

## Meeting: Housing Sub Committee

**Date:** 11 February 2019

**Title:** North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention Strategy  
2018 -2021

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**Service:** Housing

**Wards affected:** All

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### 1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018 – 2021.

### 2. Recommendations

The recommendation is that Housing Sub Committee accepts the contents of the strategy.

### 3. Details

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a statutory duty on all local housing authorities to carry out a homelessness review for their area and, in consultation with local partners and stakeholders, formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of that review, at least every five years. The strategy should be monitored by a partnership such as a homelessness forum, with local partnership sign off and clear links into the authority's corporate framework including other local strategies.

The Act states that the purpose of this strategic approach is to:

- Prevent homelessness in the district of the authority;
- Secure accommodation that is or will be available for people in the district who are or who may become homeless; and
- Provide support for people in the district who are or who may become homeless.

Our last strategy was published in 2013 and covered the period 2013 – 2018. Delivery of our third homelessness prevention strategy has been at a time of competing priorities, reduced funding and increased housing and support need from some of our most vulnerable residents.

Throughout this period we have continued to work with stakeholders and service providers to achieve some excellent outcomes. This has included funding to deliver time limited

services, conversion of existing supported housing and the creation of new supported housing schemes.

Levels of homelessness and reasons for homelessness over the lifespan of this strategy have been looked at to identify any trends or emerging issues.

A homelessness review event took place in February 2017, which identified issues and concerns to focus on. This was followed up by engagement with organisations and current and former service users, in the form of face to face interviews and questionnaires. A YouTube video was created from some video sessions with some younger service users.

Work on the strategy was temporarily suspended with the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 in April 2018. This Act represents the biggest change in homelessness legislation for over 40 years. The Act enables local authorities to work with households earlier and focuses on preventing their homelessness, and if this is not possible then further work to relieve homelessness. Only if this has not been possible is a homelessness application taken to determine eligibility and priority need.

The strategic priorities have been identified following engagement and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, council officers, registered housing providers and third sector organisations that support people in a housing crisis. Most importantly we have listened to people who have experienced or have been affected by homelessness. The priorities set out how we will, in partnership, aim to prevent people becoming homeless by working together to address the causes of homelessness. The strategic priorities are to:

- Successful implementation and delivery of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Meeting local housing need
- Supporting households to secure and sustain an affordable home
- Effective communication and robust partnership working

The strategy is supported by a delivery plan. This sets out the actions that need to be taken to achieve key objectives.

#### **4. Background Information**

The following documents have been used in the compilation of this report and may be inspected at the offices of the author.

The Housing Act 1996

The Homelessness Act 2002 (as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017)

North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2013 - 2018

North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018 – 2021 and delivery plan

North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018 - 2021 review and engagement