

Report to: Cabinet



Date of Meeting 5 June 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-28

Report summary:

To present the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-28 for approval and adoption as required by the Homelessness Act 2002.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That Cabinet recommend to Council to adopt the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 – 2028.

Reason for recommendation:

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a statutory obligation on local authorities to undertake a review of homelessness in their area and develop and publish a strategy to prevent homelessness based on the findings of the review.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information [Cabinet report 29 November 2023](#) item 89

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
 - A greener East Devon
 - A resilient economy
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Report in full

1. Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-28

- 1.1 The previous Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy covered the financial year until 31st March 2024. A new strategy to cover the period from April 2024 to March 2029 has been composed following a comprehensive review of the current strategy and a period of consultation, all of which has helped to shape the new strategy and our approach to tackling homelessness over the next few years. We intend to publish the new strategy, subject to approval, in June 2024.
- 1.2 Throughout the period from July 2023 to September 2023 we ran a series of focus groups with former service users, councillors, staff members and partner agencies and organisations concentrating on tackling homelessness to address what works well, what barriers we face and where we could adapt our practices to do better. The feedback and results of these sessions contributed towards the draft strategy which was put out for public consultation between November 2023 and January 2024.
- 1.3 Feedback from the consultation exercise was reviewed and, in summary, there were some helpful comments and valid suggestions that will be added to our live action plan which includes specific actions aimed at achieving the objectives highlighted within the strategy.
- 1.4 Our Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-28 is presented in full as Appendix 1. It explains why we have prepared this strategy, the strategic context and influences on homelessness locally and nationally, and our delivery plan.
- 1.5 Our key priorities are, as identified through consultation with focus groups:
 - Maximising prevention activity and supporting people to sustain existing tenancies.
 - Increasing the range of accommodation solutions available.
 - Ending rough sleeping.
- 1.6 Following adoption of the strategy we will:
 - Publish the strategy.
 - Continue to oversee implementation of the strategy through the Homelessness Strategy Review Group, made up of former service users, the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Homes & Communities, representatives from partner agencies and organisations and staff members. The group meet on a quarterly basis to review the ongoing, live homelessness action plan and progress in general.
 - Report progress to Cabinet against outcome and evaluation measurements.

Financial implications:

No financial implications have been included within the report. Currently the Renter's Reform Bill is being scrutinised by government once approved the changes made to the bill may have a financial implication for East Devon District Council but to date are unknown.

Legal implications:

Under the Homelessness Act 2002, all housing authorities must have in place a homelessness strategy based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their district. The strategy must be

renewed at least every 5 years. The social services authority must provide reasonable assistance. The strategy must set out the authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness and for securing that sufficient accommodation and support are or will be available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so in its authority area.