

Cabinet

9 September 2021

Warwickshire Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021 - 2024

Recommendation

That Cabinet approve the Warwickshire Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-2024.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a statutory duty on Warwickshire County Council (WCC) as a Tier One local authority to develop and publish a Safe Accommodation Strategy.
- 1.2 There is a further requirement to reflect the safe accommodation and support needs of the local area within the Strategy. These must be identified via a mandatory Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment, which has to be conducted and refreshed on an annual basis.
- 1.3 The Warwickshire Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021 – 2024 has been informed by a range of multiagency engagement, including consultation with neighbouring authorities, and endorsed by the:
 - Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board (SWPB)
 - Violence Against Women and Girls Board (VAWG)
 - Safe Accommodation Working Group (SAWG)
- 1.4 The Strategy outlines the following five objectives:
 1. Early intervention and prevention: that victim-survivors (adults and children) are supported at an early stage and provided with options to remain safe at home to prevent homelessness. This includes holding perpetrators to account for their behaviour.
 2. Accessible services: that victim-survivors and professionals know how to access safe accommodation options, both within and outside of Warwickshire.
 3. Appropriate safe accommodation: that accommodation options and appropriate support is in place for all victim-survivors who need it.
 4. Multiagency delivery: that the needs of victim-survivors will be met by effective, collaborative multi-agency support.

5. Support to return home or move on: that victim-survivors are supported to return home safely and/or move into alternative permanent accommodation.

1.5 The implementation of the Strategy will be led by SAWG and overseen by the VAWG Board. A delivery plan and financial plan are in the process of being developed which will be monitored on a quarterly basis. The Strategy will be reviewed annually within the context of the refreshed Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment.

2. Financial Implications

2.1 Under new burdens, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) issued a section 31 grant to WCC which provides additional revenue funding via a 3-year settlement to deliver the Safe Accommodation duty. This will be allocated to the delivery of the Warwickshire Safe Accommodation Strategy.

2.2 Table one outlines the amount allocated by MHCLG for 2021/22, along with details of how much has been allocated to individual district and borough councils.

Local Authority	Funding allocation for 2021/22
Warwickshire County Council	£1,040,132
North Warwickshire Borough Council	£34,867
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council	£31,944
Rugby Borough Council	£34,240
Warwick District Council	£34,498
Stratford District Council	£34,416
Total	£1,210,097

Table one: MHCLG funding allocation to Local Authorities in Warwickshire 2021-2022

2.3 The Council has discussed the option of pooling financial resources across the county; district and borough councils are in the process of reviewing this.

2.4 A financial plan, allocating the spend is in the process of being developed.

3 Environmental Implications

None

4 Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Government guidance associated with the Domestic Abuse Act, outlines that the Strategy must include:
- An overall and holistic approach to deliver a rounded offer of support to victims in safe accommodation.
 - An outline of plans and approaches setting out how this will be delivered by working across Tier One and Tier Two local authorities. This includes working with other services within the local authority, specialist domestic abuse providers, the Police and Crime Commissioner, housing, and health bodies.
- 4.2 There is a further requirement to reflect the safe accommodation and support needs of the local area within the Strategy. These must be identified via a mandatory, Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment, which needs to be refreshed on an annual basis. The Needs Assessment provides an overview of the differing requirements of victim-survivors and maps the current support provided to them.
- 4.3 Tier One local authorities must outline how they will source and provide the support and meet the needs of all victim-survivors. This must include, but is not limited to:
- Addressing the barriers faced by victim-survivors with protected characteristics and / or multiple complex needs.
 - Meeting the support needs of children and young people who are accommodated with their families within safe accommodation provision.
 - Ensuring that victim-survivors crossing local authority boundaries will be accommodated, and that services are not restricted by the victim-survivors locality.
 - Outlining the level of funding being committed to deliver on the areas set out in the strategy.
- 4.4 The Strategy is also required to:
- Set out how local authorities plan to spread awareness of domestic violence and abuse and the support available to victims-survivors.
 - Demonstrate links with other relevant areas, such as: Violence Against Women and Girls, Modern Slavery, Community Safety, Housing, Homelessness Reduction and Safeguarding.

5 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 If approved by Cabinet, the Warwickshire Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-2024, will be published by the 31st October 2021 in accordance with the Government guidance. Implementation and delivery will immediately follow.

Appendix

Appendix: ***Warwickshire Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-2024***

Background Papers

None

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Portfolio Holder for Fire & Rescue and Community Safety - Councillor Andy Crump

Other members: Councillors Golby, Holland, Drew and Rolfe