

SUBJECT:	CITY OF LINCOLN HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY
DIRECTORATE:	HOUSING AND INVESTMENT
REPORT AUTHOR:	ALISON TIMMINS, HOUSING SOLUTIONS AND SUPPORT MANAGER (PROJECTS)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the Lincoln Homelessness Strategy and supporting action plan to Executive for approval.
- 1.2 The Lincoln Homelessness Strategy was considered by Policy Scrutiny Committee on 29 July 2024 (See minute extract at Appendix C).

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Lincoln Homelessness Strategy 2024-2029 sits within a framework of documents which aim to improve the housing situation in the city including the Lincoln Housing Strategy 2020-2025 and the Lincolnshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-2027. The Lincoln Homelessness Strategy and its action plan are structured around the three themes of making homelessness 'Rare, Brief and Non-Recurring.' The strategy is produced in partnership with a number of organisations across the city and therefore is the strategy for the city rather than for the Council alone.
- 2.2 The strategy includes the Homelessness Review which sets out the evidence base behind the strategy. The strategy and the review document meet the Council's requirement as set out in the Homelessness Act 2002.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Lincoln Homelessness Review and Strategy have been carried out in response to the requirement set out within the Homelessness Act 2002 for all Local Authorities to carry out a review of homelessness in their areas, formulate and publish a strategy based on the findings of the review, keep this strategy under review and consult with other local or public authorities and voluntary organisations before modifying or adopting a strategy. The Homelessness Act 2002 Section 2(1) sets out that a homelessness review means a review by the local housing authority of:
 - (a) The levels, and likely future levels, of homelessness in their district;
 - (b) The activities which are carried out for any of the following purposes (or which contribute to achieving any of them):
 - (i) preventing homelessness in the housing authority's district;
 - (ii) securing accommodation that is or will be available for people in the district who are or may become homeless; and

- (iii) providing support for people in the district: - who are or may become homeless; or – who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.
- (c) The resources available to the housing authority, the social services authority for the district, other public authorities, voluntary organisations and other persons for the activities outlined in (b) above.

4. The Lincoln Homelessness Strategy

- 4.1 The strategy has been developed drawing on expertise from the University of Warwick. During the development process a number of staff were consulted from within the Council and from agencies who work with households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Although the responsibility for producing the strategy is with the Council it is produced in partnership with various other agencies within the city and the strategy is the city's strategy for homelessness rather than the Council's strategy for homelessness.
- 4.2 The strategy and its action plan are structured into the three themes of making homelessness;
 - Rare
 - Brief
 - Non-Recurring

These themes reflect those within the National Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and also the Lincolnshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which was developed and adopted by all seven Lincolnshire District Councils and Lincolnshire County Council in 2023.

- 4.3 A challenging action plan has been developed which, in some instances, proposes changes to the way we work, the way we use our resources, and how we work with our partners. Some of the actions will be completed within the five-year life of this strategy, others it should be noted, may only be in the early planning and implementation stages in recognition that tackling homelessness is a complex and long term issue for the Council.

5. Strategic Priorities

5.1 Let's reduce all kinds of inequality

One of the key themes is the prevention of homelessness and this incorporates measures around financial capability and ensuring people are aware of their rights with regard to tenancies as well as ensuring people are claiming the benefits they are entitled to.

5.2 Let's deliver quality housing

The strategy highlights the need for more affordable housing and a great need for move on accommodation for those households who are living within supported accommodation. The action plan includes actions which involve proactively looking for funding and potential partnerships to enable the further delivery of more

affordable housing as well as looking at the good practice examples out there which could be replicated in Lincoln.

6. Organisational Impacts

6.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)

There are no direct financial implications as a result of the strategy. Where there are actions within the action plan which require financial resources these will be taken through the relevant approval processes when they are required.

6.2 Legal Implications Including Procurement Rules

There are no direct legal implications of the strategy itself. Where individual actions require approval they will be taken through the relevant processes when required.

The strategy itself meets the legal duty set out within the Homelessness Act 2002 Section 2(1) to formulate and produce a strategy based on the findings of the homelessness review.

6.3 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

7. Recommendation

7.1 That approval be given to the Homelessness Strategy by Executive.

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? Three

List of Background Papers: None

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