

ANGUS COUNCIL

Housing Committee – 22 April 2004

Review of the Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008

REPORT by DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

ABSTRACT

This report seeks committee approval for the first annual review of the implementation of the Angus Homeless Strategy 2003-2008 and for the revised Homelessness Strategy Action Plan for 2004-2009.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that members:

- i) Note the content of the Homelessness Strategy Review 2004
- ii) Approve the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2004-2009 contained in section 3 of the Review
- iii) In the context of Community Planning, refer this report to the joint Healthy, Safe and Caring Communities Partnership, for its interest.

2. BACKGROUND

The Angus Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008 was approved by committee in April 2003. In the accompanying report (399/03) the attention of members was drawn to the strategy “assessment framework” published by the Scottish Executive, and the requirement that the strategy be submitted for assessment by the Homelessness Monitoring Group.

3. STRATEGY ASSESSMENT AND RESUBMISSION

The strategy was submitted in April 2003 and in June 2003 the Monitoring Group made a number of recommendations for strengthening the strategy. These recommendations included:

- Making the endorsement of partners more explicit
- Identifying specific actions to meet the 2012 target of abolishing the “priority need” category
- Demonstrating a clearer focus on preventative measures
- Making the “crisis response system” more explicit
- Setting specific targets in relation to Housing Benefit administration and the elimination of the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless households

The strategy was revised and updated to take account of the Monitoring Group's recommendations and resubmitted to the Scottish Executive in November 2003. No further feedback has been received to date. A revised strategy will be submitted for approval in due course.

Members should note that the action plan, agreed by committee in April 2003, remained unchanged.

4. HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY REVIEW 2004

As part of the monitoring and evaluation process, the Strategy is subject to annual review. The review for 2003-2004 is attached as [appendix 1](#). The review details progress against the targets set out in the action plan for 2003-2008, assesses the challenges posed by current trends in homelessness, and sets out a revised action plan for 2004-2009.

Implementation of the Strategy was initially held back by recruitment difficulties, but significant progress has nonetheless been achieved. The review also includes details of the substantial progress which has been made in implementing the Temporary Accommodation and Support Strategy, which was approved by committee in August 2003.

Part of the intention of the annual review is to assess the effectiveness of the strategy in preventing and alleviating homelessness. The review for 2003-2004 provides a summary of the evidence from statutory data collected by the Housing Department on homeless applications, and identifies some of the key trends which the strategy will need to address in the future.

The action plan has been revised and updated to take account of the recommendations of the monitoring group, changes in legislation, and to incorporate the tasks previously contained in the supplementary strategies. The opportunity has also been taken to introduce SMART targets for the majority of tasks. It is hoped that this will make it easier to monitor progress in implementing the strategy.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that in following the recommendation contained in this report, the Council would not be acting in any way which is incompatible with human rights.

7. CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Law and Administration, Director of Education, and the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison have been consulted in preparing this report.

8. CONCLUSION

Significant progress has been made in implementing the Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008, but much remains to be done to prevent and alleviate homelessness in Angus. The Strategy Review 2003-2004 describes progress to date, assesses

the current trends in homelessness in Angus, and sets out the revised Action Plan for 2004-2009.

Ron Ashton
Director of Housing

Note:- the following background papers, as defined by Section 50 D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to a material extent in preparing this report:

Housing Committee Report no. 339/03, April 2003 – Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008.