

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

23 JANUARY 2018

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (DIRECTOR FOR PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES)

THE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2018-2023

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present to Members the proposed Homelessness Strategy (2018-2023) for their consideration and approval.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

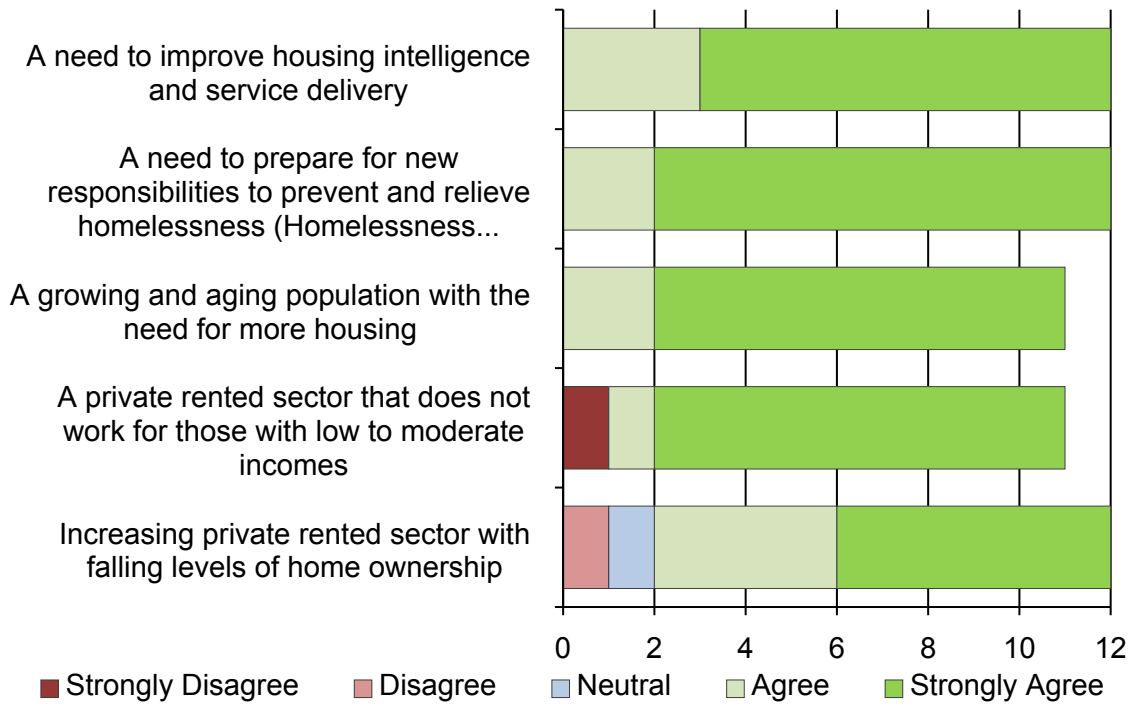
- 2.1 **Members note and approve the Homelessness Strategy (2018-2023) attached as Appendix B and Homelessness Action Plan (2018) attached as Appendix C.**

KEY ISSUES

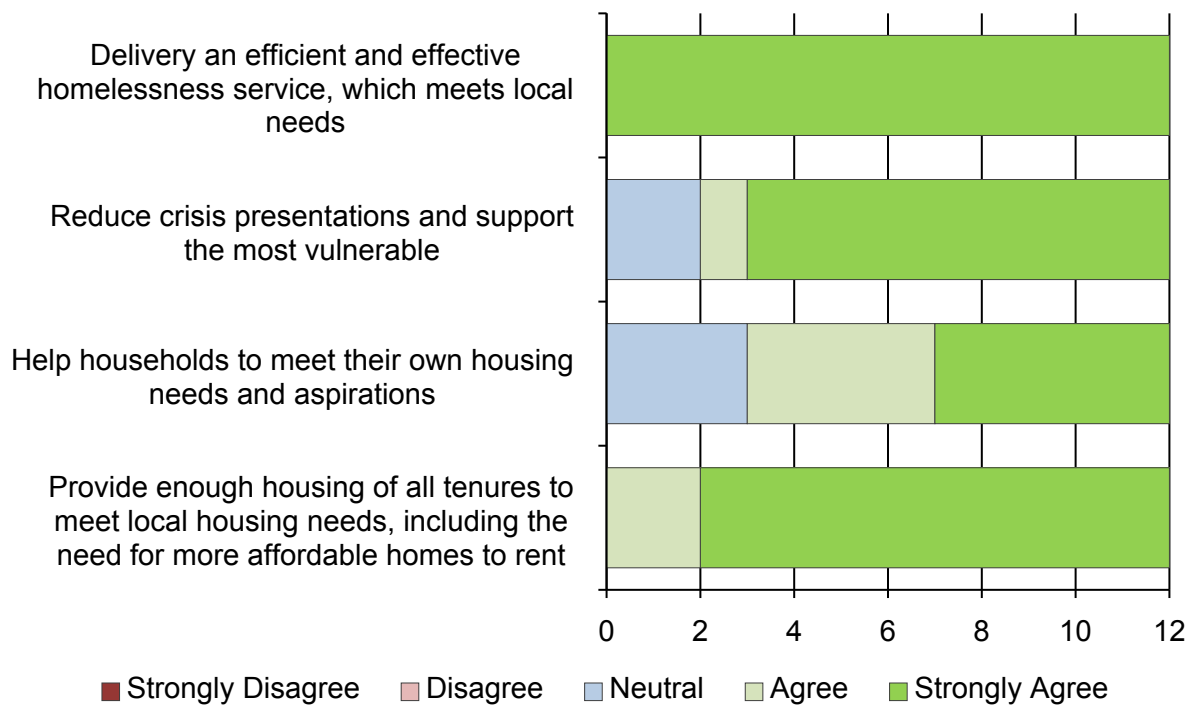
Homelessness Strategy Consultation

- 3.1 At the September 2017 meeting of this committee, the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to present the *Homelessness Review (2017)* and the *Towards a New Homelessness Strategy Consultation* document. Members gave their approval to undertake a period of consultation to help develop a new Homelessness Strategy (CSA 230917 C27).
- 3.2 A six week consultation was undertaken between the 25th September and the 6th November 2017. There was overall strong support for the key issues and priorities identified from the homelessness review, as shown in the charts overleaf.

3.3 Responses to 'Do you agree with the key issues we have identified'



3.4 Responses to 'How much do you agree with each of the proposed priorities'



3.6 The individual responses to the consultation were carefully considered and used to help shape the final Homelessness Strategy. This included changes to the wording of the draft priorities to better highlight our commitment to the prevention of homelessness for all and the incorporation of new actions to monitor the

impacts of welfare reform. A consultation feedback report is attached, as Appendix A, for Members information.

Melton Borough Council Homelessness Strategy (2018-2023)

3.7 A final Homelessness Strategy was then drawn up based on the homelessness review and the consultation, attached as Appendix B. The new Homelessness Strategy contains four strategic priorities;

1. A strong emphasis on prevention
2. A person centred approach
3. Provide enough housing of all tenures to meet local housing needs, including the need for more affordable homes to rent
4. Deliver an efficient and effective homelessness service

3.8 The Homelessness Strategy will also be supported by a Homelessness Action Plan which will be updated annually. The Action Plan consists of 17 strategic objectives, as shown in Appendix C. The Action Plan proposes that an annual report on homelessness is presented to Members to ensure that the Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan are regularly reviewed, to remain effective as well identify and adapt to any emerging needs.

4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The new Homelessness Strategy will have links to the following Melton Corporate Plan priorities;

- Helping to provide homes and environments that meet local needs
- Promoting equality of opportunity and encouraging strong, healthy and resilient neighbourhoods
- Supporting the most vulnerable to overcome disadvantage in order to live independent lives
- Tackling the root causes of offending to create safer communities
- To effectively manage demand delivering well-respected and value for money customer focused services with pride and efficiency

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct implications arising from the Homelessness Strategy itself, activities and actions will be delivered through existing service areas, primarily the Homelessness Budget and monitored as part of the Council's regular monitoring process.

5.2 *The requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act are likely to have financial and administrative implications for all local housing authorities. The government*

announced £61m of new burdens funding for local housing authorities to implement the Act, however there are concerns that this may not cover all additional costs and the new requirements may result in an additional financial burden. Fully assessing the impacts and preparing for the implementation of these new responsibilities is a key part of the new Homelessness Strategy and the Homelessness Action Plan.

5.3 Member have already taken pro-active steps to help meet the additional burdens that the Homelessness Reduction Act's introduction. Members previously approved the re-direction of £30k per annum previously identified for the Foyer project to employ an additional housing officer who will help the Council implement the Act and expand homelessness advice and assistance services.

5.3 The Council has also secured funding to trial new ways to help extend homelessness services ahead of the Bill's implementation as part of a Leicester and Leicestershire wide Trailblazer scheme.

6.0 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS**

6.1 Under the Homelessness Act (2002) it is a legal requirement for the Council to have a Homelessness Strategy based on a review of homelessness in its district and it must be reviewed every five years.

6.2 New responsibilities to prevent and relieve homelessness brought in through the Homelessness Reduction Act will come into force in April 2018. Preparing for the implementation these new responsibilities is a key part of the new Homelessness Strategy and the Homelessness Action Plan.

7.0 **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

7.1 No Direct Community Safety Issues arising from this report.

8.0 **EQUALITIES**

8.1 Equalities considerations were an integral part of the Homelessness Review on which the Homelessness Strategy has been developed. An Equalities Impact Assessment has also been undertaken to support the development of the Homelessness Strategy and it will be published on the Council's Website.

9.0 RISKS

L I K E L I H O O D	A	Very High				
	B	High				
	C	Significant			1, 3	
	D	Low			2	
	E	Very Low		4		
	F	Almost Impossible				
			Negligible 1	Marginal 2	Critical 3	Catastrophic 4

IMPACT

Risk	Risk Description
1	Those in need cannot access suitable housing.
2	Unable to meet the implications of the Homelessness Reduction Act
3	Increase in people becoming homeless
4	Do not have an up to date Homelessness Strategy in place

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 No direct climate change implications have been identified in this report

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 The homelessness review was drawn from a number of sources of data and studies that have been produced in consultation with other organisations including people who have experienced homelessness, local letting agents and partner organisations.

11.2 There was a formal six week period of consultation held to help develop a Homelessness Strategy. A feedback report on this Consultation is attached as Appendix A.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 All wards are affected.

Contact Officer: K Aubrey/ H Rai / N Butcher
Date: 23 January 2018
Appendices: Appendix A – Public Feedback Report: Homelessness Strategy Consultation
Appendix B – Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023
Appendix C – Homelessness Action Plan 2018
Background Papers: Homelessness Review (2017)
Towards a New Homelessness Strategy Consultation Document
<https://meltonboroughcouncil.citizenspace.com/communities-and-neighbourhoods/homelessness/>
Reference: X/C'tees, Council & Sub-C'tees/CSA/2017-18