

Subject: Rough Sleeping Strategy – Extract from the Proceedings of the Housing & New Homes Committee meeting held on 15 June 2016

Date of Meeting: 11 July 2016

Report of: Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance & Law (and Monitoring Officer)

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of the Committee:

To receive the item referred from the Housing & New Homes Committee:

Recommendation: The Committee is asked to note the following resolutions of the Housing & New Homes Committee:

- (1) That the Rough Sleeping Strategy (Appendix 1) be approved.
- (2) That the Interim Executive Director Health & Adult Social Care and Acting Executive Director Economy Environment & Culture be authorised to carry out any actions necessary to implement the strategy and respond appropriately to related Fairness Commission recommendations (see section 5.12).

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING & NEW HOMES COMMITTEE

15 JUNE 2016

MAIN MEETING ROOM – THE FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

Present: Councillor Meadows (Chair) Councillors Hill (Deputy Chair), Mears (Opposition Spokesperson), Gibson (Group Spokesperson), Atkinson, Barnett, Bell, Deane, Lewry and Moonan.

DRAFT MINUTE

PART ONE**7 ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2016**

- 7.1 The Committee considered the report of the Interim Executive Director Health & Adult Social Care and Acting Executive Director Economy Environment & Culture which presented the Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016 for approval. The city's current approach to rough sleeping had been re-assessed to ensure that the city's commissioners, service providers and those supporting people sleeping rough are working in partnership to a clear strategic plan. This plan would reduce rough sleeping in the city and improve outcomes for people sleeping rough and those at risk of rough sleeping. The report was presented by the Housing Strategy Manager and the Assistant Director, Adult Social Care.
- 7.2 Members were informed that there had been extensive consultation on the strategy. This was set out in paragraphs 5.1 to 5.12 of the report. Paragraph 5.11 set out the five priority areas
- Preventing homelessness and rough sleeping
 - Rapid assessment and reconnection
 - Improving health
 - A safe city
 - Pathways to Independence
- 7.3 Councillor Atkinson thanked officers for the work they had carried out. He stressed that prevention was key to the success of the strategy. He referred to page 68 of the agenda in relation to the Street Outreach Service run by St Mungo's. Councillor Atkinson saw this as an integral part of the strategy and asked for an update on the street outreach service. He also asked how easy it was for St. Mungo's to see if someone was a new rough sleeper.
- 7.4 Councillor Atkinson stressed that discouraging begging should not be linked to homelessness and it should not be assumed that rough sleepers and street drinkers were one and the same.

- 7.5 Councillor Mears thanked officers for the report. She referred to paragraph 3.3 on page 32 of the agenda. Supported accommodation needed to be delivered as soon as possible. Councillor Mears referred to page 33 with regard to assessment centres and noted that there was no detail. She considered that more detail was needed on the priorities listed on page 34 and she would be interested to know how St Mungo's were operating. Councillor Mears questioned the benefits of a sit up bed. Councillor Mears referred to the section in the strategy on Housing Related Support Commissioning Strategy 2015. She asked if Housing Services were paying for this rather than Adult Social Care. Councillor Mears referred to the financial benefits of the strategy as set out on page 58. She considered that these benefits had all been carried out through Supporting People. Finally, Councillor Mears stressed the strategy was important to the city and timescales were urgent.
- 7.6 The Housing Strategy Manager assured members that a monitoring report would be brought back to the committee each year. The waiting list was increasing and some actions were already in place. No decision had yet been made on the Assessment Centre and this would come back to the Committee for approval. Sit up beds did not take up so much room and were now widely used, for example with blood donors.
- 7.7 The Assistant Director, Adult Social Care explained that he would be happy to bring a report back to the committee on the findings with regard to St Mungo's. Housing Related Support was managed by a team in Adult Social Care and he was happy to bring housing related matters to the committee.
- 7.8 Councillor Gibson gave credit to Councillor Moonan in assuring a wider consultation. He was pleased to see the well written strategy. Councillor Gibson stressed that the strategy had to be seen in the context of national policy. Rents were becoming more unaffordable and people were faced with unaffordable housing along with a shortage of accommodation. The council had to implement austerity and had to cut back on homeless prevention work. Councillor Gibson welcomed the inclusion of Housing First in the partnership. He was not able to see information on potential cost savings to other services.
- 7.9 Councillor Gibson did not support the idea of sit up beds and considered that there should be an attempt to find more space. Councillor Gibson referred to pages 80 and 81. He considered that the Strategic Action Plan: Priority 4: A Safe City was more orientated to the safety of the public rather than to homeless people. He asked what could be done to stop people picking on people sleeping in the street. Talk about begging needed to be tactfully dealt with as too much stress on this issue could fuel negative stereotypes. Meanwhile, Councillor Gibson welcomed aspects of quick build, low cost accommodation such as the Y Cube.
- 7.10 The Housing Strategy Manager referred to Housing First. Housing First support costs were around £10,000 to £11,000 per client each year (excluding accommodation charges beyond housing benefit rates). An evaluation of the pilot programmes suggested Housing First can deliver savings of up to £15,000 a year per client.
- 7.11 Councillor Moonan had led on the strategy over the last year and added thanks to the Housing Strategy Manager, the Assistant Director, Adult Social Care and to a significant

number of other officers at the council. She considered that this was a good example of breaking down silos. She also thanked all the partners who had worked together on the strategy. It was an ambitious target and involved a very vulnerable group. There needed to be action now and a great deal of work around that action had already commenced. Councillor Moonan agreed that there was probably need for a members' briefing. She would suggest this to the Members Development Working Group.

7.12 RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016 (Appendix 1) be approved.
- (2) That the Interim Executive Director Health & Adult Social Care and Acting Executive Director Economy Environment & Culture be authorised to carry out any actions necessary to implement the strategy and respond appropriately to related Fairness Commission recommendations (see section 5.12).