

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To seek the views of Members on the draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2019-2022, attached as Appendix 1 of this report.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members endorse the approach taken to develop the new Housing and Homelessness Strategy.
- 2.2 Members are invited to consider the views that should be submitted to Cabinet.

3 Supporting Information

- 3.1 Local authorities have a statutory requirement under the Homelessness Act 2002 to produce a Homelessness Review and Strategy outlining the main causes of homelessness in their area and the strategic plans and actions in place to tackle them. The strategy should be revised and rewritten every five years as a minimum requirement.
- 3.2 The Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2019-2022 (the Strategy) has been produced following a review of the housing and homelessness needs of residents within the Vale and outlines the council's plan on addressing these needs for the next three years.
- 3.3 The Strategy was created by a working group made up of internal officers and representatives from local partners – the Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust, Aylesbury Homeless Action Group, Connection Support and Heart of Bucks.
- 3.4 Since the last Homelessness Review, changes in both local and central government legislation and policy have had a significant impact on the approach taken by local authorities to preventing and dealing with homelessness. Official statistics continue to show a worrying upward trend, with the number of homelessness acceptances and rough sleepers rising year on year since 2014.
- 3.5 As the population in Aylesbury Vale continues to rise, so does both house prices and private rents. However, the Vale has also had the third highest increase in its housing stock throughout England over the last five years (source ONS 2017) and has the highest ratio of housing delivery to existing housing stock of any authority in the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor.
- 3.6 We have seen an increase of 25% in the number of applicants found as unintentionally homeless and in priority need since 2013. The biggest rise was seen in families with dependant children, with the loss of tenancy being the most common reason for someone losing their home.
- 3.7 Compared to the national picture and in general, our homelessness figures are relatively low, however, the Aylesbury Vale 2017 rough sleeping rate (per 1,000 households) at 0.26, is marginally higher than national average of 0.20.
- 3.8 Research and customer insight to inform the Strategy began in February 2018, including interviews with customers and a survey of providers offering services to homeless people. A consultation event was held on 19 April 2018 and was attended by 41 delegates from local partnership organisations,

statutory and voluntary organisations, registered providers and local members. Following this, a full public consultation was completed in July/Aug 2018. Updates have been made to the draft Strategy to reflect the consultation responses and policy changes that have come into place since the draft was published.

- 3.9 Our Strategic Vision is: To ensure those who want to make the Vale their home are supported and empowered to do so. In order to achieve this, the following four Strategic Priorities have been agreed:

Strategic Priority 1 - Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping

Strategic Priority 2 - Continue to facilitate and maximise the supply of affordable housing

Strategic Priority 3 - Respond to the ongoing challenges of welfare reform

Strategic Priority 4 - Contribute to the improvement of health and wellbeing services for people at risk of homelessness.

- 3.10 The Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan which forms an evolving part of the strategy, sets out what we will do to achieve the priorities identified in the Strategy. It will act as a health check on the effective delivery of our service and will be updated quarterly on the AVDC website once live.

4 Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 To ensure an agreed Housing and Homelessness Strategy is published in early 2019.

5 Resource implications

- 5.1 The resource implications associated with the Strategy are already factored into the current budget. Any future pressures will be identified as part of the future years budget planning process.

Contact Officer
Background Documents

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[Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2014-2017](#)