

# **Cherwell District Council**

## **Executive**

**5 February 2024**

## **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy**

### **Report of Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing**

This report is public

## **Purpose of report**

To consider and approve the Council's new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029.

### **1.0 Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 and accompanying Action Plan.

### **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 As part of the Council's statutory duties regarding homelessness, the Council must review homelessness in the district area and produce a strategy to tackle the issue and support those affected every 5 years. The review shows homeless pressures and trends within Cherwell and the findings inform the strategy and action plan objectives. The new draft strategy, action plan and review of homelessness in Cherwell is within the appendices.
- 2.2 A public and stakeholder consultation is currently taking place on the new draft strategy and action plan. This took place between November 2023 and January 2024. The results of the consultation and how the strategy reflects the comments is within the appendices. The draft strategy was also discussed at the November Overview and Scrutiny meeting.

### **3.0 Report Details**

- 3.1 Appendix 1 sets out the proposed Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 and Action Plan. The strategy outlines local and national contextual factors that influence homelessness and the Council's ability to prevent it. The strategy is split into 4 priority themes that structure the action plan in turn. The priorities are:

- 1) Identify the causes of homelessness, facilitating early interventions to ensure a pathway and reducing rough sleeping.
- 2) Ensure that our service is accessible to all; engaging and assisting households who have difficulty receiving our services.
- 3) Deliver long term housing solutions and help sustain tenancies for the most vulnerable, creating resilience.
- 4) Improve access to quality and affordable accommodation across all sectors for homeless households.

3.2 Appendix 2 shows the Review of Homelessness within Cherwell. The review analyses trends and pressures on the service, both current and that have occurred in recent years, and helps shape the action plan objectives. This covers the types of homelessness approaches we receive, their household circumstances and what housing outcomes they receive. The review also looks at wider factors that can influence homelessness and our ability to prevent it, such as the affordability of housing.

3.3 Appendix 3 provides the consultation summary following public consultation and how the consultation has informed the final document produced within Appendix 1.

3.4 Appendix 4 is an Equality and Climate Impact Assessment that was undertaken in conjunction with the production of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

3.5 Upon implementation of the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, an annual update report will be provided to Overview and Scrutiny to monitor progress on the approved action plan.

## **4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

4.1 The Council is committed to providing a quality housing options, advice and homelessness service in accordance with our statutory duties. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 will provide a strategic framework to enable this.

4.2 Having an up to date and reviewed homelessness strategy is part of the Council's statutory duties.

## **5.0 Consultation**

5.1 Public and stakeholder consultation has taken place as part of the drafting of the strategy and implementation process.

## **6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not to bring forward a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy  
This option is not considered as reviewing homelessness and producing a strategy every 5 years is part of the Council's statutory duties and part of the statutory duties of providing housing options and advice services.

## 7.0 Implications

### Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The development and delivery of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is done within existing budgets and resources. This report indicates no new pressures.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director – Finance (Section 151 Officer),  
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### Legal Implications

- 7.2 In order to comply with its statutory duty under the Homelessness Act 2002 the Council, as a local housing authority, must formulate and publish a homelessness strategy, and keep that strategy under review from time to time.

Comments checked by:

Adrian Thompson, Principal Solicitor – Property, [adrian.thompson@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.thompson@cherwell-dc.gov.uk), 01295 221557

### Risk Implications

- 7.3 All risks are managed as part of the operational risk register associated with the Housing Service and escalated as and when necessary.

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, [celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk) 01295 221556

### Equalities and Inclusion Implications

- 7.4 An Equality and Climate Change Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is provided at Appendix 3 of this report.

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, [celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk) 01295 221556

## 8.0 Decision Information

### Key Decision

**Financial Threshold Met:** No

**Community Impact Threshold Met:** Yes

**Wards Affected**

All

**Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework**

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy links to Business Plan priorities of

- Housing that meets your needs
- Healthy, resilient and engaged communities

**Lead Councillor**

Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Portfolio Holder for

**Document Information**

**Appendix number and title**

- Appendix 1 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029
- Appendix 2 – Review of Homelessness
- Appendix 3 – Consultation Outcomes
- Appendix 4 - Equality and Climate Change Impact Assessment

**Background papers**

None

**Report Author and contact details**

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