



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 26 November 2019	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019-2024)**

Report Author(s): **Leah Montia (Housing Manager)**

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Council's strategic position on Homelessness and Rough Sleeping.
Report Summary:	<p>The report outlines the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which sets out the Council's plan for dealing with homelessness and tackling the task of reducing rough sleeping in the Borough.</p> <p>Following on from the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (implemented in April 2018) the Government requires all local authorities to have an up to date Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy available online by winter 2019.</p> <p>The Strategy supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and Housing Strategy 2019-2024.</p> <p>The report seeks approval for the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy to go out for consultation with the aim of the final document being adopted and published in January 2020.</p>
Recommendation(s):	That the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy (2019-2024) (as set out at Appendix 1 to this report) be approved for public consultation.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive) (0116) 257 2681 stephen.hinds@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of the Built Environment) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Leah Montia (Housing Manager) (0116) 257 2781 leah.montia@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Objectives:	<p>Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1) Providing Excellent Services (CO3) Click to select corporate objective.</p>
Vision and Values:	<p>"A Stronger Borough Together" (Vision) Respect (V2) Customer Focus (V5)</p>
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.

Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Regulatory Governance (CR6) Reputation Damage (CR4)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable.
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	Homelessness Strategy 2016
Appendices:	1. Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019-2024)

1. Background and the Wider Context for the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy

- 1.1 The Council's Homelessness Strategy was produced in 2016 and whilst it was not due to expire until 2021 there is a requirement to produce an up to date Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 1.2 In 2019 the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) wrote to all local authorities to notify them of the requirement to have an up to date Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy submitted to MHCLG and available on line by winter 2019.
- 1.3 The Council's current Homelessness Strategy was published before the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 came in to force in April 2018 and is therefore not strictly up to date, and needs to be reviewed to take in to account the considerable changes in legislation and policy.
- 1.4 In April 2018 the HRA came in to force and transformed the delivery of homelessness services and imposed further duties on local authorities to prevent homelessness. At Oadby and Wigston Borough Council (OWBC) the Housing Options team deliver the homelessness services and adapted well to these changes as the Council had always worked with residents to try and prevent homelessness. Officers continue to take a holistic view when dealing with homelessness and work with residents to achieve the best outcome.
- 1.5 Despite the service responding well to the new legislation homelessness is on the increase in the Borough and across the country, and homelessness remains high on the national agenda and affects a high number of residents in different capacities.
- 1.6 During the 2018-2019 financial year Oadby & Wigston Borough Council recorded the

following statistics:

- 347 households experiencing housing difficulties approached the Council for assistance;
- The Council started a relief duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 for 235 households seeking housing assistance;
- The Council prevented 8 households from becoming homeless from their existing home;
- The Council worked with 35 households so that alternative accommodation could be found for them before they became homeless from their existing home;
- The Council accepted a full homeless duty to 35 households who would have been provided with temporary accommodation, pending rehousing, if needed; and
- The Council provided outreach support to 3 rough sleepers.

1.7 In the Borough, the main reason for homelessness is the landlord issuing a notice to end an assured shorthold tenancy, closely followed by family or friends no longer willing to be able to accommodate, and the breakdown in a relationship (this includes both violent and non-violent relationship breakdowns). In identifying the Council's priorities officers have had due regard to the main causes of homelessness in the Borough and what can be done to support residents facing those situations. Consideration has also been given to those less frequent causes of homelessness to ensure the wide range of causes and homeless related issues are captured.

2. Introduction to the Strategy

2.1 Rough sleeping is often the most visible and concerning form of homelessness but the definition of homelessness and the experience of those facing homelessness extends much wider than this. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out how the Council will, over the coming five years, work to prevent all types of homelessness and support those who face homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness.

3. The Council's Priorities

3.1 The Council's priorities to prevent all types of homelessness and support those who face homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness are:

➤ Priority One: Homeless Prevention

- Tackling the causes of homelessness and continue to implement the Homelessness Reduction Act; and
- Preventing homelessness by access to affordable and sustainable housing options.

➤ Priority Two: Providing Services to respond to homeless and vulnerable people

- Preventing and responding to rough sleeping; and
- Supporting children, families, young people and vulnerable adults.

➤ Priority Three: Reduce the use of accommodation outside of the Borough

- Implementing our Temporary Accommodation Strategy; and
- Work with the private sector to secure suitable temporary accommodation.

➤ Priority Four: Increase the supply of affordable housing in the Borough

- Implementing the Local Plan and Housing Strategy; and

- Ensuring the provision of new affordable homes.

4. Delivery and Monitoring

4.1 The Strategy sets out the strategic direction and aims for preventing and reducing homelessness and rough sleeping in the Borough focusing in particular on the major changes required. It will be underpinned by policies and delivery plans to measure progress.

4.2 The Council will know if the Strategy is effective if:

- Increased number of homelessness preventions and reduced cases of repeat homelessness are reported;
- An increased proportion of personal housing plans which achieve a positive outcome;
- Improved satisfaction with the Housing Options Service;
- Funds secured to deliver rough sleeping initiatives will be maximised;
- The number of rough sleepers in the Borough of Oadby & Wigston will be reduced over the lifetime of this strategy;
- Increasing the number of homes within the Borough for temporary accommodation;
- there is a reduction in the number of out of Borough placements for temporary accommodation;
- there is a reduction in number of households living in temporary accommodation; and
- Increase the amount of affordable housing in the Borough.

4.3 The strategic priorities set out within the strategy cannot be achieved without the collective commitment of the Council and its key partners and stakeholders. This partnership approach should apply to all housing in the Borough, which means that everyone involved in building and managing homes, and supporting the people who live in them have an important role to play.

4.4 To achieve the aims set out in the Strategy the Council will:

- Involve residents and partners in developing detailed proposals to deliver the strategic objectives;
- Be inclusive and transparent in developing policies and delivery plans;
- Publish details of progress against the strategic priorities and the Council's Corporate Plan; and
- Report progress against the strategic priorities to Committee.

5. Consultation

5.1 The Strategy will be consulted on over a 4 week period and will be publicised widely including on the Council's website and with key partner agencies.