
HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members to consider the draft Homelessness Strategy which is to follow.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 introduced a requirement on all local housing authorities to produce a homelessness strategy by 31 July 2003. At the meeting of this Committee on 15 April 2003 Members considered a report which updated progress on the strategy and detailed the emerging issues.
- 2.2 The strategy has to be based on the outcome of a homelessness review, details of which are included in the strategy document.
- 2.3 The strategy action plan incorporates the homelessness and housing advice best value action plan, progress with which is currently being monitored by the Housing Best Value Sub-Committee. In future, therefore, monitoring reports will be based on the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.
- 2.4 In view of the time constraints, the strategy will have to be referred to Full Council at the end of July for adoption. However, in accordance with Members wishes it can be referred to the next meeting of the Housing Best Value Sub-Committee for detailed consideration before it is considered by Council. Any comments that Members may have at this stage will be helpful in that detailed consideration.
- 2.5 Before adopting or modifying a homelessness strategy an authority must consult such public or local authorities, voluntary organisations or other persons as they consider appropriate.
- 2.6 Consultation on the draft strategy is being carried out with partner housing associations, neighbouring local authorities and Essex County Council, the Police and Probation Service and the voluntary agencies that the Council currently works with in homelessness. Any comments received will be reported to the Housing Best Value Sub-Committee for consideration.
- 2.7 Both the homelessness review and the homelessness strategy have to be made available for public inspection. Copies of the document must also be provided on request subject to payment of a reasonable charge. It is proposed that copies of the report will be provided free of charge to partner organisations and £2.00 in all other cases. The adopted strategy will also be published on the Council's Website.

3 DEVELOPMENT, REVIEW AND MONITORING

- 3.1 The strategy will have to be kept under review and a new strategy published at least every five years.

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- 3.2 The Homelessness Strategy Working Group comprising Officers from the Council and other organisations will be responsible for further developing the strategy and also for implementing the Action Plan. Progress will be reported to the Housing Best Value Sub-Committee.

4 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are strong links between homelessness and housing advice services and reducing crime and disorder. The homelessness strategy is consistent with the crime and disorder strategy.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Apart from staff resources, there may be financial implications from implementing the strategy action plan. The implications will not be known until the options to meet the objectives in the action plan are evaluated.

6 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That, subject to any comments by Members of this Committee, the homelessness strategy be considered in detail at the next meeting of the Housing Best Value Sub-Committee before being referred to Council on 29 July 2003 for adoption.

G P Woolhouse

Head of Housing, Health & Community Care

Background Papers:

None

For further information please contact Steve Neville on:-

Tel:- 01702 318046
E-Mail:- steve.neville@rochford.gov.uk