

Report to Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:
A.4

Meeting Date: 23rd October 2014
 Portfolio: Economy, Enterprise & Housing
 Key Decision: No
 Within Policy and Budget Framework: Yes
 Public / Private: Public

Title: Homelessness Strategy 2015-20
 Report of: DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
 Report Number: ED44/14

Purpose / Summary:

To provide an update on the research and progress to date, including the consultation and implementation timescales

Recommendations:

To note the priority areas, timeframe and implementation plan

Tracking

Executive:	
Overview and Scrutiny:	
Council:	

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Section 1 (1) of the Homelessness Act 2002 gives Housing Authorities the power to carry out homelessness reviews within the district areas; and S.1 (3 and 4) places a statutory responsibility on housing authorities to formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the ongoing results of the reviews.

1.2 Section 3 (1) of the Homelessness Act 2002 requires the housing authority to have a strategy which seeks to:

- prevent people from becoming homeless
- ensure that there is sufficient accommodation in the area for people who might become, or are homeless
- ensure that people who might be, or are homeless, have sufficient support to prevent them from becoming homeless again
- consult with other relevant agencies in carrying out the review and in preparing the strategy

1.3 The key priorities within Carlisle's current homelessness strategy (published in 2008/9) align with prior Government set priorities:

Key priority area:	Objectives achieved:
Reduce temporary accommodation by 50% in 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TA target met by 2010 through the utilisation of the hostels as a preventative placement to households where no duty is owed under the Housing Act 1996 • A four times (308%) increase in homeless prevention cases from 2008 – 2013
Stop placing 16 17 year olds in bed and breakfast by 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Bed and Breakfast placements • Increased partnership working with Children's Services through the Youth Housing Panel to prevent youth homelessness • Implemented joint assessments with Children's Services • Implemented the joint protocol for 16/17 year olds
Prevent and reduce further rough sleeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented the provision of emergency accommodation arrangements for severe weather (SWEP) • NSNO • Street Link

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rough Sleepers count • Assisted 118 households through the homelessness prevention grant from 2012 to date with rent in advance / deposits • Adopted a 'Places of change' approach
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1.4 As part of the review process in line with best practice, Carlisle City Council reviewed the last six years homelessness demographic data; correlating this with information from local social services as to the current and likely future members of social services client groups who are likely to be homeless or at risk of homelessness; for example young people in need, care leavers and those with community care needs.

1.5 Trend patterns, current and future demands were determined, including housing and support resources and availability; ensuring that the future strategic priorities set are based on realistic assumptions as to how they will be delivered in practice, and collectively owned by all stakeholders within the district. The main findings included:

- 1200 people consistently approaching for housing advice for each of the last six years
- The number of Homelessness acceptances (full duty) reduced by 68% from 206 to 65 between 08/09 and 13/14 (which is comparably favourable with the national average)
- Proportionally the figures of priority need homelessness decisions have remained fairly constant over the last six years with the largest group being those with dependent children/pregnant (34%), the next largest groups being those with mental health problems (22%) and those suffering domestic violence (8%)
- The causes of homelessness remained proportionally similar with relationship breakdown (29%) and loss of rented accommodation (22%) being the most common causes
- Over the last six years the focus on homelessness prevention within the district has demonstrated an increase of 323% from 97 households successfully assisted to 410. This focus on prevention within homelessness services has successfully brought the City Council in line with the national statistical average

1.6 In addition, an audit of repeat presentations, applications and of those residents in emergency temporary accommodation for long periods of time over the past six years has been reviewed identifying 29 people annually as being multiple excluded; 1:1 interviews were then conducted with 10 sample cases over a two month period as part of an in-depth local study in to Multiple Exclusion homelessness within the district.

1.7 Significant socio-economic and changes in government policy which are deemed likely to impact on homelessness were also considered; such as changes to legislation, resources and funding; welfare and housing reform changes; reduction in public sector funding.

1.8 The City council invested in an external audit of its homelessness and hostel services which outlined a number of recommendations to improve the offer to homeless people within the district which have helped to shape the key priority areas and future approaches to service delivery.

2. PROPOSALS

2.1 Following on from all of the review data gathered the following key priority areas were proposed and agreed by a range of key stakeholders – recognising that the key to delivering these priority areas is partnership working.:

1. Appropriate Accommodation and Support Pathways

As part of our recent homelessness and hostel services review, it was recommended that our services are refocused to offer transformational services focused on the individual; ensuring there is a range of support and advice available from all of the local provider and partner agencies to meet individual needs, enabling people to maximise their independence and minimise the likelihood of them becoming homeless in the future

2. Multiple Excluded Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

- Initial research findings as to the scale of MEH in Carlisle identified 29 people annually (0.03% of the population of Carlisle) who were experiencing repeated multiple exclusion homelessness and who had presented an average of 2 times each to homelessness services each year
- Of the sample interviewed:
 - 80% had experienced institutional care (LA care, prison, mental health hospital)
 - 90% had substance misuse issues
 - 70% had participated in street culture activities (survival shoplifting, street drinking, sex work)
 - 60% of the sample reporting experiencing all four indicator areas

3. Increase and improve positive outcomes for young people experiencing homelessness

- This is a key priority area nationally and locally in particular for those young people aged predominantly 18-24 years old whose needs are difficult to address; linking closely with priority 1 & 2

- Within Carlisle homeless presentations has remained fairly constant for the past six years accounting for around 36% of all presentations

4. Prevention of Homelessness

- Government investment in the delivery of gold standard homeless prevention services
- Increased focus on prevention through internal restructure to ensure that transformational services focused on pathways to support and accommodation are realised (priority 1)

3. CONSULTATION

3.1 To date consultation meetings and workshops have been carried out with a number of representative key stakeholders from within the statutory and third sector agencies in order to shape, agree and take collective ownership of the agreed key priorities and develop future actions:

- **Tuesday 24th June 2014** - to outline the progress made on the previous strategy; the current homeless situation and key priority areas and invite discussion in relation to the key priorities / themes identified
- **23rd July 2014** - interactive workshop to explore key priority areas / themes and develop future actions
- **End of October 2014** - circulate the draft strategy to key partners and invite comments / amends
- **October / November** – Official rough sleepers count verified by Homeless Link (the results will feed in to the strategy document and action plan)
- **28th November 2014** – Key stakeholder meeting to agree final strategy and action plan
- **January / February 2015** – Pre-launch planning event with stakeholders

3.2 Agreed Strategy document and action plan will go through the following internal meetings for approval prior to publication in March / April 2015:

- SMT – 9th December 2014
- JMT – 15th December 2014
- Executive – 14th January 2015
- Community – 15th January 2015
- Executive – 2nd February 2015
- Council – 3rd March 2015

4. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Update requested by COSP

5. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

5.1 Address Carlisle's current and future housing needs

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**Appendices
attached to report:**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- None

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS/RISKS:

Chief Executive's -

Community Engagement –

Economic Development –

Governance –

Local Environment –

Resources -