

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE

Report No.11

Date of Meeting	5 th October 2006
Title of Report	Homelessness Strategy 2006/2011
Portfolio	Housing
Link to Corporate Priorities	Housing
Key Decision	No
Executive Workplan Ref	B286
Public Report	YES

Summary of Report

This report seeks Members' approval for the Homelessness Strategy 2006/2011

Officer Recommendations

Members approve the Homelessness Strategy 2006/2011

Other than those implications agreed with the relevant Officers and referred to below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Community & Environmental Implications	Human Resources Implications	Equality & Diversity Implications
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Contact Officer

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The report seeks Member's approval for the Homelessness Strategy 2006/2011

2. Options and Options Appraisal

- 2.1 The Homelessness Strategy will enable the Homelessness team to prevent homelessness, reduce the use of temporary accommodation and improve services for homeless households in the District
- 2.2 It is mandatory for all Local Housing Authorities to have an approved Homelessness Strategy

3. Background Information

- 3.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 set out the legislative framework for assisting homeless households and the allocation of social housing. One of the main requirements of the Act was that all Local Authorities should produce a Homelessness Strategy.
- 3.2 North Wiltshire District Council produced its first Homelessness Strategy in 2003.
- 3.3 Over the course of the three year Strategy, the Homelessness Team have reduced the number of people presenting as homeless by 52% and have reduced the average length of stay in Bed & Breakfast from 9 weeks to 2.3.
- 3.4 The new five year Strategy sets out the plan to further reduce instances of homelessness in the district through proactive intervention and to keep the use of all types of temporary accommodation to a minimum.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Housing Services Team Leader will be putting in a budget growth bid for £10,000 for a fund to defend Review Decisions in County Court and a further £10,000 for extending the Mental Health & Housing Co-ordinator. This will be considered with all other growth bids and be subject to approval by Executive.
- 4.2 The remaining initiatives outlined in the Action Plan will be funded by the existing £40,000 Homelessness Strategy grant from the Department of Communities and Local Government, and from savings made from the Housing Advice Contract coming back in-house on 1st October 2006.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory duty to produce a Homelessness Strategy under Section 1 of the Homelessness Act.

6. Community and Environmental Implications

- 6.1 The Strategy's focus on the prevention of homelessness will have a beneficial effect on the whole community.

7. Human Resource Implications

7.1 The Housing Team will be recruiting a further 1.5 FTE Housing Advisors in September/October this year (this will be funded from savings made in the Housing Advice contract).

8. Equality and Diversity Implications

8.1 The new Housing Options and Advice service will help all residents in the district to explore their housing options and will provide the necessary assistance in securing appropriate accommodation. An Equality & Diversity Impact Assessment has been completed on the draft strategy and no resulting actions were identified. The assessment can be located on the Council website.

9. Risk Analysis

9.1 There are no risks associated with following the recommendation.

Appendices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix 1: Homelessness Strategy 2006/2011
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homelessness Strategy 2003/2006 Homelessness Advice & Prevention Service Review 2005 Housing Strategy 2005/2008

Previous Decisions Connected with this Report

Report	Committee & Date	Minute Reference
None		