

	<h2>Housing Committee</h2> <p><b>1 April 2019</b></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Title</b></p>	<p><b>Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy</b></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Report of</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Cllr Gabriel Rozenberg</a></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Wards</b></p>	<p><a href="#">All</a></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Status</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Public</a></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Urgent</b></p>	<p><a href="#">No</a></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Key</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Yes</a></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Enclosures</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Appendix 1 –Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024</a></p> <p><a href="#">Appendix 2 – Consultation Report</a></p> <p><a href="#">Appendix 3 – Summary Equality Impact Assessment</a></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Officer Contact Details</b></p>	<p>Faisal Butt, Lead Commissioner - Housing  <a href="mailto:Faisal.Butt@Barnet.gov.uk">Faisal.Butt@Barnet.gov.uk</a></p>

## Summary

The council has developed a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to take account of major changes in the housing sector and legislative changes, including the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was approved for public consultation by Housing Committee on 10 October 2018. The consultation has now been completed and a revised draft is attached for the Housing Committee’s consideration at appendix 1, along with a summary of the consultation outcomes at appendix 2.

## Officers Recommendations

- 1. That the Housing Committee approves the revised Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy attached at appendix 1.**

## 1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The council's Housing Strategy dates from 2015, and a number of changes have occurred since then which mean that the council's approach to housing needs to be reviewed and updated. These changes include:
- changes in Government Policy,
  - a new London Mayor with a new London Housing Strategy,
  - new legislation including the Housing and Planning Act 2016, and
  - the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, and
  - the updated Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities.
- 1.2 The council's Homelessness Strategy also requires an update to take account of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA 2017). Barnet's Homelessness Strategy is currently a component of the Housing Strategy but it is proposed the two are separated to reflect the increased focus on tackling homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 1.3 Officers have updated the evidence that supports the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. A review of homelessness in Barnet was carried out, assessing the levels and patterns of homelessness in the borough and to help identify gaps in knowledge and services.
- 1.4 Since 2015, other significant events have impacted on Housing at a national level, including the EU referendum and the Grenfell Tower fire disaster.
- 1.5 Additionally, the council is in the process of updating the Local Plan, and the Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee is preparing a Regeneration Strategy.
- 1.6 The Housing Committee considered the above matters in June 2018, and instructed council officers to prepare a new draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy based on the following themes:
- **Preventing** Homelessness.
  - **Reducing** the use of temporary accommodation and securing accommodation for people who are homeless.
  - **Establishing** effective partnerships, working arrangements and support to those who are or used to be homeless, to improve their resilience and reduce the risk of them from becoming homeless again.
  - **Supporting** rough sleepers to address their housing and other needs.
- 1.7 The Housing Committee approved for consultation a new draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to cover the period 2019 - 2024 on 10 October 2018, and agreed that a proposed final draft should be brought back for Housing Committee members to consider following a period of public consultation.

## 2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has been updated to take account of responses to a public consultation that took place between November 2018

and February 2019. The responses to the consultation were positive and it is recommended that the revised draft strategy is approved by the Housing Committee.

### 3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 The Housing Committee could decide not to approve the revised draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy but at its meeting in June 2018 the Housing Committee instructed officers to prepare this, and subsequently approved the draft version for consultation in October 2018. The responses received during the public consultation about the proposed Strategy have been positive. Not revising or having such a Strategy is not recommended because the current one would not be reflective of the changes noted earlier in this report.

### 4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Subject to approval by the Housing Committee, the revised Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 will be published on the council's web site.

4.2 Progress against the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy objectives will be monitored through the Barnet 2024 business planning process, which includes the Housing Committee's Housing Delivery Plan.

### 5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

#### 5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

5.1.1 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy contributes to the council's Corporate plan priority of ***ensuring decent quality housing that buyers and renters can afford, prioritising Barnet residents*** as follows:

- Increasing supply to ensure greater housing choice for residents
- Delivering new affordable housing, including new homes on council owned land
- Prioritising people with a local connection and who give back to the community through the Housing Allocations Scheme
- Ensuring that good landlords continue to provide accommodation and that poor-quality housing is improved

5.1.2 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy supports the vision in Barnet's Health and Well Being Strategy 2015-2020 "*To help everyone to keep well and to promote independence*", with specific proposals to promote independence amongst vulnerable groups, including older people, those with mental health issues, and care leavers.

5.1.3 A health impact assessment (HIA) of the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has been completed, and found that the majority the proposals in the strategy would have an overall positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents.

#### 5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property,

## **Sustainability)**

5.2.1 Activities and proposals in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy are planned to be funded through existing council budgets and plans

### **5.3 Social Value**

5.3.1 Not applicable

### **5.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

5.4.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 requires all local authorities to carry out a review of homelessness in the borough every five years (from the date of publication of the previous homelessness strategy) and then to produce a strategy based upon this evidence base.

5.4.2 Section 333D of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 requires that any local housing strategy prepared by a local housing authority in Greater London must be in general conformity with the London Housing Strategy (the Mayor's strategy).

5.4.3 The council's Constitution, Article 7.5 - Responsibility for Functions, states that the Housing Committee is responsible '*for housing matters including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, commissioning of environmental health functions for private sector housing*'.

### **5.5 Risk Management**

5.5.1 There is a risk that the housing requirements of the Borough are not met if the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is not updated.

### **5.6 Equalities and Diversity**

5.6.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the Public-Sector Equality Duty which requires a public authority (or those exercising public functions) to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not

5.6.2 The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services. The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex

- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

5.6.3 Changes to policies and services are analysed in order to assess the potential equalities impacts and risks and identify any mitigating action possible, through an equalities impact assessment, before final decisions are made. Consideration will also be made to the equalities and data cohesion summary.

5.6.4 A full equalities impact assessment has been completed for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (summarised in appendix 3), and concluded that the overall impact of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy on the protected groups from the Equality Act 2010, as well as the Barnet Fairness Agenda, is positive.

5.6.5 There are a number of challenges related to housing in Barnet as described in the Housing Strategy, some of which disproportionately affect the protected groups due to their tendency to reside in the private rented sector. The strategy should improve this, which gives it a positive impact as a result. It is a minimal impact though because it will benefit all residents, rather than being targeted at the protected groups.

## **5.7 Corporate Parenting**

5.7.1 Establishing effective partnerships, working arrangements and support to those who are or used to be homeless is a central theme of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. This includes supporting care leavers who are at risk of homelessness.

## **5.8 Consultation and Engagement**

5.8.1 A public consultation on the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy ran from 5 November 2018 to 11 February 2019.

5.8.2 The consultation primarily consisted of an online survey on Engage Barnet. Supporting documents were also available on Engage Barnet, allowing residents to view the draft strategy. 166 responses were received to the consultation, with high levels of support for the strategy which are summarised in below:

- Across the four themes, the mean average agreement was 92%, which demonstrates the strong level of support for the strategy overall.
- The draft strategy identified four main priorities for homelessness within Barnet. The consultation asked respondents whether they agreed with each priority, with options of strongly agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree, strongly disagree and don't know.
- Support for all of themes was relatively high, with a large proportion of the respondents either tending to agree or strongly agreeing.
- The most popular priority was preventing homelessness, which received 93.8% tending to agree or strongly agreeing.
- The other priorities still received high levels of support, with establishing effective partnerships, working arrangements and support producing 92.5% agreement, supporting rough sleepers to address their housing and other needs receiving 91.8% and reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation 90.4%.

5.8.3 In addition to the survey, presentations were made to the Barnet Homes Performance and Advisory Group, the Children's Partnership Board, the Youth Board and Health and Well Being Board.

5.8.4 A number of formal responses were received from a range of stakeholders, including Homelessness Action in Barnet, Public Health and Family Services.

5.8.5 The draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has been updated to take account of the consultation response, and changes can be summarised as follows:

- Additional references to links with Health and Wellbeing
- Clearer references to corporate parenting responsibilities
- Acknowledgement of partnership working with key partners on a Pan London and local level to prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping.
- Additional references to other themes in the Housing Strategy including improving standards in the private rented sector.
- Clarification of services available to rough sleepers and agreement to develop an annual action plan to reduce rough sleeping in Barnet.

5.8.6 More information about the consultation is attached to this report at Appendix 2.

## 5.7 Insight

5.7.1 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was informed by a review of homelessness in Barnet. A summary of this review was reported to the Housing Committee in June 2018.

## 6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.8 Housing Committee 10 October 2018 – Item 10 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=9487&Ver=4>

6.9 Housing Committee 21 June 2018 – Item 7 Housing Strategy -

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=9486&Ver=4>

6.10 Housing Strategy (2015)

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s24071/Housing%20Strategt.pdf>

