



**OPEN REPORT
COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Community and Environment Committee - 7 December 2022

DERBYSHIRE HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY

Report of Director of Housing

Report Author and Contact Details

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Wards Affected

District wide

Report Summary

The pandemic and subsequent response by all of the district and borough authorities in Derbyshire has led to a sea change in collaborative working from across the health and social care sectors, criminal justice system and the NHS. Derbyshire Dales District Council has been at the forefront of this activity and, along with other Derbyshire District and Borough Councils, jointly developed a new county wide homelessness and rough sleeper strategy. The aim is to lock in the new partnerships and joined up working formed over the last two years in order to improve homelessness provision for our residents.

Recommendations

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the Derbyshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy be endorsed and the Council be recommended to adopt the Strategy.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1a	County wide data report
Appendix 1b	Glossary of Terms
Appendix 1c	Good practice guide
Appendix 1d	Derbyshire Homelessness & Rough Strategy

Background Papers

None

Consideration of report by Council or other committee

Council – 26 January 2023

Council Approval Required

Yes

Exempt from Press or Public

No

Derbyshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy

1. Background

- 1.1 The challenges local authorities have faced over the course of the last two years have brought about creativity, innovation, improved partnership working and a wide recognition of the link between homelessness and health.
- 1.2 Through our co-ordinated approach to tackling homelessness and service delivery we have seen improved outcomes for many people across the Dales with long and complex histories of homelessness.
- 1.3 Derbyshire Dales District Council has an excellent reputation for the way it delivers its homelessness service. We always try to find positive outcomes for our residents regardless of the complexities we may encounter; however, we have for some time faced difficulties linking vulnerable people into the services that they need. Those with enduring multiple complex needs have often had difficulty engaging with drug, alcohol and mental health services because often those services apply criteria that lead to people falling between the gaps. Likewise, we know that some people struggle to access services because they need one problem addressing (drug addiction) before they can access a service (mental health). This can lead to a 'chicken and egg' situation whereby people are left without any support service at all.
- 1.4 The Derbyshire Homeless Officers Group (DHOG) has a long history of collaboration and partnership working to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping across the county. The DHOG commissioned the respected charity 'Homeless Link' to develop the first comprehensive county wide strategy. Appendices 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d provide information on the homelessness data across the county, a glossary of terms, a good practice guide drawing on other areas and the final strategy document for Derbyshire.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The new county wide homelessness and rough sleeping strategy (see background paper) has a core aim to break down system blockages. It argues that a multi-disciplinary approach is needed to make systems work better and that services are flexibly designed around the needs of our customers.
- 2.2 The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) is now fully embedded and this legislation has enabled councils to do much more for people facing homelessness. The Government are committed to ending rough sleeping by 2024 and this new Derbyshire wide strategy is fully in keeping with the positive spirit of the homelessness legislation and the ambition of the Government's target.
- 2.3 The strategy makes reference to the new Domestic Abuse Act (2021) and contained within the list of priority actions are proposals to increase support and easier access to accommodation for abuse victims.

3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

- 3.1 The strategy has been developed through close collaboration between the Derbyshire Homelessness Officers Group (DHOG), Derbyshire County Council, Public Health, NHS, Police, Probation, and wide range of partner agencies including from the voluntary sector.
- 3.2 The strategy is ambitious and our vision is “working collaboratively across Derbyshire to prevent and reduce homelessness – making it everyone’s responsibility.
- 3.3 The strategy will meet the vision and aims through the delivery of 4 clear priorities:
- Make homelessness everyone’s responsibility through a system wide approach
 - Prevent homelessness and respond through early intervention and personalised solutions
 - End rough sleeping and repeat homelessness
 - Develop sustainable supported and settled housing solutions
- 3.4 The Director of Public Health for Derbyshire is a signatory and the strategy will sit under the Health & Wellbeing Board. This represents a significant shift in how homelessness strategies are implemented. With the strategy sitting within the wider health spectrum this means that we have a huge opportunity to transform housing and homelessness services for the people we serve.
- 3.5 The County Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy will inform and help to structure the Council’s main homelessness & rough sleeping strategy which is under review at this time. The Derbyshire Dales Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy will be presented to members early in 2023.
- 3.6 The past two years working together to meet the challenges of Covid and “Everyone In” have brought us to a unique position whereby there is now a broad consensus that we are stronger by working together.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 Homelessness Link were commissioned to develop the strategy. As part of this, comprehensive consultation took place with a range of stakeholders across the county.

5. Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 The strategy is currently being adopted by Derbyshire County Council and all Derbyshire districts and boroughs through their individual committee processes.
- 5.2 North East Derbyshire District Council is leading on the recruitment of a strategic post holder tasked with delivering the objectives contained in County strategy action plan. The post will be recruited early in 2023. This post will be funded by all of the Derbyshire District and Borough Councils and Derbyshire County Council and the post itself will be hosted by North East Derbyshire District Council. Contributions will covered by new and

existing homelessness grant funding. Funding from Derbyshire Dales will only be provided in line with grant award periods.

6. Policy Implications

- 6.1 By adopting this strategy we will be able to meet the wider County issues and challenges ahead such as meeting the needs of those with multiple and complex needs and the coming issues related to the increases in the cost of living.

7. Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The report states that all of the Derbyshire District and Borough Councils and Derbyshire County Council will contribute towards the costs of a shared strategic officer. It is estimated that this council's share of the costs will be as follows:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
£1791	£3,583	£3,583	£2,388

This can be funded from existing budgets and financed from the Homelessness Prevention Grant. The post will bring Value For Money, delivering greater opportunities for joint services that the Council's residents can access.

- 7.2 The financial risk is assessed as low.

8. Legal Advice and Implications

- 8.1 The Council has various statutory obligations regarding the reduction of homelessness. This report details a new approach to combating this issue. The legal risk has been assessed as low.
- 8.2 As this report seeks the endorsement of a strategy, this will require formal adoption by the full Council at its meeting on 26 January 2023.

9. Equalities Implications

- 9.1 Homelessness services provide support for all residents. Certain priority groups are given additional support and these often overlap with protected groups and vulnerable households. The equalities implications are therefore positive.

10. Climate Change Implications

- 10.1 There are limited climate change implications for the Homelessness Strategy and so a CCIA has not been completed.

11. Risk Management

- 11.1 The District Council has a duty to develop its own Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy. Aligning our strategy with the wider county approach will ensure county wide funding proposals will benefit our residents.

Report Authorisation

Approvals obtained from:-

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Paul Wilson	29/11/2022
Director of Resources/ S.151 Officer (or Financial Services Manager)	Karen Henriksen	25/11/2022
Monitoring Officer (or Legal Services Manager)	James McLaughlin	29/11/2022