



NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL SOCIAL SERVICES HEALTH & WELLBEING CABINET BOARD

3 MARCH 2022

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF ADULT SERVICES – A. THOMAS

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected All wards

NEATH PORT TALBOT HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAMME STRATEGY

Purpose of the Report

To inform members of the draft Neath Port Talbot Housing Support Programme Strategy and seek approval to undertake a 90 days public consultation.

Executive Summary

Homelessness is a highly complex issue that requires a multi-agency approach. This draft strategy sets out how Neath Port Talbot Council ('the Council') and its partners can work together towards the aim of ending homelessness.

Background

The Housing Support Grant (HSG) was established in 2019 and brought together three previous grants; Supporting People Programme Grant, Homelessness Prevention Funding and Rent Smart Wales Enforcement Grant. The funding is a non-statutory early intervention grant programme, focussing on preventing homelessness and avoiding the escalation of other housing related support needs in order to avoid institutionalisation.

Local authorities are required to develop a Housing Support Programme Strategy (“the Strategy”) every four years, with a mid-point review every two years. The purpose of this strategy is to outline the strategic direction of the local authority for housing support services and provide a single strategic view of the local authority's approach to homelessness prevention and housing support services, including both statutory homelessness functions funded through the revenue settlement and non-statutory preventative services funded through the HGS. In addition to this, the strategy takes into account what we as a local authority will do to support the delivery of Welsh Government's (WG) vision and aims to the overall prevention of homelessness and further the transformational shift that is required in order to move to the new rapid re-housing approach.

Alongside the Housing Support Programme Strategy, the Council is also required to develop a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan by September 2022. The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan will outline how the Council will move to a Rapid Rehousing approach to homelessness over a 5 year transition period. Development of this Plan will include engagement with all relevant stakeholders.

The draft Neath Port Talbot Strategy was developed following a comprehensive needs assessment, a review of the existing Neath Port Talbot Homeless Strategy (Background Paper 1) and feedback from stakeholders and clients. The draft strategy was submitted to Welsh Government for feedback.

A copy of the Draft Strategy is attached at Appendix 1.

Financial Impacts

At the time of writing this report, WG have confirmed the Council's indicative HSG settlement for 2022/23 as being £6,496,185.63, with no change against the 2021/22 allocation.

Integrated Impact Assessment

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The first stage assessment, attached at Appendix 2, has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below.

- The consultation will help the Council to better understand the impact of the draft Strategy on people with protected characteristics and will enable people with protected characteristics to shape the final Strategy.
- The consultation documents will be available in Welsh
- The consultation will help the Council to better understand the impact of the draft Strategy on peoples opportunities to use the Welsh language
- The consultation will help the Council to better understand if the draft Strategy could result in treating the Welsh language less favourably than English
- Biodiversity impact is not applicable to the consultation or the draft Strategy.
- The consultation will help the Council to better understand how the draft strategy impacts on the ‘5 ways of working’, including opportunities to further enhance this.
- A full impact assessment will be undertaken following the consultation and this will incorporate learning and information gathered from the consultation process.

Valleys Communities Impacts

The recommendation has no spatial impact on our valleys communities and does not link to the impacts identified in the Cabinet’s response to the Council’s Task and Finish Group’s recommendations on the Valleys.

Although this proposal does not relate the above policy, it should be noted that public consultation will help to identify any unintended negative impacts on Valley Communities or if there is a need to adapt the Strategy to better support these communities.

Workforce Impacts

The contents of this report do not have any impact on the Council's workforce.

Legal Impacts

The publication of this strategy is a requirement of Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

Risk Management Impacts

There are no known risks associated with this item.

Crime and Disorder Impacts

Activity outlined in the Strategy should have a positive effect on the below Crime and Disorder Impacts:

- a) Crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); and
- b) The misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area; and
- c) Re-offending the area

This is due to the Strategy supporting achievement of the WG outcome measure of 'promoting personal and community safety'.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts

Activity outlined in the Strategy should have a positive effect on the below Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts:

Section 2(1) of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 introduced a general duty where a

person exercising relevant functions must have regard (along with all other relevant matters) to the need to remove or minimise any factors which —

- (a) Increase the risk of violence against women and girls, or
- (b) Exacerbate the impact of such violence on victims.

This is because a number of services covered by this Strategy relate to the provision of domestic abuse support, such as refuge.

Consultation

It is proposed that, with Members' permission, a 90-day public consultation exercise is undertaken following the conclusion of the purdah period. This will consist of paper and on-line surveys. In addition, officers will attend various groups and forums around the county borough to reach as many stakeholders as possible, including citizens, service providers and other partner organisations.

A consultation document, an easy read version of the plan, and a 'Plan on a Page' will be developed to support the consultation. In addition, all materials will be available in Welsh.

Recommendations

That Members approve a 90-day public consultation period for the Neath Port Talbot draft Housing Support Programme Strategy, as detailed in Appendix 1, on conclusion of the pre-election period.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

To provide Neath Port Talbot residents with the opportunity to inform the development of the Strategy.

To ensure a range of good quality and strategically relevant housing related support is available to meet the needs of residents of Neath Port Talbot.

Implementation of Decision

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period, with the consultation commencing after the relevant period.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Housing Support programme Strategy

Appendix 2: First Stage Integrated Impact Assessment

List of Background Papers

Background Paper 1: Annual Update on the Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan (item 3) -

<http://modgov.npt.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=322&MId=9733>

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