

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 24 June 2019

ITEM 5(b)

Title: North Tyneside
Homelessness Prevention
Strategy 2019 - 2021

Portfolio(s): Housing

Cabinet Member(s): Councillor
Steve Cox

Report from Service

Area: Environment Housing and Leisure

Responsible Officer: Phil Scott, Head of Housing,
Environment and Leisure Tel: (0191) 643 7295

Wards affected: All Wards

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the revised Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2019 – 2021. This is attached as Appendix 1 of this report.

Local Authorities have a statutory requirement under the Homelessness Act 2002 to produce, a Homelessness Strategy that must be kept under review and published every five years. This must outline the main causes of homelessness in their area and outline the strategic plans and actions in place to tackle them.

The Housing Strategy covers the period 2017-2021, therefore the Homelessness Prevention Strategy has been developed to cover the period 2019 – 2021. This creates alignment, enabling a joint review in the future.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet approves the North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2019 – 2021 at Appendix One of this report.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 1 March 2019.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report relates to the following priorities in the 2018- 2021 Our North Tyneside Plan

Our People Will:

Be ready for work and life
Be cared for, protected and supported
Be healthy and well

Our Places Will:

Offer a good choice of quality housing
Be great places to live

In addition to Our North Tyneside Plan 2018 – 2021 the Homelessness Prevention Strategy also relates to the following current plans and strategies:

North Tyneside Housing Strategy 2016 - 2021

This strategy has four strategic objectives, of which preventing homelessness sits within Priority 4: Better Homes, More Independence.

North Tyneside Tenancy Strategy 2013 – 2018

The Strategy emphasises the need to make best use of the housing stock to meet local housing need, maintain and create successful, sustainable communities and prevent homelessness.

North Tyneside Lettings Policy 2017

This Policy aims to help people access secure, suitable and affordable social sector homes within North Tyneside.

North Tyneside Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013 -2023

This Strategy focuses on the health inequalities that exist within the Borough and sets out priorities to address this. The issues faced by many homeless and transient people cut across all five strategic priorities.

North Tyneside Children's Workforce Development Strategy 2015 -2018

The Partnership brings together public and voluntary sector organisations responsible for children's services with the aim of improving life outcomes.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

The duty placed on all Local Authorities via the Homelessness Act requires them to monitor their Homelessness Strategy together with partners and stakeholders within a local partnership. This is achieved in North Tyneside through the Homelessness Forum, who support the delivery of homelessness services in line with the Authority's corporate framework and other local strategies. The Homelessness Act states that the purpose of this strategic approach is to:

- Prevent homelessness in the district of the Authority;
- Secure accommodation that is, or will be, made available for people in the district who are, or who may become homeless; and,
- Provide support for people in the district who are or who may become homeless.

1.5.2 As an Authority we also have a moral duty to tackle homelessness as it can have a detrimental effect on health, well-being and community cohesion, as well as potentially increasing service costs for the Authority. Evidence demonstrates that investment in local homeless prevention services reduces the cost of mainstream homelessness services, which can cut across housing, health, criminal justice and community safety.

1.5.3 The Authority's current Homelessness Strategy was published in 2013 and covered the period 2013 – 2018. Therefore, to adhere to the requirement of the Homelessness Act

the Authority commenced work on updating the Strategy in 2017, when a consultation exercise was undertaken. Feedback from this was collated in early 2018, however the review process was halted in April 2018 on the publication of the Government's Homelessness Reduction Act. This allowed the content of the Act to be assessed and reflected in the updated Strategy.

- 1.5.4 The review process completed in late 2018 and an updated Strategy developed which outlines the current picture of homelessness in the Borough. Details of this work and the findings can be found in Appendix 2: Review and Engagement process – Updating North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention Strategy.
- 1.5.5 The Strategy's priorities have been identified following engagement and consultation with our Homelessness Forum and a wide range of stakeholders, Elected Members, Council officers, registered housing providers and third sector organisations who support people when they experience a 'housing crisis'.
- 1.5.6 Most importantly we have listened to service users, that is people who have experienced homelessness or who have been affected by homelessness. This has enabled priorities to be set which detail how we will work in partnership to prevent people becoming homeless and address the causes of homelessness. These strategic priorities are:
- Responding to the recent legislative changes through successful implementation and delivery of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017;
 - Ensuring local housing needs are met through both the development of new homes, and efficient allocation of Council stock, prioritising those in need and the most vulnerable;
 - Acknowledging the impact of Universal Credit and supporting households to secure and sustain an affordable home; and
 - The provision of effective communication and utilising robust partnership working,
- 1.5.7 The strategy is supported by a delivery plan which is included within the draft strategy. This sets out the actions that need to be taken to achieve key objectives.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet.

Option 1

Cabinet approve the North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2019 – 2021 at Appendix One of this report.

Option 2

Cabinet does not approve the North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2019 – 2021 at Appendix One of this report.

Option 3

Cabinet request further information be obtained prior to approval of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy being received.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

The Authority is required to formulate and publish a Homelessness Prevention Strategy based on the homelessness review results at least every five years. Therefore Cabinet is requested to approve the Strategy that will ensure that the Authority has a Homelessness Prevention Strategy in place to deliver key objectives that will contribute to preventing homelessness within the Borough.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix 1: North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2019 - 2021

Appendix 2: Review and Engagement Process – Updating North Tyneside’s Homelessness Prevention Strategy

1.9 Contact officers:

Paul Worth, Senior Manager, Housing Operations, tel. (0191) 643 7554

Martin Bewick, Strategic Housing Manager, tel. (0191) 643 6206

Fiona Robson, Housing Implementation Officer, tel (0191) 643 6212

David Dunford, Acting Senior Business Partner, Finance matters, tel (0191) 643 7027

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- [North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2013 – 2018](#)
- [North Tyneside Housing Strategy 2016-2021](#)
- [The Housing Act 1996](#)
- [The Homelessness Act 2002](#)
- [The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017](#)
- [The Homelessness Code of Guidance](#)
- [North Tyneside Health Needs Audit 2016](#)

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

The cost of compiling and publishing the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2019 – 2021 will be managed within current budgets. It is our intention to aim to deliver the outcomes described within the action plan within current resources and any other funding requirements subsequently identified to deliver specific priorities within the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2019 -2021 would be funded through external partnership funding or be subject to future Cabinet reports.

2.2 Legal

The Authority is obliged by section 1(4) of the Homelessness Act 2002, to publish its Homelessness Strategy within 5 years from the date of publication of the last Strategy. It is also required to keep the Strategy under review and the Authority may modify it from

time to time and publish the modifications or Strategy as modified as considered appropriate.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 came into force on 3rd April 2018 and requires local housing authorities to take “reasonable steps” to either maintain or secure accommodation for eligible applicants threatened with homelessness. In addition, in accordance with section 182 of the Housing Act 1996, local housing authorities are required to have regard to the Homelessness Code of Guidance published by the Secretary of State. Failure to have an updated Homelessness Strategy may impact the Authority’s ability to defend challenges to decisions made under the Housing Act 1996 as amended by Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

Council officers and Elected Members were invited to respond as part of the consultation exercise which closed December 2017. Responses were collated and examined in early 2018. (As mentioned in 1.5.3 the review process was halted to allow acknowledgement and alignment of the Government’s Homelessness Prevention Act).

Internal consultation has taken place with Elected Members through attendance at Housing Sub Committee on 11 February 2019. The Committee provided their feedback which has been incorporated within the review process and strategy.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

As outlined in Appendix 2 external consultation took place with service providers and service users during 2017. The Homelessness Strategy Review event held in February 2017 also provided an opportunity for various stakeholders to inform the strategy, this included support providers such as Changing Lives and Depaul UK, as well as third sector organisations such as Homeless Link, Crisis and Shelter.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

This report supports our aim to ensure that the local authority meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, where no one will experience disadvantage or discrimination because of their personal circumstances, background or characteristics.

Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken on all potential projects and policies to be considered stemming from the adoption of the Homelessness Reduction Strategy.

2.6 Risk management

Risks associated with the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2019 – 2021 have been considered.

2.7 Crime and disorder

The Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2019 -2021 aims to contribute to reducing crime through supporting offenders into settled accommodation. It therefore supports the strategic priorities of the Safer North Tyneside Partnership.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications directly arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive X
- Head(s) of Service X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) X
- Chief Finance Officer X
- Monitoring Officer X
- Head of Corporate Strategy and Customer Service X