

Committee: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 21 September 2015

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Title: Draft Homelessness Strategy

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Summary

1. In 2012 the council included its Homelessness Strategy within the Housing Strategy document. The Housing Strategy is now being renewed and the decision has been to once again have a stand-alone Homelessness Strategy to better illustrate the council's commitment to tackling homelessness. The draft Homelessness Strategy is now ready for member and public consultation, prior to its adoption in December 2015.

Recommendations

2. That the Housing Board notes the report and considers the draft Homelessness Strategy 2016-21 before a six week consultation period.

Financial Implications

3. It is envisaged that the strategy's Action Plan will be delivered from within existing resources.

Impact

- 4.

Communication/Consultation	Members, tenants, all partner agencies and public consultation via the website
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	Equality impact assessment has been completed on the draft strategy The strategy will again be EIA before it is finalised following the period of public consultation
Health and Safety	N/A

Human Rights/Legal Implications	It is a requirement for the council to have a homelessness strategy
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	All wards
Workforce/Workplace	Housing, Planning, Environmental Health

Situation

5. The council's current Homelessness Strategy is contained within the Housing Strategy which expires at the end of this year. As the council is legally required to have a Homelessness Strategy a new draft document has been prepared and this time the strategy will revert to being a stand-alone document. The new Strategy will run from 2016 -2021.
6. The document details the council's homelessness service's achievements since 2012. It also looks at the legal context for having a homelessness strategy and the National and Local context of homelessness and other strategies that the document links to.
7. The Strategy also contains a review of homelessness within Uttlesford and details homelessness statistics for the past 4 years. These clearly show the impact that the recession has had on increasing homelessness during this period.
8. The Strategy contains an Action Plan that outlines how the council will meet the four strategic priorities that have been set for the council's homelessness service during the lifetime of this new document. These priorities are:-
 - Prevent homelessness, by providing a high quality housing advice service to clients in all housing tenures, by sustaining tenancies and by mitigating the negative effects of welfare reform
 - Provide good quality suitable temporary accommodation and work towards ending the use of bed and breakfast even in an emergency
 - Engage with the private rented sector to improve access to accommodation for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness
 - Improving the Health and Wellbeing of homeless people
9. The draft Strategy will now be put out for a 2 month period of public consultation, this period will also allow time for members and our partner agencies to be able to review document and make comments. Any

amendments required following this period of consultation will be made and the final document brought back before the Housing Board for the Board to recommend its adoption by Cabinet In December.

Risk Analysis

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Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The council fails to have carried out a homelessness review and have an updated Homelessness Strategy before the current document expires	1 Little risk – review and draft strategy already prepared in advance of current document being out of date	3 – the council may lose government funding if it cannot demonstrate it has a homelessness strategy in place	Draft document has already been prepared to go out for public consultation. It will be put before Cabinet for approval in December prior to the expiry of the current document

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.