



## Report of the Chair

Special Scrutiny Programme Committee – 1 October 2018

### Consultation on Draft Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2022

<b>Purpose:</b>	The Scrutiny Programme Committee is meeting to discuss the recently published consultation draft of the Council's Homelessness Strategy.
<b>Content:</b>	This draft Homeless Strategy and accompanying Action Plan, as published by the Council, are appended. The findings from the Homelessness Scrutiny Working Group (June 2018) and Cabinet Member response are also provided for information.
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss and give views on the draft Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan to feed into the consultation process</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Mary Jones, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee
<b>Lead Officer &amp; Report Author:</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Team Leader Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk">brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Paul Cridland

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee has already agreed that the scrutiny work programme should include a focus on homelessness. Having already set up a Working Group, which met in May / June 2018, to look at activities to manage homelessness, the current position, performance of relevant services, and challenges, the Committee intends to scrutinize the Homelessness Strategy which is being developed by the Council.

- 1.2 Although the Committee intends to carry out pre-decision scrutiny of the final Strategy ahead of decision by Cabinet (expected on 15 November), the Committee agreed that it should meet to discuss the draft Strategy which has been recently published for the purposes of public consultation. This meeting will enable any views and response from the Committee to inform the cabinet report, as part of the overall consultation process.
- <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/HomelessnessStrategy>

## 2. Draft Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan

- 2.1 The Homelessness Strategy 2018-2022 (final draft for consultation) and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2018-2022 (final draft for consultation) are **appended**.

- 2.2 Information taken from the consultation:

- The draft strategy sets out the guiding principles for the development and delivery of homelessness services in Swansea over the next four years.
- It will ensure that the services and support in place for those at risk of, or experiencing homelessness are as effective and accessible as possible. It also aims to inform stakeholders of the levels of homelessness in Swansea and provide a baseline to measure future progress and performance.
- The strategy and accompanying action plan have been developed in response to the findings of the Homelessness Review 2017, which provided a comprehensive understanding of homelessness across Swansea.
- The review identified issues and gaps in service provision, which the strategy will seek to address. This strategy has also been developed as a result of extensive consultation with service users and stakeholders to ensure that it accurately captures the needs and aspirations of all those involved with and experiencing homelessness in Swansea.

- 2.3 The Committee is invited to discuss and comment on the draft Strategy and Action Plan. Any views will be passed on to the Cabinet Member for Homes & Energy and relevant officers so that they can be considered, along with other consultation responses, and inform the preparation of the cabinet report and final Strategy.

- 2.4 The final Strategy and Action Plan is currently scheduled for decision by Cabinet on 15 November. It is also scheduled to then be reported to Council, for information, on 20 December.

### **3. Homelessness Scrutiny Working Group**

- 3.1 In order to contribute to improvement a Homelessness Working Group was set up by the Committee during 2017/18. The Working Group, convened by Councillor Peter Black, met in May and June 2018.
- 3.2 The first meeting involved discussion with external organisations on what they thought was working well in Swansea; where the gaps in provision were; and, what was not working so well. The second meeting involved discussion with the Cabinet Member for Homes & Energy and relevant officers of the Council, and representatives of ABMU Health Board.
- 3.3 In conclusion, the Working Group sent a letter to the Cabinet Member for Homes & Energy, Cllr Andrea Lewis, in July and a response received. In her response the Cabinet Member stated that she will ensure that the issues raised by the Working Group are taken into account when finalising the Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan for 2018-2022. This correspondence is also **appended** for the Committee's information.

### **4. Legal Implications**

- 4.1 There are no specific legal implications raised by this report.

### **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report.

### **Background Papers: None**

#### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – Homelessness Strategy 2018-2022 (final draft for consultation)

Appendix B – Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2018-2022 (final draft for consultation)

Appendix C – Letter from Homelessness Scrutiny Working Group to Cabinet Member for Homes & Energy (dated 5 July 2018)

Appendix D – Letter from Cabinet Member for Homes & Energy to Homelessness Working Group (dated 26 July 2018)