



Central Swindon South Parish Council

South Swindon Parish Council  
Broadgreen Community Centre  
Salisbury Street  
Swindon  
SN1 2AN  
Clerk@southswindon-pc.gov.uk  
T: 01793 312006

## Rough Sleeping Reduction Strategy – Parish Response

### Comments on Foreword

- Is the Borough ready for any future roll outs of Universal Credit, if the changes that are anticipated do not correct the issues flagged in the foreword?
- UC has been increasingly rolled out in Swindon since November 2017 and it has been well publicised the difficulties that claimants have with the system. It will be important to have the right support at the right time to mitigate the impact of full roll out
- Temporary Housing Provision – good to see new initiatives, and improvements year on year. We hope to see funding beyond the current timeline outlined. It would be good for further monitoring to ensure that the impacts are measured and reported on and improvements built on year by year.
- Following the collation of the consultation and any amendments to the strategy, we will set up a strategy action group that will consist of key stakeholders, volunteer groups and individuals. The Council will ensure that we have a SMART action plan that will be monitored quarterly by this group.
- We will use our website and social media to publicise progress & updates.

### Comments Vision and Aims

- How accurate are the rough sleeping counts and how are they measured?
- There is clear guidance from the Ministry of Housing and the figures are ratified by an independent advisor from Homeless Link. The Count is only a snapshot on a particular evening. We hold monthly multi-agency operational meetings which ensures that we have good local intelligence on the number of RS
- What is the protocol for the outreach workers to go out in poor and severe weather conditions to ensure, during these conditions, rough sleepers are being offered adequate support?
- We have to ensure the safety of staff and those who work for partner agencies, however they will go out in most conditions. Now we have commissioned a Day Centre (The Haven) this will provide a base / central point for which we can effectively engage with Rough Sleepers.
- Really important to focus on mental health support – is this training for existing staff or will there be professional, dedicated, mental health support?

- We received additional funding from Central Government and have used this to train Council and partner agency staff. We have managed to train over 50 staff who work with Rough Sleepers.
- We are working with the Care Commissioning Group and Mental Health Services to improve in this area. How we address this is likely to be included in the Action Plan

#### Point one

- It would be good to understand more detail on how the council is providing proactive support for people to avoid eviction, will they consider initiatives such as deposit guarantee schemes etc?
- We have a prevention fund that can be used for deposits or in some situations address rent arrears. We currently fund 2 floating support workers.
- We are also working with internal and external partners to improve communication and recognise early prevention is key.
- Is there any support for people if their family has broken down and this has caused homelessness?
- The Council has a Housing Options service that has a statutory duty to advice & assist any person who is homeless.
- How many people will be in the new frontline prevention team & are there any figures on how many people are at risk of homelessness in Swindon?
- Hidden Homelessness (sofa surfing) how is this going to be approached and supported?
- It is difficult to address sofa surfing, however part of the strategy is to increase the range of accommodation options and increase access to accommodation, particularly for this cohort.
- How do you maintain the support services in a sustained and continuing basis?
- The Council has a budget for commissioned services and has a commitment to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities.
- Is the Borough working with other organisations with a military focus such as the Royal British Legion etc.
- The Council has a military covenant

#### Point two

- Could the Borough implement a 'no second night' on the streets policy to provide a real timeframe to the 'rapid' response. This would require capacity and flexibility in shelter provision.
- This is something that can be explored and we need to think about how we are going to measure the vision / aims in the strategy.
- Is there a single point of contact in Swindon for members of the public, those at risk, or those who are homeless? This should be a single free number which provides a 24/7 365 day a year route for support or to flag those in need. This can then direct people to the most appropriate services / charities.
- [https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20140/homelessness/945/what we are doing to help rough sleepers and those at risk of becoming homeless](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20140/homelessness/945/what_we_are_doing_to_help_rough_sleepers_and_those_at_risk_of_becoming_homeless)

- During times of adverse weather, we'll provide updates on our [Twitter](#) and Facebook pages as to when the SWEP is activated. You can alert us to rough sleepers in need of support by visiting the [Street Link](#) website or by calling Street Link on 0300 500 0914. Street Link is an organisation which enables members of the public to connect people sleeping rough with the local services that can support them. Rough sleepers can also refer themselves by visiting the following address during office hours or by calling us on 01793 445503, available 24 hours a day.

#### **Point three**

- Essential to have a joined up approach.
- Is the Borough working with local businesses like Nationwide who have a clear CSR strategy in this specific area?
- [We recently connected Nationwide to the charity HOSTS and this relationship is flourishing.](#)

#### **Point four**

- The Borough will need to keep trying, and provide lasting support

#### **Point five**

- Single person housing, and how to ensure landlords take individuals.
- [We acknowledge that the welfare system can create barriers and there is no-one solution to address this, however we can improve relationships with private landlords and this will be key moving forward.](#)
- Would the Borough consider innovative solutions to immediate housing needs such as the PLACE/ Ladywell project <https://www.rsh-p.com/projects/place-ladywell/>
- [We recognise the need to be creative, innovative and resourceful in our future plans. We are regularly looking at best practice across the UK.](#)

#### **Further Questions**

- Where will the funding come from for the housing first, to provide accessible accommodation?
- [A good question as despite its success Housing First has been recognised as an expensive form of housing and moving forward may require joint funding including Health, Probation and Housing.](#)
- How do those on the geographical fringes get to the central support location?
- [We do have an outreach service that will need to build those relationships and can then support individuals with accessing transport, for example bus passes.](#)
- Could we have a presentation from the lead support provider to the Parish about this strategy, the results of the consultation and the impact of recent changes of central provision for homelessness?
- [I can arrange this is in due course](#)
- Is this joined up with the Police and Crime Commissioner's strategy?

- The PCC is part of the Health & Wellbeing Committee where the strategy is discussed and approved. We are currently working with PCC on accommodation for offenders, particularly on release from prison.

Compiled by South Swindon Parish Council

Acting Clerk  
Jake Mee MAAT