



DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE	7 JANUARY 2020	8
FYLDE COUNCIL HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2020-2025			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

There is a legal requirement for Local Authorities to have a five year homelessness and rough sleeping strategy that sets out information about; the scale and causes of homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough; how the local authority will prevent and tackle homelessness and rough sleeping; and the National and Local context.

Fylde Homelessness Strategy 2013-18 had three main priorities focussed on improving homelessness services within Fylde based on the **Making Every Contact Count – Gold Standard** 10 'local challenges' set out by the National Practitioner Support Services (NPSS). The introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act 2018 and changes to service delivery in 2018/19 has delayed the publication of the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 for consultation.

This report presents the final version of Fylde Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 for adoption. The new Strategy continues the work of the service to meet the NPSS 10 local challenges. The Strategy covers; an overview of homelessness legislation since The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977 to current day and the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act 2018; picture of homelessness in the borough and information on the make-up and needs of clients accessing the service; achievements under the 2013-18 Strategy; and funding programmes the service has accessed to develop in order to manage service changes under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018.

The Strategy has three strategic priorities that are focussed on continuing to develop a service focussed on prevention and relief of homelessness and working in partnership with agencies in Fylde to achieve our vision and values for homelessness services. These values will ensure all clients facing homelessness have access to expertise needed to enable them to engage with a range of support service to resolve their housing situation and clients are empowered with the confidence to access and maintain tenancies with the skills required to ensure their home is affordable, settled and if they are facing difficulties who to approach for help.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the contents of the report and outcomes of the consultation with partner agencies to inform the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 and that the report is now to run for 5 years from 2020-2025;
2. Approve Fylde Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 to direct the work of the Housing and Homelessness Service at Fylde;
3. Recommend to the Finance and Democracy Committee a fully-funded revenue budget increase in the total sum of £70,921 (£7,500 in 2019/20, £18,571 in 2020/21, £22,425 in 2021/22 and £22,425 in 2022/23) funded by £53,766 Flexible Homeless Grant and £17,155 by DCLG New Burdens Grant;
4. Recommend to the Finance and Democracy Committee a further fully-funded revenue budget increase in the total sum of £2,000 in 2020/21 funded by the DCLG Rapid Rehousing Personal Budgeting Support Grant.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

[Policies on the Procurement and Allocation of Temporary Accommodation 23/02/2016](#)

[Lancashire Single Homelessness Initiative evaluation 06/09/2016](#)

[Fylde Coast Homeless Prevention Trailblazer 14/03/17](#)

[Homeless Reduction Act 2018](#)

[Fylde Coast Homelessness Trailblazer Evaluation 05/06/18](#)

[Final update on Fylde Homelessness Strategy 2013-18 06/11/2018](#)

[Fylde Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2015 draft for consultation 03/09/2019](#)

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services (Value for Money)	✓
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council (Clean and Green)	✓
Working with all partners (Vibrant Economy)	✓
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live (A Great Place to Live)	
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit (A Great Place to Visit)	

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

1. **Appendix 1 contains Fylde Council Final Fylde Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025**
2. There is a legal requirement for Local Authorities to have a five year homelessness and rough sleeping strategy that sets out information about; the scale and causes of homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough; how the local authority will prevent and tackle homelessness and rough sleeping; and the National and Local context.

3. **The Homeless Reduction Act 2018 (HRA)** fundamentally changed the way local authorities support homeless people in their areas. From April 2018 **prevention and relief statutory duties** are available to any household vulnerable to homelessness in 56 rather than 28 days.
4. **Making Every Contact Count – Gold Standard.** As a follow up report to, 'Vision to end rough sleeping' the Government's Ministerial working group for homelessness introduced a range of challenges as set out in the report, 'Making Every Contact Count: A joint approach to preventing homelessness', published in August 2012.
5. Fylde Council's Homelessness strategy 2013-18 was focussed on meeting the 10 Local Authority Challenges and this approach has been adopted for the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025.

Fylde Housing Service 2018/19

6. Within Fylde homeless presentations has increased by 155% from 89 in 2017/18, to 227 in 2018/19. However, the number of households to whom a statutory main duty has increased only slightly from 27 in 2018 from 89 presentations, to 30 in 2019 with 227 presentations. This is higher than previous years, but an explanation would be the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act and customers facing homelessness being encouraged to approach local authorities for advice and assistance under prevention and relief duties.
7. Overall the service has seen a 170% increase in requests for housing assistance from 326 in 2017/18 to 802 in 2018/19. This has resulted in an overall increase in homeless presentations to the authority to whom either a prevention, relief duty or main housing duty is owed. Numbers of households assisted to remain in their own home has remained fairly static since 2016/17, but we have seen an increase in households being assisted into alternative accommodation during both prevention and relief duty stages.
8. In November 2019 the annual rough sleeper estimate was conducted in Fylde. This included contacting all partner agencies to identify rough sleepers in Fylde from midnight 14th November 2019 to 7am on the 15th November 2019. In 2017/18 and 2018/19 the rough sleeper counts were 2 known rough sleepers. In 2019/20 we have recorded 7 known rough sleepers, 2 females and 3 males all over 35 and known to the service. 6 out rough sleepers engage with the service regularly and have been offered B&B accommodation, and 4 have attended the tenancy training course.

Funding provided by Government to implement the Homeless Reduction Act 2018

9. The Flexible Homelessness Support Grant (FHSG) is a new source of funding announced by Government in 2017. Local authorities were initially awarded this grant for a two year period from 2017/18 and 2018/19 and a fully funded revenue budget increase was approved by this Committee on the 07/11/2017 and full Council on the 04/12/2017. Funding has been received for 2019/20 of £42,766 plus a top up for grant funding of £11,000 for 2018/19.
10. New Burdens Funding was announced by Government on the 16th October 2017. The funding is an additional national funding to support all housing authorities in England in acknowledgement of the transitional support required by local authorities in implementing and managing the new processes and systems required to meet data requirements of the HRA Act. Fylde Council have been allocated an additional £17,155.

Funding accessed to support service provision

11. Fylde Housing service has faced a number of challenges following the introduction of the new prevention and relief duties under the HRA 2018. In order to undertake this work and manage the increase in requests for housing assistance the local authority has been fortunate to access funding from a number of initiatives implemented by MHCLG by working in partnership with neighbouring authorities. This funding has enabled the service to improve and develop in order to meet the challenges placed.
12. The following is a brief summary of funding accessed and the changes brought about to the service.
 - a. MHCLG awarded a total sum of £504,000 across all Lancashire authorities in respect of the Lancashire Single Homeless Project. Local authorities were arranged in Clusters to take responsibility for delivery of the programme – East, Central and North. The North Cluster had a total initially of £102,517 to pilot approaches to support single households across Lancashire for a period of 12 months.
 - b. In December 2016 Fylde BC, working jointly with Blackpool Council and Wyre Council were awarded two year Homeless Trailblazer funding from MHCLG. The aim of the funding was to develop innovative approaches to preventing homelessness by carrying out prevention activity earlier and work with a wider group of people and reduce the number of people who face a homelessness crisis in the first place. Fylde were awarded £120,000 (£60,000 2017/18 and £60,000 2018/19).
 - c. In December 2018 Fylde BC, working jointly with Lancaster City and Wyre Council were awarded one year Rapid Re-housing funding from MHCLG. The funding was launched as part of MHCLG Rough Sleeping Strategy in August 2018 and the commitment under the Rough Sleeping Strategy August 2018, to half rough sleeping in the UK by 2022 and to end it by 2027. The pathway brings together 4 policy elements – somewhere safe to stay, supported lettings, navigators and local lettings agencies. The authorities were successful in the supported lettings and navigator policy elements. Fylde Council were awarded £30,000.
 - d. An additional figure of £2,000 has been awarded for Personal Budgeting Support under the Rapid Rehousing project. This is funding that will enable additional one to one support and can include access to training/education, furnishing costs and other miscellaneous items that encourages clients to engage with the service and support them to make lifestyle choice changes.

Fylde Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24

13. **Our vision** is to work to prevent and relieve homelessness in Fylde and provide homelessness services with our partners that are accessible, professional and make a difference. We will work to ensure all our clients facing homelessness have:
 - a. Access to expertise needed to enable clients to engage with a range services that will support them to resolve their housing situation and improve their health and well-being.
 - b. The confidence to access and maintain a tenancy with the skills required to ensure their home is affordable, settled and if they are facing difficulties know who to approach for help.
14. The Strategy has three strategic aims for Fylde Housing Services in order to achieve this vision and Appendix 1 contains an action plan that comments on how we will deliver these aims. Then action plan has been developed in partnership with Fylde Homeless Partnership group.

- a. **Priority One – Developing a service that is focussed on preventing homelessness**
- b. **Priority two – Developing a service that is focussed on relieving homelessness**
- c. **Priority three – Partnership working to achieve our vision and values**

15. The consultation period ran during September and October 2019 and to events were held to focus on the priorities within the action plan in November 2019:

- a. Links to document on website sent to all partner agencies – Home Start, Police, Probation, DWP, Key Floating support, Registered Providers, neighbouring local authorities, YMCA, Lancashire County Council, Supported Housing Providers, CAB, Community Mental Health Teams, drug and alcohol services, Children’s Social Care and Hospital Link Worker. No responses were received.
- b. The draft Strategy was taken to the Fylde Homeless Partnership Meeting in November 2019 for discussions. In attendance were the key partners Fylde work with to directly deliver the homelessness services within Fylde: Progress Housing, Key Floating Support, Human Kind and Fylde Coast YMCA.
- c. The draft Strategy was taken to Fylde Homeless Forum in November 2019 and a workshop was held where partner agencies discussed the actions under the three priority areas and made recommendations to amend the emerging action.

CONCLUSION

- 16. The Committee are requested to approve the Fylde Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to direct the work of the Housing and Homelessness Service at Fylde.
- 17. Recommend to the Finance and Democracy Committee a fully-funded revenue budget increase in the total sum of £70,921 (£7,500 in 2019/20, £18,571 in 2020/21, £22,425 in 2021/22 and £22,425 in 2022/23) funded by £53,766 Flexible Homeless Grant and £17,155 by DCLG New Burdens Grant.
- 18. The Committee is requested to recommend to the Finance and Democracy Committee a further fully-funded revenue budget increase in the total sum of £2,000 in 2020/21 funded by the DCLG Rapid Rehousing Personal Budgeting Support Grant.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	This report requests approval to recommendations to the Finance and Democracy of fully-funded revenue budget increases in the total sum of £70,921 and £2,000 for the years 2019/20 to 2022/23 (as detailed within the report) in order to provide the required resource to deliver the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy as part of the continued implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act 2018 and the Rapid Rehousing project.
Legal	Legal requirement for local authorities to have a five year homelessness and rough sleeping strategy in place.
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	Equality Impact Assessment on the 8 main characteristics required
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Fylde Homeless Strategy 2013-18 Fylde Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Strategy 2019-2024 Draft for consultation September 2019	2013 2019	www.fylde.gov.uk

Attached documents

Appendix 1 Final Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025