



Cabinet

Tuesday 1 October 2019

HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2019-24

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. To comply with its statutory obligations, East Suffolk Council must adopt a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. This report brings forward a new strategy that was produced following extensive consultation. The strategy aligns with the approaches of other Suffolk agencies to the problem of homelessness and rough sleeping to ensure a consistent approach.
2. Members are asked to approve the adoption of the strategy which will be operative until 2024.

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
-------------------------------	------

Wards Affected:	All
-----------------	-----

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Richard Kerry Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing
-----------------	--

Supporting Officer:	David Howson Housing Strategy Manager 01502 523146 Dave.howson@eastsuffolk.gov.uk
---------------------	--

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council is legally obliged to have a Homelessness Strategy and has since 2018 been required to produce a Rough Sleeping Strategy. Both former Councils adopted a joint Homelessness Strategy in 2013 that expired in 2018. The Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government (MHCLG) gave approval for a delay to a revised strategy to allow its adoption by the new East Suffolk Council. Additionally, significant changes took place nationally to the homelessness legislation with the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. This changed the way any person who was homeless or at risk of being homeless was dealt with by the local authority. It was desirable to evaluate the impact on the service following these changes to ensure that the new strategy was relevant.
- 1.2 In December 2017 the Council hosted an event for our partners across the whole district to consider the new changes to homelessness legislation and to identify the priorities in dealing with homelessness in our district and reducing rough sleeping. Subsequent work took place on developing the priorities, especially when considering the impact of the changes in how we dealt with homelessness presentations since April 2018. The cross-Suffolk cooperation in developing 'pathways' for different client groups has also been important.

2 THE STRATEGY

- 2.1 Legislation requires that a strategy is produced to : (a) address the prevention of homelessness in the district; (b) secure that sufficient accommodation will be available for people in their district who are or may become homeless; and (c) secure satisfactory provision of support for people in the district who are or may become homeless. The strategy may also include specific objectives to be pursued and specific actions planned.
- 2.2 This strategy seeks to achieve these requirements being presented in a clear and straightforward format. It considers the outputs of both former councils over the period of the previous strategy.
- 2.3 The strategy explicitly seeks to highlight the actions that will be taken to specific areas of homelessness and rough sleeping such as the Duty to Refer by other statutory agencies, early interventions and provision of temporary accommodation. All together there are 17 actions that can be reported on and the East Suffolk Homelessness Forum will be able to provide a monitoring role for this.
- 2.4 The strategy links closely with the funding that has been received from the MHCLG for the Rapid Rehousing Pathway and Rough Sleeper Initiative. It additionally encourages future funding applications that help the Council meet its strategic objectives of reducing homelessness and rough sleeping in East Suffolk.
- 2.5 The various pathways identified in the strategy are linked to the Council's website and enable readers to focus on their interested client group should they prefer rather than read the whole document.

3 HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO THE EAST SUFFOLK BUSINESS PLAN?

- 3.1 The strategy seeks to ensure that the Council moves towards the Vision in the Business Plan of improving the quality of life for those living in East Suffolk, and the critical success factor of 'improved access to appropriate housing to meet existing and future needs' is

central to the Strategy. This includes the health and wellbeing of residents who are faced with the traumatic situations of homelessness and rough sleeping in the district.

4 FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The strategy is intended to reflect the Council's intentions over the coming 5 years in regard to how we seek to address homelessness and rough sleeping in the district. The strategy includes projects whose viability are reliant on external grant-funding from Central Government. Additionally, the use of temporary accommodation does impact on the Council financially though our various funding streams are set out within the Strategy.
- 4.2 There will be regular updates with the Portfolio Holder for Housing as well as the Homelessness Forum.

5 OTHER KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 This report has been prepared having considered the results of an Equality Impact Assessment. The strategy has no negative impact on any group.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The draft strategy has been consulted upon publicly between February and May 2019 with all relevant statutory and voluntary agencies as well as previous users of the service. There were few responses, but their feedback has been incorporated into the strategy where practically possible.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 No other options have been considered

8 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 The Council is legally required to have a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The strategy requires formal adoption by the Council to satisfy the requirements of the MHCLG.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 is adopted by the Council and published on the Council's website.

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24
-------------------	--

BACKGROUND PAPERS Please note that copies of background papers have not been published on the Council's website www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk but copies of the background papers listed below are available for public inspection free of charge by contacting the relevant Council Department.

Date	Type	Available From
5.6.19	Equality Impact Assessment	David Howson