
Cabinet

July 19th 2011

Report of the Cabinet Member, Health, Housing and Adult Social Services

Approval of the Homeless Strategy (Review) 2011 to 2013

Summary

1. The purpose of the report is to inform Cabinet of the work undertaken as part of the mid term review of the homeless strategy and to approve the contents of the Homeless Strategy Action Plan that will cover the period between 2011 and 2013.
2. To agree renaming the document Housing Options and Homeless Strategy Action Plan

Background

3. The City of York Council has a duty under s.1 (4) of the Homelessness Act (2002) to publish a homeless strategy every five years the first strategy was published in 2003 and again in 2008.
4. Key targets in the 2008/13 strategy are to:
 - a. Keep rough sleeping as close to zero as possible
 - b. Reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation by 2010 to half the figure it was in 2004
 - c. End the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for homeless families with children, except in short term emergencies.
 - d. End the use of Bed and Breakfast for 16-17 year olds, except in an emergency by 2010.
5. As a result of the 2008-13 strategy and action plan there have been some significant achievements in the last three years since the strategy was published.
 - Advice and prevention – Establishment of Housing Options Service, development of accredited training programme for

advice agencies, achieving temporary accommodation targets (March 2010)

- Accommodation – Re-provision of Arc Light and Peasholme hostels as ‘Places of Change’, establishment of YorHome (Social lettings agency)
- Support - Development of Single Access Point, expansion of MOPP into young peoples services.
- Partnerships – Successful bid and implementation of Teenage Parent Housing Support Project (Project 92), successful bid and provision of Family Intervention Project (Catalyst), achieving rough sleeper champion status, development of Gypsy and Traveller action plan

6. Whilst significant achievements have been made it is important that good work introduced by previous editions of the strategy remain in situ namely:

- a. Multi-agency work and training continues;
- b. Retain Housing and Debt Project (currently provided by CAB);
- c. Retain emergency bed spaces for young people (currently provided by n Nightstop);
- d. Continue to provide assistance to rough sleepers to return to their local area where appropriate (currently operated as Salvation Army travel warrant scheme);
- e. Continued additional support via CLG grant to provide supported accommodation and advice services within resettlement model - Salvation Army (Early Intervention and Prevention) and Peasholme Charity;
- f. Retain a bond guarantee scheme in the city;
- g. Continue to provide a severe weather procedure for rough sleepers November – March
- h. Delivery of Gypsy and Traveller action plan.

Consultation

7. The review of the strategy and ultimately the monitoring of the action plan have been overseen by a Homeless Strategy Steering group. Membership includes the Primary Care Trust (PCT), NY Probation Service, Resettlement Services, Supporting People, Adults, Children and Education (ACE) Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) City Strategy, Registered Social Landlords, the Voluntary Sector (Keyhouse) and Housing Services. The Homeless Strategy Steering Group agreed the draft action plan on 19/1/11 and it was signed off by Housing Services Management Team on 16/3/11.
8. In order to review and update the action plan a series of consultation events took place between October - December 2010 with staff, stakeholder and user groups to discuss what further actions were required to achieve targets and improve services.
9. Following the completion of the review of the strategy the draft documents have been shared with staff and stakeholders for comment.

Options

10. Option one - To endorse the review of the homeless strategy action plan.
11. Option two To reject / amend the draft strategy action plan

Analysis

12. The overarching aspiration of the 2008-13 strategy is to eradicate the use of emergency accommodation and move towards prevention and planned housing options. In recognition of this the action plan has been renamed 'The Housing Options and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2011-13'
13. Within the 2008-13 strategy there are four key strands:
 - a. **Strategic aim 1.** Ensure people who are at risk of homelessness are aware of and have access to the services they may need to prevent it
 - b. **Strategic aim 2.** Ensure the provision of, and fair access to, accommodation sufficient to meet the identified housing needs
 - c. **Strategic aim 3.** Ensure that people with housing related support needs have these fully assessed and have access to service

required to sustain successful independent living and prevent homelessness

- d. **Strategic aim 4.** Ensure the effective co-ordination of all service providers, across all sectors whose activities contribute to preventing homelessness and meeting the accommodation and support needs of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Following the consultation this strategic aim has been changed to *'Ensure the effective multi-agency and partnership working occurs across all services to prevent homelessness and provide appropriate accommodation and support to meet the needs of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.'*

14. A brief overview of the strategy and details of what is required over the next three years are contained within the action plan see appendix 1 and 2. There are some significant themes within the action plan which should be noted.

- a) The need to prepare for the potential impact as a result of the changes to the benefit system.
- b) The need to maximize the access to accommodation both through the Private Rented Sector and freeing up accommodation in the social sector through initiatives such as tackling subletting, encouraging downsizing thereby making family housing available.
- c) Developing the Housing options model to widen the information and advice available to specific groups such as those with disability and the elderly.
- d) Work to tackle the issues that are associated with homelessness such as Worklessness, incorporating advice around employment and training into the advice and assistance that is given

15. To achieve the aims set out in the action plan there is a need for both members and stakeholder agencies to continue to adapt their working practices maintain forward thinking and dynamic policies and pro-actively address the future challenges including those which have resulted from Comprehensive Spending Review.

Council Priorities

16. The Homeless strategy is closely link to various strategies. The action plan supports the priorities of the council plan .

Implications

17. **Financial Implications** - There are no specific financial requests as a result of the action plan at present but in committing to the action points there may be future request for funding to achieve certain goals
18. **Equalities Implications** - As part of the process of reviewing the homeless strategy an equalities impact assessment was completed.
19. **Legal Implications** - The Review and Strategy are legal requirements under the Homelessness Act 2002. City of York agreed to review the action plan in the 2008-13 strategy

Risk Management

20. There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

Recommendation

21. The Cabinet is asked to:
 - Approve the contents of the Homeless Strategy Action Plan that will cover the period between 2011 and 2013; &
 - Agree renaming the document, 'Housing Options and Homeless Strategy Action Plan'.

Reason: It is a legal requirement that the council has a Homeless Strategy, it was agreed within the 2008-13 strategy action plan to update and republish in 2011.

Contact Details

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Report
Approved

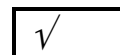


Date 6th July 2011

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Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

2003/08 homeless strategy

<http://www.york.gov.uk/housing/Homelessness/strategy/>

Annexes

Appendix 1 - Overview Housing Options and Homeless Strategy Action Plan

Appendix 2 – Housing Options and Homeless Strategy Action Plan 2011-13