

Report to	Cabinet	Item
	12 November 2014	
Report of	Head of city development services	8
Subject	Consultation: Greater Norwich homelessness strategy 2015-20	

Purpose

To seek approval from cabinet to consult on the *Greater Norwich homelessness strategy 2015-20* for a period of twelve weeks.

Recommendation

To approve the consultation document: *greater Norwich homelessness strategy 2015-20*.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priorities “Decent housing for all”, “Value for money services”, “A safe and clean city” and “A prosperous city”.

Financial implications

All costs can be met within existing resources.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Bremner.

Contact officers

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Background documents

None

Report

Background information

1. The Homelessness Act 2002 requires Local Authorities to produce a homelessness strategy (based on the evidence from a homelessness review) that applies to everyone at risk of homelessness, not just people who may fall within a priority need group for the purposes of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.
2. This is the third greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy to be produced since 2007. Work started on the formation of this document in January 2014. The following organisations been involved in the formation of this consultation document:
 - Broadland Council
 - City Reach – NHS
 - Integrated Commissioning Team – NHS
 - Norwich City Council
 - South Norfolk Council
3. The main achievements in preventing homelessness in the last three years since the last homelessness strategy:

Action	What does this mean?
Restructured our housing options service to ensure that specialist advice is available for all clients at first point of contact.	<p>We can help more people and be more responsive to preventing homelessness.</p> <p>In an average month the housing options department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• See 1000 people with a housing issue.• Take 350 Home Options applications• Give specialist one to one advice to 220 households threatened with homelessness.• Take 1500 telephone calls• Visit 150 applicants at home to check their circumstances.
Increased the size of our private sector leasing scheme (NCC Let).	<p>We have been able to provide more affordable housing and prevented homelessness.</p> <p>In the last 3 years the scheme has grown and now manages 380 properties (one of the largest such schemes in the country).</p> <p>Earlier this year the scheme housed its 1000th tenant.</p>

Our housing options service has played a proactive role in ensuring Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) gets to people who most need it.	We can be more proactive in preventing homelessness through working closely with our housing benefits team and focussing resources on those in the most need.
Co-ordinated a severe weather provision for rough sleepers at times of extreme weather.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helped mitigate the risk of rough sleeper deaths in severe weather. Linked rough sleepers into services and help.
Carried out an 'Alternative Giving' campaign to highlight the issue of begging and the often false perception that this is linked to rough sleeping.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It helped breakdown the often false perception that the general public may have about begging by encouraging charitable donations to the homelessness charities. This directed help to those who most need it, and who are homeless. It encouraged closer working with the Police and our outreach team who come into contact with street beggars on a daily basis.
Introduced a hostel eviction protocol ('Off the street').	<p>It helps encourage closer working between the statutory and voluntary sector to help reduce the number of people ending up on the streets from hostels through eviction.</p> <p>At the last rough sleeper count (November 2013), Norwich had 5 verified rough sleepers. In comparison, Cambridge had 9 verified rough sleepers.</p>
Provided St Martins Housing Trust with a former sheltered housing scheme for older people who have experienced homelessness.	Older people who have experienced homelessness are able to live in a specialist supportive environment.
Undertook a review of our properties that we lease to homelessness agencies.	We have ensured that our resources meet our strategic needs and priorities.
Expanded our Learning Education, Accommodation Project (LEAP) to increase education, accommodation and employment opportunities to people in hostels.	<p>We have developed a Community Interest Company to give clients' work-based opportunities.</p> <p>We have placed over 600 clients into work focused opportunities</p> <p>We have trained 35 peer mentors to deliver mentoring to new LEAP clients.</p>

	<p>We have introduced GOALS training (which is motivational training for LEAP clients.)</p> <p>We have helped over 150 clients move from hostels into independent living.</p>
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4. The priorities and actions for the new strategy are based on the findings of the following:
- Homelessness review;
 - Trends and issues;
 - National and local policy; current and proposed; and
 - Analysis of the outcomes of the previous Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.
5. Based on the above information the following four proposed priorities for the new strategy have been identified:

Nos.	Priority
1	Targeting our resources at those people who are most at risk of homelessness.
2	Help people find affordable, safe, good quality housing.
3	Working better together with representatives from the following sectors and professions so that we can work in a co-ordinated way to prevent homelessness: health, education, criminal justice, mental health, substance misuse, children services, social care, job centre, private sector landlords and third sector providers
4	Helping people regain their independence again so it reduces the risk of someone becoming homeless in the future.

6. Identified actions for the new homelessness strategy

Each of the three councils has identified a series of actions which are listed in the consultation document. The reason for having three discrete action plans, rather than one plan covering all three districts, is to ensure that each council adequately addresses its own identified needs. There are, however, a number of actions that will be common to each authority.

To ensure the strategy's relevance throughout the five year period the priorities and actions will be reviewed by each greater Norwich council on an annual basis.

7. Consultation

The period of consultation will be from the week commencing 17 November 2014 for a period of twelve weeks as directed by the 'National Compact' (which all district

councils are signatories to). Officers from the three councils will be presenting the strategy at the following events:

- Greater Norwich youth homelessness forum
- Greater Norwich homelessness forum
- Greater Norwich hostel provider forum
- Clinical commissioning group boards of greater Norwich
- Client user group forums at St Martins Housing Trust, Under One Roof, Norwich.

As well as the above forums the following activities will take place:

- The consultation document will appear on the three websites of the greater Norwich councils.
- A questionnaire will be sent out to key stakeholders in the voluntary and statutory sector.
- A joint press release will be published in the local press to encourage responses to the consultation document.

The responses from the consultation will be published alongside the final strategy which will be published in June 2015.

8. Recommendation

To approve the consultation document: greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20.

9. Next steps:

Action	When
Consult with stakeholders on the greater Norwich homelessness strategy 2015-20.	Week commencing 17 th November for a period of twelve weeks until 9 th February 2015.
Revisions carried out to strategy.	December 2014 until 9 th March 2015.
Produce 'response to consultation' document for appendix to strategy.	See above.
Adoption of final greater Norwich homelessness strategy 2015-20 by three greater Norwich council's cabinets.	End of May 2015.
Publication of strategy on three greater Norwich websites.	June 2015

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
City Council

Report author to complete

Committee:	Cabinet
Committee date:	12/11/14
Head of service:	Andy Watt
Report subject:	Consultation document: greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20
Date assessed:	10/10/2014
Description:	

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICT services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial inclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Human Rights Act 1998	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and well being	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Impact			
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Natural and built environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Waste minimisation & resource use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommendations from impact assessment

Positive

Negative

Neutral

Issues