

Bolsover District Council

Customer Services Committee on Monday 15th July 2024

Update on Bolsover Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-2027

Report of Sandra Peake, Portfolio Holder for Housing

Classification	This report is Public
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PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the Bolsover Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy (2022 - 2027) To outline the action plan, and achievements resulting from this.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 The Bolsover Homeless and Rough Sleeper Strategy (The Strategy) was approved In December 2022, attached at Appendix 1. The Strategy seeks to build upon a multi-agency response that was seen during the pandemic, to continue this, to prevent and reduce homelessness.
- 1.2 There are four clear strategic priorities, that are broken down into individual actions within the action plan (see Appendix 2):
 1. Make homelessness everyone's responsibility through a system wide approach.
 2. Prevent and respond to homelessness through early intervention and personalised solutions.
 3. End rough sleeping and repeat homelessness.
 4. Develop sustainable supported and settled housing solutions.
- 1.3 The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) has enabled councils to be more proactive and encourages early intervention for those facing homelessness. The Government are committed to ending rough sleeping, our Strategy is fully in keeping with the positive spirit of the homelessness legislation and the ambition of the Government's target.

- 1.4 The five-year Strategy was developed in partnership with all Derbyshire district and borough councils as well as Derbyshire County Council. All councils adopted the relevant strategy by the end of 2022. The Strategy was formally launched in May 2023 with an event attended by over one hundred partners from across the county.
- 1.5 In February 2023 a project officer was employed to lead the implementation and future development of the Strategy. This role is currently hosted by North East Derbyshire District Council, with funding for the role coming from all districts, borough and county councils. The Homelessness Special Projects Officer has taken the lead on setting up a steering group to help drive the work needed to complete some of the more complex actions in the strategy.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 Appendix 2 contains the Action Plan which has been developed by Derbyshire Homeless Officers Group (DHOG) and which is being progressed by Homelessness Special Projects Officer.
- 2.2 The areas of action within each of the key priorities set out in the Strategy are set out in the Action Plan and updates have been added against each one for Members' information. Progress is shown using the red / amber / green (RAG) system, along within an explanation.
- 2.3 There have been some early successes on key strategic actions, summarised below.

SIGNAL Pilot

SIGNAL is a holistic assessment tool that captures location-specific data on a wide range of markers including homelessness, health, poverty, and general wellbeing. The project will help form the basis of a needs assessment for wider research to inform future service planning. An initial 18 month pilot project has been taking place in North East Derbyshire with three of our key local partners; P3 charity, Pathways of Chesterfield and The Elm Foundation. Based on promising results from the pilot, the project will soon be extended for another year and expanded to include more organisations across the county.

Derbyshire Homelessness Charter

The development of a Homelessness Charter for Derbyshire began with a workshop at the strategy launch event in May 2023 and a consultation on a draft document ended in January 2024. The final Charter will shortly be published on Street Support Derbyshire and will serve as a reference point for the vision and values we wish to uphold in partnership working across the county.

Street Support Derbyshire

In December 2023 we launched Street Support Derbyshire, an online resource that connects local people and organisations to support those who need it the most. Street Support Derbyshire will host Derbyshire's Homelessness Charter and also aid the development of an alternative giving campaign in 2024.

Salus Project

Local authorities have worked with domestic abuse services to develop an instant access accommodation and support service for people fleeing domestic abuse where a refuge placement is not immediately available.

Substance Misuse Navigators

Funding has been secured from the Rough Sleeping Initiative to employ two substance misuse specialists to work alongside our rough sleeping services. These roles will be hosted by Derbyshire Recovery Partnership and will focus on developing new pathways into treatment for this hard-to-reach cohort.

Countywide Homelessness Forum

Individual local authorities have long had their own local homelessness forums but given how much collaborative work is now taking place across Derbyshire, this model has been expanded. The first countywide homelessness forum was hosted by North East Derbyshire District Council in December 2023 and subsequent forums will be held on an annual basis going forwards.

A Private Rented Sector Offer for Derbyshire

In recognition that evictions from the private rented sector are now the leading cause of homelessness across the county, all district and borough councils have committed to the development of a countywide private rented sector offer. This offer is still in development and there is unlikely to be a one size fits all offer, given the variations in resources. Bolsover District Council approved a Private Sector Strategy in April 2024 which seeks to engage with and support the private rented sector, to sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness.

- 2.4 We have identified the following four planned activities for delivering actions within the Homeless Strategy in line with the Council's Ambition:
- Following consultation with private landlords, develop a comprehensive and attractive countrywide landlord offer.
 - React accordingly and ensure a range of measures are in place to prevent homelessness linked to the wider economy and increases in cost of living.
 - Streamline the duty to refer system, and work with partner agencies to improve timelines and quality of referrals.
 - As part of the 'Rough Sleeper Initiative' develop a targeted prevention approach to prevent the flow of new rough sleepers on to the street.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 To inform scrutiny of the Homeless and Rough Sleeper Strategy Action Plan and give any updates where available.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 There are no alternative options.
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RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee note the contents of the Homeless and Rough Sleeper Strategy Action Plan Monitoring Update, and make any necessary recommendations arising from this work area.

Approved by Councillor Peake Portfolio Holder for Housing

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details: There are no financial implications arising from the strategy

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details: As set out in the report.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment: Yes No

Details: Not applicable.

Staffing: Yes No

Details: There are no staffing implications contained within the report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i>	No

District Wards Significantly Affected	No
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Details: Portfolio Holder Executive Director Health & Wellbeing Board

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment and Housing
The Strategy links to the Council’s Housing Ambition of Preventing and responding to homelessness through early intervention and personalised solutions.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title
1	Bolsover Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy
2	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan
3	Bolsover District Council Homeless Statistics

Background Papers
<i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>