



Stage 1 EIA Trackingⁱ	
Title of EIA	Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan - 2022-2027
Lead Officer	Annette Snell, Housing Solutions Manager
Division	Housing & Community
Publication Date <i>(if applicable)</i>	November 2022, depending on the strategy and action plan being adopted at Community & Wellbeing Committee on 24 November 2022
EIA Review Date <i>(only applicable when completing the full EIA)</i>	November 2023

Stage 2 Details of Policy, Service or Functionⁱⁱ

Provide an overview of the policy, service or other function being introduced or reviewed.

Please include the aim or purpose of the policy, service or function etc., any context, changes proposed and the desired outcome. You will need to start to think about the equality implications and whether there is potential for impact on residents, service users and staff (as applicable) with one or more of the protected characteristics.

The Council is required under the Homelessness Act 2002 to have a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan.

This Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan sets out how Epsom & Ewell Borough Council intends to meet the needs of our residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including rough sleeping and single people over the next five years (2022-27). The strategy outlines the Council’s strategic vision and the key objectives we aim to achieve when addressing homelessness within the borough.

The Council’s strategic vision is to see: *“The Council and its partners working collaboratively to prevent homelessness, to proactively reduce and end rough sleeping, assist homeless households to find affordable housing solutions and ensure the right support is available to promote recovery and improve health and wellbeing.”*

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has identified six key objectives for the next five years.

1. The early identification, intervention & prevention of homelessness
2. Reduce Rough Sleeping
3. Increase accommodation options including social rented, private rented, supported and move on accommodation and in borough temporary accommodation
4. Improve the Health & Wellbeing of homeless people
5. Ensuring sufficient support is available for homeless people
6. Partnership working

Delivery of the Strategy is supported by an Action Plan, which is structured around the six key objectives. The Action Plan sets out the individual actions and activities to be undertaken and details how the Council will achieve the aims and objectives of the strategy.

Stage 3 Relevance Check ⁱⁱⁱ	
<p>Indicate whether the policy, function or service change etc. outlined in Stage 2 above has the potential to impact on people with a protected characteristic (covers service users, the wider community and staff).</p> <p>If yes, a full EIA needs to be completed (<i>please go to Stage 4</i>).</p> <p>If no, please set out your reasoning and then secure sign-off by your Head of Service and the Inclusion and Diversity Group at Stage 8.</p>	<p>Homelessness disproportionately affects people on low to modest incomes and those who are vulnerable due to physical or mental disability, learning disabilities, those suffering domestic abuse, young people and care leavers, older people, ex-offenders and substance misusers.</p> <p>The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan have been deliberately designed to meet the needs of and support all those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. It is anticipated it will have a positive impact for all protected groups both directly and indirectly and the EIA has found that there are no indications that either the strategy or action plan will have negative impacts for any protected groups.</p> <p>The strategy and action plan will ensure that the Council's statutory homelessness services continue remain fully accessible to persons with protected characteristics and support the delivery of targeted and appropriate support services where required.</p> <p>Failure to deliver the strategy and action plan may, however, have negative consequences for some protected groups as it has been designed to meet identified needs.</p>

Stage 4 Data Relevant to Full EIA ^{iv}	
<p>List all data (including source) and other information relevant to the full equality impact assessment</p>	<p>In developing the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022 to 2027 and Action Plan a detailed review of homelessness in Epsom & Ewell has been undertaken.</p> <p>The purpose of the Homelessness Review is to establish the extent of homelessness in the area, identifying future trends and any gaps in the service currently being provided. The review has considered a range of information including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of homeless approaches • Reasons for homelessness • Homeless Prevention and Relief cases and outcomes • Support needs of homeless households • The type of individuals and households becoming homeless • Households in nightly paid accommodation & in-borough temporary accommodation • Supply and Demand of Affordable housing - Housing Needs Register and social housing lettings • Private rented housing & the Rent Deposit Scheme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rough Sleeping & Single Homelessness • The current Housing Options Service & existing homelessness prevention measures <p>The data set used to undertake this review was from information extracted from the Council’s Abris Housing System for the period 2018/19 up to quarter 3, 2021/22 and is based on Homelessness Case Level Collection data (H-CLIC).</p> <p>The Homelessness Review provides comprehensive information to develop the Council’s Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022 to 2027. The full findings of the Homelessness Review document can be viewed on the Council’s website.</p>
<p>Specify all engagement activities undertaken</p>	<p>The Council carried out six weeks public consultation between 12 July and 23 August 2022 with a range of stakeholders, service users, staff and residents. These included:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeless applicants Residents Staff Housing Association partners including Rosebery, Transform, Mount Green & PA Epsom CAB Epsom Foodbank Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network Adult Social Care, Children Services, Mental Health Service Surrey Adults Matter/Bridge the Gap Drug & Alcohol Services Hospital Discharge Co-ordinator Probation Service North Surrey Domestic Abuse Service DWP/Job Centre + Surrey Life Long Learning Partnership/ETHOS East Surrey Outreach Service Local Faith groups Various community & voluntary sector groups <p>The consultation took the form of an on-line questionnaire, focus groups and a Member’s briefing.</p> <p>The on-line questionnaire and accompanying strategy documents were emailed to the stakeholders listed above. In addition, 250 homeless applicants on the Housing Need Register were asked to participate. A paper version of the questionnaire was available on request.</p>

	<p>Three focus groups were held; one with Housing Services staff on 10 July 2022; one with Rosebery Housing Association on 7 September 2022 and another with the community & voluntary sector on 8 September 2022. A Member’s briefing will be held on 24 November 2022.</p> <p>The consultation generally received very positive responses, with the vision, objectives & action plan priorities very well received by the respondents.</p> <p>All six of the key objectives received at least 80% support, which represents an extremely positive reaction.</p> <p>The specific actions of each priority were also very well supported, with 94% positive response, which suggests the Council is correct in its approach to addressing the identified issues.</p>
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Stage 5 Impact on Residents, Service Users and Staff with Protected Characteristics^v

Undertake a full analysis which details all positive and negative impact arising from the policy, service or other function. If there will be no impact, make this clear by completing the relevant box. Please ensure that you evidence your conclusions with reference to the appropriate source.

Protected Characteristic	Potential Positive Impact	Potential Negative Impact	No Impact
Age	<p>Positive Impact The Housing Options service is available to everyone from the age of 16+.</p> <p>Certain age groups i.e. 16/17’s and the elderly are more likely to have priority need if homeless by virtue of their age.</p> <p>Young people aged 16-17 and care leavers receive enhanced services via the Surrey wide Joint Protocols. Younger people who have been in the care of the local authority are considered vulnerable.</p>	No Negative Impact	N/A

<p><i>Disability</i></p>	<p>Positive Impact The Housing Options Service is available to all regardless of disability.</p> <p>The homelessness legislation protects people with disabilities in that the Council must assess whether they are vulnerable and in priority need under the legislation. Homeless applicants with a disability may be more likely to have a priority need.</p> <p>Improving the Health & Wellbeing of homeless people is as one the key objectives of the strategy and there are specific actions and services that are targeted at people with disabilities.</p>	<p>No Negative Impact</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><i>Gender Reassignment</i></p>	<p>Positive Impact The Housing Options Service is available to all regardless of gender reassignment. There would be no discrimination made as a result of this relevant characteristic. The legislation protects those who are considered to be vulnerable. Homeless applicants undergoing gender reassignment may be more likely to have a priority need.</p>	<p>No Negative Impact</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i></p>	<p>Positive Impact The Housing Options Service is available to all regardless of pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>Families expecting a child are protected by the homelessness legislation as they will have a priority need. Many of the strategies key objectives and actions will offer targeted and appropriate support services for households with dependent children or who are pregnant.</p>	<p>No Negative Impact</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><i>Race</i></p>		<p>No Negative Impact</p>	<p>No Impact The Housing Options Service is available to all regardless of race. The legislation protects those who are considered to be vulnerable and in priority need.</p>

			Monitoring shows that the ethnic origin of homeless households appears to largely reflect the demography of the borough.
<i>Religion and Belief</i>		No Negative Impact	No Impact The Housing Options Service is available to all regardless of religion or belief. The legislation protects those who are considered to be vulnerable and in priority need.
<i>Sex</i>	<p>Positive Impact</p> <p>The Housing Options Services available to all, regardless of sex. The legislation protects those who are considered to be vulnerable and in priority need.</p> <p>Lone parent households are at a higher risk of homelessness, and these are more likely to be headed by women. Dependent children and pregnancy are factors conferring priority status under the homelessness legislation. Many of the strategies key objectives and actions will offer targeted and appropriate support services for households with dependent children or who are pregnant.</p> <p>Rough sleeping is more common amongst men than women, however, for women, the impact can often be worse. Our strategy aims to significantly reduce rough sleeping and offers targeted and specialised support services where required.</p>	No Negative Impact	
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>		No Negative Impact	No Impact The Housing Options Service are available to all regardless of sexual orientation. The legislation protects those who are

			considered to be vulnerable and in priority need.
<i>Marriage and Civil Partnerships</i>	<p>Positive Impact Services for the homeless are available to all regardless of marital and partnership status. Single people and couples without dependent children may not be protected by the homelessness legislation if they are found not to be vulnerable and in priority need. However, the Council provides a specialised Housing Options service for single people from this group.</p>	No Negative Impact	N/A

Stage 6 Decision ^{vi}	
<p>Specify the full details of your decision.</p> <p>Include any changes made to the proposal, steps taken to eliminate or minimise any negative impact(s), any additional mechanisms put in place to meet the needs of particular groups or to help foster good relations etc.</p>	<p>It is anticipated that the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan will have a positive impact for all protected groups both directly and indirectly and the EIA has found that there are no indications that either the strategy or action plan will have negative impacts for any protected groups.</p> <p>The strategy and action plan will ensure that the Council's statutory homelessness services continue remain fully accessible to persons with protected characteristics and support the delivery of targeted and appropriate support services where required.</p> <p>The data within the Homelessness Review will be updated, evaluated and monitored on a regular basis so we are able to predict future trends of homelessness, identify households at risk of homelessness and to inform new service improvements.</p>

Stage 7 EIA – Action Plan ^{vii}			
Please specify any action that will be taken to support implementation of your decision			
Issue Identified	Action required	Implementation Date	Responsible Officer
Homelessness Review Data	The data within the Homelessness Review will be updated, evaluated and monitored annually	Annually - May 2023	Annette Snell
Delivery of the Strategy and Action plan	Annual monitoring on the delivery of the strategy and Action plan	Nov 2023	Annette Snell
Stage 8 EIA Sign Off ^{viii}			
Head of Service: Rod Brown		Date:	
Inclusion & Diversity Group:		Date:	

Guidance on completing the Equality Impact Assessment Template

- i **Stage 1 - EIA Tracking**
 Insert appropriate details. A review date will only be required when completing the full equality impact assessment (Stages 1 – 8).

- ii **Stage 2 - Details of Service / Policy / Function to be assessed**
 In this section you will need to provide information which explains the subject matter of the work you are undertaking. If a new policy is being developed then explain what the policy covers and what it sets out to achieve. If a policy is being reviewed, then once again explain what the policy addresses and highlight any changes that are being introduced. If the work you are undertaking involves a service change, outline what the current service provides and to whom, then discuss the changes that are proposed and what the outcome of these service changes are anticipated to be. Bear in mind when drafting this section (and the rest of the document) that a lay person, unfamiliar with the subject matter should be able to read it and understand the policy, function or service and any changes that are proposed.

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- iii **Stage 3 – Relevance Check**
The relevance check asks you to complete an initial assessment of whether the new / reviewed policy, service or function proposed is anticipated to impact upon residents, service users or staff with a protected characteristic. If you consider that there will be some form of impact then you must go on to complete all other stages of the form (Stages 4 – 8 inclusive). If, however, there will be no impact, provide your justification in the space provided and seek formal sign off of your assessment (Stage 8). The form should then be kept in case you need to provide evidence at a later date that you had due regard to the three aims of the equality duty during policy development / service design. If you have any uncertainty at this stage of the process, go on to complete all sections of the Equality Impact Assessment Template (Stages 1-8).
- iv **Stage 4 - Data Relevant to Full EIA**
In order to undertake a full assessment of the equality implications associated with your project/work you will need to outline the data that you possess which will help you to understand any resultant impact. If you identify any gaps in your information, and thereby have gaps in your understanding, you will need to fill these areas of uncertainty by exploring what other sources of information there are and/or by talking to different groups/bodies. It may be possible to consult with relevant groups. If you undertake any engagement activities you will need to set them out in this section. Please speak to the Consultation Team in Policy, Performance and Governance if you are considering undertaking consultation.
- v **Stage 5 - Impact on Residents, Service Users and Staff with Protected Characteristics**
Using the information that you have set out at stage 4 you now need to consider carefully whether the new or revised policy, service or other function etc. will impact upon people with a protected characteristic in a positive or negative way. You will need to consider service users, residents and staff (as appropriate). Set out your considerations for each protected characteristic in the appropriate column. If no impact will arise, please indicate this in the appropriate box to show that you have given due regard to equality. When undertaking this assessment make sure you bear in mind the different forms of discrimination, e.g. direct and indirect discrimination, discrimination by association or perception. The protected characteristic 'marriage and civil partnership' needs only to be considered in relation to the first aim of the equality duty – the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation...
- vi **Stage 6 – Decision**
This section requires you to make and evidence your decision. Use your analysis undertaken in Stage 5 together with other relevant factors such as financial implications. The importance that you give equality considerations when making your decision should be proportionate to the significance of the policy, service or function on advancing equality of opportunity and in fostering good relations. Be mindful that your decision could be challenged, the Equality Act 2010 requires you to 'give due regard' to the three aims of the public sector equality duty. A strong evidence base and transparency will lead to effective decision making.
- vii **Stage 7 – Action Plan**
In the Action Plan set out any actions that you plan to implement to support your policy, service delivery or change etc. You will need to set a completion date and name a responsible officer. These actions may comprise some form of positive step(s) to support the needs of a particular group or step(s) which will negate any impact on a particular group.

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Stage 8 – EIA Sign Off

This section must be completed by the relevant Head of Service and a copy sent to HRAdmin@epsom-ewell.gov.uk when finishing your assessment at Stage 3 – Relevance Check or when completing the full equality impact assessment, Stages 1-8.

Further information is available from:

[‘Equality Impact Assessment Introduction and Appendices’](#). .

[‘Meeting the Equality Duty in Policy and Decision-Making England’](#)

If you need further assistance please speak to a member of the Inclusion and Diversity Group