



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 20 February 2024

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Lee Brazier, Housing

Director Lead: Suzanne Shead, Housing Health and Wellbeing

Lead Officer: Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration and Housing Strategy, Ext. 5923
 Cheska Asman, Homelessness and Safeguarding Officer, Ext. 5643

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Key Decision
Report Title	Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy
Purpose of Report	To present the Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024-2029 for approval.
Recommendations	That Cabinet approve the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024-2029 (as at Appendix 1 which has been published separately to the main agenda).
Alternative Options Considered	Under the Homelessness Act 2002, local housing authorities have a statutory duty to have a Homelessness Strategy. Alternative options therefore relate only to the actions within the strategy and not the decision to have a strategy. Priorities for Newark and Sherwood and actions to be delivered under the strategy have been developed following a robust review of local and national evidence.
Reason for Recommendations	Newark and Sherwood District Council has a statutory requirement to deliver a Homelessness Strategy every five years as a minimum. The delivery of this strategy also supports key community plan objectives: To improve health and wellbeing and to increase the supply, choice and standard of housing.

1.0 Background

1.1 The new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029 follows on from the Council’s existing Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy, 2019-2024. The production of a Homelessness Strategy is a statutory requirement under the Homelessness Act 2002, requiring housing authorities to carry out a homelessness review for their district and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review every five years (as a minimum).

- 1.2 Additional duties for local authorities have been introduced via the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (to produce a strategy that involves partners in earlier identification and intervention to prevent homelessness) and the Government’s Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 (the expectation for Local Authorities to produce a Rough Sleeping Strategy).
- 1.3 Newark and Sherwood District Council has brought these duties together to create a collective ‘Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029’ which is attached at **Appendix 1** of this report for consideration.
- 1.4 The Homelessness Review is at **Appendix 2** which has also been published separately to the main agenda and is based on an evaluation of:
 - i. Progress in delivering the 2019-24 strategy aims and objectives;
 - ii. The current and emerging national, regional and local policy context;
 - iii. An assessment of the housing market;
 - iv. Analysis of official homelessness statistics, local rough sleeping data, stock housing data and Private Rented Sector statistics over the last four years;
 - v. Research into the root causes of homelessness and the likely future levels of homelessness; and
- 1.5 Consultation with a range of stakeholders has been undertaken in the production of this strategy which has also been considered and recommended to the Cabinet by the Council’s Policy and Performance Improvement Committee following their meeting held on 29 January 2024.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 Our vision is for 2024-2029 strategy is for Newark and Sherwood: *“To create an environment where people lead safe and healthy lifestyles, ensuring suitable housing for all. At the heart of this is our aim to break the cycle of homelessness by ensuring the causes of homelessness are identified at an earlier stage and prevented where possible”*.
- 2.2 Whilst a statutory requirement of the Council to deliver, the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy can only be delivered through effective partnership work and therefore the strategy’s delivery plan will be a collective plan to tackle homelessness with partners.
- 2.3 A draft delivery plan is included within the strategy. The delivery plan will be populated in partnership with key stakeholders across mid-Nottinghamshire once the strategy has been approved.
- 2.4 At the core of this strategy are six priorities which will underpin our approach to the development and delivery of homelessness services in Newark and Sherwood:
 - i. Early intervention through effective partnership working.
 - ii. The provision of an accessible, agile, and responsive homelessness service.
 - iii. Access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors.
 - iv. Tackle rough sleeping by developing and improving pathways.

- v. Linking homelessness, health, well-being, and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected.
- vi. Delivering holistic support solutions to sustain long term tenancies and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.

2.5 To ensure that our six priorities are delivered and progress is monitored, we will:

- i. Develop a delivery plan with key stakeholders and agree robust actions with leads and timescales assigned.
- ii. Carry out an annual review to re-evaluate and align the delivery plan to current findings or situations to be presented to Cabinet.
- iii. Agree a robust data analysis framework to monitor performance and adapt to findings.
- iv. Monitor the local, regional and national policy context.
- v. Facilitate appropriate governance through the Mid-Notts Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group and the Newark and Sherwood Homeless Interagency Forum.

2.6 To fund homelessness prevention, every local authority receives a Homelessness Prevention Grant from central government, with a recommendation to ringfence the funding and meet the following conditions:

- i. Embed the Homelessness Reduction Act and contribute to ending rough sleeping by increasing activity to prevent single homelessness.
- ii. Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation by maximising family homeless prevention.
- iii. Reduce the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for families.
- iv. Report total homelessness spend under the categories of temporary accommodation, staffing, prevention activities, relief activities.
- v. Submit accurate data or up to 10% of funding may be deducted.

2.7 Newark and Sherwood received £226,279 in 2022/23 for Homelessness Prevention. This funding is used to deliver core services including prevention, staffing and contributions to partner delivery through service level agreements and grant funding including: Sherwood and Newark Citizens Advice, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire Credit Union, Home-Start, Rough Sleeper Initiative Partnership and the Furniture Project.

2.8 Allocations for the current and next year stand at £236,278 for 2023/24 and £240,767 for 2024/25. This funding will be aligned directly to the priorities within the new strategy.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital and Cyber Security; Equality and Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding and Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Financial Implications: FIN 23-24/7442

There are no additional financial implications resulting from this report. Any specific activities requiring funding would be presented under separate cover.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None.