

Title of Report	HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY	
Presented by	Andrew Woodman Housing, Property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder PH Briefed <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Background Papers	<u>Homelessness Strategy Community Scrutiny Report 28th September 2023</u>	Public Report: Yes
	<u>Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy Cabinet Report 5th March 2019</u>	Key Decision: Yes
Financial Implications	There are no financial implications arising directly from the approval of the Strategy. However, the impact of the Strategy will need to be considered as part of developing and approving the Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan as homelessness is a pressure within the local government sector.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	No direct legal implications arising from this report.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes.	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	There are no direct staffing or corporate implications.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To allow Cabinet to consider the new five-year Homelessness Strategy.	
Reason for Decision	To ensure that the Council has an up to date homelessness strategy in keeping with legislative requirements.	
Recommendations	THAT CABINET APPROVE THE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2024 - 2029	

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 Under the Homelessness Act 2002, all housing authorities must have in place a homelessness strategy based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their district. The strategy must be renewed at least every five years.

1.2 The strategy must set out the authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness and for securing that sufficient accommodation and support are or will be available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so.

1.3 The Council's last Homelessness Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 5 March 2019. As the end of the strategy's lifespan approaches, this new draft strategy sets out the Council's priorities for the next five years.

2.0 CONSULTATION

2.1 The draft Strategy has been developed in consultation with a range of key partners and stakeholders. Consultation and engagement has included:

- A shared partner engagement day alongside Melton Borough Council and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
- An online public survey promoted to current and recent service users of the housing choices service
- A presentation to the Tenants and Leaseholders Consultation Forum
- Engagement with the local homelessness prevention forum
- A Member workshop.

2.2 Feedback across all these activities has fed into the draft Strategy and emerging actions.

2.3 Following on from consideration by Scrutiny Committee on 28 September 2023 the draft Strategy was shared with key stakeholders for comment. No further changes were required.

3 OVERVIEW OF THE STRATEGY

3.1 The Strategy reviews performance over the last five years and then identifies a set of priorities and potential actions to address those priorities.

3.2 Section 179 of the Housing Act 1996 sets out an obligation on the local housing authority to provide advice around homelessness to people in the district. Section 179(2) sets out particular groups the service must be designed to meet the needs of. These are:

- a) people released from prison or youth detention accommodation;
- b) care leavers;
- c) former members of the regular armed forces;
- d) victims of domestic abuse;
- e) people leaving hospital; and
- f) people suffering from a mental illness or impairment.

3.3 The Strategy is structured so as to have particular regard to the needs of these groups.

3.4 The Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities sets out that "in districts where there is evidence that people are sleeping rough, the homelessness strategy should include objectives to work toward eliminating rough sleeping." The Strategy also, therefore, considers the needs of rough sleepers in the District.

3.5 Finally, taking on board feedback from service users, the Strategy places a focus on the customer experience.

3.6 The Strategy identifies five priorities and sets out how the Council intends to address these, namely:

- Reduce demand for homelessness services through proactive support;
- Increase the number of positive outcomes for homeless households;
- Reduce demand and increase the quality of emergency accommodation;
- Better meet the needs of people with complex needs; and
- Eliminate rough sleeping where possible.

4.0 SCRUTINY

4.1 The draft Strategy was considered by Community Scrutiny on 28 September 2023. The minutes are attached as an appendix to this report.

4.2 Scrutiny sought clarification on a number of areas of the report and the section on “meeting the needs of particular groups,” was revised as a result with additional information added to make the comparative level of demand from the prescribed groups clearer.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Once the Strategy is approved, an annual delivery plan will be developed to address the priorities agreed through the Strategy.

5.2 Oversight of the delivery plan will be through the Council’s multi-agency preventing homelessness forum.

5.3 Key performance information in relation to homelessness will also form part of the housing strategy and systems team plan.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	- Communities & Housing - A Well Run Council
Policy Considerations:	Non.
Safeguarding:	There are no direct safeguarding considerations, however, the policy has particular regard to support for people subject to domestic abuse.
Equalities/Diversity:	An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and no adverse impacts on protected groups have been identified
Customer Impact:	The Strategy identifies the Council priorities for addressing homelessness. These will have a direct customer impact. The Strategy endeavours to have a positive impact on some of the most vulnerable customers we support.
Economic and Social Impact:	None Directly.
Environment, Climate Change and Zero Carbon:	None directly.

<p>Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:</p>	<p>The draft Strategy has been developed in consultation with a range of key partners and stakeholders. Consultation and engagement has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A shared partner engagement day alongside Melton Borough Council and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council • An online public survey promoted to current and recent service users of the housing choices service • A presentation to the Tenants and Leaseholders Consultation Forum • Engagement with the local homelessness prevention forum • A Member workshop. <p>The draft Strategy was shared with key partners for comment.</p>
<p>Risks:</p>	<p>There is a risk of challenge from the Department for Levelling Up Homes and Communities if we do not have a Homelessness Strategy approved within the last five years.</p>
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