



Report to Cabinet

Subject Draft Homelessness Strategy 2008-13

Date 5th June 2008

Author Strategy and Enabling Officer on behalf of Head of Strategy and Performance

1. Purpose of the Report

- To inform Cabinet of the Draft Homelessness Strategy 2008-13 and Action Plan and of consultation arrangements for it.
- To seek Cabinet approval for delegation arrangements for agreement of the final version of the Strategy.

2. Background

The development and publishing of a Homelessness Strategy is key to the Council delivering its strategic housing role and supports and enhances the delivery of other Council strategies, for example the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Housing Strategy.

It is also a requirement of the Homelessness Act 2002 that all local authorities adopt a revised Homelessness Strategy by July 2008.

At the time of writing, the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health is expected to approve the draft Strategy and Action Plan for consultation by the end of May. A copy of that draft is attached for members' information at **Appendix A**.

3. Issues

This will be the Council's second homelessness strategy and it provides a clear statement about how the Council plans to address and prevent homelessness. It also provides a clear direction for the Council's homelessness team to follow, providing links to national, regional and local strategies and priorities and providing clear, smart action plans to enhance the service further.

The draft Strategy has been based on an assessment of the current picture of homelessness in the Borough that involved all key stakeholders, and followed good practice guidance including the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities, the Audit Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry and the CLG publication "Preventing Homelessness: A Strategy Health Check".

The Strategy also takes account of recent Scrutiny Committee recommendations and of issues emerging from a review of the service completed recently by Tribal Consulting.

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) of the Strategy is underway and will be informed by both the consultation on the Strategy itself and a separate user survey already being carried out. Key actions to address any issues raised as a result of the EIA will be fed into the monitoring arrangements, as well as actions relating to equalities in the Strategy itself.

The Draft Strategy will be subject to a 6-week consultation period with statutory and non-statutory consultees including Government Office for the East Midlands, Shelter, Housing Associations, members of the Local Strategic Partnership and residents of the Borough.

4. Resource Implications

Resources for the development of the strategy are available from existing budgets.

Many of the proposed actions set out in the draft Action Plan can be delivered from within existing agreed resources. However, proposals involving capital expenditure are likely to require significant external funding, which officers will seek out should the Strategy be approved.

5. Recommendation

Cabinet is **recommended** to: -

- Note the draft Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan attached at **Appendix A**.
- Delegate to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health the authority to approve the final version of the Strategy, after any amendments, as appropriate derived from the consultation exercise.