

HOUSING COMMITTEE

10 DECEMBER 2019

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Report Title	HOMELESS PREVENTION AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY
Purpose of Report	To approve the Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy following the consultation process.
Decision(s)	The Committee RESOLVES to approve the Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
Financial Implications	There are no specific financial implications to this report. An increased budget has been proposed for 2020/21 to support the Council's homelessness prevention function, however this is not directly linked. Lucy Clothier, Interim Accountancy Manager Tel: 01453 754343 Email: lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk
Legal Implications	Any legal implications are set out in the report. Patrick Arran, Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer Tel: 01453 754369 Email: patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk
Report Author	Phillip Bishop, Housing Advice Manager Tel: 01453 754063 Email: phillip.bishop@stroud.gov.uk
Options	The Council has to have a homeless strategy so there is no option other than to adopt a strategy
Risk Assessment	It is a statutory duty for housing authorities to have a Homelessness Strategy. Not having one would make the council vulnerable to legal challenge.
Appendices	Appendix A – Consultation Responses. Appendix B – Homelessness Prevention Strategy (Including Rough Sleeping) 2019 – 2024.

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

Section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 placed a duty on housing authorities to formulate a homelessness strategy. Every five years, housing authorities have to carry out a further homelessness review and publish a new strategy. In addition, the government's Rough Sleeping Strategy, published in August 2018 required all local authorities to update their homelessness strategies, and rebadged them as homelessness and rough sleeping strategies.

- 1.1 The previous strategy was initially developed with members of the Stroud Homelessness Forum. Since then the Forum has been re-launched as the Stroud Homelessness Working Group this includes external partners and organisations. The previous strategy was reviewed with consultation and feedback from the Working Group in November 2017. This strategy has also had input from the Working Group which last met on 24 April 2019 with the primary aim of identifying trends and particular problems relating to homelessness in the District which included rough sleeping, financial hardship, older people and support for physical and mental health problems.

- 1.2 By initially consulting with Working Group members the strategy reflects the input of the Homelessness Working Group partners and is based on an understanding of front line services as well as strategic drivers for change, and meeting the challenges brought about by changes in legislation, particularly welfare reform and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 1.3 In considering feedback from the Working Group and changes in legislation, the Housing Advice Team will undertake work on establishing targets, responsibilities and time frames for the actions. The strategy is very much a partnership document and, as it reflects the views and aspirations of Working Group members, the intention is that all partners will be involved in its delivery.
- 1.4 An extensive consultation period has taken place. Responses to the consultation have been considered and, where appropriate, incorporated into the Strategy (Appendix A).

2. CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATION

The Housing Advice Manager recommends that members approve this strategy for implementation.