

Health and Well Being Board

Wednesday 10th July 2019

68. Swindon Borough Council's Reducing Rough Sleepers Strategy

The Committee received a report of the Head of Housing submitted a report on the Council's "Reducing Rough Sleepers Strategy".

Michael Ash, Head of Housing and Nick Kemmett, Housing Strategy and Development Manager, introduced the report drawing Members' attention to the following key issues:

- The local and national policies and practice underpinning the strategy.
- The Strategy's five key objectives as set out within paragraph 3.2 of the report.
- The role of key partners in supporting and delivering the strategy including the health and probation services.
- The outcome of the consultation undertaken prior to the drafting of the strategy set out within the report.
- The employment of a dedicate Rough Sleeper Cop-coordinator and three out-reach workers by the Council following the securing of grant funding from the Government to ensure delivery of the programme.
- Success in relation to support given to rough sleepers to secure and retain housing.
- The provision of Mental Health and First Aid training across the Housing Department and Voluntary and other agencies.
- The creation of a Strategic Board with Swindon Borough Council as the lead and the creation of an action plan to progress key priorities and objectives.
- The work and provision of Services at the Haven Day Centre including the Night Shelter.

Following their presentation Michael Ash and Nick Kemmett responded to Members questions and comments in respect of the following points.

- The delayed discharge of rough sleepers form hospital to ensure support services were in place.
- The preference of most rough sleepers in accessing medical services via the Emergency Department at the hospital rather than their GPs and the discharge process involved.
- The likely recommendations forthcoming from the JNSA within the next six months for the commissioning of general and mental health services which

should reduce the need to access medical services through the Emergency Department.

- The general trend for local homeless people to have a Swindon connection.
- The co-ordination of work by voluntary groups involved with the homeless in Swindon.
- The potential future funding of homeless related work through Government grants.
- How the Council identified and helped the invisible or hidden homeless, such as sofa surfers, including work under the Council's Homelessness Strategy.
- The securing of 12 housing units to support the work to reduce rough sleeping which had been recognised as good practice across the housing sector.
- The need to draw the public's attention to the wide ranging work by the Council and its partners to reduce rough sleeping.
- Access to mental health and substance misuse services to support the reduction in rough sleeping.

Resolved – (1) The Swindon Borough Council's Reducing Rough Sleepers Strategy 2019-2022, as attached as appendix 1 to the report be approved.

(2) That Swindon Borough Council's Cabinet be recommended to adopt the Council's Reducing Rough Sleepers Strategy 2019-2022.