

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Report to Service Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Panel**

**6 September 2023**

<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023- 2027</b>
<b>PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>Councillor Bill Cawley – Portfolio Holder for Communities</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Martin Owen – Executive Director Finance and Customer Services</b>
<b>WARDS INVOLVED:</b>	<b>Non-Specific</b>

**Appendix A: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2027**

**Appendix B: Homelessness Review**

**Appendix C: Consultation Questions**

**Appendix D: Equalities Impact Assessment**

**1. Reason for the Report**

- 1.1 To advise the Panel in relation to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023- 2027 and seek approval to adopt the strategy following consultation.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 Members note the contents of the report and recommend Cabinet approve adoption of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023- 2027 (Appendix A), in connection with the Homelessness Review (Appendix B)

**3. Executive Summary**

- 3.1 It is a legal requirement under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) for local authorities to carry out periodic reviews of homelessness and publish a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy based on these results.
- 3.2 At the meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023, this Panel approved consultation be undertaken on the draft review and strategy with consultation questions (Appendix C).
- 3.3 Following consultation, the Strategy and review documents are now ready for consideration and approval to adopt.

#### 4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 The strategy contributes to the Corporate Plan 2019-23 aim of helping to create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live and work.

#### 5. **Options and Analysis**

5.1 Option 1- Proceed with the recommendation to adopt the Homelessness Review and Strategy - **Recommended**

5.2 Option 2- Not to proceed with the recommendation – **not recommended**. The Council has a legal duty to carry out a review and publish a strategy.

#### 6. **Implications**

6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)  
There are no specific implications with this report

6.2 Workforce  
There are no specific implications with this report

6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment  
The report has been prepared in line with Council policies, with an Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix D). The new Strategy will have either have a neutral or positive affect.

6.4 Financial Considerations.  
The delivery of the Strategy is resourced through annual Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) from Department Levelling Up Housing and Communities. The purpose of HPG is to give local authorities control and flexibility in managing homelessness pressures and supporting those who are at risk of homelessness, homelessness prevention, to enforce the Homelessness Reduction Act, and end the use of unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation for families for longer than 6-week period.

In 2022/23 the Authority received £145,057 HPG. The grant is used to fund homelessness services, staff, activities and projects to prevent and address homelessness.

The government has confirmed its commitment to provide HPG, and during Summer 2022 consulted on funding arrangements for 2023/24 onwards.

6.5 Legal  
The Review and Strategy have been developed in line with legislation (Housing Act 1996 as amended) and there are no specific legal implications to this report.

- 6.6 Climate Change  
There are no specific implications to this report
- 6.7 Consultation  
With the approval of the Panel - the Review, Strategy and consultation questions were shared with partner stakeholders.
- 6.8 Risk Assessment  
There are no specific implications to this report

Martin Owen  
**Executive Director (Finance and Customer Services)**

<b>Web Links and Background Papers</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
		Helen Core Head of Housing Services <a href="mailto:Helen.core@staffordshiremoredon.gov.uk">Helen.core@staffordshiremoredon.gov.uk</a>

## 7. Detail

- 7.1 The Housing Act 1996 (as amended) places a statutory duty on local authorities to undertake a review of homelessness, and use those findings to develop a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The review identifies local trends and challenges, to inform priorities and actions within the strategy, which sets out a proactive partnership approach to address and prevent homelessness.
- 7.2 The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) is now fully embedded. The Government are committed to ending rough sleeping by 2024 and proposals within the strategy are in keeping with the positive spirit of the homelessness legislation and the ambition of the Government's target.
- 7.3 The strategy makes reference to the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) and contained within the list of priority actions are proposals to continue work with Staffordshire County Council to increase support and easier access to accommodation for abuse victims.
- 7.4 The strategy aims are to;
- Respond to homelessness by ensuring individuals have prompt access to housing advice, homes and tailored support.
  - Replicate best practice and innovation in response to homelessness and prevention.
  - Commission and develop services and improve collaboration wherever

possible.

- Prevent homelessness across the whole system by intervening earlier and developing individual solutions.
- Increase the range of affordable housing options available.
- Develop a better understanding of the causes of homelessness through improved data capture. The

7.5 The strategy is ambitious and the vision is ‘working collaboratively to prevent and reduce homelessness’. The Strategy proposes to meet the vision and aims through the delivery of four suggested priorities;

1. Create and develop robust partnerships to address homelessness and tenancy sustainment
2. Prevent and Respond to Homelessness through Early Intervention and Personalised Solutions
3. End Rough Sleeping and Repeat Homelessness
4. Develop Sustainable Supported and Settled Housing Solutions

7.6 The strategy would be delivered and monitored through an action plan, which will expand on the commitments and actions set out in the strategy. The plan would be reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs, alongside policy and legislative changes. This will be led by the Council, but the involvement of our partners is important, recognising that resolving homelessness goes beyond the provision of housing alone and we need to work closely with our partners to ensure we have the expertise, services, and resources to improve outcomes and deliver the strategy.

7.7 Key performance monitoring information relating to homelessness and temporary accommodation provision is provided on a monthly basis and feeds into the Councils Corporate Plan.

## **8.0 Consultation**

8.1 The Panel previously agreed, consultation be undertaken for a period of eight weeks. The review, strategy and consultation questions (Appendix C) were shared with a wide range of partner stakeholders.

8.2 As part of the consultation process the consultation opportunity, review, strategy and consultation questions were published on the website, with a web based form made available to collect responses.

8.3 Invitations to engage in the consultation were shared with Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire based District/ Borough authorities and Registered Providers; statutory agencies including police, probation, and public health and other agencies including Citizens Advice, drug and alcohol services, Glow, Adullam, P3 and Support Staffordshire.

- 8.4 The strategy, priorities and consultation opportunity were discussed in April at the Staffordshire Moorlands Homelessness Forum meeting attended by partner agencies.
- 8.5 Feedback received was positive in relation to the Strategy and no amendments were required.