

# People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Dorset County Council**



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| Date of Meeting    | 4 July 2018   |
| Officer            | John Alexander, Senior Assurance Manager<br><b><u>Lead Member:</u></b><br>Clare Sutton  |
| Subject of Report  | <b>Homelessness in Dorset: Review of Evidence</b>   |
| Executive Summary  | In October 2017 The Chair of the People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cllr. David Walsh, suggested that with homelessness on the increase, the committee should instigate a review of the evidence, to help them gain a better understanding of the situation in Dorset, and how the County Council works with district and borough councils and other partners. They also wanted to consider the impact that the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018 will have. Cllr. Clare Sutton agreed to be the lead member. This report addresses those issues, and makes some suggestions for further action which the Committee may choose to consider.  |
| Impact Assessment: | <p><b>Equalities Impact Assessment:</b> There are no specific equalities implications in this report. However, the prioritisation of resources in order to challenge inequalities in outcomes for Dorset’s people is fundamental to the Corporate Plan. Homelessness is a clear example of a problem that impacts on different demographic groups unequally. The overwhelming majority of rough sleepers, for example, are men aged 25 to 40. Homelessness is more likely to afflict people with mental and physical ill health. Poverty and deprivation often lead to homelessness. Any work to address homelessness by implication also addresses inequalities in outcomes.</p> <p><b>Use of Evidence:</b> This report draws on many sources of evidence, each of which is clearly identified in the main body of the report and in the accompanying footnotes.</p> |

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|                                  | <p><b>Budget:</b> None at this stage.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Having considered the risks associated with this report using the County Councils approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as:</p> <p>Current:       LOW<br/>Residual:       LOW</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b> Homelessness relates to all four of the outcomes in the County Council's Corporate Plan. For example, rough sleepers do not live in a <b>safe</b> environment. Homeless people often struggle to lead <b>healthy</b> lives. Interventions to alleviate homelessness need to prioritise helping people to have greater control and choice over their lives and become, and remain, <b>independent</b>. Poverty and deprivation lead to, and result from, homelessness, and therefore the <b>prosperity</b> of an area and the people in it is important. This report seeks to identify the key evidence with regard to homelessness in Dorset, in order to inform any further interventions to address it, which is an important part of OBA methodology.</p> <p><b>Other:</b> None</p> |
| <p>Recommendation</p>            | <p>That the committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Reviews the evidence at Appendix 1, and considers the importance of homelessness as an issue facing Dorset and its public services;</li> <li>ii) Prioritises actions that should be taken to address the issue in Dorset, both in the short and the longer term;</li> <li>iii) On the basis that this is currently a cross authority issue on which the new Dorset Council will be well placed to make progress, makes recommendations for future activity to the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and:</li> <li>iv) Appoints a lead member and a lead officer to take these recommendations forward into the Shadow Authority</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Reason for Recommendation</p> | <p>The evidence in this report suggests that homelessness has been a growing problem in Dorset in recent years, bringing with it other issues related to the wellbeing of those it affects. A number of agencies, including the County Council, are seeking to address this. This committee is invited to consider whether more could and should be done to seek improvement.</p>  |
| <p>Appendices</p>                | <p>Homelessness in Dorset: Review of Evidence</p>  |
| <p>Background Papers</p>         | <p>None</p>  |

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