



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

3 October 2022

Report of the Director - Public Health

**Contribution towards Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
delivery**

1. Divisions Affected

1.1 County-wide.

2. Key Decision

2.1 This is not a Key Decision.

3. Purpose

3.1 To seek approval for the contribution of £0.030m across three years to help fund a county wide Housing Strategy & Homelessness Manager post, which will be hosted by North East Derbyshire District Council on behalf of Derbyshire Homelessness Officers Group (DHOG), and will lead on the delivery of the Derbyshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2022-27).

4. Information and Analysis

4.1 The number of people sleeping rough in England has risen substantially over the past decade. People who are homeless have some of the worst health outcomes in England and are more likely to experience and die from preventable and treatable medical conditions and to have multiple and complex health needs. Many people who sleep rough experience a combination of physical and mental ill health and drug or

alcohol dependency. They often experience the most significant health inequalities. The longer a person experiences homelessness, particularly from a young adulthood, the more likely their health and wellbeing will be at risk.

- 4.2 The reasons that lead to homelessness are multiple and often extremely complex. Nevertheless, local data from district and borough councils indicates that over 3,000 homelessness assessments were made in 2020-21 in Derbyshire, indicating we have a sizeable number of people who are homeless or living in temporary accommodation, sleeping rough or living in overcrowded properties.
- 4.3 Ultimately, a person cannot achieve good physical and mental health without a safe and stable home. However, health problems can also be a cause of homelessness or a barrier to exiting rough sleeping. Health, housing and wider support needs are deeply interconnected – there is a need for an integrated response across a wide range of partners including health services, local government and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE), as well as a range of other organisations such as the police, the wider local economy and the local community.
- 4.4 Partners in Derbyshire face considerable challenges in responding to homelessness and rough sleeping, set against a backdrop of the global pandemic, increases in the cost of living and an increasingly unaffordable housing market. The pandemic has highlighted and intensified existing housing problems and exposed the impact that poor quality and overcrowded accommodation has on population health. Tenants have been more impacted than homeowners in terms of arrears, and individuals who live in more deprived communities are experiencing housing payment arrears along with increased living costs which are resulting in more people being at risk of losing their home.
- 4.5 DHOG's purpose is to promote homelessness reduction and prevention through strategic leadership and is built upon a successful partnership of homeless leads from the 9 District and Borough Authorities (including Staffordshire Moorlands), together with representatives from Public Health and Derbyshire County Council.
- 4.6 DHOG has worked collaboratively with a wide range of local system partners to develop the Derbyshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2022-27). It has been recognised that this Strategy sets out an ambitious plan and vision for tackling homelessness over the next five years, and to successfully deliver this will require significant commitment from all of the Local Authorities and key partners.

- 4.7 According to evidence in Homelessness: applying All Our Health (www.gov.uk), the reasons that lead to homelessness are multiple and often extremely complex. Many people have needs that extend beyond the basic need for a home and impact on their health and wellbeing. Local Housing Authorities need to work alongside a range of local partners to meet those needs and a successful strategic approach to preventing homelessness is built on a coordinated multi-agency response, with opportunities for early intervention and promotion of wellbeing being prioritised wherever possible.
- 4.8 The health and wellbeing of people who experience homelessness are poorer than that of the general population. They often experience the most significant health inequalities. The longer a person experiences homelessness, particularly from a young adulthood, the more likely their health and wellbeing will be at risk.
- 4.9 The strategy identifies four key priorities, each with a series of actions to address the strategic aims:
- Make homelessness everyone's responsibility through a system-wide approach
 - Prevent homelessness and respond to homelessness through early intervention and personalised solutions
 - End rough sleeping and repeat homelessness
 - Develop sustainable supported and settled housing solutions
- 4.7 Collectively, DHOG working with partners and local communities wants to ensure that the factors that lead to homelessness can be better understood and identified, with effective pathways into preventative services in place, and clear and accessible referral mechanisms. DHOG aims to embed this approach across Derbyshire, significantly reducing crisis presentations and ensuring effective homelessness prevention interventions, partnerships and pathways are in place.
- 4.8 It is therefore proposed that dedicated officer time in the form of a Housing Strategy & Homelessness Manager is required to develop and lead on the implementation of the Derbyshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2022-27). This new role will devise, initiate, and implement policies, projects, partnerships in relation to the strategy and the strategy action plan. The postholder will also liaise with a wide range of stakeholders to devise work programmes and project manage initiatives that will enable all of the Derbyshire District and Borough Councils to meet their statutory obligations and agreed strategic homelessness objectives.

- 4.9 The delivery of the strategy will be overseen by Derbyshire Health and Wellbeing Board, ensuring the intrinsic link between homelessness and health is fully understood and cementing the partnership approach required to deliver the strategy.

5. Alternative Options Considered

- 5.1 Do not approve the contribution of £0.030m across three years to help establish a county wide Housing Strategy & Homelessness Manager post. This could cause a reputational risk to the authority as it could be interpreted that the authority is not working with partners to support the delivery of the Derbyshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2022-27), which aims to improve health outcomes for some of the most vulnerable groups in Derbyshire.
- 5.2 Do approve the contribution of £0.030m across three years to help establish a county wide Housing Strategy & Homelessness Manager post. This is the preferred option as Derbyshire County Council is seen as an integral member of DHOG which aims to reduce rough sleeping and homelessness and it is recognised that dedicated officer time is required to drive forward the commitments and actions made by the Derbyshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2022-27).

6. Implications

- 6.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 [Homelessness: applying All Our Health - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/homelessness-applying-all-our-health)
- 7.2 [Derbyshire Homelessness Strategy 22-27.pdf](#)
- 7.3 [Health and Wellbeing Board – Update on the county wide homelessness and rough sleeping strategy](#)

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Implications

9. Recommendation(s)

That the Cabinet Member:

- a) Notes that the Council supports the delivery of the Derbyshire

- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2022-27).
- b) Approves the contribution of £0.030m across three years for the development of a county wide Housing Strategy & Homelessness Manager post to develop and lead on the implementation of the Derbyshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2022-27).

10. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 10.1 Supporting the delivery of the strategy will reflect our strong shared commitment to working collaboratively across Derbyshire to prevent and reduce homelessness – making it everyone’s responsibility.
- 10.2 Approving the contribution of £0.030m to help fund this new Housing Strategy & Homelessness Manager post across three years will assist in delivering the actions contained within the delivery of the strategy and securing positive public health outcomes for the people of Derbyshire.

11. Is it necessary to waive the call in period?

- 11.1 No

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Implications

Financial

- 1.1 The funding for this post will come from existing budget lines from the Public Health Grant at a cost of £0.030m.
- 1.2. Alongside the proposed contribution of £0.030m across three years from Derbyshire County Council, the 9 District and Borough Authorities (including Staffordshire Moorlands) will be contributing 3% from their annual Homelessness Prevention Grant with contributions ranging from £3,600 to £7,600 annually.
- 1.3. If for any unforeseen reasons District and Borough Authorities do not commit the agreed 3% from their Homelessness Prevention Grant as anticipated, however unlikely this now seems given the communications to date, a core group of five District and Borough Authorities are prepared to commit more money if required.

Legal

- 2.1 Section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 (as amended) places a duty on local housing authorities (in relation to Derbyshire, the district and borough councils) to formulate a homelessness strategy. The Section also requires the relevant social services authority (the County Council) to:
 - (i) give such assistance as the local housing authority reasonably requires; and
 - (ii) take the strategy into account in the exercise of its functions.
- 2.2 Article 19 of the Council's Constitution allows the Council to enter into arrangements with or co-operate with another person or body in order to promote the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area or in pursuance of any statutory functions.

Human Resources

- 3.1 The funding will enable North East Derbyshire District Council to host this position. Derbyshire County Council accepts no employment or future redundancy liability, with all employment and related matters to be managed by the providers.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 4.1 The recommendations link to the Council Plan priority, Thriving Communities; Resilient, Healthy and Safe Communities and Effective Early Help for Individuals and Communities.
- 4.2 Working with partners to implement the Derbyshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will work towards ensuring individuals and communities most in need are supported and protected.
- 4.3 Working with partners we can enable individuals and communities to lead healthier and happier lives, accessing support when and where they need it.