

HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting name & Date	COUNCIL 10 July 2019
Agenda item	7
Report title	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2023
Report reference no.	C/19/24
Wards affected	All Wards
Report author, job title & email	Hilary Shade, Head of Partnerships, Community Engagement and housing Hilary.shade@hertsmere.gov.uk
List of Appendices	Appendix A – Homelessness Review 2018 Appendix B – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2023
Reason for urgency	Not Applicable
Is it a Key Decision?	Yes
Call-in expires on	This will be five working days after the decision is published (not made). You cannot implement the decision before this date.
Exempt from Call-in	Not Applicable
Portfolio Holders	Cllr Jean Heywood, Housing and Transport Portfolio Holder

PUBLIC REPORT - this report is available to the public.

1 RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Council adopts the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2023 as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

2 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 2.1 This report is brought to the Council to present the findings of the Homelessness Review which was conducted in 2018, and to seek approval of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2023 for adoption as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 sets out a requirement for Local Authorities to carry out a review of homelessness and develop a new homelessness strategy every five years. Hertsmere's last published its homelessness strategy in 2014.
- 3.2 With the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness it was considered timely to review the strategy in 2018 for adoption by the Council in 2019.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The Council could determine to not adopt the Strategy, however this would mean that there would be a gap in the Council's Policy Framework, and the Council would not be in compliance with the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002.

5 BACKGROUND

- 5.1 During 2018 a review of homelessness in the borough was conducted taking into account the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002 and the new Homelessness Code of Guidance.
- 5.2 The Review is attached at Appendix A and covers the following key areas:
- National and regional context
 - The levels, and likely future levels of homelessness in the borough
 - A review of activities to prevent homelessness
 - The needs of vulnerable groups
 - A review of temporary accommodation
 - Housing Register and Allocations Policy
 - Implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
 - New housing supply
 - Staff structure and resources
- 5.3 The findings of this review have provided the basis for formulating the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 – 2023 attached at Appendix B. The strategy sets out the achievements since the last strategy was published in 2014 and presents the updated vision and priorities for preventing homelessness in the future.
- 5.4 As part of the review and the development of the strategy consultation was undertaken with a variety of stakeholders through the Homelessness Forum, and with key service users and key partners. The East of England Local Government Association also provided input into the initial draft

Homelessness Review. In addition the draft strategy was presented to the Policy Review Scrutiny Committee in December 2018.

- 5.5 The strategy sets out a number of priorities as set out below:
- Offer a range of support and advisory services to those presenting as or threatened with homelessness regardless of need at the earliest opportunity
 - Support vulnerable people and avoid homelessness (including rough sleepers, those with complex needs and victims of domestic abuse or modern slavery)
 - Increase the supply of affordable accommodation
 - Continue to develop partnership initiatives to prevent homelessness
 - Continue to work towards the gold standard for Housing services
- 5.6 The strategy sets out the context, challenges for each priority and sets out the Council's approach to achieving them. The strategy will be supplemented with a more detailed Action Plan once the strategy has been adopted.
- 5.7 The Executive, at its meeting on 26 June 2019, agreed the draft Review and Strategy and agreed to recommend it to Council as part of the council's policy framework.

6 FINANCIAL AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are none directly arising from this report, as activities will be funded from within the existing revenue budget and reserves, and within the Flexible Housing Support Grant. If additional funding is required then a report will be presented to the Executive and Council accordingly.
- 6.2 In addition the Housing Team have been successful in attracting grant aid from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to support specific projects and initiatives. For example £52,750 has been awarded for Rapid Rehousing Pathway for rough sleepers, and £319,011 has been awarded from the Private Rented Sector Access Fund.

7 LEGAL POWERS RELIED ON AND ANY LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 sets out a requirement for Local Authorities to carry out a review of homelessness and develop a new homelessness strategy every five years.

8 EFFICIENCY GAINS AND VALUE FOR MONEY

- 8.1 None for the purposes of this report.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are none directly arising from the report. There is a risk that the council could be challenged for not having an up to date strategy in place.

10 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None for the purposes of this report.

11 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 None for the purposes of this report.

12 CORPORATE PLAN and POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will contribute towards the corporate priorities of:
- Planning for the future
 - Supporting our Communities

13 ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

14 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are none arising from this report.

15 APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix A – Hertsmere Homelessness Review 2018

Appendix B – Hertsmere Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
2019-2023

16 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS USED TO PREPARE THIS REPORT

- 16.1 None.