

## HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2016 - 2021

REPORT OF: Tom Clark, Solicitor to the Council  
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Wards Affected: All  
Key Decision: No  
Report to: Scrutiny Committee for Leisure and Community  
Date of meeting 6 July 2016

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### Purpose of Report

1. This report provides Members with a Homelessness Strategy covering 2016-2021.

### Recommendations

2. **The Committee is requested to:**
    - 2.1 **Recommend to Council that the Homelessness Strategy 2016-21 be adopted, subject to any comments or amendments that the Committee might wish to propose.**
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### Background

3. Under the Homelessness Act 2002, all local authorities are required to conduct a review of homelessness in their district and use this to inform a strategy for tackling homelessness which they must publish at intervals of no longer than five years.
4. Currently, the Council's plans for tackling homelessness are set out within the Housing Strategy, which was refreshed in 2012 and it is therefore timely that a new strategy is adopted.
5. The Homelessness Strategy deals with matters related to the prevention of homelessness, as issues around housing supply are outside its scope.

### Homelessness Strategy 2016-21

6. The Homelessness Strategy is included at Appendix 1 of this report and sets out four strategic objectives, and actions for their achievement in preventing and dealing with homelessness in the District.
7. The strategic objectives identified in the Strategy are:
  - **Prevent homelessness wherever possible.**
  - **Tackle homelessness amongst specific vulnerable groups.**
  - **Engage with landlords to maximise access to private rented sector accommodation.**
  - **Minimise the use of temporary accommodation where possible**
8. An appendix to the Homelessness Strategy sets out a review of homelessness in Mid Sussex together with an assessment of likely future trends. The review assesses the extent of homelessness in the District, together with its causes and an analysis of

those groups most affected. The review also considers the use of temporary accommodation by the Council, the availability of social housing, access to the private rented sector and the affordability of market housing. In addition, a full round-up of recent and imminent reforms to social housing and welfare benefits is considered in the context of implications for future homelessness in Mid Sussex.

### **Next steps**

9. Subject to the Committee's comments and amendments, the Strategy will be submitted for approval by Full Council at the meeting on 20 July.

### **Policy Context**

10. The delivery of the Homelessness Strategy will make a significant contribution to the priorities set out in the Sustainable Communities Strategy and Corporate Plan, and to the Council's aim to achieve Opportunity and Quality of Life for All.

### **Other Options Considered**

11. The report provides a new Homelessness Strategy which is designed to set out how the Council will meet its homelessness duties. No other practicable options were identified.

### **Financial Implications**

12. The actions set out in the Homelessness Strategy can be met from existing resources.

### **Risk Management Implications**

13. The Homelessness Strategy helps the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting its duties under the Homelessness Act 2002 and to avoid the risks associated with non-compliance.

### **Equalities and customer service implications**

14. An impact assessment has been completed for the Homelessness Strategy. Those assisted by the Council to prevent them becoming homeless include those on low incomes and some of the most vulnerable members of society.

### **Other material implications**

15. None.

### **Background Papers**

Homelessness Strategy Equality Impact Assessment.