

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Cabinet Council	Date:	12 February 2020 26 March 2020
Subject:	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods, and Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	Yes	Budget/Policy Framework:	Yes
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Appendices:	1. Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 2. Public Consultation Responses Table		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval from Cabinet for the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 to be adopted.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that:

(1) the result of the public consultation be noted.

- 2.2 Cabinet is asked to **RECOMMEND** that:

(1) the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 be adopted.

- 2.3 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that:

(1) The Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 be adopted.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 There is a legal requirement for Local Authorities to have a 5-year Homelessness Strategy. The current Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was produced in 2015 and was a five-year strategy running until 2020. Since the inception of the current strategy, there have been many changes in the external environment as well as local changes. It is therefore timely to develop a new

strategy to meet the current challenges and those we anticipate for the next 5 years.

- 3.2 The purpose of the strategy is to set out the Council's aims and objectives in relation to housing and to articulate a clear vision for the role that housing plays within the community. It recognises that the Council has a key leadership role in delivering the Strategy, but that partners and stakeholders are fundamentally important to its success.
- 3.3 Ark Consultancy were appointed to assist in co-ordinating and facilitating the development of the strategy, bringing in partners and stakeholders to ensure a well formulated and supported strategy was developed.
- 3.4 The Strategy has been developed through several stages:
 - a) Initial development through working groups with staff, members and external partners/ stakeholders. These discussions focused on the opportunities and challenges that are faced in the City in relation to housing and sought solutions and outcomes that will be the focus over the next five years.
 - b) Sharing and sense checking an initial draft strategy and review by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
 - c) A public consultation carried out over 6 weeks involving workshops, one to one conversations, public surveys and open feedback to Officers. The result of this consultation and how feedback has been considered can be found in Appendix 2.
- 3.5 The document is built on good evidence, with data being included within the Strategy to demonstrate why the key areas are our priorities.
- 3.6 It is written in the context of the Council Plan, the Economic Growth Strategy, the Regeneration and Economic Growth Strategy and Gloucester City Plan. It also reflects the objectives of the Gloucestershire Joint Housing and Well Being Strategy 2019- 2030.
- 3.7 The actions within the strategy give an overview of the workstreams and activities that need to be undertaken. More detailed SMART actions supported through appropriate budgetary provision will be developed through the Service Planning Process for relevant departments. These will be linked to key performance indicators and the progress of the Strategy Action Plan will be reported annually to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.8 Throughout the life span of the Strategy it will be regularly reviewed in the light of economic, environmental and social change.

4.0 Social Value Considerations

- 4.1 Housing in the City has a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our communities. The Housing and Homelessness Strategy seeks to ensure we deliver our services on the basis of the needs of our residents. It also identifies quality and standards as a key theme which is known to have a significant impact on health.

5.0 Environmental Implications

- 5.1 Responding to climate emergency is a cross cutting theme of the draft strategy. Housing is a key part of our environment and the impact on our environment in terms of design, planning and delivery will be carefully considered.

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 The current Housing and Homelessness Strategy is coming to an end and it is a statutory requirement under the Homelessness Act 2002 for us to have a Homelessness Strategy. We could consider only adopting a Homelessness strategy, but this would not take into account the broader impact of Housing challenges across the City. For this reason, it makes sense to develop a new Housing and Homelessness Strategy for the City for the next 5 years.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 This is a well formed, evidenced and widely supported strategy which has the potential to support significant improvements for the City and our residents. Having a clear strategy helps to allocate resources effectively and allows clarity for our partners.
- 7.2 In order to satisfy the requirements of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Gloucester City Council must have an adopted Homelessness Strategy in 2020 to serve 2020-2025. As previously mentioned, we have included homelessness in a broader strategy on Housing to ensure a coherent and effective approach.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 8.1 Following the adoption of this strategy an action plan will be formed. This will be reviewed annually along with the broader strategy to monitor changes, ensuring it is delivered.
- 8.2 As this is a framework policy, the strategy will be finally adopted at March 2020 Council.

9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 Gloucester City Council received a Homelessness Prevention Grant to the value of £372K last year. This strategy will help to ensure that resources are targeted appropriately to meet our Housing needs and ensure efficient service delivery.
- 9.2 Temporary Accommodation cost the Council £1.3m last year which is a considerable cost. This strategy will help us to identify opportunities for both reduction in need and therefore save the Council revenue costs.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.)

10.0 Legal Implications

- 10.1 Whilst under S29 of the Deregulation Act 2015 the council is not required to have a housing strategy, it is required to have a Homelessness Strategy in place so that its duties under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and the Local Government Act 2003 can be met. The Homelessness Act 2002 requires local authorities to publish a strategy setting out how it will address homelessness (including rough sleeping) and the Localism Act 2011 places a duty on all local authorities to produce a tenancy strategy.
- 10.2 S3(8) of the Homelessness Act 2002 provides that the council shall consult with the public, other local authorities and other persons they think appropriate in relation to the draft strategy and take into account the outcome of that consultation prior to adoption.
- 10.3 Any strategy should be reviewed regularly.

(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation of this report.)

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 11.1 If this strategy is adopted and the Council fails to deliver on the outcomes identified, that will cause reputational damage for the Council and negative social impact for the City. For this reason we will be creating an action plan detailing progress and performance measures to ensure appropriate monitoring takes place throughout the duration- 2020-2025.

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:

- 12.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

13.0 Community Safety Implications

- 13.1 The design, planning, delivery, management and mix of accommodation across the City can have a significant impact on community safety. This strategy will help by informing our priorities and our approach to developing new communities and delivering on the City's Housing Needs.

14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications

- 14.1 None

Background Documents:

- 1. Draft Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025**
- 2. Public Consultation responses table**