

Report to: **Overview & Scrutiny Panel**
Date: **17 March 2016**
Title: **Homeless Strategy**
Portfolio Area: **Customer First – Cllr Ward (deputising for Cllr Bastone)**

Wards Affected: **All**

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: **Overview & Scrutiny Panel**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken: Immediately following this meeting.

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RECOMMENDATION

That the Panel support the establishment of a joint SH/WD Homeless Strategy Task & Finish Group.

1. Executive summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to brief Members on the commencement of work on a new joint Homeless Strategy for South Hams & West Devon and for Members to consider how they wish to contribute to the aims and actions of any proposed new strategy.

2. Background

2.1 It is a statutory requirement of the Homelessness Act 2002 for each Local Authority to have a Homeless Strategy which sets out how they will prevent homelessness in their district.

- 2.2 Previously South Hams had a stand-alone homeless strategy which expired in 2013. Since that time specific actions around homelessness have been incorporated in the Connect Strategy. With the replacement of Connect by Our Plan as an overarching policy it now seems timely to revisit a dedicated homeless strategy that underpins and informs some of the work of Our Plan.
- 2.3 For the Council it presents an opportunity to develop a robust strategy within our new working environment with the breakup of traditional departments. This will ensure other related work streams can be included in the strategy to showcase the innovative way we are now working.
- 2.4 The Strategy will cover the next 5 years and will be subject to an annual update and report.

3. Outcomes/outputs

- 3.1 The Strategy will set the agenda for the way the District tackles homelessness for the next 5 years. It is important that Members have the opportunity to influence the development of the strategy from the very start.

4. Options available and consideration of risk

- 4.1 Members are asked to consider how they wish to take the work in producing the homeless strategy forward. This could be through a series of Task & Finish groups or an officer only group with regular reporting to the Panel.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Strategy is ready for public consultation in the late summer, with formal adoption by the Council in the autumn.
- 5.2 It is proposed that Members consider setting up a joint task and finish group. Whilst the Group would set its terms of reference at its first meeting, it is suggested that its primary purposes would be to develop the draft Homeless Strategy and to consider the relationship between the Strategy (when approved) and Our Plan: South Hams.

6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	It is a statutory requirement to have a Homeless Strategy,
Financial	N	Guidance: Authors should have engaged with the S151 Officer as part of building of the report such that the relevant Finance officer is aware of what is to be covered and is able to input into the drafting of the

		report if required. The report needs to be as specific as possible and shall include all material costs.
Risk	N	
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	Y	Any strategy or consultation will need to ensure it considers any equality and diversity implications are.
Safeguarding	Y	Any strategy will need to ensure that safeguarding principles are used to protect vulnerable people.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	Y	Some of the approaches to tackle homelessness in the district may also help to tackle community safety, crime and disorder.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Y	These will be fundamental principles of any strategy to tackle homelessness.
Other implications		

Appendices:

None