

CABINET DECISIONS ON REPORTS PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED BY THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OSC

The following report was presented to the OSC on 27 March 2019 for comment prior to determination by the Cabinet on 9 April 2019.

The following is an extract from those Cabinet minutes:

Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy for Northumberland 2019-21

The report presented members with the refreshed Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy for Northumberland 2019 - 2021, updated following changes to legislation and requirements by Government to recognise and support the needs of Rough Sleepers. The strategy provided updated details of the strategic objectives for the Council's Homelessness & Housing Options Service for the following three years (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix D, along with the report of the Communities and Place OSC).

Councillor Riddle advised that this was a refresh of the Strategy following changes in legislation and Government requirements to encompass those at risk.

Phil Soderquest confirmed that this had come about because of changes to legislation, and that a new strategy would still be delivered in 2021. Engagement had taken place with partners to establish the priorities, all of which had equal weight. The Homelessness Reduction Act placed a duty on Authorities to prevent homelessness and to work with people to maintain their tenancies, and was linked to getting people back into work. He was pleased to report that grant funding had been received for additional resources to identify those most at risk and to provide greater capacity on the ground to work with the homeless and signpost them to services.

The Leader advised that the level of work undertaken demonstrated how seriously this issue was being taken. The points raised by Communities and Place OSC, which had supported the recommendations, would be taken into account.

Councillor Daley commented that though the numbers in Northumberland were low, they were still too high. He highlighted priority 5 to prevent youth homelessness and the important work to identify this at an early stage. Mediation training to prevent family breakdown was vital.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the refreshed Homelessness Strategy, which supports the delivery of the Council's statutory obligations for residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, be approved; and
- (b) the report of the Communities and Place OSC, and the points raised, be noted.