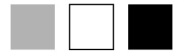


## Wyre Forest District Council

### Record of a Council Decision delegated to be made by an Officer

This includes a record of an Executive Decision made by an officer under Regulation 13, Part 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

<b>Item decided:</b> To approve the Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy following public consultation	
<b>Officer who has taken the decision</b>	Mike Parker, Corporate Director; Economic Prosperity and Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health Wellbeing and Democratic Services
<b>Date of the decision</b>	23/11/2021
<b>Reason for the decision/alternatives considered</b>	<p>The Council is required, by the Homelessness Act 2002 (as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017), to have a strategy for dealing with all forms of Homelessness and to review and publish that strategy every five years.</p> <p>The Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019 - 22) has been updated to take into consideration changes that came about because of the Coronavirus pandemic which has affected the way homelessness services were delivered across the country.</p> <p>The revised published strategy has been considered by Members, partners, (Local Homelessness Forum) and the general public.</p> <p>The consultation responses have been considered. It is not proposed to make any further amendments to the strategy as the comments made either concern items included in the action plan or items that are operational and not within the scope of the strategy.</p> <p>The proposed strategy can therefore be adopted forthwith.</p>
<b>Date and source of Delegated Decision (if appropriate)</b>	Cabinet on the 14 September 2021



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<b>Council/Cabinet member consulted – if applicable</b>	Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Democratic Services
<b>Any interest declared by the Consultee or officer</b>	None

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Update to Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place on the outcomes from the consultation on the Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 On 14 September 2021 Cabinet agreed that the proposed amendments to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 – 2022 were publicly consulted on from 20 September for 6 weeks. Cabinet also agreed to delegate to the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Democratic Services, to determine the final form of amendments to the strategy following any changes arising as a consequence of the consultation and that the final amendments be made to the strategy no later than 31 December 2021.
- 2.2 The Council is required, by the Homelessness Act 2002 (as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017), to have a strategy for dealing with all forms of Homelessness and to review and publish that strategy every five years. The Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019 - 22) has been updated to take into consideration changes that came about because of the Coronavirus pandemic which has affected the way homelessness services were delivered across the country and as it is a requirement of Local Authorities to consult on any substantial modification to the existing strategy under Homelessness Act 2002, the revised strategy has been published and considered by Members, partners, (Local Homelessness Forum) and the general public.

**3. KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 In total the Council received 13 responses to the consultation.
- 3.2 In relation to the first question: Do you think there is anything missing from strategy?
- 3.2.1 There were nine responses saying Yes. Of these, four made general comments in relation to homelessness rather than items to be included and one made no additional comments. Of the four remaining responses, one comment was regarding direct payments to landlords and is a matter for the DWP who pay Universal Credit and as such is outside the scope of this strategy,
- 3.2.2 Of the remaining three comments, one was regarding working with voluntary groups, one related to the need to provide support as well as housing for rough sleepers and one asked for more to be included in relation to mortgage arrears and assistance. Officers are satisfied that all three elements are already covered by the strategy either in the strategic priority one – prevention or in strategic priority two – intervention.

3.3 In relation to the second question: Thinking about the action plan – do you agree with out plans to tackle homelessness?

3.3.1 Seven respondents confirmed they agreed with the action plan and 3 didn't answer. Of the remaining 3 who answered No, one respondent commented about long waiting times and mediation not being used when there was violence in the home, one mentioned intervention and the final respondent made a comment about not ending the use of temporary accommodation like the Lion Hotel.

3.3.2 Officers have considered these comments but they either relate to operational matters or are already covered through actions in Strategic Priority Two (intervention). The final comments with regards to using accommodation such as the Lion, whilst the provision plays a vital role in accommodating households it is part of the Council's long term ambitions to provide it's own, more cost effective and purpose built temporary accommodation and so Officers feel this should remain an action in the strategy.

3.4 In relation to the third question: If you have any more comments, please let us know?

3.4.1 Ten respondents didn't add anything further and one respondent made derogatory comments which have been discounted.

3.4.2 Of the remaining two respondents one made the point about providing accommodation and support to prevent a return to rough sleeping and officers feel this has been covered in Strategic Priority Two – Intervention. The other respondent asked that we remember to appreciate what we have already (in relation to services). Officers believe this is picked up throughout the document as partnership working is key to the delivery of the strategy.

3.5 Officers have considered the points raised in the consultation and are satisfied with the strategy, which officers believe address the relevant points that have been raised and therefore do not propose any further amendments.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The current Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy actions will be delivered within existing financial resources

#### **5. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Local Housing Authorities have a legal duty to undertake a review of homelessness in their area and to publish a Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy every five years.

#### **6. CONCLUSION**

6.1 The public consultation to the strategy received 13 comments. The respondents were broadly in support of the strategy and action plan and where amendments were suggested or comments made, these have been considered by the Officers.