



# Health and Wellbeing Together Meeting

Wednesday, 23 January 2019

Dear All,

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING TOGETHER - WEDNESDAY, 23RD JANUARY, 2019

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at next Wednesday, 23rd January, 2019 meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Together, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

<b>Agenda No</b>	<b>Item</b>
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7	<b><u>Working Together to End Rough Sleeping (Pages 3 - 14)</u></b>
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[To endorse the proposals for the next steps to tackle rough sleeping.]

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the democratic support team:

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## Health and Wellbeing Together

23 January 2019

<b>Report title</b>	Working Together to End Rough Sleeping	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Roger Lawrence Leader of the Council	
<b>Accountable director</b>	John Denley, Director of Public Health	
<b>Originating service</b>	Health and Housing	
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	Anthony Walker Tel 01902 551631 Email <a href="mailto:anthony.walker@wolverhampton.gov.uk">anthony.walker@wolverhampton.gov.uk</a>	Homelessness Strategy and External Relationships Manager
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	Public Health Leadership Team SEB Rough Sleeping Task Team meeting	18 December 2018 15 January 2019 15 January 2019

### Recommendation for decision:

The Health and Wellbeing Together Board is recommended to:

1. Agree the Task Team's recommendations for 'next steps' and confirm a commitment to collectively tackling rough sleeping through a partnership model, by having strategic oversight of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018-2022 and actively contributing to the associated action plan.

### Recommendation for noting:

The Health and Wellbeing Together Board is recommended to note:

1. The overall progress and achievements made by the Leader's Tackling Rough Sleeping multi-agency Task Team, including the rapid reduction in numbers of individuals sleeping rough in the city from thirty-three to twelve since April 2018.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 To inform Health and Wellbeing Together of the overall progress and achievements made by the Leader's Tackling Rough Sleeping multi-agency Task Team – a task and finish group established in July 2017 and concluding in January 2019.
- 1.2 To invite the Health and Wellbeing Together membership to agree the Task Team's recommendations for 'next steps' and confirm a commitment to collectively tackling rough sleeping by having strategic oversight of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018-2022 and actively contributing to the associated action plan.

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Cllr Roger Lawrence, Leader of the City of Wolverhampton Council, identified tackling rough sleeping as a corporate priority requiring a holistic and cross-cutting approach in his 2017 annual State of the City speech to Full Council.
- 1.2 A Task Team was established in July 2017 to address this priority. Chaired by the Leader, its membership includes the City of Wolverhampton Council – Public Health, Housing, Community Safety and City Health; Wolverhampton City Centre BID; Voluntary sector partners - Recovery Near You, Wolverhampton Drug Service User Involvement Team and the Refugee and Migrant Centre; West Midlands Police; Wolverhampton Homes and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).
- 1.3 The purpose of this Task Team is to bring stakeholders together in a task and finish group to pilot new ways of working with the aim of halting the rapid increase in people sleeping rough in the city by leading on a series of work streams identified at its first meeting, namely:
  - Strengthening targeted intervention and a person-centred approach.
  - The development of specialist accommodation through the Housing First pilot, in conjunction with Wolverhampton Homes and WMCA.
  - Voluntary/ faith group engagement to help co-ordinate and appropriately target support being provided to rough sleepers in the city, particularly the most vulnerable.
  - Promotion and development of the Alternative Giving Campaign.
  - Appropriate enforcement, including a focus on displacement within the City and from outside of the City, and underpinned by a commitment to the use of enforcement measures as a positive lever for life-change as opposed to simply moving people round the City / region.
- 2.4 By piloting new ways of working, with a focus on an outcomes-based approach, the Task Team has identified best practice that is now able to be adopted as business as usual.
- 2.5 In January 2018 the Leader published an Interim Report Highlighting Task Team achievements and priorities for the year ahead. A final report will be launched at Full Council 30 January 2019 following feedback from Health and Wellbeing Together at its meeting on 23 January 2019.

### 3.0 Approach and context

- 3.1 Rough sleeping is not a problem unique to the City of Wolverhampton. The Government defines rough sleepers as "...people sleeping, or bedded down, in the open air such as on the streets, or in doorways, parks or bus shelters; people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats)."<sup>1</sup>
- 3.2 Over 4,500 people were estimated to be sleeping rough in England on any given night in 2018, a 15% rise on the year before. This number has risen by over 130% since 2010, when it was estimated that around 1,700 people were sleeping rough. The greatest number of rough sleepers are located in the London area (approximately a quarter of the total number of people sleeping rough). The majority of people sleeping rough are men.
- 3.3 Historically a small number of people have slept rough in Wolverhampton – fluctuating between six and twelve, as measured by the annual count. Between 2014 and 2016 however, this number more than doubled, following a similar trajectory to national trends outlined above.
- 3.4 It was in response to this rapid increase that the Leader established his Task Team in 2017 to actively disrupt this upward trend by bringing stakeholders together to pilot new, innovative and collaborative ways of working to enable more individuals to access and sustain a tenancy. This proactive approach has meant that Wolverhampton was able to buck the national trend in 2018 by sustaining the same annual count number of 19 individuals for two years running. In addition, section 5.2 of this report provides more detailed monthly count data demonstrating the positive impact of the activity being led by the Public Health operational group, a sub-group of the Task Team, and how the numbers of individuals sleeping rough in Wolverhampton continues to actively decrease.
- 3.5 Research undertaken for Crisis in 2012<sup>2</sup> shows that homelessness and rough sleeping cost lives: "being homeless is incredibly difficult both physically and mentally and has significant impacts on people's health and wellbeing. Homelessness leads to very premature mortality and increased mortality rates." The same report states: "Homeless people are more likely to die young, with an average age of death of 47 years old and even lower for homeless women at 43, compared to 77 for the general population, 74 for men and 80 for women." Sadly, three people with a history of rough sleeping died in Wolverhampton in 2017.
- 3.6 In addition to the personal cost of rough sleeping it is estimated that on average the cost to the public purse of someone sleeping rough in terms of emergency health care, criminal justice and other supports costs is approximately £20,000 per individual, per annum<sup>3</sup>. City of Wolverhampton Council spends some £1.2 million per year on homelessness and rough sleeping (including £300,000 of Government grants). Nationally rough sleeping costs the state approximately £1 billion every year.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-data-notes-and-definitions>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/236799/crisis\\_homelessness\\_kills\\_es2012.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/236799/crisis_homelessness_kills_es2012.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/cost-of-homelessness>

- 3.7 The cost to local business or the council of cleaning up land vacated by rough sleepers can be thousands of pounds. Enforcement action is also costly and often moves rough sleepers from one part of the City to another without addressing the underlying problem.
- 3.8 Taken together this means that as well as the moral imperative to tackle rough sleeping, the cost to the public purse of preventing rough sleeping is less than the cost of doing nothing at all.
- 3.9 Two core guiding principles have underpinned the approach taken by the Task Team. Firstly, no-one should be forced to sleep rough in Wolverhampton, therefore all efforts should be focussed on providing a viable and long-lasting alternative. Secondly, delivering real and sustainable change to end rough sleeping in our City involves us all working together: public bodies, voluntary groups, the business sector, faith groups, the wider Wolverhampton community and our regional partners - with those experiencing rough sleeping fully engaged and at the heart of what we do.
- 3.10 The collective commitment to these principles has structured all Task Team activity and key to this has been a partnership between Public Health and Housing, which sees rough sleeping not simply as a housing issue, but as one requiring a wider public health response.

#### **4.0 Task Team Achievements**

- 4.1 Task Team achievements are thematically presented as supporting the following:
- Prevention, defined as activity seeking to understand the issues that lead to rough sleeping and identify opportunities to provide timely support for those at risk.
  - Intervention, defined as the provision of person-centred support to those already sleeping rough so that an immediate alternative is available to them.
  - Sustaining change, defined as actions to obtain long-term support for people sleeping rough so that they can secure and sustain a tenancy and rebuild their lives.
- 4.2 The activity taking place under each of these themes is underpinned by a Public Health led operational group. This is a partnership forum which meets regularly to monitor the numbers of people sleeping rough in the City and coordinate targeted intervention.

#### **5.0 Achievements to support prevention**

- 5.1 Overseen the implementation of the refreshed City of Wolverhampton Council Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018-2022 and Allocations Policy in order to support the Council to deliver a preventative homeless service in line with the new duties set out in the Homelessness Reduction Act. This includes a clear message of intervention and prevention with aspects related to rough sleeping, vulnerable individuals, prevention and access to quality accommodation. On-going work with the WMCA will also seek to develop and embed the prevention offer through sector specific round table events in 2019.

- 5.2 Taken on board the recommendations contained in The Passage 'Understanding and Responding to Modern Slavery within the Homelessness Sector'<sup>4</sup> within the City of Wolverhampton Council and Wolverhampton Anti-Slavery Partnership action plans. This includes recommendations around training, awareness raising, and the importance of partnership working to combat both homelessness and modern slavery, monitoring of suspected occurrences of modern slavery, and specific guidance on victim identification and support which will be created and disseminated to homelessness organisations within the City.
- 5.3 Worked in partnership with Local Government Association and other Councils to lobby government for policy change on supporting rough sleepers with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). In addition, partnership work with the WMCA will continue going forward through contribution to a regional bid in April 2019 to seek to access funding earmarked for NRPF support by Government in the 2018 National Rough Sleeper Strategy.
- 5.4 Developed a referral process to waive the fee for anyone sleeping rough, born in Wolverhampton, to request a copy of their birth certificate.
- 5.5 Initiated a pilot to support people sleeping rough, or at risk of rough sleeping, to access support for training and employment via the Wolverhampton's Skills and Housing Options Team. This has involved the development of a tailored referral process through housing, police and local voluntary organisations and the provision of a dedicated work coach to provide drop-in sessions at three locations in the City - Good Shepherd Ministry (City centre), P3 Bilston and P3 Low Hill. This has seen thirty-one individuals registered with Wolves at Work, of which, to date, four people were supported into work.
- 5.6 Worked with National Express as part of a regional pilot to secure free bus passes, distributed via partner agencies, to people sleeping rough in the City, thereby enabling them to travel to access support services, etc.
- 5.7 Overseen the use of multi-agency visits co-ordinated through the Responsible Authorities Forum to licensed premises identified as selling alcohol to persons that were already drunk and/or alcohol dependent, potentially including rough sleepers. The premises were given advice on how to spot signs of alcohol dependency and their legal obligations under the Licensing Act 2003 to refuse to sell alcohol to persons that are already drunk.

## **6.0 Achievements to support intervention**

- 6.1 Promoted the street link reporting app: <https://www.streetlink.org.uk/> and P3 helpline: 0800 107 6753, to enable partners and members of the public to notify outreach agencies where people are sleeping rough and in need of assistance.
- 6.2 Recommissioned the 'out of hours provision', following a successful pilot in 2017, so that rough sleeper outreach is now available on four nights a week up until 23:00 hrs.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://passage.org.uk/540927-2/the-passage-anti-slavery-document-for-web-24-01-17/>

- 6.3 Established a multi-agency rough sleeper team, by co-locating officers from Wolverhampton Homes, West Midlands Police, outreach services (including treatment service providers) and the anti-social behaviour team at a premises on School Street on a pilot basis.
- 6.4 Undertaken two successful multi-agency 'Days of Action' (14 June 2018 and 13 November 2018.) This has involved over twenty organisations co-ordinating outreach activity across the City, with the aim of identifying rough sleepers and enabling them to immediately access accommodation and support. It has also enabled the task team to test-pilot new ways of integrated working. Building on the success of these events, these multi-agency days of action will now become an annual activity.
- 6.5 Facilitated a partnership meeting between the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and voluntary sector partners. Following this meeting the Council worked with voluntary sector partners to co-produce a bid which secured two years of funding (Year One funding: £138,000 as part way through the year; Year Two funding: £236,000) from MHCLG for targeted outreach activity. This was awarded jointly to P3, RMC, Good Shepherd and St Georges HUB. This has enabled the appointment of an additional outreach officer, additional in reach worker and focus on meaningful activity sessions and migration support.
- 6.6 Increased the single person's accommodation provision in the City by ten additional emergency units – including increasing the provision for women.
- 6.7 Supported the development of the Alternative Giving Campaign which has raised over £14,000 through collection boxes located around the City, including business support, with JLR, Casino 36 and Sainsbury's all raising approximately £1400 each. Funds raised have been used to support rough sleepers to access emergency accommodation, clothes and food, at short notice and in circumstance of dire need until other more sustainable support is put in place. By giving spare change to the Alternative Giving Campaign, in place of street beggars, the public can ensure rough sleepers receive support, particularly in an emergency.
- 6.8 Worked in partnership with voluntary sector providers who distribute food so that the service is brought indoors alongside advice and signposting services thereby enabling vulnerable people, not all of whom are sleeping rough, to be signposted to appropriate services, and for partners to have a better picture of their needs to inform their intervention and prevention activity.

## **7.0 Achievements to support sustaining change**

- 7.1 These are defined as actions to obtain long-term support for people sleeping rough so that they can secure and sustain a tenancy and rebuild their lives. Since July 2017 the Task Team has:

- 7.2 Provided strategic oversight in relation to the development and progress of securing specialist accommodation through the Housing First pilot in Wolverhampton, in conjunction with Wolverhampton Homes and West Midlands Combined Authority. Wolverhampton will use its portion of the West Midlands region £8 million allocated from Government to fund a small number of dedicated units for entrenched rough sleepers with complex needs, thereby putting the appropriate support in place to enable them to sustain a tenancy in the long-term.
- 7.3 Worked in support of the West Midlands Police and Anti-Social Behaviour Team to develop an approach to enforcement with action taken only when individuals refuse to engage multiple times and taken in a manner that provides targeted support alongside enforcement measures.
- 7.4 Hosted a successful business event in April 2018 attended by thirty businesses promoting how business can support efforts to tackle rough sleeping both through Corporate Social Responsibility – including the development of a business menu to illustrate what cash donations can be used for, as well as opportunities to volunteer staff time or expertise (i.e. immigration advice). This led on to the successful recruitment of Trustees to enable the Alternative Giving Campaign to become a registered charity ‘Alternative Giving – Business Backing Big Change’, in conjunction with a website refresh to enable on-line donation, and to be formally launched in 2019.
- 7.5 Hosted a successful voluntary sector event on July 2018 attended by representatives from eighteen voluntary sector/ faith groups, where groups from the faith, statutory and voluntary sector met to discuss the needs of vulnerable clients and how they can be addressed, in particular, opportunities to promote collaboration and avoid duplication. Issues raised at this event are being taken forward by the voluntary sector led Homelessness Forum supported by a Council grant of £5000, which they are match-funding with time and resources.

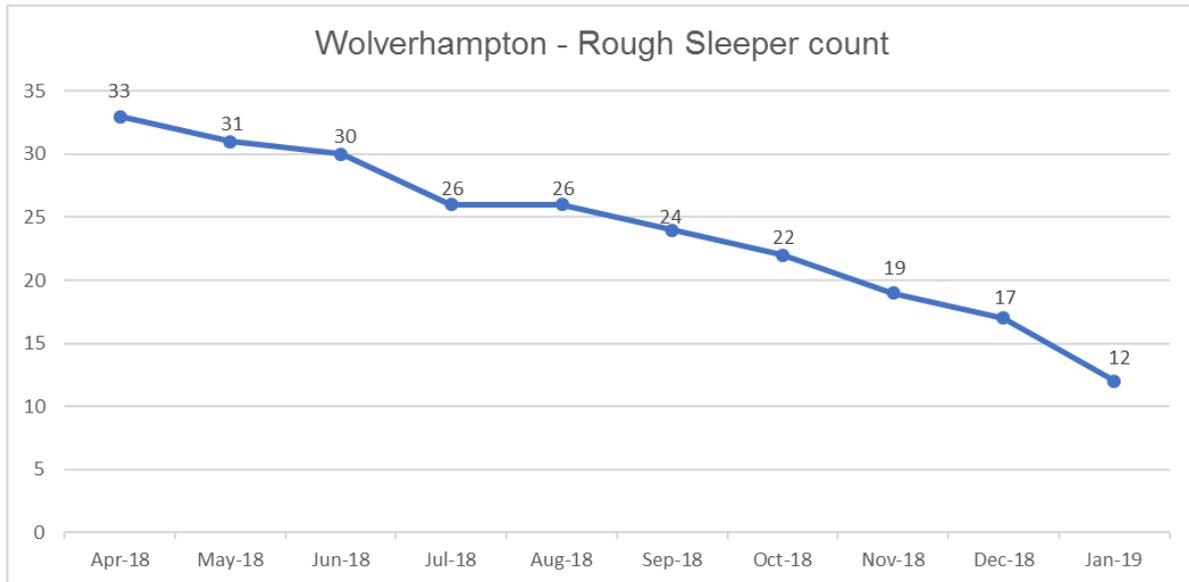
## **8.0 Impact**

- 8.1 The Council, along with all other Local Authorities is required to undertake a statutory count of rough sleepers each year on a date set by Government and following specific guidance.<sup>5</sup> It is widely accepted that this annual snapshot, while useful in terms of providing a geographical comparator and in demonstrating trends, underestimates the number of people sleeping rough in the country. It is for this reason that the Wolverhampton Public Health led operational group has been undertaking a monthly count. This data demonstrates impact of new operational ways of working the Task Team has established through its approach of pilot, learn, apply as business as usual.
- 8.2 Using MHCLG funding voluntary sector partners have been able to increase their outreach capacity, including people with No Recourse to Public Funds. This has enabled them to more proactively identify individuals sleeping rough, build relationships with them and provide tailored support to enable them to access accommodation and other support

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

services. Information and intelligence are also shared via the Public Health led operational group and the creation of the multi-agency team is improving collaborative working enabling users' needs to be met in a more timely and cost-effective way. The impact of this approach can be evidenced using partnership monthly count data which illustrates a rapid decrease in people sleeping rough since April 2018. This includes housing six entrenched rough sleepers with complex needs using a Housing First methodology, in preparation for the release of Housing First monies and roll-out of the regional pilot.



8.3 At the same time partnership work with the West Midlands Police and Anti-Social Behaviour Team has enabled enforcement to be used appropriately and positively as part of a wider support driven approach. This has seen Community Protection Orders including referrals to addiction services, and a reduction in shop theft in the City centre by 20%. In addition, City centre policing teams are working in conjunction with other outer sector policing teams to deal with issues of displacement from City centre and are already seeing the benefits of this increased focus on joined up working. This has been judged so successful that the City centre Neighbourhood Team has been nominated for a Police Diamond Award in the category of 'Neighbourhood Team of the Year'.

## 9.0 Next Steps

9.1 The monthly count data demonstrates the impact of the Leader's Task Team strategic oversight and approach to tackling rough sleeping, however City of Wolverhampton Council, partners and Task Team members understand that more needs to be done. No-one should be forced to sleep rough in the City. The focus going forward is to further embed the learning from the pilot activity overseen by the Leader's Task Team so that it is fully incorporated into business as usual activity via the new City Homelessness Prevention Strategy, a partnership approach to responding to and preventing homelessness.

- 9.2 The strategy and associated action plan will work to strengthen the joint working between partners on addressing the needs of clients who are either rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping by creating a multi-agency group to oversee the strategy, including service user involvement.
- 9.3 This prevention focus will be accompanied by activity to continue to support individuals who are long-term rough sleepers with complex needs, including problems associated with addiction, through the roll-out of the Housing First pilot.
- 9.4 It is also important to be aware that the rough sleeper population in the country is highly mobile and at the same time as successfully engaging with people sleeping rough in the City new people arrive. It is for this reason there will be a continued focus on working towards aligning local, regional and national policies so that rough sleepers are not simply moved around the country. Wider problems of poverty, insecure tenancies, hidden homelessness and austerity continue to drive rough sleeping numbers at a national level, and inevitably this also has a regional and local impact. As success is achieved in reducing the number of people sleeping rough in the City, partnership working will seek to increasingly focus on prevention and up-stream activity to try and prevent homelessness.
- 9.5 Combatting anti-social behaviour in city centres in a way that does not penalise genuine rough sleepers also remains a priority, as does understanding and tackling what is driving street begging.
- 9.6 The overall way of working will be one where cooperation and calibration are key and the shared view of prevention and intervention.
- 9.7 The refreshed Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy includes reference to continued tackling of rough sleeping in the City. Health and Wellbeing Together is invited to confirm a commitment to collectively tackling rough sleeping through a partnership model, by maintaining strategic oversight of this issue and actively contributing to the City Homelessness Prevention Strategy and associated action plan. It is recommended that the Homelessness Prevention Strategy and associated action plan be presented to a future Board meeting.

## **10.0 Financial implications**

- 10.1 The work highlighted within the report will be met via existing budgets for Homelessness and Housing Strategy, Rough Sleeping Initiative grant funding from the Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government and Housing First funding from the West Midlands Combined Authority  
[JM/14012019/H]

## **11.0 Legal implications**

11.1 The work of the rough sleeper group is governed by homelessness legislation under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, whilst housing allocation comes under Part 6 of the same act. However, other aspects of street homelessness including begging will be governed by Section 3 of the Vagrancy Act 1824 and Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

[LW/16012019/M]

## **12.0 Equalities implications**

12.1 People sleeping rough in the City are more likely to be vulnerable than the wider population with a higher prevalence of poor mental and/or physical health, and/or related problem linked to addiction.

12.2 This report outlines the partnership approach to enabling people to find a long term and sustainable alternative to rough sleeping through a personalised and targeted approach, which necessarily involves understanding and responding to their personal circumstances and paying due regard to equalities implications.

12.3 Although the majority of people sleeping rough are men, it is recognised that a number of rough sleepers in the City are women and specialist provision may be required to meet their specific needs.

## **13.0 Environmental implications**

13.1 A strengthened focus on prevention, early intervention and the enabling people sleeping rough to access and sustain a tenancy will reduce the number of rough sleeper encampments on land in the City.

13.2 Working with volunteers engaged in street feeding to target this activity and bring it indoors will reduce food waste left on streets in the City.

## **14.0 Human resources implications**

14.1 There are no human resources implications.

## **15.0 Corporate Landlord implications**

15.1 There are no Corporate Landlord implications.

## **16.0 Health and wellbeing implications**

16.1 Point 3.5 of this report highlights the damaging impact of prolonged rough sleeping on an individual's mental and physical health. This report outlines the partnership approach to enabling people to find a long term and sustainable alternative to rough sleeping through

a personalised and targeted approach. Improving health and wellbeing, including ensuring access to appropriate health provision, is embedded in this partnership approach.

**17.0 Schedule of background papers**

17.1 Working Together to End Rough Sleeping – Task Team Interim Report January 2018

17.2 Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018-2022

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