





Homelessness Strategy Consultation



'You said, we did'

12 Feb to 28 Mar 2016




Ref	Section	You said	We say	Link
1. 4544677903	Format	Easy to read language and well laid out.	Thanks!	
2 4519049305	Overview	A bit longwinded	There is a lot of information to cover; we have put the more technical information into the appendices. We are planning to do more succinct literature to give advice. Actions HA01, 02 & 03 seek to develop self help guides for clients and promotional material to distribute to agencies, such as letting agents and hospitals.	
3 4609778140	Overview	I think the issues of mental health and substance abuse are not realistically explored to provide adequate support. Speaking from experience as a relative of a rough sleeper there was a need for all aspects to coordinate at the same time for it to work. There is no residential long term support for rehabilitation of substance abuse unless you are extremely wealthy. Seeing an advisor or two weeks in hospital is hopeless if someone does not have an alternative but to return to their pre -existing life before admission.	Mental health services are commissioned via Devon Partnership Trust and substance misuse services are commissioned via Public Health at Devon County Council. As local authorities it is important that Exeter and Teignbridge work closely with both partners. Especially through the delivery of the 'dual diagnosis strategy', which is currently under development. There is a rehabilitation service, but this is limited and accessed via Recovery and Integrated Services (RISE), who are commissioned by Public Health, who would require commitment for change from service users.	
4 4547261175	Place to live	Content good but 3D style graphs make it look messy and more complicated than necessary	Noted; we will make changes	
5 4544677903	Place to live	see note at end of survey	Noted	
6 4539449840	Place to live	affordable isnt affordable. devon wages and london prices. more council owned properties are required.	The issues of affordable housing delivery and affordability are explored within the Housing Strategy. Both Councils have a programme of building new housing, but since the government announced budget cuts in 2015, requiring a 1% rent reduction across social housing over 4 years, there are limited funds to progress some schemes. Accommodation required for homeless households will generally be sourced	

			from the private rented sector and we are working closely with partners, such as PATH, to secure 'affordable' accommodation. As Councils we also lease properties ourselves through 'private sector leasing schemes'.	
7 4526090596	Place to live	Very concerned about the lack of accommodation for rough sleepers in Dawlish area. We currently have 2 sleeping rough that I know of and one who died 3 weeks ago was also rough sleeping.	As you can see from the strategy, we take rough sleeping very seriously. We work very closely with Julian House, who have been commissioned by both Exeter and Teignbridge across the area to deliver assertive street-homeless outreach service. Projects HP08/09 specifically address accommodation gaps for people sleeping rough. If you are concerned by people sleeping rough in your area, we encourage you to contact StreetLink, who will share the information with the relevant teams.	 
8 4511577984	Place to live	The document majors on prevention - which in the current climate is exactly the right thing to do. Early intervention to prevent the need for acute support is the most cost-effective solution, and has the best outcomes for customers. However, I was surprised not to see a section on how more affordable housing options can be brought on-stream - particularly in Exeter where good quality, affordable homes for single people are in short supply. (To be fair, this may be in the Housing Strategy - in which case a link in the Homelessness Strategy might be useful.) It is important to say that actually providing the housing needed cannot be a responsibility solely laid at the door of local authorities, however - we all have to accept that the resources that there used to be have gone. For that reason, I would like to see a commitment to (and call for) wider community-based social action projects to bring more housing options to the local market. I would like to see a "housing summit" of Local Authorities, RSLs, community organisations and social enterprises with a housing focus to co-	The issues of affordable housing delivery and affordability are explored within the Housing Strategy. We will include links. Both Councils have a programme of building new housing, but since the government announced budget cuts in 2015, requiring a 1% rent reduction across social housing over 4 years, there are limited funds to progress some schemes. We are open to working with developing partners, both social and private, however the current central government policy direction and the funding available through the Homes and Communities Agency means that we have to be realistic about what can be achieved. Accommodation required for homeless households will generally be sourced from the private rented sector and we are working closely with partners, such as PATH, to secure 'affordable' accommodation. As Councils we also lease properties ourselves through 'private sector leasing schemes'. Project HP04 will 'develop an options appraisal report with registered partners to provide accommodation options to homeless people.' As part of the strategy implementation it is envisaged that we will have a number of working groups to focus on the task in hand. We will keep your comments in mind.	 




		<p>design new potential solutions. (e.g. Housing First models, Peer Landlord schemes, supported tenancies brokered by social sector organisations within the private rented sector etc.)</p> <p>Also in Section 3 (3.3a) I think we need to think very carefully about a nightshelter in Exeter - I am not certain that this type of provision is helpful or desirable.</p>	<p>In Section 3.3, at this stage it is a discussion about whether there is a need for a night shelter in Exeter City. At present there is no commitment to deliver. If something were to be delivered it would probably be more along the lines of the 'safe sleep' model, giving emergency accommodation through the coldest months, as a step toward more settled accommodation.</p>	
<p>9 4510351890</p>	<p>Place to live</p>	<p>Could have more detail about what accommodation could be built. The Council should invest in homes for those without one, not people who want a different one.</p>	<p>The issues of affordable housing delivery and affordability are explored within the Housing Strategy. Devon Home Choice is the way social housing is allocated to people and there are criteria about how households are allocated new homes. Both Councils have a programme of building new housing, but since the government announced budget cuts in 2015, requiring a 1% rent reduction across social housing over 4 years, there are limited funds to progress some schemes.</p>	
<p>10 4526090596</p>	<p>Access to services</p>	<p>The actions are good but our experience of trying to access help lines is not good. Often no answer from the Outreach team especially at weekends.....</p>	<p>Thank you. The current working pattern of the Outreach Team does not cover weekends and the capacity within Teignbridge is equivalent to one day a week. Resources are prioritised to the locations where there is the greatest need and times where engagement and resolution can be best managed.</p> <p>Both councils are signed up with the StreetLink project, which we intend to advertise more widely and promote better contacts.</p>	
<p>11 4511577984</p>	<p>Access to services</p>	<p>Good section - could do more to highlight and celebrate the inter-agency and cross-sector work being undertaken to tackle complexity and entrenchment - e.g. MEAM, ICE etc, and the fact that the Exeter Community Safety Partnership & Street Attachment Group is currently commissioning the "mapping" of a city-wide "exit offer" for the street-attached.</p>	<p>Noted. When the strategy was drafted the progress of Making Every Adult matter (MEAM), Integrated Care Exeter (ICE) and the Street Attachment Group (StAG) were in their infancy and their roles will be further outlined in the later version.</p>	


12 4544677903	Health and protection	Have forwarded to DCC Children's Services for comment on 5.2a.	Thank you	
13 4511577984	Health and protection	In Action HH06 (p.22) again I think you could mention that the City Council and others will be involved in mapping the "exit offer" and asking organisations to agree a shared set of values and protocols in order to develop the "consistent" approach referred to.	When the strategy was drafted the progress of Making Every Adult matter (MEAM), Integrated Care Exeter (ICE) and the Street Attachment Group (StAG) were in their infancy and their roles will be further outlined in the later version.	
14 4606645142	Health and protection	<p>The strategy valuably highlights the importance of supporting people with multiple needs, but the proposed response does not seem adequate to the scale of the problem. There is a specific lack of suitable accommodation for people with significant mental health needs and substance misuse issues (particularly those with dual diagnoses) locally. I fear the impact of initiatives such as ICE will be limited unless increased specialist accommodation options for those with high-support needs is also made available.</p> <p>Separately, I also feel that the strategy misrepresents the level of co-ordination and knowledge that already exists between experienced local voluntary groups (for example, through the Exeter Soup Kitchen Network, which incorporates all major groups locally and already works directly and proactively with ECC to tackle rough sleeping)</p>	<p>Mental health services are commissioned via Devon Partnership Trust and substance misuse services are commissioned via Public Health at Devon County Council. As local authorities it is important that Exeter and Teignbridge work closely with both partners. Especially through the delivery of the 'dual diagnosis strategy', which is currently under development. There is a rehabilitation service, but this is limited and accessed via Recovery and Integrated Services (RISE), who are commissioned by Public Health, who would require commitment for change from service users.</p> <p>There is currently a lack of co-ordination and smaller voluntary groups which we acknowledge and will seek to address. With specific regard to the soup kitchens this work has been included as part of the work of the Outreach Team, where we are looking to engage them in our emerging plan.</p>	


15 4511577984	Money matters	I think the "spend to save" case is very strong in homelessness, and this driver has made housing services in some parts of the UK an "early adopter" of socially-financed models. I think Exeter & Teignbridge could more explicitly state an aim to explore socially-financed housing models - evaluating evidence and emerging practice from elsewhere.	Noted. Action HM08 proposes to 'develop a cost calculator for homelessness services to effectively measure the impact of interventions and increase readiness to new public finance initiatives'. However, this is not the only avenue that we wish to explore.	
16 4510351890	Money matters	There should be additional funding to stop homeless people dying. Stop wasting money on swimming pools and shopping centres and invest in making the city and countryside safe and offer new housing to rough sleepers	<p>More than £110 million has been pledged by the government to tackle homelessness as part of the 2016 Budget. The money will be spent on 2,000 accommodation places for rough sleepers and on projects to prevent homelessness. Although this is mainly in the capital.</p> <p>Local authorities run a number of statutory activities which need to be resourced. Funding for some of these is ring fenced, or funding is decided by the democratically elected members. Unfortunately, severe cuts are having a continuing impact.</p> <p>Social housing is offered on criteria, on a case by case basis via Devon Home Choice.</p>	
17 4526090596	Governance	This looks good on paper but on the ground does it mean anything????	<p>Homelessness was identified as a high priority topic at Exeter's Annual Scrutiny Work Programme Meeting that took place in July 2015. It was decided to use the development of a task and finish group to join together members from both councils to look at the key challenges impacting homelessness across the area. It is proposed that this group continue as a Homelessness Steering Group with 2 meetings a year.</p> <p>We are looking at ways in which we can feed back to the community. On 24 March 16, we held a public consultation event in Exeter's Guildhall, where members of the public were given the opportunity to meet partners and stakeholders who provide service for the homeless in the area. We will be looking to replicate this in the future.</p>	
18 4547261175	Appendix	Mostly fine, same comment about 3D graphs	Noted, we will make changes	
19 4544677903	Appendix	see note below in comment 9 box.	Noted	

<p>20 4511577984</p>	<p>Appendix</p>	<p>Some "not achieved" actions need re-visiting, they still have merit. E.g. - Bringing empty homes back into use, links to employment services etc.</p>	<p>We will look at the unachieved actions once again.</p> <p>We have hosted several events with staff, members and the public looking to refocus work on homelessness. In addition there has been the development of a task and finish group to join together members from both councils to look at the current key challenges impacting homelessness across the area. All of these have generated the draft actions. Empty homes work is generally picked up within housing strategies, to which we will link, and we do work with partners, such as JobCentre Plus to signpost clients.</p>	
<p>21 4581626661</p>	<p>General comment</p>	<p>We welcome a greater emphasis on prevention. Support for crisis intervention must remain, but it is costly. More spending on preventative work, over time, must be the way forward.</p> <p>The Court Desk referred to on page 27 would benefit from an explanation that, to the best of my knowledge, there is no County Court provision in Teignbridge. Therefore cases go to either Exeter or Torbay. A joint funding approach to the Court provision would seem fair if Teignbridge were to cover some of the real costs of the service.</p>	<p>Agreed, early intervention, partnership working and homeless prevention are key themes in the strategy.</p> <p>We will add more detail about Court Desk provision in Exeter and Teignbridge</p>	

<p>22 4544677903</p>	<p>General comment</p>	<p>Page 9 says: "Public spending cuts have led to the loss of over 300 units of supported accommodation across the area in the last five years." This sentence infers that bed spaces have been removed. Please clarify that accommodation has not been lost and also note that in line with the principle of funding individual support packages to people assessed as most in need (rather than block purchasing support attached to a building) budgets may have been reallocated to support people assessed as eligible for social care which is personalised to meet their specific needs.</p> <p>Page 37 says: "DCC's 2014 homelessness prevention tender changed the model of provision by giving providers freedom to support clients in existing homes and along pathways, rather than solely linked to accommodation. This has clear benefits but also difficulties in the provisions of specialist high support services where housing support is needed alongside mental health, substance misuse or offending behaviour and usual accommodation does not provide a suitable setting." For additional clarity it would be useful to add in that "Where current accommodation is not considered suitable, the flexibility of the 2014 contract allows support to be delivered on the basis of need rather than where buildings just happen to exist."</p>	<p>Noted. The accommodation does currently exist, but there are no longer any support services attached. Further discussion is needed about future commissioning of support services and we look forward to working with Devon County Council to highlight where service gaps exist and how we can jointly address these needs.</p> <p>As part of the strategy implementation it is envisaged that we will have a number of working groups to focus on the task in hand. We will keep your comments in mind.</p>	
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<p>23 4539449840</p>	<p>General comment</p>	<p>Most of the new builds in the area are not affordable for local people.</p> <p>Also local agents advise against letting to anyone on benefits.</p> <p>People who let up to 2 property's should get a tax break. this would encourage private / non business to rent out without losing too much in tax. a council run scheme should be in place of land agents. this way people with a property to let can have peace of mind. tax could be taken at source as community tax and not income tax. money can then be used for more social housing.</p>	<p>Affordability is discussed in the each authorities' Housing Strategy.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the 'no dss' prejudice prevails in the private rented sector. But we do work with landlords and letting agents to help manage tenancies. Both Exeter and Teignbridge are working with Plymouth Access To Homes to better access the private rented sector and there are at least three actions in the strategy, HP01/02/03, which take a proactive approach to working in this sector.</p> <p>Strict rules apply when you rent property. Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs govern and apply those rules and we have no jurisdiction. If being a landlord is your main job, you rent out more than one property and you're buying new properties to rent out, the HMRC see it as a business and will tax you accordingly.</p>	
<p>24 4526090596</p>	<p>General comment</p>	<p>This is a good working document but I do worry about the continuing number of homeless people we have coming to our Church asking for food and money. It's then difficult to know where to get help. It seems everything is in Exeter. Our town also desperately needs a group that will support people with addictions. Rise Recovery up and left last year and there is nothing in its place.</p>	<p>We acknowledge that there is currently a lack of co-ordination between the local authorities and the smaller voluntary groups, which the strategy seeks to address. With specific regard to the homeless visitors to your centre, our Outreach Team will be in touch to see how they can assist to help address your issues and help meet the needs of homeless people in the area.</p>	
<p>25 4524223207</p>	<p>General comment</p>	<p>The policy does not give sufficient priority for affordable housing to those who are working in low paid jobs, but cannot afford housing in the area they want to live</p>	<p>The issues of affordable housing delivery and affordability are explored within the Housing Strategy. Devon Home Choice is the way social housing is allocated to people and there are criteria about how households are allocated homes.</p>	
<p>26 4514219994</p>	<p>General comment</p>	<p>No mention of Credit Unions</p>	<p>Agreed, we will include credit unions in the Money Matters section</p>	

27 4512241500	General comment	A very well planned customer friendly layout	Thanks	
28 4511655242	General comment	I think that the homelessness strategy puts into words what most already know.. And that is all that it is words ! The deed may be more difficult to deliver given the numbers set to enter the country.	Homelessness was identified as a high priority topic at Exeter's Annual Scrutiny Work Programme Meeting that took place in July 2015. It was decided to use the development of a task and finish group to join together elected members from both councils to look at the key challenges impacting homelessness across the area. It is proposed that this group continue as a Homelessness Steering Group with 2 meetings a year.	
29 4511577984	General comment	The main thing missing is an actual strategy / approach / stated ambition to bring more units of accommodation into use. As stressed above, this is not to be seen simply as something for local authorities to achieve alone - it needs a multi-agency, cross-sector, co-designed solution(s). It may involve new financial models, pilots of different approaches, and a review of evidence and practice from elsewhere. However, when push comes to shove, in Exeter at least, the homelessness crisis is due in significant part to the sheer shortage of appropriate, affordable accommodation, so as a whole community we all need to do more to increase supply.	As part of the strategy we will be mapping all affordable and supported accommodation across the area and will look at how people currently access this accommodation. This work will go a long way to identify gaps in the service provision and will help to determine how we can address the issue of supply. We are open to working with developing partners, both social and private, however the current central government policy direction and the funding available through the Homes and Communities Agency means that we have to be realistic about what can be achieved. But project HP04 will Develop an options appraisal report with registered partners to provide accommodation options to homeless people.	
30 4510351890	General comment	There should be more money available to provide the services people need. I get that resources are tight but they need to be prioritised across the councils to the most vulnerable	More than £110 million has been pledged by the government to tackle homelessness as part of the 2016 Budget. The money will be spent on 2,000 accommodation places for rough sleepers and on projects to prevent homelessness. Local authorities run a number of statutory activities which need to be resourced. Funding for some of these is ring fenced, or funding is decided by the democratically elected members. Unfortunately, severe cuts are having a continuing impact.	

31 4609176598	General comment	Reference should probably be made to the proposed PSPO in Exeter. The Salvation Army and other churches also play a part in supporting homeless people.	The strategy is about the prevention and reduction of homelessness. The PSPO is about dealing with anti-social behaviour. Although both are potentially linked they remain separate policies. We will include the Salvation Army in the 'Partner approach' section [7.1b]	
32 4606645142	General comment	The holistic awareness of individuals' needs and their impact on housing needs, and the integrated approach this leads to, is very strong in this strategy. I also greatly appreciate the new emphasis on partnership working with local organisations, including the voluntary sector, which I see as key to future successes.	Agreed, early intervention, partnership working and homeless prevention are key themes in the strategy. Reduction in rough sleeping and homelessness can only be achieved when partners work together. We look forward to your support.	

If you need this information in another format, please contact us.



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