

Diversity impact assessment

TITLE
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to 2030
DATE
09/09/2024
LEAD OFFICER.
Chris Giles Housing Strategy and Partnerships Manager
1 Summary description of the proposed change What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation?
The proposed change is the recommended adoption of a new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy for Medway Council. This replaces the previous Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024. The key change in the new strategy is an increased focus on a One Medway approach in working in partnership to relieve and prevent homelessness and using available data to predict households who may be at risk of homelessness in an upstream prevention approach. The main themes of the previous strategy have been reframed following the input from stakeholders, but remain the prevention and relief of homelessness, early advice to people at risk of homelessness, ensuring vulnerable people get the right support and working with partner agencies.
2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment E.g. Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user. E.g. Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile
Initial consultation was undertaken in a wider discussion with the entire staff team of Housing Services in September 2023, to establish initial thoughts about groups whose needs should be considered. A homelessness review was carried between December 2023 and May 2024 looking at numbers of homelessness presentations, rough sleeping, vulnerable groups needing supported housing, impacts of cost of living of affordability of housing, etc. A strategy shaping and consultation event was carried out with a wide range of statutory and voluntary partners on July 15 2024, with a particular focus on vulnerabilities, and the draft strategy was shared with colleagues from Culture, Adult Social Care and Children's Services in advance of presentation to Directorate and Corporate Management Teams.

What is likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

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Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	No	Yes	No
Disability	No	Yes	No
Gender reassignment	No	No	No
Marriage/civil partnership	No	No	No
Pregnancy/maternity	No	No	No
Race	No	No	No
Religion/belief	No	No	No
Sex	No	Yes	No
Sexual orientation	No	No	No
Care experience	No	Yes	No
Other (e.g. low income groups)	No	Yes	No

4 Summary of the likely impacts

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

The Medway Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy to 2030 outlines the approach that will be taken by Medway to prevent and relieve homelessness in all its forms, to enhance understanding of housing and homelessness issues across partner agencies and Medway residents, and to take a one Medway approach in tackling issues which make people vulnerable to homelessness.

The provisions within the strategy should have a positive impact on the following groups.

- Age. With a focus on supporting vulnerable people to prevent them losing their homes the strategy will positively advantage older people. This links in with the disabled facilities work contained within Medway's Housing Strategy. Additionally, with a focus on preventative information being targeted towards educational settings and continuing, and where possible expansion of, supported housing provision for vulnerable

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younger people, the strategy will positively advantage younger people and care leavers

- Disability. By ensuring focus on the provision of the right kind of supported housing or support, the strategy will positively impact on the lives of people with disabilities.
- Sex. Through a focus of providing supported housing and ongoing support to vulnerable people including women who sleep rough and/or sex work and also meeting the needs of those fleeing domestic abuse, the strategy will positively impact women, (victims of domestic abuse at the March 2022 census were significantly more like to be female - 70% of recorded cases).
- Low income. A high number of the provisions within the strategy are envisaged to have a positive impact on the lives of Medway residents with a low income, these groups are more at risk of homelessness due to lack of financial resources and resilience, so prevention, information and understanding of rights and responsibilities, and what help is available will directly address people within this group.

5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

All the impacts foreseen by adopting the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy to 2030 are considered to improve equality of opportunity.

6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
N/A		

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7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

The recommendation is to progress the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy to 2030 through the democratic process and to have the strategy adopted at Cabinet on December 17 2024.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director

Mark Breathwick

Date of authorisation

09.09.24