

Agenda item:

[No.]

Cabinet

On 13 July 2010

Report Title. **Housing Strategies: Move-on Strategy 2010-15 and the Rough Sleepers Strategy 2010-12**

Report of the Director of Urban Environment, Niall Bolger

Signed :

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Wards(s) affected: **Not applicable**

Report for: **Non key-decision**

1. Purpose of the report (That is, the decision required)

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for both the Rough Sleepers Strategy 2010-12 and the Move-on Strategy 2010-15. Both strategies have been developed by the Integrated Housing Board and agreed at their meeting on 14th June 2010.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member

- 2.1. **The Rough Sleepers Strategy.** Rough sleepers in Haringey are among the most vulnerable groups in the Borough, many have high support needs resulting from dependence on alcohol and drugs or have mental health issues. Whilst we need a

zero tolerance approach to rough sleeping we must ensure that effective support networks are in place to help former rough sleepers sustain accommodation in the long term.

2.2. The Move-on Strategy. There are significant numbers of residents in short-term supported housing that are ready to move-on but can't due to barriers preventing them from doing so such as the shortage of available tenancies. The resulting blockage in this valuable resource means that vulnerable people who need to access short-term supported accommodation are prevented from doing so. The Move-on Strategy aims to identify and provide solutions to these barriers.

3. State link(s) with Council Plan Priorities and actions and /or other Strategies:

3.1. As sub-strategies of the Homelessness Strategy 2008-11 these strategies will support the delivery of a number of key objectives, namely

Objective 1: Actively support and promote a partnership approach to preventing homelessness

Objective 2: Invest in early intervention and effective homelessness prevention

Objective 4: Provide choice and encourage independence

Objective 7: Work proactively to safeguard children and vulnerable adults

3.2. The outcomes of these strategies will help meet the following priorities in the Council Plan

- **Priority 2** - Creating a Better Haringey: cleaner, greener and safer

The Rough Sleepers Strategy will ensure that interventions are put in place to prevent people from ending up on the streets and ensure that those who do are given realistic options to enable them to stop sleeping rough.

The strategy will positively contribute to tackling anti-social behaviour associated with rough sleeping and the street drinking population.

- **Priority 3** - Encouraging lifetime well-being, at home, work, play and learning

The strategies will link to opportunities for skills development, education and training to encourage life-time wellbeing.

- **Priority 4** - Promoting independent living while supporting adults and children when needed

By assisting planned move-on from short-term supported housing the Move-on Strategy will enable some of the Boroughs most vulnerable residents to plan

their lives and work toward independent living.

The Rough Sleepers Strategy will ensure that a case-by-case approach is taken to establish offers of support/options based on circumstance.

- **Priority 5** - Delivering excellent, customer focused, cost effective services

By making the best use of short-term supported housing the Council will be able to free up valuable stock for those that need it most, including rough sleepers. Greater value for money from the Supporting People budget will be realised by ensuring that accommodation based support is not being given to those who are ready to move-on.

4. Recommendations

4.1. It is recommended that the Cabinet

(a) Approves the Rough Sleepers Strategy 2010-12 for adoption subject to the inclusion of any case studies to be agreed by Cabinet Member for Housing

(b) Approves the Move-on Strategy 2010-15 for adoption subject to the inclusion of any case studies to be agreed by Cabinet Member for Housing

(c) Notes the feedback from the strategy consultation

5. Reason for recommendation(s)

5.1. The development of strategies to address move-on from short-term supported housing and rough sleeping is prioritised through the Homelessness Strategy 2008-11.

5.2. The introduction of procedures to increase the flow of clients through short-term supported housing is a Supporting People Strategy 2005-10 priority.

5.3. A detailed audit of short-term supported housing has been undertaken, suggesting that over 2010-11 there will be an estimated 237 people ready to move-on but unable to access appropriate accommodation. The Move-on Strategy will increase the availability of sustainable housing solutions.

5.4. The development of a strategy to tackle rough sleeping is in line with the government's 'No One Left Out' agenda to reduce and sustain the incidence of rough sleeping to as close to zero as possible by 2012.

5.5. An increase in the number of rough sleepers from the eastern European countries and a correlated increase in the incidence of violent crime make a strategic multi-

agency approach to rough sleeping an imperative.

6. Other options considered

6.1. Not applicable

7. Summary

7.1. These strategies will expand on the work already being done through the Homelessness Strategy 2008-11, they will seek to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable homeless groups in Haringey.

Rough Sleepers Strategy 2010-12

7.2. The Rough Sleepers Strategy 2010-12 will seek to ensure that Haringey's reduces and sustains the number of people sleeping rough in the borough to as close to zero as possible by 2012.

7.3. Rough sleepers in Haringey are among the most vulnerable groups in the Borough; many have high support needs resulting from dependence on alcohol and drugs or have mental health issues. Whilst we need a zero tolerance approach to tackling rough sleeping we must ensure that effective support networks are in place to help former rough sleepers sustain accommodation in the long term.

7.4. Over the last four quarters the number of clients seen rough sleeping by outreach services has remained at a fairly constant level, between 17 and 23. However, there have been confirmed reports of a significant influx of rough sleepers from central and eastern European countries which now poses a significant problem especially in relation to an increase in the incidence of violent crime (particularly murders) among this group.

7.5. The strategy will bring together all agencies dealing with rough sleepers to provide effective support in terms of detox programmes and to facilitate reconnection to country of origin in the case of rough sleepers with no recourse to public funds.

7.6. The singular identified outcome for the Rough Sleepers Strategy is;
"Through a zero tolerance approach to rough sleeping, reduce and sustain the numbers of people sleeping rough on the streets of Haringey to as close to zero as possible by 2012"

Move-on Strategy 2010-15

7.7. The Move-on Strategy 2010-15 aims to provide solutions to the barriers that

prevent clients in short-term supported housing from moving on. It will also free up valuable provision for those that need accommodation based support.

7.8. Short term supported accommodation, funded by Supporting People, aims to help people move to independent living and prevent homelessness. By working with service users to develop their skills and confidence most aspire to moving into long term or permanent housing. Unfortunately, due to barriers this is not always possible and service users can remain in supported accommodation for too long, therefore blocking up this valuable resource.

7.9. Nationally, it is estimated that 45% (46% in London) of short term supported housing units are occupied by people who are ready to move on but do not have the accommodation or support to enable them to do so. This is because of barriers such as lack of alternative accommodation, affordability and the lack of necessary support. These blockages are not a new issue, constituting a problem for many years.

7.10. In development of the strategy Haringey carried out an audit of all short term supported housing and those clients ready but unable to move on. Headline results of the audit indicated that;

- 176 clients were ready to move-on from short-term supported housing but had no accommodation to move into.
- An estimated further 242 clients would be ready to move-on at some point during 2010/11
- There is an existing shortfall of 176 tenancies rising to a potential 237 over 2010/11

7.11. Two outcomes have been identified through the Move-on Strategy, that

- The annual availability of short term supported housing is increased for those who need it

And

- No one remains in short term supported housing for longer than they need

8. Chief Financial Officer Comments

8.1. The proposals set out in this report will be delivered within existing approved budgets within Housing Services or approved external funding from DCLG. However some of the funding is time limited and costs incurred in respect of these measures must be limited to the funding available and should cease when the funding runs out, unless further bids for funding are successful. Commitments should take account of the one –off nature of some of the funding, particularly any additional staffing costs where contracts should be of a fixed term nature linked to the funding timescales

9. Head of Legal Services Comments

9.1. The Head of Legal Services has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

9.2. The need for the Council to adopt strategies in respect of Rough Sleepers and Moving-On is driven by the Central Government objectives that are set out in the report. These strategies underpin the Council's Homelessness Strategy and support the delivery of some of the key objectives in the Council Plan.

9.3. Effective non-statutory consultation has taken place with Partner Organisations and Stakeholders (including the public) in line with the Council's Consultation Framework and Compact Agreement and there are no further legal implications arising.

10. Head of Procurement Comments –[Required for Procurement Committee]

10.1. Not applicable

11. Equalities & Community Cohesion Comments

11.1. Equalities Impact Assessments (EIA) have been completed for each of these strategies

11.2. Recommended actions resulting from the EIAs have been incorporated into each of the Action Plans

12. Consultation

12.1 Extensive consultation has been carried out on each of these strategies with several interest groups, namely:

- Integrated Housing Board
- Supporting People Partnership Board
- Supporting People Provider Forum
- Supporting People Team
- Strategic & Community Housing Services
- Corporate Policy & Performance Team
- Safer, Stronger Communities Service
- Haringey Drug & Alcohol Team
- Haringey Advisory Group on Alcohol
- Met Police
- Communities & Local Government

- Homelessness Strategy Delivery Groups
- Thames Reach
- UK Border Agency
- Bubic
- Homelessness Strategy Delivery Groups
- Homeless Link
- Short-term supported housing service users

12.2 The consultation carried out on both these strategies has demonstrated that there is widespread support for both.

12.3 Consultation reports for both strategies are appended to this report

13. Service Financial Comments

- 13.1. Although there are some costs involved in the delivery of these strategies (outlined below) the delivery of most of the actions will need to be contained within existing budgets and through forming effective partnerships with other services. These actions could be affected by future funding cuts resulting in changes to staffing structure.
- 13.2. An extended outreach service for rough sleepers providing a faster and more targeted approach has been funded by Communities & Local Government at a cost of £27,928. This enhanced service will run until 31st December 2010. Further external funding will be sought for an extension of this service if, after evaluation, there is still a need.
- 13.3. Funding has been secured for a deposit guarantee scheme to last 12 months. £70,000 through the Supporting People budget will cover staffing costs. A total of £35,000 will constitute the pot from which any claims will be paid; £25,000 from Communities & Local Government from two pots (small grants bid for rough sleepers & funding for social excluded groups) and £10,000 from Strategic & Community Housing Services.
- 13.4. Benchmarking from other local authorities indicates a possible 20% claim rate; effective monitoring systems as well as robust procedures will need to be put in place to minimise as much as possible the risk of tenancies failing and claims being made.
- 13.5. Possibilities for underwriting the scheme should be explored with partner agencies to further mitigate of risk.
- 13.6. Future funding for this scheme cannot be guaranteed so it is recommended that potential external funding sources are explored as well as any future input from Supporting People should the scheme prove effective and value for money.

14. Use of appendices /Tables and photographs
14.1. Copies of the Move-on and Rough Sleepers Strategies plus the consultation reports are available in the Members rooms
15. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
15.1. Not applicable