

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO: MSDC Cabinet	REPORT NUMBER: MCa/18/25
FROM: Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing	DATE OF MEETING: 10 September 2018
OFFICER: Heather Sparrow – Corporate Manager, Housing Solutions	KEY DECISION REF NO. CAB34

HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION STRATEGY 2018-2023

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider and provide comment on the draft Joint (Babergh and Mid Suffolk) Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2018-2023, prior to being published for consultation with stakeholders.

2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Council is required under the Homelessness Act 2002 to carry out a review of homelessness within its District and formulate and publish a strategy based on the results of that review. As we have a statutory obligation to publish the strategy there are no other options to consider.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves the Draft Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Homelessness Reduction Strategy to go to a formal 30-day consultation period 5 October 2018 – 2 November 2018.

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure that Mid Suffolk District Council meets its statutory obligations under the Homelessness Act 2002 to review homelessness within its District and publish the results of that review and a strategy for tackling homelessness over the next five years.

4. KEY INFORMATION

- 4.1 Mid Suffolk District Council has an obligation under the Homelessness Act 2002 to carry out a review of homelessness within its District every five years. The review has shown that: -
- Homelessness has been prevented in 704 cases. This means 704 households have been able to remain in their home that they were at risk of losing because of the intervention of the Housing Solutions team.
 - Homelessness has been relieved and alternative accommodation secured in 173 cases.

- A full homelessness rehousing duty has been accepted to 275 households.
- It is clear from these figures that prevention and relief of homelessness is the focus for the team as far fewer households have been accepted as being owed a full rehousing duty.
- The main reason for people becoming homeless is the loss of privately rented accommodation or relatives being unable to accommodate them.
- The main reason for households being owed a duty under the *priority need* criteria under homelessness is dependent children.

4.2 The Strategy highlights the key achievements in the 2013-2018 strategy, including being awarded funding through the then DCLG for developing a targeted approach to rough sleeping and funding accommodation within the District for victims of domestic abuse.

4.3 The Strategy has six key priorities: -

- Prevention of Homelessness
- Supporting Vulnerable Households to Secure and Maintain Accommodation
- Mitigating Against the Impact of Welfare Reforms
- Increasing Access to Suitable Accommodation
- Raising Aspirations of Positive Health and Wellbeing amongst Homeless People
- End Rough Sleeping

4.4 Detailed within the Strategy for each of the six key priorities, are five actions (30 in total), which will be the basis of a detailed action plan to ensure we successfully deliver the strategy over five years.

4.5 Mid Suffolk District Council committed an additional £100K to preventing homelessness in the 2018/19 budget. A project is currently being developed to look at how we can use the money most effectively to prevent homelessness into the Private Rented Sector, reducing the demand for social housing and temporary accommodation. The options being considered as part of the project are landlord incentive schemes, an improved rent deposit scheme and a leasing scheme.

4.6 It is envisaged, this work will commence by November and we will have costed options to discuss with Members early in 2019.

5. LINKS TO JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN

5.1 Being clear about what housing is needed

5.2 Continued support for Health and Wellbeing outcomes that prevent interventions.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Revenue/Capital/ Expenditure/Income Item	Total	2018/19
Cost of developing the strategy including the associated consultation will cost no more than £5,000 in total	£5,000	MSDC Contribution 50% £2,500

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 It is a statutory requirement to publish a Homelessness Reduction Strategy. The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government monitor which Councils have published a strategy and will contact us if we fail to publish one during 2018/19.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Corporate / Significant Business Risk No. Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Without a revised and adopted Homelessness Reduction Strategy, it is unlikely the Councils will reduce homelessness and higher numbers of Babergh and Mid Suffolk residents may be at increased risk. This will impact most on our vulnerable residents and children.	Highly unlikely (1)	Disaster (4)	Dedicated officer resources support the production and inclusion of a reviewed Homelessness Reduction Strategy in accordance with new duties and guidance of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, as part of the comprehensive Housing Strategy development process.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 April 2018: Housing market stakeholder event to determine areas of strategic focus and begin work on Action Plans.
- 9.2 June 2018: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councillors workshop event to comment on and refine work so far.

- 9.3 June 2018: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Town and Parish Councils alerted in advance of the consultation period during September / October.
- 9.4 July 2018: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee: to comment on the process and endorse the approach.
- 9.5 September 2018: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Cabinets to agree the draft strategies and actions and authorise a 30-day consultation beginning on the 5th October until 2nd November 2018. During the consultation period copies of the draft strategy will be sent to all key stakeholders including; Parish Councils, Local Borough & District Councils, Third Sector organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureaux.
- 9.6 October 2018: An event is to be held in Endeavour House Atrium whereby stakeholders can speak to officers regarding the content of the consultation.
- 9.7 November 2018: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councillors workshop to consider consultation feedback and offer final amendments to the strategy and associated Action Plans.
- 9.8 December 2018: Both strategy and associated Action Plans to Full Council to request adoption.

10. EQUALITY ANALYSIS

- 10.1 See screening Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix B) for the Housing Strategy and the revised Homelessness Reduction Strategy. No further action required at this time.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no environmental implications as a result of the Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2018 - 2023

12. APPENDICES

Title	Location
(a) Draft Copy of the Joint (Babergh and Mid Suffolk) Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2018-2023	Attached
(b) Babergh and Mid Suffolk Housing Strategy Equality Screening Analysis	Attached

13. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/13/contents/enacted
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