

South Lakeland District Council

Cabinet

5 June 2019

Draft South Lakeland District Council Homelessness Strategy 2019 - 2024

Portfolio:	Cllr Jonathan Brook - Housing and Innovation Portfolio Holder
Report from:	David Sykes – Director of Strategy, Innovation and Resources
Report Author:	Julie Jackson – Principal Housing Strategy Officer
Wards:	(All Wards);
Forward Plan:	Key included in the Forward Plan as published on 8.1.19

1.0 Expected Outcome

The new Council Plan adopted in February 2019 identifies a key theme of reducing inequalities and within that, a commitment to prevent and reduce homelessness. The South Lakeland District Council Homelessness Strategy 2019 - 2024 will assist in the prevention and tackling of homelessness in the District superseding the South Lakeland District Council and Eden District Council Homelessness Strategy 2013 - 2018. It is expected that, by implementing the Strategy, people experiencing homelessness issues will be better supported so that homelessness can be prevented wherever possible and, if this is not possible, that there is sufficient housing supply for people to access appropriate accommodation and the support they need to help maintain a tenancy.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:-

(1) Approves the South Lakeland District Council Homelessness Strategy 2019 – 2024.

3.0 Background and Proposals

The 2002 Homelessness Act requires local authorities to conduct a review of homelessness and following on from this to develop a homelessness strategy. The purpose of the strategy is the prevention of homelessness, to secure sufficient accommodation for people who are or may become homeless and to secure the provision of support for those who are or may become homeless so they do not become homeless again.

South Lakeland District Council has been working in partnership with a range of partners from the voluntary and statutory sectors to develop a Homelessness Strategy for the period 2019 - 2024. As a first step the Council conducted a Review of homelessness in 2018, the findings of which were considered by the South Lakeland Strategic Homelessness Group and are attached as **Appendix 2** of the Strategy. The Strategic Homelessness Group is a multi-agency Group chaired by the

Portfolio Holder for Housing, People and Innovation. A Workshop was held on 4 December 2018 with relevant stakeholders to discuss the priorities arising from the Review and agree actions that could be taken forward into the Homelessness Strategy 2019 - 2024. The key actions have been replicated within the Strategy's Action Plan (**Appendix 1** of the Strategy) and the feedback from this Workshop is detailed in **Appendix 3** of the draft Strategy. This work has helped to shape the priorities in the new Strategy which are (in no particular order):

1. Homelessness prevention;
2. Increasing the supply of settled accommodation;
3. Ensuring appropriate support is available
4. Tackling complex needs

The above priorities are framed within the overarching priority of partnership working as it is recognised that homelessness is not an issue that can be addressed by a single organisation. However, we can work together with other statutory and third sector organisations to help achieve these priorities. The Strategic Homelessness Group provides a mechanism to embed partnership working with other partners, such as Cumbria County Council who have a duty to assist in the development of the Homelessness Strategy and are represented on the Group. Developing commitment to collaboration should be strengthened by the recent adoption of the Cumbria Public Health Strategy which recognises the contribution that access to housing and preventing homelessness has in promoting health.

3.1 The draft South Lakeland District Council Homelessness Strategy 2019 – 2024 was subsequently developed and is attached as **Appendix 1** to this report. Following consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 April 2019 a couple of minor amendments have been made to the Glossary. Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that Cabinet approve the draft Strategy.

3.2 The Action Plan needs to be updated on an annual basis and will be reported to the Housing Advisory Group and Strategic Homelessness Group as stipulated in the Strategy, before being signed off by the Director of Customer and Commercial Services. Updated Action Plans need to then be sent to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 Initial stakeholder consultation was held with key stakeholders with an interest in homelessness via a survey. As a follow up to this a workshop was held on 4 December 2018 to consider the key actions that would be taken forward in the Strategy. The draft Strategy is now subject to a further consultation period with key stakeholders.

4.2 The draft Strategy has been consulted on during March to 1 April 2019 with Ward Members, Parish Councils and other statutory and voluntary agencies with an interest in homelessness issues. Consultation has also been undertaken with service users (**Appendix 4** of the draft Strategy) and this was useful to see that the Strategy priorities and actions reflect the views of the service users. The consultation results are attached at **Appendix 2**.

4.3 The draft Strategy was considered by the Housing Advisory Group on 5 March 2019; no further changes were required to the draft as a result of this meeting.

5.0 Alternative Options

Cabinet could decide not to approve the draft South Lakeland District Council Homelessness Strategy 2019 – 2024. However, this is not recommended as the Council has to have a Homelessness Strategy and update this every five years in

accordance with the Homelessness Act 2002 and would not be complying with this legislation.

6.0 Links to Council Priorities

- 6.1 The draft South Lakeland District Council Homelessness Strategy links to the Council Plan priority for 'Housing' 'Providing homes to meet need'. 'The council and its partners will work together to significantly reduce the risk of homelessness'

7.0 Implications

Financial, Resources and Procurement

- 7.1 In 2018/19 the Council received DCLG Homelessness Reduction new burdens grant of £8679, Flexible Homelessness Support grant £91228, and Private Sector Data Collection grant £358. The Council has committed £461,000 for temporary accommodation for families for 2019/20.

The implementation of the Strategy is likely to be within existing resources. The Council will also work with partners to source external funding, such as Government funding, for specific projects identified within the Action Plan.

- 7.2 The Council administers Discretionary Housing Payments to help in cases of hardship to prevent tenants from accruing arrears. The budget for 2018 to 2019 is £113,777 and this has been paid to 205 individual households. The budget has reduced for 2019 to 2020 to £93,649.

Human Resources

- 7.3 There are no human resource implications for this report.

Legal

- 7.4 Local authorities have a statutory duty to conduct a review of homelessness, to develop a homelessness strategy and to update that strategy every five years under the Homelessness Act 2002.
- 7.5 Local authorities have specific duties set out within the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 in relation to how homeless cases are assessed and in relation to the duty to refer. This is reflected in the draft Strategy.

Health, Social, Economic and Environmental

- 7.4 Have you completed a Health, Social, Economic and Environmental Impact Assessment? Yes attached at Appendix 3.
- 7.5 Summary of health, social, economic and environmental impacts: it is anticipated that the draft South Lakeland District Council Homelessness Strategy 2019 – 2024 will have positive impacts on health, social, economic and environmental issues. This is particularly the case in terms of the built environment and social factors such as poverty. Increasing the supply of settled housing will have a positive impact in terms of housing provision to meet needs. The Strategy will have a positive impact on health and wellbeing by ensuring support is available to people with additional needs such as drug and alcohol.

Equality and Diversity

- 7.6 Have you completed an Equality Impact Analysis? Yes attached at Appendix 4.
- 7.7 Summary of equality and diversity impacts: the Equality Impact Analysis shows that adopting the draft South Lakeland District Council Homelessness Strategy 2019 – 2024 will have a mainly positive impact on equalities as it will address the needs of vulnerable people and people protected by the Equality Act 2010. There are some impacts in relation to rurality, gender, Black and Minority Ethnic, and sexuality,

however the Equality Impact Analysis shows how any negative impacts can be negated.

Risk

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
There is a risk if the draft South Lakeland District Council is not approved that the Council will not be compliant with legislation.	This could lead to Government funding being reduced.	Approve the draft South Lakeland District Council Homelessness Strategy 2019 – 2024.
There is a risk that relevant partners will not engage to deliver the identified actions.	This could result in some of the actions not being carried out which would then impact on the ability to meet the identified priorities.	Continue to engage partners in the Strategic Homelessness Group.

Contact Officers

Julie Jackson, Principal Housing Strategy Officer, 01539 793371
j.jackson@southlakeland.gov.uk.

Appendices Attached to this Report

(delete if no appendices attached)

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Draft South Lakeland District Homelessness Strategy 2019 – 2024 and Action Plan
2	Consultation responses.
3	Health, Social, Economic and Environmental Impact Assessment
4	Equality Impact Assessment

Background Documents Available

Name of Background document	Where it is available
South Lakeland District Council Homelessness Review 2018	South Lakeland District Council web-site .

Tracking Information

Signed off by	Date sent
Legal Services	1.4.19
Section 151 Officer	1.4.19
Monitoring Officer	1.4.19
CMT	11.4.19

Circulated to	Date sent
Assistant Director	6.3.19
Human Resources Manager	N/A
Communications Team	14.3.19
Leader	6.3.19
Committee Chairman	6.3.19

Circulated to	Date sent
Portfolio Holder	27.2.19
Ward Councillor(s)	6.3.19
Committee	26.4.19
Executive (Cabinet)	5.6.19
Council	N/A