statutory duty unfulfilled.

4.2 Producing a shorter-term strategy would restrict the city's response to current and urgent need. This would present challenges in meeting longer term aims of enhanced prevention and wider collaboration opportunities.

5 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION)

5.1 The new Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Strategy is being introduced at a time of change. Earlier this year, the Homelessness Reduction Act was implemented across the country which significantly changed the way local authorities must respond to people at risk of homelessness. The 2019 to 2024 strategy is also set in a challenging context. Like many other areas of the country, homelessness in Nottingham has increased as a result of ongoing welfare reform, austerity and affordable housing shortage.

5.2 Development of the new Homelessness Prevention Strategy involved:

- Stakeholder engagement sessions
- Interviews with people with lived experience of homelessness
- Surveys of Private Rented Sector landlords
- Consideration of local research (including the Sheffield Hallam University research into Mental Health and Homelessness in Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University Research into Persistent Rough Sleeping)
- Discussion at various partnership forums including the Nottinghamshire Social Housing Forum, Multi-Agency Forum on Refugees and Asylum Seekers, Nottingham Health and Housing Partnership Group, Nottingham Domestic Violence Strategy Group, Advice Nottingham Managers Group and the Voluntary Sector Homelessness Forum.

5.3 The draft strategy has been presented for discussion at Nottingham City Council Corporate Leadership Team and within the Development and Growth, Community Protection and Children and Adults Directorates and at the Nottingham City Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- 5.4 Drafting of the strategy was taken through the Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Strategy Implementation Group (SIG) during 2018. Membership of the SIG includes ten Nottingham City Council service areas, ten different community or faith sector organisations, representatives from Nottingham City Homes and the Nottinghamshire Social Housing Forum and public sector partners including the Nottingham Department for Work and Pensions, Nottingham Clinical Commissioning Group, the local Community Rehabilitation Company and National Probation Service.
- 5.5 The strategy was released for public consultation during September 2018. 90% of respondents to the accompanying survey felt that the strategy contained the right themes and 83% agreed with the partnership and person centred approach. Comments received during the consultation stage were taken into consideration by the SIG and the final draft of the strategy amended appropriately.
- 5.6 The Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Strategy will be presented to Full Council for approval on 12 November 2018. The strategy will then be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board, Crime and Drugs Partnership Board and Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards for wider partner sign up.
- 5.7 A communications plan will be implemented in early 2019, introducing the Homelessness Prevention Charter, which will seek pledges and actions from partners across the city. A year one action plan will then be developed and driven through the Homelessness Prevention Strategy Implementation Group with further accountability via the relevant governance structures.

6 FINANCE COMMENTS

- 6.1 This strategy in itself does not bring forward specific financial implications. These implications will be properly considered as and when specific decisions are brought forward.

7 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COMMENTS

- 7.1 This strategy in itself does not raise any specific legal issues. These issues will be properly considered as and when specific decisions are brought forward.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 Appendix 2.

9 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 None

10 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

- 10.1 Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (February 2018) Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Homelessness Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Chapter 2017
Sheffield Hallam University research into Mental Health and Homelessness in Nottingham (2016-2018)
Nottingham Trent University Research into Persistent Rough Sleeping (February 2018) No Way Out: A study of persistent rough sleeping in Nottingham

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