

Subject:	The Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review 2018-21	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Overview & Scrutiny Cabinet	Date:	15 th October 2018 12 th November 2018
Report of:	Director of Communities	Portfolio Holder:	Health, Housing, Communities and Customer Service
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	Yes/No	Attached: Yes/No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	Yes/No	Attached: Yes/No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	That Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the new Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review 2018-21, along with the appendices and recommends its approval to Cabinet.
1.2	All future minor amendments to the Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review are to be delegated to the relevant Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To propose that the up to date Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review 2018-21 replaces the 2007 strategy. The Council has a duty to formulate and publish a Strategy and a Review under the Homelessness Act 2002.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priority:
- **A proud, healthy and vibrant Rossendale:** our priority is to ensure that we are creating and maintaining a healthy and vibrant place for people to live and visit.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 5.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 places a statutory duty on each local housing authority to carry out a review of homelessness, and using the review, develop a strategy to prevent homelessness. Both strategy and review must be formulated at least every 5 years and then published. The draft Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review acts as both documents that are legally required. Following the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction act 2017 on 3rd April 2018, it is also good practice to publish a new strategy at this time, having regard to additional powers and duties due to the new legislation, and new ways of working needed to deliver a legally compliant Housing Options service.
- 5.2 Due to the statutory duty to publish an up to date strategy and review, there were no other options considered.
- 5.3 The review highlighted increasing numbers of homelessness decisions as well as a rising trend in the number of households considered statutory homeless. Whilst the number of

statutory duty decisions has increased since 2013/14 the rate of homelessness was 1.4 households per 1,000 in 2017/18, still well below the national level of 2.4 per 1,000. The main reason for homelessness, in consistently over 1/3rd of all cases, is domestic abuse. The increasing number of complex cases involving people with mental health problems was highlighted as a significant factor contributing to rising numbers of homeless households, along with the borough becoming less affordable and decreasing numbers of social housing lets. In 2017/18 the Council helped to prevent or relieve 217 households from being homeless, which is the highest figure for 5 years, and represented 7.2 households per 1,000. The rate of prevention and reliefs was 6th highest out of 12 Lancashire districts, but the highest of the Pennine districts. The main 3 prevention types were rehousing in social housing, assisting a household into supported accommodation and securing private rented sector accommodation through the 'rent bond' scheme.

5.4 The historic lack of supported housing in the borough was highlighted, in particular for use as temporary accommodation, and future challenges were also illustrated such as the roll out to Rossendale of "full service" Universal Credit in November 2018. The success of the 2007 Homelessness Strategy was also detailed, with 14 out of 19 actions completed.

5.5 The strategy will be measured by the following factors that were devised to measure its success at a high level:

1. keeping the number of prevention & reliefs consistently high with a target of 140 plus per year,
2. ensuring the number of households in Temporary Accommodation is maintained at 2.5 or below on average,
3. the numbers of statutory homeless households remain low with a target of no more than 36 per year.

The success factors above will be monitored on a quarterly basis.

5.6 Considering the evidence and taking into account policy changes and future challenges, 3 priorities were developed to enable the Council to robustly meet its duties and proactively prevent homelessness:

- priority 1: ensure the Council is well positioned to deliver a service that meets the demands and duties introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, as well as meet other current and future challenges,
- priority 2: working with all partners to ensure vulnerable people are supported in suitable accommodation,
- priority 3: ensure that housing supply best meets housing need.

5.7 The key actions contributing to achieving the priorities are manifested in the action plan which forms Appendix 1 of the strategy. The action plan takes a holistic approach, and demonstrates how all of the wider Strategic Housing team, as well as teams such as Planning, the Public Protection Unit, Economic Development and the Service Assurance Team amongst others, as well as external partners, all contribute to the prevention of homelessness in Rossendale.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

6.1 All financial implications are within existing budgets.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

7.1 All legal implications are covered in the body of the report.

8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

8.1 There was initial stakeholder consultation prior to the strategy being formulated from 2nd March 2018 to 3rd April 2018. All members of Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Homelessness Forum were targeted for consultation, along with members of the Rossendale Health and Wellbeing Partnership and related staff in the Council and partner local authorities. Service user consultation was carried out throughout June via a Smart Survey online questionnaire. The Draft Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review 2018-21 has been consulted on via the Council website since Thursday 23rd August 2018 and will run for just over 7 weeks until 12th October 2018. The consultation of the draft document was open to anyone, but was targeted at stakeholders via email.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The new strategy identifies how the Council endeavours to increase the prevention of homelessness in Rossendale and fulfil its statutory duties under part VII of the Housing Act 1996 and amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, the Localism Act 2011 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

Background Papers

Document	Place of Inspection
The Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review 2018-21	Appendix 1
Initial Equality Impact Assessment	Appendix 2