

SUBJECT: COUNTY HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2022-2027

DIRECTORATE: HOUSING AND INVESTMENT

REPORT AUTHOR: ALISON TIMMINS - HOUSING SOLUTIONS MANAGER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy 2017-2021 review document, to consider the consultation summary document and to seek approval for the new Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy 2022-2027

2. Background

- 2.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 requires that all Local Authorities carry out a review of homelessness in their areas, formulate and publish a strategy based on the findings of this review, keep the strategy under review and consult with other local or public authorities and voluntary organisations before modifying or adopting a strategy.
- 2.2 The strategy should:
- Assess the levels of homelessness now, and the factors likely to impact on future levels of homelessness
 - Ensure that there is sufficient accommodation available for people who are, or may become, homeless
 - Provide services that help to prevent people becoming homeless
 - Ensure that through effective partnerships, support services can be accessed for those people who are, or who may become, homeless – or to prevent them from becoming homeless again
 - Promote a cultural change so that homelessness is viewed in a wider context than just lack of accommodation
- 2.3 This strategy (attached at Appendix 1) is the fifth document that has been developed by all Lincolnshire Housing Authorities, in partnership with our stakeholders and has been formulated following our strategy review (attached at Appendix 2).
- 2.4 An extensive consultation (attached at Appendix 3) with stakeholders collated the achievements of the last strategy and shaped the strategic direction of this document. A series of focus groups, one-to-one meetings and a survey collated vital feedback, which will enable this strategy to meet the aims of not only the seven district councils but our partners.
- 2.5 To allow us to form a collective and robust approach to homelessness, we have incorporated our Rough Sleeper Strategy into this this document as opposed to having a separate document.

- 2.6 This strategy informs of the current position and challenges for homelessness across the County, sets out the priorities and actions that together aims to prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping across the County.

3. Priorities

- 3.1 The strategy demonstrates that we are committed to the Government's vision that homelessness should be rare, brief and non-recurring
- 3.2 Building on the successes of the last strategy and taking account of new challenges the new priorities for the next 5 years will be:

Prevent – identify those that are at risk of becoming homeless as early as possible and through the Duty to Refer work with them to prevent homelessness or rough sleeping

Protect – identifying the most vulnerable and ensuring individuals are safe from harm, and have access to the support and services to maintain their health and wellbeing

Partnerships – strengthen and maintain relationships to bring together resources and knowledge to prevent and relieve homelessness

Place – ensure accommodation is both available and suitable for those that need it and explore opportunities to increase the supply of accommodation

Plan – take a proactive and joined up approach to tackling rough sleeping and homelessness and explore funding opportunities to ensure we meet the needs of all client groups

- 3.3 These priorities have been chosen to reflect the issues highlighted through the consultation process with our stakeholders and the challenges we face going forward.

4. Developing the Strategy

- 4.1 A through consultation was completed throughout the development of the strategy. A review of the previous strategy provided a basis on which the new strategy could be formulated along with stakeholder comments from the consultation.
- 4.2 A series of focus groups and one-to-one meetings ensured the views of our stakeholders were captured into order to highlight the challenges we face together and ideas to resolve them.
- 4.3 Strategic leads were consulted on the final draft before going out to public consultation. A total of 22 responses were received to the consultation and a collective response from Lincolnshire County Council. The comments shaped the final version and further details can be found in the summary document at Appendix 3.

5. Pathways

- 5.1 There are many people that can experience or be threatened with homelessness in their lifetime all of which will have different reasons and situations. Whilst each person receives a housing and support plan specific to their needs the strategy identifies the main groups of people that to help and support;
- Single people
 - Families
 - Rough sleepers
 - Those with complex and/or specific needs
 - Priority groups at risk
- 5.2 Identifying the main barriers that these groups are facing allows us to produce tailored approaches to ensure our services offer a tailored and consistent approach across the county. These pathways are detailed in the strategy.

6. Monitoring

- 6.1 The strategy will be reviewed annually by both the Strategic Leads group represented by all district councils and the Lincs Housing Partnerships Manager
- 6.2 Each priority will have an action group responsible for the delivery of the ambitions and each will create a detailed implementation plan.
- 6.3 Representatives of the action groups will include the District Councils, Lincolnshire County Council, housing providers, voluntary sector and health professionals who will work collaboratively.
- 6.4 The action groups will be coordinated by the Lincs Homelessness Partnership group made up of all representatives, organisations and individuals involved in the remit of homelessness across the County.
- 6.5 Progress on the actions from the implementation plans will be reported to Lincs Housing Health Co-ordination Group and Housing Health Care Delivery Group.

7. Strategic Priorities

7.1 Let's reduce inequality

Delivery of the Lincolnshire Homeless Strategy will have a positive impact on this strategic priority by working to support the most disadvantaged groups within our community.

7.2 Let's deliver quality housing

Working with partners to maximise the availability of affordable housing across the city will reduce homelessness and rough sleeping.

8. Organisational Impacts

8.1 Finance

No financial implications.

8.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

As set out in the report, the Homelessness Act 2002 Section 1 (1) requires all local authorities to complete a homelessness review and Section 1 (4) to have a Homelessness Strategy.

8.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced on behalf of the partnership which identifies this Strategy will not have a detrimental impact on any group, rather the Strategy will positively impact disadvantaged groups.

8.4 Human Resources

It is anticipated that commitment to review the strategy and action plan can be met within existing resources. Each Local Authority currently contributes to the post of Lincs Housing Partnerships Manager, which is hosted by North Kesteven District Council on behalf of the 7 Lincolnshire Authorities.

8.5 Land, Property and Accommodation

No implications.

8.6 Significant Community Impact

No significant community impact.

9. Risk Implications

9.1 i. Options Explored

- a) Develop a City of Lincoln Homelessness Strategy

9.2 **ii. Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach**

The preferred approach is (a) as there is no associated risk. Whilst City of Lincoln Council will develop its own individual homelessness action plan, which will take additional time to develop, there is an established and effective partnership in place with positive outcomes achieved to date.

10. Recommendation

- 10.1 It is recommended that the Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy 2022-2027 be approved.

Is this a key decision?

Yes

Do the exempt information categories apply?

No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?

No

How many appendices does the report contain?

4

List of Background Papers:

None

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