



Briefing: Homelessness Strategy

25 October 2023 – 4.47pm

Attendees

Elected Members: Mayor Barry, Cr Barratt, Cr Briggs, Cr Brown (via audio-visual link), Cr Dyer, Cr Edwards, Deputy Mayor Lewis, Cr Mitchell, Cr Morgan, Cr Parkin, Cr Shaw, Cr Stallinger (via audio-visual link), Cr Tupou (via audio-visual link).

Staff: J Miller, Chief Executive; A Blackshaw, Director Neighbourhoods and Communities (via audio-visual link); J Griffiths, Director Strategy and Engagement; R Hardie, Head of Strategy and Policy; C Parish, Head of Mayor's Office; S White, Policy Advisor; D Gharbaoui, Policy Advisor (via audio-visual link); J Randall, Democracy Advisor.

Mana Whenua:

C Ellery, Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira (via audio-visual link).

Apologies

There were no apologies.

Presenter

R Hardie, Head of Strategy and Policy.

Key Objectives of the Briefing

The purpose of the briefing was to present results from a review of Council's 2019 Homelessness Strategy Action Plan (the Action Plan).

Introduction

The goal is to develop a clearer picture of homelessness and understand what Council can do to support and prevent homelessness. The terms of reference for reviewing the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan did not include the work of external partners.

Presentation by Richard Hardie, Head of Strategy and Policy

Slide 1 (Header)

Slide 2 – Homelessness Strategy – working together to end homelessness: The review is looking to map how many people are experiencing homelessness, including those experiencing homelessness in other ways than living on the streets. Council's role is specified in the Action Plan, and there are 24 targeted actions.

Slide 3 – Homelessness targets, related actions in Action Plan and Strategic Priorities: Council had agreed to fund three providers as part of the 2019 Homelessness Strategy. That funding has now been extended to ten providers working with Council's strategic approach.

Slide 4 – Other HCC roles: The Homelessness Network provides an opportunity for organisations, including Mana Whenua, to work together to better achieve goals. This multi-partnership allows a more comprehensive collective understanding of homelessness. Central government representatives can see the value in the network and are regular participants. Council is viewed as a leader that can enable and facilitate action and assist with data collection.

Slide 5 – 2023 review of strategy to understand successes and challenges:

Officers used a partnership approach via a review panel that involved Council officers, the General Manager of Takiri Mai Te Ata Trust, Community Law and the Tuatahi Centre. They developed terms of reference, and a contractor: 'Making Everything Achievable' (MEA), assisted with the refresh. Those experiencing homelessness were also given a voice in the Action Plan review.

Slide 6 – The review results (Header)

Slide 7 – High level results: There were four key findings and eleven key recommendations. The MEA Action Plan demonstrated Council has developed good relationships. It pointed out changes from the central government level that could make a difference.

Slide 8 – Initial assessment: Providers' services will be reviewed to ensure they are working. There is a role for central government funds and a role for Council to lobby for more. Council is looking to fund and share an administration role for the Homelessness Network.

Slide 9 – Initial assessment (continued) Council can help by directing providers and whānau to where they can find support.

Slide 10 – Initial assessment (continued): Some recommendations are within the control of Council and its partners and some are directed to central government. The recommendations provide an understanding of the importance of partnering with both government and non-government entities.

Slide 11 – Next steps: Refreshed Action Plan: The recommendations will feed into the refresh of the Action Plan. Some actions are not specifically for Council to action, but they need to be considered as it moves forward with a plan. Officers will also consider what else central government can offer to fill strategic gaps and support our providers. Officers will define what they can do better with existing resources to help support and address homelessness.

Questions and discussion points

- The Takiri Mai te Ata Trust works closely with homeless people who have disabilities. It addresses a range of issues behind homelessness to support people experiencing homelessness.
- The Homelessness Strategy aims to engage with and find housing solutions for people from various backgrounds. Officers will ensure those with disabilities are considered in the refreshed Action Plan.
- Understanding the underlying causes of homelessness is a key priority, and officers will make sure this is prominent in the Strategy and the Action Plan. It will be captured in the performance measures and used when considering solutions.
- Community providers deliver assistance to the homeless, but their role is not to understand the causes.
- Officers are asked to consider ways to increase funding and leverage more government funding to provide better intervention measures.
- It is essential to understand what homelessness is – it is often invisible, hidden in emergency and temporary housing.
- The review has informed Council to the extent it can make improvements, but more understanding is needed.

Next steps

- Officers will engage with the Homelessness Network.
- The refreshed Action Plan will be developed.
- Agreement will be sought from the Communities, Culture and Partnerships Committee on 28 February 2024.

Briefing materials

Attachment 1 – Presentation: Homelessness Implementation Review Results.

The briefing closed at 5.18pm