

For publication

HOMELESSNESS – North Derbyshire Homelessness Strategy 2016-2021 (H000)

Meeting: Cabinet

Date: 26 July 2016

Cabinet portfolio: Cabinet Member for Housing

Report by: Housing Manager
Alison Craig

For publication

1.0 **Purpose of report**

1.1 To seek approval for the adoption and publication of the North Derbyshire Joint Homelessness Strategy 2016 - 2021 which sets out the Council's approach to dealing with homelessness in Chesterfield and across North Derbyshire.

2.0 **Recommendations**

2.1 That Cabinet approve the North Derbyshire Joint Homelessness Strategy 2016-2021.

3.0 **Report details**

3.1 Background

3.1.1 The Homelessness Act 2002, placed on local authorities a duty to review homelessness in their area and to produce and publish a five year strategy and action plan to tackle the issue.

3.1.2 The Council produced an interim Homelessness Statement for 2014/15 that set out the key strategic priorities and the challenges we face relating to homelessness in Chesterfield pending the development of a joint North Derbyshire Homelessness Strategy with the neighbouring districts of Bolsover and North East Derbyshire.

3.1.3 Consultants were appointed in September 2015 and work to develop the Strategy commenced in October 2015. It is intended, that a launch event for the joint Strategy contained in this report is held in September 2016.

3.2 Current Position

3.2.1 The strategy sets out the framework in which we will develop and deliver homelessness prevention, advice and support services both in Chesterfield and across North Derbyshire. A copy of the Joint Strategy is attached at **Appendix A**.

3.2.2 The three Council's and partners have made considerable progress in improving services and reducing homelessness in their areas since each Council published their first homelessness strategy in 2003. Through strong partnership across North Derbyshire and working with local agencies we have:

- Increased the number of households year on year, from becoming homeless through prevention activities
- Reduced the number of households in temporary accommodation
- Participated in the Derbyshire and Derby City 'No Second Night Out' and have secured additional funding to improve the service in North Derbyshire
- Worked in partnership with Action Housing to provide a Private Rented Access Scheme for non-priority homeless households
- Provided funding for the Derbyshire Law Centre Court Desk Service to provide legal help and advice to households at risk of eviction
- Continued to work in partnership with the Chesterfield Credit Union to encourage saving and planned expenditure
- Ensured the continued viability of Newbold Court (supported accommodation for young people)
- Provided funding to the Pathways Day Centre and YMCA Furniture Project to continue to provide services within the borough

3.3 A Joint North Derbyshire Homelessness Strategy 2015-2020

- 3.3.1 In order to build and capitalise on the solid foundation of joint working, Chesterfield Borough Council, Bolsover District Council and North East Derbyshire District Council appointed consultants, North Star, to carry out a review of homelessness across North Derbyshire and produce a joint Homelessness Strategy for 2016 – 2021
- 3.3.2 Many of the issues faced by the three local authorities with regard to homelessness are the same, and the majority of the services and support for homeless people are common throughout the three authorities. It therefore makes sense to look at a shared overarching strategy and to make use of pooled resources to facilitate this.
- 3.3.3 It is clear that by working together and having a joint strategic vision and aims that we can make the best use of our resources and maximise the opportunities to bring additional funding in to this area.
- 3.3.4 This joint approach has already proven successful. We placed a joint bid for funding with NEDDC and Bolsover DC from the DCLG Single Homelessness Fund to provide specialist housing advice for young people in receipt of benefits (working in partnership with the Ambition project funded by Sheffield City Region). We received notification on the 9th December 2014 that our bid was successful and this project is currently supporting young people across North Derbyshire.
- 3.3.5 Two specialist housing advice and support workers were recruited to work alongside DWP colleagues to prevent homelessness amongst young people age 18-24 who are in receipt of benefits. The aim of the project is to ensure that young people are fully aware of the implications of managing a tenancy and are equipped with the skills to do so. The aim of the project is to identify and address any employment and training gaps and housing options suitable for the needs of each individual will be identified and progressed.
- 3.3.6 In addition, the funding is also being used to employ a 'No Second Night Out' worker based in Chesterfield and employed by Riverside, an organisation who are contracted by Derbyshire

Districts and Derby City to provide advice and help to rough sleepers. The service commenced in September 2015.

3.3.7 Funding was also secured in November 2015 from the Platform for Life programme working in partnership with Action Housing to provide 6 units of shared accommodation for young people aged 18-24 with employment and training. This unit opened in May 2016.

3.3.8 The three authorities have agreed the following vision and objectives:

The overall vision for tackling homelessness in North Derbyshire is:

By working with our partners to prevent homelessness, we will ensure that everyone has access to a place they call home.

Our approach is to strengthen, sustain, grow and innovate with our partners. We will achieve our vision by delivering the following five strategic objectives:

- Objective 1:** Develop a robust young person's housing pathway by delivering a range of housing solutions with our partners
- Objective 2:** Create strong partnerships with all stakeholders to tackle homelessness for all those at risk, including those most vulnerable households;
- Objective 3:** Prevent rough sleeping across the area
- Objective 4:** Prevent homelessness by tackling and reducing financial deprivation within our communities
- Objective 5:** Work towards achieving the Homelessness Gold Standard

3.3.9 The Strategy document and the Action Plan sets out our priorities, objectives and outcomes. The outcomes identified in the Action Plan will be monitored by the three authorities and reported to the Homelessness Forum. New or changed priorities may evolve

during the life of the Strategy and the Action Plan will be updated annually.

4.0 **Financial implications**

4.1 All the proposals contained in the strategy can be met from the Homelessness Prevention Budget and supplemented where appropriate and where available from bids for specific targeted funding.

5.0 **Legal and data protection implications**

5.1 The Homelessness Act 2002, placed on local authorities a duty to review homelessness in their area and to produce and publish a five year strategy and action plan to tackle the issue.

5.2 This Strategy will ensure the council meets this duty.

6.0 **Consultation**

6.1 The Strategy has been produced following an extensive period of consultation with neighbouring authorities, housing providers and voluntary organisations.

7.0 **Risk management**

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
Failure to address homelessness issues	High	High	To deliver the actions set out in the Councils' joint Homelessness strategy 2016-2021, against the key priorities and objectives.	Medium	Medium
Increase in homelessness presentations	High	High	To deliver the actions set out in the Councils' joint Homelessness	Medium	Medium

			Strategy 2016-2021, against the key priorities and objectives.		
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8.0 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached at **Appendix B**.

9.0 Recommendations

9.1 That Cabinet approve the North Derbyshire Joint Homelessness Strategy 2016-2021.

10.0 Reasons for recommendations

10.1 To ensure we comply with our statutory obligations in having a strategy in place to deal with homelessness in the Borough.

Glossary of Terms <i>(delete table if not relevant)</i>	

Decision information

Key decision number	
Wards affected	ALL
Links to Council Plan priorities	To improve the quality of life for local people- with particular reference to reducing inequality and supporting the more vulnerable members of our communities

Document information

Report author	Contact number/email
Alison Craig	01246 345256
Background Papers	
None	

Appendices to the report

Appendix A/A1 Joint Strategy and Action Plan

Appendix B EIA