



Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	25 April 2017
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	No Second Night Out Policy
Contact:	Cllr Margaret Griffiths – Portfolio Holder for Housing Author /Responsible Officer - Natasha Brathwaite – Group Manager Strategic Housing
Purpose of report:	For Members to consider the new No Second Night out Policy and approve if in agreement.
Recommendations	That Cabinet approve and adopt the No Second Night Out policy set out in appendix 2 of the attached report.
Corporate Objectives:	Affordable Housing
Implications:	<p>The Council has closely scrutinised service delivery in the last 12 months. A peer review assessment of the service was also conducted in March 2016, which the Strategic Housing service successfully passed. The Council is now committed to achieving the 10 local challenges required to attain the Gold Standard for homelessness and will be seeking to implement proposals received from the National Practitioners Support Service within our Continuous Improvement Plan to ensure this happens.</p> <p>One of the requirements to achieve Gold standard status is to have an approved approach in respect of No Second Night Out, if the Council does not have this then we will be unable to achieve the status. In order to meet these commitments it is critical that the Council makes the recommended improvements identified, whilst ensuring that increasing service demand can be met at this challenging time and prepare ourselves for any potential changes in guidance, such as the Homeless Reduction Bill, which will further impact service delivery. Failure to adequately address rough sleeping in the borough council may result in the Council failing to exercise its</p>

Value For Money Implications'	<p>statutory duty and also result in safeguarding implications.</p> <p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>Within 2017/18 budget resources have been implemented to ensure that the service is adequately resourced, to support recommendations made to further improve the service delivered to customers. Furthermore the Council has now received notification of the Flexible Homeless Support funding, that is to be allocated to Dacorum for 2017/18 and 2018/19, this funding is ring-fenced to enable the Council to ensure that the service is adequately resourced to deal with the impact of the potential implementation of the homeless reduction bill. Further work is underway in service to determine the requirements of the service and ensure that funding is used to maximise our effectiveness in delivering Homelessness Strategy commitments.</p> <p><u>Value for money</u></p> <p>It is important that we deliver value for money for local people accessing our homelessness support services. Increased demand requires us to explore new ways to improve efficiency within our housing advice and options service so we can target resources to improve service quality, enhance effectiveness and deliver positive outcomes for our clients. We are also committed to 'demonstrating the cost effectiveness of preventing homelessness'. By investing in preventative approaches we can support people to stay in existing accommodation</p>
Risk Implications	<p>Risk Assessment completed</p> <p>The intention of this report is to comply with legislation and therefore avoid the risk of non-compliance. A procedure and review is underway and involves all frontline officers. Improved communications and notification programme for rough sleepers is in place and has been since October 2015</p>
Community Impact Assessment	<p>Community Impact Assessment carried out</p>
Health And Safety Implications	<p>There are no direct Health and Safety implications from the strategy.</p>
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	<p>Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>The Policy will help to ensure that appropriate support and guidance is offered to those persons 'rough sleeping' and provide a framework for enforcement action where</p>

	<p>appropriate.</p> <p>Deputy S.151 Officer</p> <p>We have received confirmation that the grant will be ring-fenced in 2017/18 and 2018/19. The detailed financial implications will need to be modelled to live within the terms of the grant both within year and also for any ongoing liabilities.</p>
Consultees:	<p>Cllr Margaret Griffiths – Portfolio Holder for Housing</p> <p>Mark Gaynor – Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration</p> <p>Elliott Brooks – Assistant Director Housing</p> <p>Mark Brookes – Solicitor to the Council</p> <p>Julie Still – Group Manager Residents Services</p> <p>Cynthia Hayford – Strategic Housing Team Leader</p> <p>Emily-Rae Maxwell – Policy & Participation Team Leader</p> <p>Homelessness Forum partners</p>
Background papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Housing Allocations Policy • Housing Strategy 2016 -2020 • Localism Act 2011 • The Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Localism Act 2011) • The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<p>NSNO: No Second Night Out policy</p>

1. Background

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to outline the context behind the drafted No Second Night Out policy (NSNO) and how it will support the wider approach to preventing and tackling homelessness in Dacorum.
- 1.2. For the purpose of this report and policy 'rough sleeping' is defined as;
 - People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments)
 - People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or 'bashes').

For the full policy, please see appendix one NSNO Policy Draft.

- 1.3. The number of rough sleepers nationally and in Dacorum has increased. In the 2014 the Council identified seven known rough sleepers within the borough and in the years prior to this Dacorum have consistently reported less than five rough sleepers. Both figures contradict evidence collected by partner agencies who reported the number of rough sleepers was closer to thirty. This led to the Council undertaking a formal homeless count for the first time in 2015 with the support of Homeless Link, DENS and other statutory and voluntary partners. Following the count the Council has continued to monitor the numbers of rough sleeping, and figures have ranged between four and fifteen rough sleepers on any given night.
- 1.4. As a result of the increased demand, not only in the number of rough sleepers but people approaching as homeless, the Strategic Housing service took the opportunity to work with the Policy and Participation team to review and develop a new Homelessness Strategy. This new strategy 'Preventing and Tackling Homelessness' 2016 – 2020 sets out the Councils vision to create a borough where homelessness is not an option. This includes a commitment to developing a No Second Night Out policy. This strategy was approved by Cabinet in November 2016.
- 1.5. To date, the Council and its partners have made a number of arrangements to support rough sleepers in the local area off the streets. There remained a need for leadership when coordinating the approach to end rough sleeping and a clear expectation on the support provided within the borough. The purpose being to ensure that people who are rough sleeping receive a consistent service regardless of the service or agency they initially make contact with.

2. No Second Night Out Policy

- 2.1. In 2012, the Government called on all Local Authorities to adopt the No Second Night Out standard. Government recognised that the approach would need to be tailored to local need. Dacorum is

considered a local authority with 'low numbers' of rough sleepers (in comparison to areas such as London). This however, provided a clear expectation for the Council to adopt and fulfil the role as leading organisation in Dacorum's response to tackling rough sleepers.

- 2.2. Traditionally, the No Second Night Out standard is focused on people who are new to the streets. Following discussions at the Homelessness Forum and an understanding of Dacorum's needs, it was felt that the policy should be used to outline a holistic approach to tackling rough sleepers holistically, including those considered entrenched. To ensure it would be successfully delivered, all members of the Homeless Forum were then asked to commit to joint delivery of the policy and its aims.
- 2.3. The aims of this policy are to;
 - Outline how we will ensure appropriate measures are in place to support people who are rough sleeping to move off of the streets;
 - Outline how we will increase local options so that rough sleeping is not enabled.
- 2.4. The policy is centred on six key statements;
 - We will ensure there is a consistent and rapid response to supporting rough sleepers across all support services operating in Dacorum.
 - We will work with rough sleepers to identify their needs and develop appropriate support plans.
 - We will help reconnect rough sleepers to areas where they have support networks e.g. family.
 - We will provide support for people from the European Migrant Area.
 - We will support people who have no recourse to public funds.
 - We will work with public health partners including the Clinical Commissioning Group to reduce the number of people rough sleeping when discharged from hospital.
- 2.5. These policy statements were developed using current situations within the borough regarding rough sleepers e.g. supporting those with no recourse to public funds that required a clearer stance, and guidance from Central Government on the No Second Night Out standard. It was presented back to the Homelessness Forum where it was circulated as part of the consultation process.
- 2.6. To successfully embed this policy Strategic Housing and the Policy and Participation team have sought the approval of Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Management Team.

- 2.7. It is important to note, this policy does acknowledge the impact of 'street activity' e.g. begging within the borough however it is solely focused on the support offer for those who are genuinely rough sleeping.
- 2.8. Efforts will be made to work with all rough sleepers but there are individuals who refuse to engage and/or who are using rough sleeping for other purposes. It is acknowledged that there is a link between people rough sleeping and the likelihood of anti-social street activity.
- 2.9. Where the Strategic Housing team have provided advice and assistance to rough sleeping, but activity continues the service will work with key partners to take further action, which may include enforcement.
- 2.10. The service will then work with partners to monitor and review performance against these statements and the overarching homelessness strategy within the Homelessness Forum.
- 2.11. Over the Christmas period, the Council piloted a No Second Night Out Campaign. This promoted the use of Street Link, which is a national notification service for members of the public to use and report incidents of rough sleeping to the relevant local authority. The campaign was well received by Dacorum residents and raised public awareness of the support that is offered to those experiencing or at risk of street homelessness. The aim of this campaign was to discourage people from enabling rough sleepers in the local area. Based in the feedback from local residents and our partners, it is proposed this campaign is replicated for 2017/18.
- 2.12. This policy also supports to the Council's commitment to achieve the National Practitioners Support Service Gold Standard service, the Ten Local Challenges which includes Local Challenge Four 'To adopt a No Second Night Out policy'.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. The Homelessness Reduction Bill is progressing through parliament which will increase the obligations on local authorities and approval of this policy will leave the Council better prepared for current and future responsibilities. This policy will support the Council in taking a leading role in developing a consistent and effective approach to preventing rough sleeping. Using this model to inform a Council wide approach to tackle street activity and support the work currently being undertaken across the Council by Strategic Housing, Resident Services and Legal Department.
- 3.2. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the policy set out in *appendix one NSNO Policy Draft*.