

Chichester District Council

CABINET

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Draft Homelessness Strategy 2015-2020

1. Contacts

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2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the draft Homelessness Strategy 2015-2020 for Chichester District be approved for consultation.
- 2.2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Housing and Environment Services (following consultation with the Cabinet member for Housing and Planning) to consider the representations arising from the consultation exercise and, provided the representations do not request significant amendments, to approve adoption (with minor amendments if considered appropriate) of the Strategy.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Homelessness Act 2002 requires all local housing authorities to have a homelessness strategy and to review and renew the strategy every five years.
- 3.2. The purpose of such a strategy is to set out the local authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness and for ensuring that sufficient accommodation and support is available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so.

4. Outcomes to be achieved

- 4.1. The outcome to be achieved is to have a homelessness strategy that ensures that the Council can prevent homelessness in the next five years and to assist and support people when we are unable to prevent them from becoming homeless.
- 4.2. The draft Homelessness Strategy 2015-2020, which forms the appendix to this report, re-affirms the five key objectives developed in the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2009-2014 and sets out action plans to reduce homelessness based on the outcomes of the homelessness review that has

recently been completed. It also seeks to minimise the risks arising from the Government's stated intention to further reduce expenditure on welfare benefits and to extend the right to buy to housing association tenants.

5. Proposal

- 5.1. To carry out a consultation exercise on the proposed Homelessness Strategy 2015-2020.
- 5.2. Should the consultation, detailed in paragraph 8.2 below, result in inconsequential changes to the document then authorisation is sought by officers to adopt the Strategy without returning to Cabinet. However, should the consultation exercise require key changes to the draft strategy the amended strategy will then be brought to Cabinet in October 2015.

6. Alternatives that have been considered

- 6.1. There are no alternatives to the action outlined in this report as there is a statutory requirement for all housing authorities to have a homelessness strategy.

7. Resource and legal implications

- 7.1. The draft Homelessness Strategy 2015-2020 has been developed so that the action plan can be delivered within existing resources. The Housing and Environment Service will take every opportunity to bid for additional Government funding, if and when it becomes available, in order to further enhance the service it provides to prevent homelessness either alone or with partners.
- 7.2. If a Homelessness Strategy 2015-2020 is not adopted the Council's homelessness decisions would be open to challenge because it is necessary to have regard to the strategy when determining homeless applications.

8. Consultation

- 8.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Homelessness Strategy 2015-2020 at its meeting on 2 July 2015 and the Chairman will report the outcome of its consideration orally to Cabinet.
- 8.2. We will consult widely with our partners, including West Sussex County Council, Registered Providers of Social Housing and third sector organisations that assist with the delivery of our homelessness services. The consultation period will commence on 8th July 2015 and finish on 19th August 2015.

9. Community impact and corporate risks

- 9.1. The strategy is likely to have a positive impact on our community since it will focus on homelessness prevention and a reduction in rough sleeping.
- 9.2. The corporate risk in not adopting a strategy has been identified in that the Council's homeless application decisions would be open to challenge.

10. Other Implications

	Yes	No
Crime & Disorder: If rough sleeping can be reduced then there is a possibility that crime could be reduced since rough sleeping is sometimes associated with criminal activity	X	
Climate Change:		X
Human Rights and Equality Impact: The new strategy is not significantly different to the previous strategy, however, it should be noted that when considering all homeless applications the applicants' human rights and protected characteristics have to be taken fully into account.	X	
Safeguarding: The nature of homelessness means that the client group is likely to have a member of the household who is a vulnerable adult or child and hence an effective strategy can reduce the risk to adults and children who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.	X	

11. Appendices

11.1. Draft Chichester District Council Homelessness Strategy 2015-2020

12. Background Papers

12.1. Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2009-14.

12.2. Homelessness Review 2015.