



# COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

17<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019

## CABINET

### AGENDA ITEM (7)

#### PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

<b>Accountable Member</b>	Councillor SG Hirst Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure
<b>Accountable Officer</b>	Jon Dearing Group Manager 01285 623304 jon.dearing@publicagroup.uk

<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To consider and adopt (subject to any amendments considered necessary) an updated Preventing Homelessness Strategy.
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>That the Preventing Homelessness Strategy be approved.</b>
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	The proposed strategy is intended to address and reduce homelessness within the District.

<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Recommendation to Council</b>	No

<b>Financial Implications</b>	The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 comes with 'new burdens funding' which the Council is using in combination with other time-limited funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The Council will use this funding, and the opportunities arising from the Act, to support the priorities identified within the strategy.
<b>Legal and Human Rights Implications</b>	The adoption of a strategy is a legal requirement.
<b>Environmental and Sustainability Implications</b>	None
<b>Human Resource Implications</b>	None
<b>Key Risks</b>	By not adopting a new strategy, the Council would not meet its legal

	obligations.
<b>Equalities Analysis</b>	Yes - see <b>Appendix B</b> .

<b>Related Decisions</b>	Adoption of previous Strategy in 2016
<b>Background Documents</b>	None
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>Appendix A</b> - Draft Preventing Homelessness Strategy <b>Appendix B</b> - Equalities Impact Assessment

<b>Performance Management Follow Up</b>	The strategy will be monitored to ensure we are meeting the priorities detailed
<b>Options for Joint Working</b>	This strategy has been aligned with those of West Oxfordshire and Forest of Dean District Councils

## Background

1. The Council has a duty under the Homelessness Act 2002 to carry out a review of homelessness in its area at least every five years and to produce a strategy to prevent homelessness. The previous strategy was adopted in 2016 but, due to the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA), is no longer fit for purpose. There is a need to consider the future strategy in the light of the legislative changes and current housing pressures within the District.
2. Given the significant changes introduced by the HRA, the on-going shortage of affordable housing, and continuing pressure of welfare reform, it is expected that homelessness and the risk of homelessness will increase, meaning that the focus will be on preventative measures to address homelessness.
3. The Council's priorities must be relevant under the new legislation and reflect the new and wider responsibilities of the Council as well as the wider reform agenda for tackling homelessness and proposals to halve rough sleeping by 2020, and to end it completely by 2027. The new strategy and action plan are focussed on three areas:-
  - **Prevention** - Prevent homelessness and meet our obligations under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017;
  - **Supply** - Secure accommodation for homeless households;
  - **Support** - Provide support for homeless households.
4. Prevention of homelessness is the central objective of the proposed Preventing Homelessness Strategy.
5. There are also new duties within the HRA setting out expectations on councils to prevent homelessness for everyone, regardless of their priority need.
6. There is significant interest in housing at a national level. Alongside increasing the supply of new homes, the government is also keen to see improvements in standards within the private rented

sector.

(END)