

Title of report: Review of the strategic approach to Homelessness

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 23 February 2023

Report by: Cabinet Member for Housing, regulatory services and community

Classification

Open

Decision type

Key

This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.

Notice has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in Connection with Key Decisions) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To approve progress in implementing the Homelessness prevention and rough sleeping strategy and approve the strategic approach for Project Brave.

The strategy is a statutory requirement and the review of progress is being undertaken in the third of the five years of its duration. A summary of the progress review is set out at Appendix B. Project Brave is a strategic partnership initiative tackling high risk homelessness and multiple complex vulnerability, which emerged rapidly during the Covid19 pandemic. A strategic approach to the further development of Project Brave is now proposed, as set out in Appendix A.

Recommend that:

- a) Cabinet note and approve the mid-point review and progress of the Homeless Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 – 2025;**
- b) Consider and approve the strategic approach to Project Brave; and**
- c) Authority is delegated to the Corporate Director, Community Wellbeing to take all operational decisions required to implement the Project Brave Strategic approach (as set out in Appendix A), including securing and utilising any relevant external grant funding.**

Alternative options

1. Do nothing, this is not recommended as it is a legal requirement for every Local Authority in England to have a Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy and linked action plan – the strategy has already been approved and adopted by Cabinet.
2. Not to proceed with the above outlined strategic approach and recommendations. This option is not recommended, as the council has expressed an ambition to protect and improve the lives of vulnerable people and to reduce the number of people in Herefordshire identified as homeless. Project Brave has been proven to be a success not only in accommodating individuals but with the level of support provided, through this work the more multiple complex vulnerabilities have been highlighted. There are at least 150 individuals that have been identified to have multiple complex vulnerabilities, therefore not to continue would negate the work already underway.
3. Continue with the approach to Project Brave in its current format delivering a service for homelessness, this is not recommended as there is a significant cohort of very vulnerable people and there is no other strategically driven solution for them. There is also an ongoing and inevitable co-dependency between homelessness and those other vulnerabilities and so managing both branches of the initiative together makes sense.

Key considerations

4. The council has a Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy as it is a statutory requirement for each local authority to have one. The strategy has an associated action plan and is reflective of the multi-agency approach necessary to ensure that homelessness prevention, intervention and recovery is at the very the centre of all work practice. This strategy sets out Herefordshire Council's priorities for preventing homelessness and rough sleeping across the county. The strategy recognises that homelessness, in its causes and consequences, is a cross-cutting issue, which cannot be tackled by one agency or organisation alone. In order to achieve positive outcomes it is essential that all partner agencies work together in a coherent and integrated way. It makes a direct link to the national Homeless Reduction Strategy 2022-25 and the 4 priority outcomes.

5. Overall there has been positive progress against the strategy. In some respects the response to Covid has enabled more rapid progress in areas such as the development of a housing first model (notably at Whitecross Road), the development of a cross sector systemic approach; delivered under the Breaking the Cycle banner as a multi-agency 'Team Around The Individual' and link-worker approach; and the acquisition of both capital and revenue funding amounting to over £5.5 million. There has however been slower progress in undertaking the review of the operational structure; which is now underway; and in the reduction of our reliance on meeting demand through the provision of temporary accommodation and bed and breakfast accommodation - although this is not an isolated issue for Herefordshire as it reflects a national trend. Developments are now in hand to deliver those areas of the strategy that remain to be fully developed.
 1. Homeless prevention activity for all households at risk is maximised.
 2. Rough Sleeping is minimised and tenancy sustainment opportunities for rough sleepers and those with complex needs are increased.
 3. Homeless people and those at risk are able to access appropriate housing and support services are targeted effectively.
 4. The health and wellbeing of homeless people and those at risk is improved.
6. The Homelessness Reduction Act places a legal duty on all English councils to help all eligible applicants and not just those who are in most need. The Council must help if an individual is legally homeless or threatened with homelessness. The type of assistance depends on the individuals circumstances. If they are already homeless or threatened with homelessness, help under the personalised housing plan is usually limited to 56 days. This will be provided under the Council's duty to **relieve** and **prevent** homelessness. In March 2020 the UK Government introduced a number of restrictions upon society in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. One of these restrictions was the introduction of the 'Everyone In' initiative by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). It became mandatory for all local authorities to provide emergency accommodation for everyone who was rough sleeping. This initiative was to ensure that the COVID pandemic's impact amongst homeless and rough sleeping individuals was mitigated and did not add additional pressure to the National Health Service.
7. Vennture, a local Voluntary Faith Organisation, were commissioned to work closely with the council's Housing Solutions Team. Together they identified individuals who were street homeless, rough sleeping or sofa surfing. Support, accommodation and sustenance was provided to all. Over 280 individuals in Herefordshire were accommodated during the first period of 'lock down'. The individuals had a wide range of backgrounds and differing support needs and were accommodated in a variety of settings across the whole county. Herefordshire called this approach Project Brave (Building Resilience Against Enduring Vulnerabilities).
8. Project Brave became very successful and evolved to embrace the ambition to make homelessness rare, brief and non-reoccurring by tackling and addressing gaps in provision. A partnership approach was taken across all council services, community voluntary and faith sectors, NHS agencies and the police with a wider focus on substance misuse, mental health, anti-social behaviour and exploitation. The proposed long term

strategic approach to Project Brave has evolved from this initial work and is attached at appendix A. The overall aims of Project Brave are:

- a) Greatly improving outcomes for vulnerable individuals
- b) New homes and sustainable support models for homeless people
- c) Empowering people with multiple complex vulnerability to direct their own lives
- d) Reducing avoidable demands on health, housing, social care and police systems
- e) Making high risk homelessness largely a thing of the past
- f) Promoting safe, healthy, independent living and community participation and preventing the next generation of people with multiple complex disadvantages
- g) Developing and galvanising accommodation assets

9. It is evident that Project Brave has had significant impact on the lives of vulnerable homeless people in particular, both in positive outcomes for individuals and in the overall numbers of those assisted. Since March 2020,

- 252 households have been accommodated altogether, in some form
- 157 households have moved into transitional or long term housing, including some progressing from one to the other.
- 62 units of new accommodation have been created or brought into use to house homeless people, in a combination of transitional housing and long term homes. Some of these schemes are coming into use in the new year 2023.
- People have also been supported into long term homes through tenancies with registered housing providers in existing social housing stock.
- In early 2023, the Rough Sleeper Outreach Team is continuing to support 82 people at risk of rough sleeping and around 16 actual rough sleepers.

The journeys of individual homeless people are varied and complex and don't always proceed in a linear, incremental fashion. Amongst the many examples of real success stories for people through Project Brave are;

- People with histories of multiple evictions and debt and financial concerns sustaining long term tenancies.
- People with long term mental health or substance use needs enabled to self care, manage risks for themselves and live more independently with support.
- People with complex needs being supported through temporary and transitional housing eventually into long term tenancies, with continuing support.
- People enabled to take up training and employment
- Many of those supported are single adult men, but couples and women have also participated and been supported through Brave.

Project Brave has adopted a team around the person approach, incorporating a link worker model. Individuals are provided with a wrap-around support service with the

objective to enable them to progress from transitional accommodation to more settled accommodation with a personalised support plan. Some of that settled housing has been acquired or developed by the council and some people become tenants of registered housing providers.

10. Central to Project Brave is finding long term homes for homeless people and providing the support they need. This requires a pipeline of self-contained homes to be developed, along with additional transitional accommodation. Accommodation has been acquired using council capital and grants, existing council properties have been converted and housing has been secured from local Registered Providers, Private Landlords and voluntary organisations.
11. To date 45 units have been secured for transitional accommodation with the creation of a homeless hub, 29 units as long term accommodation and a further 28 units of accommodation are in the pipeline to supplement the existing transitional accommodation. In addition a number of individuals have been accommodated in to permanent tenancies. Having an address has also enabled a growing number of people to find employment.
12. The operational management arrangement for Project Brave evolved during and beyond the period of Covid emergency with both strategic and operational groups involving multi agency partner organisations.
13. In 2022, officers have worked with partner organisations to consider the scope and best way forward for Project Brave. This concluded with a series of workshops in November and December including:
 - a) Health and Social Care Partners
 - b) Housing Partners;
 - c) Community, voluntary and faith organisations, police and others; and
 - d) Users of Project Brave – Experts by Experience.
14. Reflection on the Brave engagement and review of implementation of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy highlighted opportunities to refine the approaches to intervention and support.
 - a. Prevention – through Herefordshire Council Talk Community network work with communities to minimise the risk factors that lead to complex vulnerability and occurring and homelessness reduction
 - b. Personalised and joined up support through named link workers – through the existing Project Brave model, work with individuals who are rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping to help them secure accommodation and meet any support needs they may have – primarily through a single agency lead worker model.
 - c. Team Around the Individual / Breaking the Cycle – utilising a MEAM informed approach to multi-agency working, work collaboratively across the whole public sector and CVFS sector landscape to develop bespoke support and accommodation plans for individuals with the highest levels of multiple disadvantage.
15. Services should also be co-designed and co-produced utilising the knowledge and experience of individuals with lived experience. ‘Experts by Experience’ is considered both

nationally and internationally to be best practice. It leads to services being more effective and more responsive to the needs of users of the services.

16. It is proposed to establish a standing/continuing expert experience forum comprising experts by experience to support and advise the onward development of Brave. This will follow good practice identified elsewhere or through research. The group will be developed through the cohorts of people identified and support through Brave. Once this is established, the most effective means by which it and its membership can be heard within the wider management and development of Brave.
17. The partnership approach to Project Brave has emerged naturally and rapidly during Covid19 and has persisted to the present day. Internal governance is proposed for the initiative going forward, as follows.
 - a) A strategic project board, chaired by the council and with senior manager representation from Police, NHS agencies and representatives from housing and voluntary and community sectors, complemented by experts by experience, where available. It will oversee the development and delivery for the project overall, its performance and delivery of the action plan.
 - b) An operational Board focused on homelessness, featuring operational managers and other key professionals and experts by experience. To include the council, police, major stockholding housing providers, Herefordshire Homelessness Forum, commissioned accommodation providers and other voluntary organisations.
 - c) An operational Board focusing on multiple complex vulnerability and prevention, featuring operational managers and key professionals, along with experts by experience. Organisations involved will include the council, health agencies, specialist voluntary organisations, adult social care and others.
 - d) Attendance at these boards by experts by experience is expected to be achieved over time and supported through the development of the proposed experts focus group.
18. In order to implement this strategic approach to Project Brave, an action plan will be prepared with clear achievable actions and accountability, based upon the building block areas, objectives and outcomes set out in the document. The action plan will be in place from April 2023, will be monitored by the Strategic Project Board and progress will be reported using Verto and to Health and Wellbeing Board and Cabinet Members. Clear timelines will be set out for each action in the plan and monitored through the project governance.
19. In August, Herefordshire secured entry to the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) network as one of ten new local authority areas to do so. MEAM is a National programme led by Homeless Link, sponsored by DLUHC. The MEAM network provides a framework, advice database and national local authority support network for Local Authorities to develop and implement services that address multiple disadvantage – Homelessness, addiction, offending and mental ill-health. It does not provide funding.

20. MEAM defines multiple disadvantage as including, homelessness, substance misuse, mental ill health and contact with the criminal justice system. Where services in a local area do not work in partnership with each other, the combination of these multiple disadvantages can lead to people not being able to engage with local services. This in turn can lead to additional disadvantages such as poverty, ill-health, homelessness, relationship breakdown, loss of employment, amongst others.
21. Herefordshire is now working with a dedicated MEAM project delivery officer, in order to focus local work to ensure that our collective efforts reduce the opportunities for multiple disadvantages to occur in Herefordshire and when they do people and communities are supported to overcome them.
22. There are 7 Core Objectives to MEAM, these align with the core principles of Project Brave and will be referred to as we move forward.

Objectives	Principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership & Co-production • Consistent Cohort • Co-ordination for people/services • Flexible responses from services • Sustainability & System change • Service Improvement & staffing • Measurement of success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A whole system collaboration Knowing who everyone is A Team around the Person Strengths based, Promoting Independence Whole system collaboration & solutions Training and data sharing Project & performance management

23. A key cohort of vulnerable people of project Brave is ex-offenders being released from prison. A number of individuals have been supported as part of project Brave, including moving into settled accommodation. However, targeted or dedicated support and accommodation is generally not in place for ex-offenders and this is a significant gap in provision. Attempts to secure external grant funding to support ex-offender provisions have so far not been successful. Beyond the scope of project Brave there is the need for the council to consider the wider, corporate approach to ex-offenders across a range of needs and risks.

Community impact

24. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Understanding Herefordshire (JSNA) identifies the scale and breadth of homelessness need locally, along with the numbers of care leavers and a broad analysis of their needs. The needs of the small cohorts of very vulnerable people who are the focus of this report represent a level of specific detail within the broader data in the JSNA.
 - Homelessness can be associated with severe poverty and is a social determinant of mental health, it can also have an impact on physical health
 - Homeless people are more likely to become victims of crime
 - On average homeless men die 30 years earlier and women 37 years earlier than the general population in England

- The causes of homelessness are often complex so that preventing homelessness is a difficult issue to address. However, it is known that some factors and experience can make people more vulnerable to homelessness, including poor physical health, mental health problems, alcohol and drug issues, bereavement, experience of care, and experience of the criminal justice system.
25. The procurement of temporary accommodation will significantly contribute to the priorities in the council's County Plan through; enabling vulnerable adults to live in good quality housing, helping to ensure they are safe and live independent lives and allowing them to enjoy their home and neighbourhoods.
 26. Housing has been identified amongst the priorities in Herefordshire's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, including housing those with hidden issues and reducing health inequalities. Enabling people to live independent lives through provision of good quality affordable housing, and developing homes for life is also reflected in the strategy. The health and Wellbeing Strategy is currently in the process of being revised.
 27. The council is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for all individuals affected by the council's activities. Therefore the council seeks to ensure that the work it and its partners undertake, does not adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of any homeless individuals. In acquiring or leasing property, the council operates to high standards of health and safety in all aspects of maintenance and management of premises. These standards will be applied to any properties acquired under this proposal and any associated arrangements for housing management.
 28. The County Plan 2020 - 2024 aims to shape the future of Herefordshire and encourage and strengthen communities whilst creating a thriving local economy and protecting and enhancing the environment to ensure Herefordshire remains a great place to live, visit, work, learn and do business.
 29. Delivering housing to help address the shortage of affordable housing in the County is intrinsically linked to the ambitions of the new County Plan 2020 – 2024.
 30. A key focus of the proposed strategic approach to Project Brave involves long term preventative work in the community, reducing the risk of multiple complex vulnerability, including homelessness. It will therefore be essential to work through and with Talk Community, the council's main communities initiative. It is envisaged that work through Talk Community Hubs and other community initiatives will take potentially take the following approach, subject to Hub development and resources required.
 - Focus on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and long term prevention of complex vulnerability
 - Trauma informed approaches
 - Opportunities for vulnerable people to participate in activities and benefit from signposting through Talk Community Hubs
 - Mental Health First Aid and wider training for volunteers
 - Identify individuals journeys and links to communities of interest/identity
 - Promote active participation in Communities more widely for vulnerable people
 - Encourage improved digital access and participation through any relevant schemes or projects
 - Help promote better take-up of primary care and encouraging self care

Environmental Impact

31. Overall this strategy has minimal impact upon Herefordshire Council's Environmental Strategy. It impacts in the area of Improving Access to Green Spaces as it is intended to reduce the number of people rough sleeping and therefore leaving rubbish in the natural environment.
32. The development of this Strategy has sought to minimise any adverse environmental impact and will actively seek opportunities to improve and enhance environmental performance.
33. Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.

Equality duty

34. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
35. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. Our providers will be made aware of their contractual requirements in regards to equality legislation.
 36. The recommendations in this report will assist in adding to the County's affordable housing stock and allowing future households who share protected characteristics to have access to appropriate accommodation. The decision will support the council in discharging its equality duty.

Resource implications

37. It is envisaged that all the staffing and activity required to implement the proposed Strategic Approach to Project Brave will be continue to be delivered through existing resources within Community Wellbeing directorate and external grants.
38. A notable feature of Project Brave is the great success Herefordshire Council has achieved in securing grants from DLUHC to support the initiative. The new services and activity involved has been largely funded by significant revenue grant aid, attracted from DLUHC. This have been under a number of grant schemes, including RSI programmes 2 to 5 and Rough Sleeper Accommodation Progamme (RSAP). The total grant awarded to the council so far for Project Brave for the period 2020 to 2025 is approximately £5m.

£4,183,912 in revenue funding
£ 824,000 in capital funding

39. This level of grant aid reflects both the scale of the work within Brave and DLUHC's recognition of, and confidence in, what Herefordshire is delivering and achieving. There is close working relationship between the council and DLUHC's homelessness and regional teams, who have made a number of visits to the county to view Project Brave in practice. The capital grant funding is overseen and assured by Homes England, with whom Herefordshire Council is now an Investment Partner.
40. The capital grant has supported acquisitions and conversions or improvement of properties to bring them into use as transitional accommodation or long term homes. The council has also deployed capital spending of around £1.05m to Brave properties over the period.
41. In total, £1.824m in capital has been spent on delivering 51 units of housing under Project Brave.

FUNDING SUMMARY	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	TOTAL
Capital funding:						
Total capital funding	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Revenue funding:						
Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) 3 (2020)	329,946					329,946
West Mercia Integrated offender management fund	4,000					4,000
Cold Weather Fund	53,450					53,450
Winter Transformation Fund - funding for Vennture	96,500					96,500
2020-21 winter Provision Funding	102,743					102,743
Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP)		33,621	34,629	35,668		103,918
Cold Weather Fund		93,914				93,914
Protect Plus Fund to ensure safe accommodation-		20,000				20,000
Emergency Funding Grant		130,000				130,000
Protect and Vaccinate		150,437				150,437
RSI4		586,855	114,360			701,215
Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP)			33,533	31,661		65,194
Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership			20,000			20,000
Night Shelter Transformation Fund			54,000	89,923	89,060	232,983
Rough Sleeper Drugs and Alcohol Grant Funding			894,992			894,992
RSI 2022-25			676,222	708,244	687,863	2,072,329
Total revenue funding	586,639	1,014,827	1,827,736	865,496	776,923	5,071,621
TOTAL FUNDING	586,639	1,014,827	1,827,736	865,496	776,923	5,071,621
EXPENDITURE SUMMARY	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	TOTAL
Capital expenditure:						
						£0
Total capital expenditure	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Revenue expenditure:						
RSI3 staffing & training - outreach & support	353,440					353,440
West Mercia Integrated offender Management Fund - personalised budgets	4,000					4,000
2019/20 Cold Weather Fund - Deliver cold weather shelter & support	53,430					53,430
2020-21 Winter Transformation Funding - secured for Vennture as delivery partner	96,500					96,500
2020-21 - Winter Provision Funding - New Zara House winter provision	102,743					102,743
2021-22 - Protect Plus - additional B&B accommodation		20,000				20,000
2021-22 - Emergency Funding Grant- pay additional B&B costs		130,000				130,000
2021-22 - Protect and Vaccinate. Costs associated with accommodation/vaccinating		150,437				150,437
2021-24 Next Steps Accommodation Programme		33,621	34,629	35,668		103,918
2021-22 RSI4 - outreach staff, translation, surge provision, client debt & personal budgets		662,367				662,367
2022-23 RSAP - Tenancy Sustainment Officer HC07 FTE			33,533	31,661		65,194
2022-25 Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership - funding toward winter provision			20,000			20,000
2022-25 Night Shelter Transformation Fund - secured for Vennture			54,000	89,923	89,060	232,983

2022-25 Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Grant Funding - Turning Point			373,664	521,328		894,992
2022-25 RSI funding - Additional Protect and Vaccinate support			25,620	37,116	39,140	101,876
2022-25 RSI funding - Early intervention/outreach staffing support/training/translation			231,120	298,376	276,179	805,675
2022-25 RSI funding - Emotional Trauma Specialist			23,264	31,608	32,640	87,512
2022-25 RSI funding - Flexible Surge Provision to provide temporary accommodation			96,500	82,500	68,750	247,750
2022-25 RSI funding - Client Personal Budgets/Debt alleviation fund			45,000	45,000	45,000	135,000
2022-25 RSI funding - White Cross Road manager (HC08) and four staff HC07 FTE's			185,965	191,545	201,294	578,804
2022-25 RSI funding - Funding towards New Zara House Operation			70,000	75,000	80,000	225,000
Total revenue expenditure	610,113	996,425	1,193,295	1,439,725	832,063	5,071,621
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	610,113	996,425	1,193,295	1,439,725	832,063	5,071,621

42. The revenue funding costs to meet the needs of this process are currently met from existing Housing Solutions Temporary Accommodation budget and staffing budgets, which include the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG), Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP), accessing Local Housing Allowance / Housing Benefits and the use of Rough Sleeping Initiative Surge provision and Staff funding posts. This revenue funding is a combination of Herefordshire Council core base budget and the HPG provided by the DLUHC. The existing funding is due to finish in 2025, however the council have a working relationship with DLUHC and are confident that there will be further funding opportunities beyond 2025.

43. DLUHC have recently announced a new funding initiative, Supported Housing for Young People aged 16 – 25 who are homeless or deemed to be at risk of homelessness. DLUHC specified this cohort from data that the council report on.

44. Taking into account, all the above factors, there are no immediate financial implications for the council from this decision.

Legal implications

45. In line with relevant statutory duties, the Homelessness Reduction Act included duties for Councils to provide advisory services and introduced new duties to assess all applicants and take reasonable steps to prevent and relieve homelessness.

46. Under the Homelessness Act 2022, this requires all local housing authorities to publish a homelessness strategy every five years. The Rough Sleeping Strategy also introduced requirements for councils to have a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

47. The recommendations made in this report, will ensure that these duties and requirements are being met.

Risk management

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
<p>It is a legal requirement to have a Homelessness Reduction Strategy. Not having one will leave Herefordshire Council open to legal challenge</p>	<p>The council has a published strategy</p>
<p>Developing a service that does not take into account the experiences of those with lived experience and therefore does not meet the need of service users.</p>	<p>Work collaboratively with 'Experts by Experience' to co-design and co-produce the service</p>
<p>Current Government funding for Project Brave staffing within the council will cease on the 31/03/2025.</p>	<p>The council should access all additional funding stream and opportunities, ring fence Local Housing Allowance / housing benefit for use directly in the delivery of housing services for all households accommodated through the Housing Solutions Service. The likelihood is that further funding opportunities will be made available through DLUHC from 2025. The council have an excellent partnership relationship with DLUHC and meet regularly to discuss funding.</p>
<p>Lack of engagement or offers of accommodation from registered housing providers.</p>	<p>All major stockholding providers in the county have committed to working with project Brave to provide housing with tenancies for previously homeless people. This is based on the council's commitment to providing support for all Brave tenants for as long as needed</p>
<p>Rising prices in the local housing market restricting acquisition and wider options.</p>	<p>Whilst prices have risen significantly since 2020, there is evidence that they are now to be stabilising. Capital resources identified are likely to continue to be sufficient to secure or acquire the housing required, where such acquisitions are considered.</p>
<p>Risks from non engagement by vulnerable people with essential support services.</p>	<p>This is a common factor in multiple complex vulnerability and homelessness and can be associated with high risk of harm for individuals. The Brave model of named link workers and teams around the individual are design in part to address this. Existing training including around trauma can help tackle the issues</p>

<p>The lack of a corporate or multi agency approach for ex-offenders in Herefordshire presents some risks of harm and provides outcomes for people being released for prison.</p>	<p>and more focused training is being considered</p> <p>Project Brave will continue to provide some good outcomes for Individuals to manage the wider risk in relation to the ex-offenders community. A corporate council approach will be required to address a range of issues and needs.</p>
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48. These risks can be managed at a Service Delivery Level and a Directorate level

Consultees

49. Consultation with Service users and partners has taken place. This strategy incorporates their views.

- The consultation with Service Users saw seven people attend the feedback event. This is 25% of the current rough sleepers.
- This group were representative of the wider group of rough sleepers and previous rough sleepers.
- The consultation took place in a workshop facilitated by Herefordshire Health Watch on 20th November 2022

50. The council is committed to supporting and listening to the voices of 'Experts by Experience' in developing Project Brave and co-producing services wherever possible. An initial workshop with experts by experience in December has generated some themes from their input include;

- The need for help earlier in people's lives.
- Recognising and tackling the different causes of homelessness and the different routes people take.
- Recognising that some homeless people move between areas and in and out of Herefordshire.
- Need to accept that people may only be able to seek help and move towards improved outcomes when they are ready and services need to be agile enough to respond when that happens.
- Some frustration around council decisions relating to homelessness duty to individuals and how that is communicated

51. Consultation with partners to Project Brave took place on 4, 7 and 11 November 2022. Key themes emerging from the engagement are:

- More joined up working including multi disciplinary meetings/practice

- A greater focus on prevention of vulnerability and effective early intervention
- Recognising impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and work with children's services
- Need to tackle diverse causes of vulnerability/homelessness including employment, addiction
- Mental health needs are widespread and often go undiagnosed
- Need to understand an work with the mobility of some homeless/vulnerable people.

52. A political groups consultation meeting relating to this decision was held on 25 January 2023 and was attended by members from various parties. There was a wideranging discussion and members generally expressed considerable support for the work in Project Brave and in tackling homelessness. There was a clear expectation of regular reporting on future performance of Project Brave services and activities and this will be taken forward through the action plan to be developed. Particular emphasis was given to the importance of enabling community participation by vulnerable people in the context of Project Brave and this is highlighted in the strategic approach around community prevention, through and with Talk Community.

Appendices

Appendix A - Draft Strategic Approach to Project Brave

Appendix B - Mid point review of the action plan with the Homeless Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 – 2025.

Background papers

None

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Governance	John Coleman	Date 30/01/2023
Finance	Karen Morris	Date 27/01/2023
Legal	Sam Evans	Date 26/01/2023
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 24/01/2023
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 30/01/202
Procurement	Lee Robinson	Date 24/01/2023
Risk	Jo Needs	Date 26/01/2023
Approved by Hillary Hall		Date 15/02/2023