

Subject:	Rough Sleeping Strategy Update		
Date of Meeting:	8th October 2018		
Report of:	Executive Director for Health & Adult Social Care		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 The report provides a progress update on the implementation of the Rough Sleeping Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee note this report.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Rough Sleeping Strategy (2016-2020) was approved by the Local Authority and partners and signed-up to by Brighton & Hove Connected in June 2016.
- 3.2 The issue of rough sleeping remains acute with a visible presence on the streets. This not only impacts on the individual's wellbeing and life chances, but also the city's reputation and incurs costs to public services and businesses.
- 3.3 It is estimated that there are currently around 10 new arrivals to the city per week who are either already rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping. This means that local agencies have to work effectively together with over 1000 individuals per year.. The numbers who come from outside the city and those with a local connection is currently approximately a 50-50 split. The vast majority of individuals have complex needs, often relating to substance misuse and mental health issues connected with their vulnerability.
- 3.4 The strategy that was approved unanimously and signed up to by all local agencies in June 2016 is now being closely monitored and all activity reviewed to ensure that we achieve the most effective outcomes for rough sleepers and the city as a whole.
- 3.5 At the Brighton & Hove Connected meeting in February 2017, following the MHCLG annual rough sleeper count in November 2016 where the number of rough sleepers in the city had risen to 144, BHCC and citywide partners agreed that, to ensure the implementation of the Rough Sleeping Strategy, a Coordinator role was required. The Rough Sleeping Strategy Coordinator was appointed and

in post by September 2017. This role has now been extended until 31 March 2019.

3.6 Also in June 2017 a Charity Link Project Co-ordinator (funded by a MHCLG grant for 2 years) was appointed via a support service, The Passage, to coordinate and support community, voluntary and third sector voluntary services.

3.7 **The strategy is broken down into 5 Priorities and 12 Goals:**

- **P1: Prevent Homelessness and Rough Sleeping** – to provide a consistent message about housing options that helps services prevent homelessness and moves people away from sleeping rough
- G1: Develop a consistent citywide approach to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping
- G2: Improve housing options for single person households
- **P2: Rapid Assessment and Reconnection** – outreach to assess the needs of people sleeping rough to plan support, and where appropriate, reconnect people with friends, families and support networks, before they are fully immersed in street life
- G3: Provide rapid assessment, support planning and effective reconnection for those new to rough sleeping
- G4: Target people sleeping rough with complex needs to ensure there is an integrated plan to move people into accommodation
- G5: Ensure services are sensitive to the needs of all vulnerable groups including LGBT people, young, older, women and ex-service personnel
- **P3: Improving Health** – to ensure people sleeping rough are supported by health and social care services that help them to regain their independence
- G6: Improve health and care outcomes through the delivery of integrated and flexible service
- G7: Ensure those on the streets continue to have access to emergency shelter during extreme weather
- **P4: A Safe City** – making sure people sleeping rough, residents and visitors are safe and free from intimidation
- G8: Focus on managing risks, preventing harm and promoting appropriate behaviour
- G9: Promote alternatives to discourage street life and begging

- **P5: Pathways to Independence** – making sure supported accommodation offers solutions appropriate to residents’ needs. Our vision and priorities acknowledge that some people may initially choose to remain on the city’s streets. We will make sure that services continually engage with all those sleeping rough to support them into a position where ultimately they do decide to move away from street life
- G10: Have a flexible accommodation pathway that responds to changing needs
- G11: Develop bespoke supported housing options where appropriate
- G12: Ensure timely move on to independent accommodation

3.8 As reflected in the national trends the rough sleeper count rose again in November 2017 to 178 and Brighton & Hove remained the second in terms of rough sleeper numbers across Local Authorities in England (see table below).

MHCLG Annual Rough Sleeper Count/Estimate Autumn 2017

England total = 4751 up 617 from 2016 – 15% rise

Local Authority	Region	2016	<u>2017</u>	Change from 2016	% change on 2016
Westminster	London	260	217	-43	-17%
Brighton and Hove	South East	144	178	34	24%
Camden	London	17	127	110	647%
Manchester	North West	78	94	16	21%
Luton	East	76	87	11	14%

3.9 **Key Factors and Challenges Locally:**

- Housing within Brighton & Hove is limited and expensive and there are issues with planning restraints for change of use and with public consultations
- Lack of suitable move on accommodation for existing hostel and supported accommodation residents, leading to blockages in supported accommodation
- There is a need for social/affordable housing for many demographic groups including: young families, the elderly, people requiring disabled access,

- people with learning disabilities, vulnerable young adults leaving care and ex-service personnel. Rough sleepers do not necessarily take priority over all these groups; however they must be included in the mix
- The level of complex needs among rough sleepers in the city is high. Accommodation alone is not sufficient for people with multi complex needs to maintain a tenancy. Support, often intense, is required to help people in this cohort to develop skills and maintain accommodation
 - A multi-agency strategy to address access to mental health and substance misuse support is needed for this cohort
 - The number of tents and encampments in the city has increased significantly over summer 2018 which poses safeguarding and social issues as well as concerns nuisance to the public

3.10 **Key achievements to date:**

Winter night shelter 17/18 (Priority 2, Goal 3)

The night shelter at Brighton Centre was open last winter, 10 Dec to 11 Mar. The facility provided a safe shelter for rough sleepers. Successful moves into supported accommodation, detox services and safe reconnections outside the city were achieved through from service. It was assessed that the service helped reduce risk of death in periods of severe weather alongside the churches' night shelter and Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) provision

Implementation of Bthink (P2, G3)

The implementation and roll out of Bthink has enabled accurate recording and capturing of information related to those people coming into contact with services. This enables services to have access to an individual's case notes and provides detail on the interventions and support being provided. Work is underway to ensure all relevant services are using this system to improve the sharing of information across various providers.

MAP (P1, G1)

A Multi-agency protocol (MAP) was developed through a series of workshops facilitated by the Policy, Partnership and Scrutiny team working with BHCC staff in ASC and Housing along with commissioned services. There was agreement on principles and guidelines for an action plan or single service offer for all rough sleepers that is agreed by the individual, all services and entered onto the shared database (Bthink). The aim is to give every rough sleeper the best and most appropriate offer of accommodation, given the resources available, to move them off the streets as quickly as possible in order to reduce harm.

Local Connection (P2, G3)

The Local Connection protocol for BHCC had not been updated since 2005 and this needed to be reviewed and updated to meet the current needs of rough sleepers and the provision available in the city. This was developed by co-working with Commissioning, Housing and the Refugees & Migrants lead in BHCC.

Business Pack (P1, G1) and (P5, G10)

An advice and guidance pack for businesses to help support rough sleepers and report concerns around begging and anti-social behaviour was developed and distributed to all businesses in the BID area and through the Brighton & Hove Chamber of Commerce. The pack gives businesses practical advice on what to do and who to contact in various scenarios and explains the difference between rough sleeping and aggressive begging, usually to support an addiction, to give a clearer picture of the challenges we face.

Make Change Count 2018 (P1, G1) and (P4, G9)

BHCC's online giving campaign to encourage the public to give online to a group of homeless support charities in the city rather than directly on street was extended to eight charities in 2018. In 2017 £28K was raised and so far in 2018 £11k has been raised, which hopefully will rise steeply in the build up to Christmas as it did last year. The aim is as much about raising awareness of the issues we face in the city and promoting the vital and varied support work of the charities as it is about raising money.

Galvanise (P1, G1)

YMCA Downs Link Group (YMCADLG) led a project to pull together community support and volunteers to undertake a five day/night survey and head count of rough sleepers across Brighton & Hove in November 2017. This event was based on the European End Street Homelessness Campaign led by World Habitat. Data was gathered on the profile of people sleeping rough in the city and what led them to becoming homeless and will be used for further analysis to help develop homeless support services.

3.11 Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 (in effect from April 2018)

3.11.1 This builds on Trailblazer initiatives that have been in place since June 2017, with all Housing Officers taking up generic roles as Homelessness Prevention Officers. Placing homeless prevention as the first action of all homeless enquiries/presentations is now embedded into service and procedures. The HRA places a duty on all Housing Authorities to provide assistance to anyone who is within 56 days of being a risk of homelessness. A minimum of advice and guidance and a Personal Housing Plan (PHP) is provided to everyone to find the best solution and prevent homelessness and a homeless application being made. The key aims of the HRA are:

- Improved advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness
- Introducing new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible people, regardless of priority need and intentionality
- Introducing assessments and personalised housing plans (PHPs), setting out the actions housing authorities and individuals will take to secure accommodation
- Encouraging public bodies to work together to prevent and relieve homelessness through a duty to refer (Oct 2018)

3.12 Tackling Begging and Encampments

Op Doorway:

- 3.12.1 Sussex Police have been working with the Equinox drug and alcohol service ASB Officer and the Community Safety Team to deal with aggressive begging in the city. This operation is undertaken weekly and has shown positive results in tackling the issue.

Encampments:

- 3.12.2 A flowchart with procedures of how to deal with encampments has been completed with advice from Legal Services. The aim is to encourage rough sleepers to engage with services and work to get vulnerable people in a safe space rather than on the streets. The process also helps reduce harm to both the community and rough sleepers.

3.13 MHCLG Rough Sleeper Interventions Funding

Health & Adult Social Care was successful in bidding for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government funding in August 2018 to provide services and support that will have an immediate impact on reducing rough sleeper numbers in Brighton & Hove by the annual rough sleeper count in November 2018. The funding of **£495,107** is for **8 interventions**, expanding on existing services, until 31 March 2019. A further bid for £711,524 has been submitted to continue some of these interventions for 19/20 and expand Housing First. The 8 interventions are:

- **Additional outreach provision** within the existing street outreach service. Two additional posts can each work intensively with 15 people, with one post working specifically with women. One further navigator post can focus on people new to the street and link to the Hub and other day centres
- **Increase 'in-reach' support** for rough sleepers placed by Housing in emergency accommodation to ensure they are linked into services and able to sustain their accommodation. One worker will work with out of area placements in Eastbourne & Newhaven, working closely with other local authorities and partners
- **Expand the psychology service** which works with people with complex trauma and Personality Disorder. These are people the statutory services won't pick up or who require additional support or advocacy to access services and accommodation
- **Establishment of a Hub** to embed a NSNO approach and place of safety. 17 bed Hub to be located in an existing day centre focusing on moving rough sleepers off the streets quickly
- **Dedicated funding to support reconnections work**, move on support based at the Hub to ensure that those with a Local Connection elsewhere or who want to resettle elsewhere are supported to settle in the best accommodation option to meet their needs

- **Move off the streets temporary accommodation**, and move on from the Hub. This expands existing non-commissioned accommodation services. 21 units with 3 support staff
- **Fund 0.5 FTE Occupational Therapist** Band 7 to work with rough sleepers to support people into and to sustain accommodation, while expanding resilience and life skills
- **Expand the churches winter night shelter to 6 months provision** of the existing 15 beds per night

3.14 **Winter Provision**

3.14.1 Following the success of the winter night shelter at the Brighton Centre last winter, open mid-Dec to mid-March, the facility is to be provided again for winter 18/19. It will run alongside the SWEP provision and Churches night shelter. In addition a Hub with 17 beds is being operated at First Base by BHT to get people new to rough sleeping in Brighton & Hove off the streets rapidly and assess them as to what is their best option. This may be housing them in or outside the city depending on their needs and Local Connection status.

3.15 **Government Rough Sleeping Strategy**

3.15.1 The Government Rough Sleeping Strategy was released 13 August 2018. This latest action is part of the government's ongoing work to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and eliminate it by 2027. The three areas of focus are: Prevention, Intervention and Recovery. A Further £100 million was proposed but it was later announced that 50% of that had already been allocated or spent through funding for MHCLG rough sleeper intervention and other related schemes.

3.15.2 The area of recovery, particularly around funding for move on accommodation, is where Brighton & Hove could definitely apply for additional funding.

4. **ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

4.1 Not relevant for this report which is an update rather than a report presenting decisions.

5. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

5.1 The development and implementation of the strategy has been and continues to be widely consulted upon, engaging businesses, community and voluntary sector organisations as well as communities themselves.

6. **CONCLUSION**

6.1. This report outlines activity being undertaken to implement the Rough Sleeper Strategy.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The overall budget within Health & Adult Social Care for commissioned Housing Related Support services is £5.4m for 2018/19. Tenders for the individual services within this report will be requested against an agreed service specification. The Council is experiencing financial challenges and is subject to annual government financial settlements which can impact on the availability of funding. However it is anticipated that financial resources will be available to enable the commissioning of the services detailed above. Any services commissioned from the MHCLG Rough Sleeper Interventions Funding, will need to be within the funding awarded. If the accommodation cannot be sourced then the funding will have to be returned.

Finance Officer consulted: Sophie Warburton Date: 21/09/2018

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 The Neighbourhoods, Inclusion, Communities and Equalities Committee has delegated authority to discharge the Council's functions in relation to street homelessness. As well as being responsible for co-ordinating the Council's policies and actions in relation to street homelessness, it has responsibility for ensuring - in conjunction with the Policy, Resources and Growth Committee, the Housing and New Homes Committee and the Health & Wellbeing Board - that appropriate action is taken in relation to it.
- 7.3 This Committee formally approved the Rough Sleeping Strategy in July 2016 (as did the Housing and New Homes Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board). It is appropriate that this Committee consider this Report on progress in implementing the Strategy.

Lawyer Consulted: Victoria Simpson Date: 12/09/2018

Equalities Implications:

- 7.4 None directly to this report for information. Equality issues were considered in the formulation of the Rough Sleeper Strategy and in the development of the tenders detailed in the body of the report.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.5 None identified to this report for information.

Any Other Significant Implications:

- 7.6 None directly to this report for information. Public Health and risk/opportunity issues have been considered in formulating the Rough Sleeper Strategy and in the development of the tenders detailed in the body of the report

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Rough Sleeping Strategy: Action Tracker
2. MHCLG Eight Rough Sleeper Interventions: Action Tracker

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

None

