

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning**
held on Thursday, 5th October, 2017 at The Capesthorne Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor A Arnold, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning

Officers

Karen Carsberg, Strategic Housing Manager
Julie North, Senior Democratic Services Officer

19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

21 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present wishing to use the public speaking facility, however, Cllr Jill Rhodes had submitted some comments in respect of the Homelessness Strategy in advance of the meeting, which the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning, Cllr Ainsley Arnold, summarised as follows:-

Cllr Rhodes welcomed the strategy, which she felt was comprehensive and well researched. She felt that it was good to see the emphasis on the prevention of homelessness.

She did, however, point out a number of areas which she felt needed to be considered further, or brought to the further attention of Members including:

- Child poverty, which the strategy indicated was a strong indicator of young adult homelessness. Whilst recognised that Child Poverty was not within the scope of the strategy it was an issue which Members needed to be aware of.
- Concerns in relation to the increase of rough sleepers, especially in Crewe and the lack of provision during the summer months. There was the suggestion that the Local Authority should take responsibility for coordinating voluntary activities that supported rough sleepers.

Cllr Arnold, thanked Cllr Rhodes for her comments and stated that they would be submitted as part of the consultation process and reviewed by officers. In the interim he responded to the comments on rough sleepers and stated that the Housing Team offered a number of services to rough sleepers, including “No Second Night Out” and also the new Upstreaming Project, which had been awarded a grant of £100k, which were available during the whole year and not just in Winter months. The Council recognised that this was a growing issue and this was why it was a key area of focus within the strategy.

22 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning considered a report on the Homelessness Strategy.

It was reported that Cheshire East’s Housing Options service had an overarching aim of providing an exemplary service to provide housing advice and assistance to help residents find suitable accommodation. The service was facing a number of challenges which had been brought about by emerging national policies and local pressures.

The Homelessness Act 2002 placed a duty upon local authorities to carry out a review of homelessness in their area and formulate and publish a strategy for the future, based on the results of that review. The Homelessness Strategy provided direction, a framework and an action plan so that any agency or individual could clearly understand what the Council and its partners were doing to support people in housing need.

It was noted that the Homelessness Strategy for 2017-21 had been developed putting residents at the heart of the service. Working groups had carried out discussions with residents to ensure that their experiences and views had been fed into the review and the strategy to support their needs. Partnership working was a key focus of the strategy and several of the actions promoted the need for a unified response, especially as the new Homeless Reduction Act imposed more duties upon the Council. This was aimed at embedding the joint approach as a driving force for the success of the strategy.

The Portfolio Holder was requested to note the draft Homelessness Strategy and its preliminary findings and to authorise officers to publically consult on the draft strategy for a period of 9 weeks, before incorporating the responses into the finalised strategy, noting that following the consultation period the revised strategy would be presented to Cabinet for formal adoption.

RESOLVED

That the Portfolio Holder:-

1. Notes the draft Homelessness Strategy and its preliminary findings;
2. Authorises officers to publically consult on the draft strategy for a period of 9 weeks, before incorporating the responses into the finalised strategy; and
3. Notes that following the consultation period the revised strategy will be presented to Cabinet for formal adoption.

The meeting commenced at 3.15 pm and concluded at 3.25 pm

Councillor Ainsley Arnold (presiding)