

Housing Scrutiny Commission

Leicester's new Homelessness Strategy

Date of meeting: 19th September 2023

Lead member : Cllr Elly Cutkelvin

Lead director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Julie Turner
- Author contact details: julie.turner@leicester.gov.uk Ext: 37 5212
- Report version number: v1.0

1. Summary

- 1.1 There is a requirement in the Homelessness Act 2002 for housing authorities to:
 - Carry out a review of homelessness in their areas.
 - Formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on this review.
 - Keep the strategy under review.
 - Consult other local or public authorities, or voluntary organisations before adopting or modifying the strategy.
- 1.2 The Council is required by statute to update its Homelessness Strategy every five years. The Council's last strategy was published in 2018.
- 1.3 In November 2022 we presented the completed homelessness review to Housing Scrutiny Commission. During May & June we consulted with partners and the HOPE Forum (a homelessness lived-experience group) to help develop our fifth Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and get input from partners regarding actions and improvements.
- 1.4 We have developed a new draft homelessness & rough sleeping strategy 2023-2028 for Leicester and an associated action plan (see appendices). The action plan will be a working document and reviewed annually.

2. Recommended actions/decision

- 2.1 We are asking the Housing Scrutiny Commission to:
 - Provide feedback on the draft strategy.

3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

- 3.1 We held workshops during May, where partner organisations including other council services, homelessness charities, other support services, registered social landlords, volunteers, local religious groups and others attended and were involved in workshops, to gather their thoughts on what should be included in our new strategy. We also invited feedback on proposed actions and improvements that each organisation might deliver.
- 3.2 In June we met with the HOPE Forum (a homelessness lived-experience group) to summarise the findings of the Homelessness review, discuss proposed priorities for the new strategy and seek feedback on their suggestions for actions and improvements.

- 3.3 A public consultation exercise was also undertaken July to September 2022 which were collated as part of the homelessness review. The findings of this consultation were used to help inform development of this strategy. In November 2022 the completed review was shared with the Housing Scrutiny Commission and shared with partners and others.

4. Detailed report

- 4.1 A homelessness strategy is defined as one formulated to:
- a) Prevent homelessness in an authority's area;
 - b) Secure that accommodation is and will be available in that area for people who are or may become homeless; and
 - c) Provide support for such people or those who have been homeless and need support to prevent it recurring.
- 4.2 The draft strategy (see appendix) summarises key findings from our comprehensive homelessness review, highlights key achievements of the previous strategy, sets out our priorities for the next five years and highlights some of the actions/improvements to be actioned.
- 4.3 To finalise this strategy we will discuss with the Charter and The HOPE forum whether they would like to add statements of support to the strategy, make changes required by CMB or HSC and work with communications and marketing to format and design the finalised document for publication on the Council's website.
- 4.4 We propose that the action plan (see appendix) is a working document and reviewed annually. We plan to discuss responsibilities relating to priority 4 – partnership working with the Homelessness Charter and other tasks with wider partners to set timescales for delivery. Updates on the homelessness strategy progress will continue for the Housing Scrutiny Commission.

5. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

The financial implications are driven not so much by the development of a strategy but by the action plan that is put in place. The implications will be considered in more detail throughout the production of this action plan, but given the financial constraints on local government there is an expectation that the focus will be on actions which are cost neutral or managed within existing resources.

Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance

5.2 Legal implications

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2002 imposes an obligation on local housing authorities to carry out a homelessness review at least every 5 years and to formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on that review.

The draft homelessness strategy appended to this report is the council's response to its latest review.

Jeremy Rainbow - Principal Lawyer (Litigation) - x371435.

5.3 Equalities implications

When making decisions, the Council must comply with the public sector equality duty (PSED) (Equality Act 2010) by paying due regard, when carrying out their functions, to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not.

We need to be clear about any equalities implications of the course of action proposed. In doing so, we must consider the likely impact on those likely to be affected by the options in the report and, in particular, the proposed option; their protected characteristics; and (where negative impacts are anticipated) mitigating actions that can be taken to reduce or remove that negative impact.

Protected characteristics under the public sector equality duty are age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The report is seeking feedback on the new draft Homelessness Strategy and action plan, which will impact on people from across a range of protected characteristics. Whilst the draft Homelessness Strategy is a strategic overarching document setting out our statutory responsibility per the Homelessness Act 2002, the actions listed for progressing the four priority areas in the draft action plan with partners, will be used to monitor delivery and track progress, and equality considerations should be embedded throughout the priorities.

In order to demonstrate that the consideration of equalities impacts is taken into account and as an integral part of the process of implementing the strategy priorities, it is recommended that Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken on relevant actions identified in the action plan as appropriate. The EIA process can support the Council to predict possible issues and take appropriate action such as removing or mitigating any negative impacts, where possible, and maximising any potential for positive impact. The EIA is an iterative process and should be revisited as part of the decision-making process.

Sukhi Biring, Equalities Officer, 454 4175

5.4 Climate Emergency implications

Housing is one of the largest sources of carbon emissions in Leicester, responsible for 33% of emissions in the city. Following the council's declaration of a Climate Emergency and its aim to achieve carbon neutrality addressing these emissions is vital to meeting our ambition. This is particularly important through the council's own housing provision where it has the highest level of influence and control. In addition, energy is a major cost for many city residents, and is therefore a contributing factor to housing affordability issues.

As such, opportunities to both reduce carbon emissions from housing and tackle fuel poverty among city residents should be considered through work to deliver the aims of this strategy. This includes ensuring that where housing is developed or refurbished it meets a high standard of energy and carbon efficiency. Improving energy efficiency should also help to ensure that housing reaches a high standard, reduce energy bills for tenants and help to limit maintenance costs. Links to the council's existing fuel poverty programmes for residents should also be considered, to identify opportunities to support those at risk of homelessness.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

5.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

None.

6. Background information and other papers:

None.

7. Summary of appendices:

Attached:

Draft Homelessness Strategy 2023 – Appendix 1

Draft Strategy Action Plan – Appendix 2

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

9. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?

No.

Leicester's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028

Forward

This is Leicester's fifth Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. Housing is a human right and this strategy outlines Leicester's commitment to ending rough sleeping and tackling all forms of homelessness.

The impacts of homelessness can be devastating for individuals and families. It can affect both physical and mental health, educational and employment opportunities (for both adults and children) and has long term consequences for those affected.

During the Covid pandemic Leicester's homelessness services provided accommodation and support to over 1,000 households at risk of rough sleeping and those in temporary accommodation with shared facilities. This involved a huge effort from a range of services and individuals and indicates the level of commitment there is locally to support people facing homelessness.

There are ongoing challenges, particularly with the cost-of-living crisis hitting household budgets, and continued pressures on Council finances. We are seeing more people approach services for homelessness support and advice.

Leicester City Council and homelessness partners across Leicester will continue to work to do all they can to end the plight of homelessness and will lobby government to respond to the housing crisis. This strategy sets out Leicester's priorities and the actions that will be taken locally to prevent people from becoming homeless wherever possible and provide support and advice when homelessness cannot be prevented. This five-year strategy looks at strengthening the already high level of partnership working across Leicester and how we can continue to make significant improvements across homelessness services.

Councillor Cutkelvin
Deputy City Mayor



Introduction

The context in which we deliver this strategy is challenging and may change. National challenges, such as changes to welfare policies, the cost-of-living crisis, local housing allowance not keeping pace with rents and the housing crisis, are likely to result in more households seeking housing support.

There is no 'quick fix' to resolving many of the broader social and economic challenges, and in the context of shrinking council budgets it is important to ensure our plans are prioritised. This strategy reflects what we can do locally.

Defining homelessness

People can be homeless if they have nowhere to stay and are sleeping on the streets (also known as rough sleeping). They can also be considered homeless (also known as the hidden homeless) even if they have a roof over their head.

This means that homelessness can also include people who are:

- Sofa surfing (temporarily staying with friends or family)
- Staying in a hostel, night shelter or bed & breakfast accommodation
- Squatting
- Homeless because of violence or abuse in their home
- Living in poor conditions which affect their health
- Living apart from their family because they don't have a place to live together.

This strategy has been drawn up from a robust evidence base (the homelessness review), which looks at patterns and trends in homelessness and the effectiveness of different interventions in preventing homelessness.

This strategy is accompanied by an action plan setting out specific actions we will take. Our action plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

Homelessness in Leicester

Key achievements 2018-2023

- During the pandemic over 1,000 households were assisted with accommodation and support. The Council and a wide range of services worked quickly and adapted their services to provide accommodation, healthcare, food, and other support to homeless people affected by the pandemic.
- Additional temporary accommodation was quickly mobilised, working with local hotels to provide self-contained accommodation to enable people to self-isolate and prevent the spread of Covid.
- Leicester's Homeless Charter launched in November 2018.
- Since 2018 Leicester has secured an additional £10m to support work to tackle homelessness.
- Improved homelessness prevention services in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

- Strong 'off the street' offer for those identified as rough sleeping. Extended outreach services (covering weekends) and supported by health services, and drug and alcohol and peer support services.
- Leicester, compared with other cities, has a wide range of homelessness services commissioned by the local authority as well as other provision funded by the third sector. This includes temporary accommodation, outreach services, one-to-one support staff, physical and mental health services, floating support services, substance misuse services, skills and employment services, day centres, food, and arts services.
- Nationally recognised specialist health services for individuals who are homeless.

Picture of homelessness in Leicester

- Generally, the number of households approaching the Council for assistance has increased year on year. In 2018/19 4,756 households sought help from the council in 2021/22 this was over 5,000 households.
- Support provided by council homelessness staff prevent homelessness in over 2 out of 3 cases.
- There is a lack of affordable housing options
- Around half of singles presenting to homelessness services have support needs. Of these, a quarter have mental health support needs and over 20% have complex support needs (2 or more support issues)
- Leicester's annual rough sleeping snapshot numbers returned to pre-pandemic after reducing in 2020 and 2021.
- Since July 2022 we have seen an alarming rise in family homelessness, primarily from the private rented sector. This increase has also been reflected nationally.

Future levels of homelessness in Leicester

- Increasing numbers of households approaching homelessness services and requiring temporary accommodation. We expect this to continue with the cost-of-living crisis and other pressures facing households.
- Previously outreach services mainly supported individuals known over many years to be rough sleeping however we are now seeing many 'new' individuals not previously known to be rough sleeping in the City.
- Limited affordable housing options available to households, which unless addressed will increase pressures on homelessness services, not just because additional households require support but because those in temporary accommodation do not have anywhere affordable to move-on to. This also impacts on the prevention of homelessness, for example, finding an alternative affordable home to prevent homelessness from occurring.

Our Priorities for the next 5 years

Our overarching priorities for this strategy continue to be:

1. Prevention

- wherever possible stop people from becoming homeless
- wherever possible stop people sleeping rough for the first time

2. Intervention

- improve early action/intervention and support so homelessness is as brief as possible
- improve support to those currently sleeping rough to move off the streets

3. Recovery

- enable access to settled housing and support where needed for people who have been homeless, so homelessness doesn't reoccur
- enhanced support to those who have slept rough to ensure they don't return to the streets

4. Partnership

- enhance partnership working to improve services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

Priority 1: Prevention

Successfully preventing and relieving homelessness has always been and remains the main aim and focus of the Council's Homelessness Prevention Service. Preventing homelessness avoids the trauma and upheaval of homelessness.

Prevention actions include any activities aimed at preventing a household threatened with homelessness from becoming homeless. This includes initiatives which enable a person to remain in their current home or find alternative accommodation to prevent them from becoming homeless.

The Council works with partners to understand and address the root causes of homelessness within the city and encourages these organisations to actively seek to identify people at risk of homelessness and to refer them for help at an early stage when support could prevent homelessness.

Early intervention can take the form of advice and information, mediation services; proactive interventions, such as negotiating with landlords to enable people to retain their tenancies; or assistance with debt. Housing advice is available and tailored to the needs of specific vulnerable groups, such as those leaving prison or youth detention; care leavers; former members of the armed forces; people leaving hospital; people experiencing domestic abuse; and those experiencing mental illness.

Addressing homelessness from the private rented sector is critical and we will continue to work with private sector landlords and lettings agents to understand how best to engage with them and to build an early alert system, so they contact us if their tenants are at risk of homelessness.

Spotlight on:
PRIVATE SECTOR RELATIONS TEAM

During 2022/23 the private rented sector team worked to sustain 104 private rented sector tenancies.

If you are keen to move as soon as possible then private renting may be your best option.

Private rented accommodation is generally the easiest, quickest, and most convenient route for people to find a home. There's lots of private lets in Leicester, and the benefits of renting privately include properties usually being available immediately, as well as giving you greater choice over where you live.

Where to find private rented accommodation:

- Letting agents in the city.
- Local newspapers such as the Leicester Mercury and community centres, libraries, or shops.
- Look online – popular websites include Zoopla, Rightmove and Sparreroom.

We can help remove barriers such as:

- Finding suitable and affordable accommodation.
- Raising money for a deposit.
- Landlords accepting benefit income as rent.



The team offers a range of services including:

- Negotiation with landlords to secure new tenancies where these are sustainable and affordable for the tenant
- Providing financial support with rent arrears or rent shortfalls
- Providing advice and support to landlords and tenants

Early identification of problems, early targeted interventions and the provision of high-quality advice and assistance will ensure people have the best chance of staying in their home or obtaining alternative accommodation.

What we plan to do / key objectives

- Review and improve engagement and initiatives available for private rented sector tenants & landlords
- Maximise funding available that enables people to maintain their tenancies
- Continue work to improve standards in the private rented sector
- Increase awareness of the range of housing options for households

- Review awareness and improve information for partners relating to referrals of cases early to prevent homelessness
- Develop targeted support to prevent people from rough sleeping
- Training, development, and support programme for homelessness prevention staff

Priority 2: Intervention

When homelessness does occur, our aim is to ensure that it is as brief as possible. Leicester has a range of services for households who are eligible for support and offers support to anyone who is found rough sleeping. In periods of severe weather additional support is offered to anyone rough sleeping.

Leicester has a team of staff providing outreach support for individuals who are rough sleeping. They engage with individuals on the street, signposting to services and referring to accommodation. There are tailored interventions for people on the streets based on individual needs, including support for people that have experienced long-term rough sleeping.

Case study:

OUTREACH IN ACTION



David (not his real name) had been sleeping rough for many years. He had a history of problematic substance use and poor mental health, he was known to the police, and he did not always want support.

Support workers engaged with David to enter temporary accommodation and engage with substance use treatment services and then into settled accommodation. David relapsed and his property was taken over and he was not able to return to this property for his own safety. He did rough sleep on occasion (even when alternative accommodation was available) and there was a serious decline in his physical and mental health and David was admitted to hospital.

Supporting David required a lot of multi-agency work with housing, homelessness, substance misuse, mental health, primary care and hospital services, the police, and voluntary services. This work has made sure David is now safe and reduced identified risks and a new safe tenancy is being identified for David.

There are also a range of organisations / charities / faith groups, offering a range of services, including healthcare, practical support, food, peer support, housing, advice & signposting.

Interventions are required where households advise they are already homeless to the council's homelessness prevention service. In these cases, support and advice is provided. This can include help to secure alternative accommodation. The council can refer households to a range of different organisations that provide accommodation and support (temporary accommodation).

Bed & breakfast, or accommodation without access to cooking facilities and other living space, is not suitable for anyone to live in and can affect people's mental health & wellbeing. Our aim is not to use this type of accommodation or when it is used, only for a very short time.

There is not enough affordable settled accommodation available, households are staying in temporary accommodation longer while they wait to move to a suitable home.

We want to manage peoples' expectations so that they understand when they approach our services that we are not able to offer many people council housing but can offer a wide range of other services to help them into a stable home. Addressing homelessness requires the person/s affected, the Council and other partners to work together to find a solution.

What we plan to do / key objectives

- Eliminate the use of B&B / paid nightly accommodation
- Improve access to information and services so clients can easily access information and support early and are realistic about likely outcomes
- Continue to provide and strengthen rough sleeping outreach services, providing on-going offers of support to anyone rough sleeping in Leicester
- Explore all funding opportunities to develop intervention services in Leicester
- Ensure temporary accommodation and support is available, where needed, for families and for other vulnerable people and appropriate support is provided to move-on to settled accommodation

Priority 3: Recovery

The lack of affordable housing options is a key challenge in tackling homelessness. Waiting times for council housing are increasing. Market rents are increasing and are well above Local Housing Allowance rates which means that many on low incomes can find it very difficult to access private rented housing. More social housing has been developed locally by the Council and other registered providers; however, demand far outstrips supply and many social rental homes are also lost through the right to buy scheme. The Council is committed to working to improve standards in the private rented sector and working with landlords providing good quality homes through delivery of its private rented sector strategy.

The limited supply of both affordable housing and supported accommodation has not only significantly increased the number of households living in temporary accommodation but also the length of time they spend there before a settled housing solution can be found.

Housing is central to promoting good health and wellbeing. Having a stable home is often a platform from which individuals feel they can then engage with other support services. However, some households' homelessness cannot be solved solely through the provision of accommodation. Some households require a range of support services to help them sustain their accommodation as well as personal support relating to factors such as relationship breakdown, domestic abuse, mental health problems, drug and alcohol addiction, offending, poverty, debt, and unemployment.

There are a wide range of accommodation and support initiatives available locally for households to recover from homelessness. The council, charities and organisations provide a range of accommodation-based support and other support services that assist individuals who have been homeless. There are also a wide range of wider support services in Leicester providing households with mental health support, drug and alcohol support, domestic abuse, poverty, debt and unemployment.

Spotlight on:
ST MUNGO'S RECOVERY COLLEGE



Delivered in partnership with Leicester City Council, local businesses and the community, the St Mungo's Recovery College offers inclusive learning, training and employment support to people recovering from homelessness.

A team of employment specialists provide intensive, individual support to those facing unemployment and homelessness, and build relationships with local employers to create sustainable opportunities in line with clients' skills and interests.

Clients can access a gardening training project and a construction skills programme. Other courses on offer include arts and crafts, IT skills, maths and English, life coaching, digital confidence, and digital employability.

St Mungo's Multi Skills Centre opened in partnership with Leicester City Council in September 2022. Students can learn and train in a variety of skills like plumbing, carpentry, tiling, painting and decorating, working towards a basic qualification and also gain practical experience with the Council's Repairs service. Over the last year the centre has engaged over 18 people who have experienced homelessness and 4 individuals have already completed their OCN in Multi Skills trades.

The Council secures additional funding for initiatives to support people who are homeless with complex needs and will continue to explore all additional funding opportunities. Some examples of support schemes that are available:

- A new multi-agency team (Changing Futures) providing intensive and specialist support for individuals experience multiple disadvantage
- Additional support to help people recover from drugs and alcohol misuse. Including accommodation where individuals get support in maintaining a tenancy and specialist homelessness officers
- Specialist longer-term accommodation with additional support for individuals who were rough sleeping
- Additional social workers to work with individuals who are homelessness but do not meet the adult social care statutory threshold.

What we plan to do / key objectives

- Continue social housing development through the Council's Local Plan and Affordable Homes Programme and ongoing council house building and acquisitions programme
- Explore all funding opportunities to develop specialist accommodation and support services for people to recover from homelessness
- Develop schemes so people can continue to access affordable, good quality homes in the private rented sector
- Connect people to local services, physical and mental-health services, education, cultural and leisure activities, housing and welfare support, training, volunteering, and employment opportunities.

Priority 4: Partnership

It is widely recognised that no single organisation can prevent or relieve homelessness. The causes of homelessness are multiple and complex and many of these are not housing related.

Government and partners have a role to play in preventing homelessness and addressing the underlying issues that are the root causes of homelessness, such as poverty, unemployment, poor physical and mental health, adverse childhood experiences, substance abuse, domestic abuse, and family breakdown - preventing homelessness is everybody's business.

Leicester has extensive partnership working arrangements; however, we continue to strive to build on and improve our partnership working. Working effectively together we can achieve more.

Spotlight on:

LEICESTER'S HOMELESSNESS CHARTER - Examples of the Charter's work to date



The Charter & Dear Albert (a peer-led recovery focused social enterprise) established the HOPE forum which seeks to elevate the voices of people who have experienced homelessness. This is a peer network with opportunities for them to contribute their personal insight and expertise.

The HOPE forum meets monthly and has provided feedback to a range of services, commissioners, and parliament.

In 2019 a new scheme, Give Leicester, was set up by BID Leicester, Leicester City Council, and the Charter to establish donation points across the city where people can donate £3 to help support people who are experiencing homelessness.

To date this has supported local homeless charities One Roof Leicester, The Bridge Homelessness to Hope raising over £46,000.

There are a wide range of partnership forums, meetings, and protocols where a wide range of agencies and charities come together to engage and coordinate their services as well as joint working across Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland.

With so much going on, effective communication between partners and access to up-to-date information for the public and other services needs to be a priority.

What we plan to do / key objectives

- Improve communication and raise awareness of homelessness support and services available for people locally
- Work with partners to identify how those with lived experience of homelessness can be included in the design and delivery of services
- Sharing knowledge and experience and improving partnership working across the sector
- Work with the voluntary and third sector, empowering and growing their homelessness service provision so that it is sustainable and resilient to future funding changes

Action Plan

Key to the delivery of this strategy is the collaborative work across the council and its partners. We are committed to maintaining and building on existing partnership working to support people to stay in their properties, or to find lasting and affordable housing options.

The strategy will be underpinned with an action plan which will be flexible and respond to emerging needs, trends, and policy changes. The action plan sets out the individual actions and activities to be undertaken and details how the Council & partners will achieve the aims and objectives of the strategy. There will be a dedicated Steering Group to ensure that the actions plan is regularly monitored and reviewed, and regular progress updates will be presented to the Housing Scrutiny Commission.

Appendix 2 – Homelessness Strategy Action Plan

Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy

Action Plan 2024-2025

Aim 1: Prevention – wherever possible stop people from becoming homeless or rough sleeping for the first time

Action / Improvement	Target / Outcome	Lead	Timescale
Develop prevention rough sleeping hub and work with range of services (YASC, HMHS, St Mungos, Turning Point, LCC homelessness services, DWP, Inclusion Healthcare) to provide accessible interventions	Effective support to prevent rough sleeping from happening in the first place and when this is not possible provide support, so individuals rough sleeping is as brief as possible	LCC Head of Homelessness	
Improve customer access to the council's homelessness prevention support services whether that be in person, on telephone or online and identify training needs and deliver training to meet any skill gaps and updates on new legislation and case law	Improve the prevention offer for those at risk of homelessness	LCC Head of Homelessness	
People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness can access discretionary funding e.g. council tax discretionary relief, discretionary housing payments, community support grants & council tax support	Ensure households, eligible for welfare support, receive assistance in a timely manner	Revenues & Benefits Manager & Welfare & Advice Manager	
Continue to build links with landlords and private sector tenants to ensure early advice and guidance can be provided to prevent	Develop the private sector offer improving early advice and guidance for both landlords and tenants	LCC Head of Homelessness	

homelessness e.g. roll out of call before you serve			
Continue programme of landlord accreditation in areas of high density of private rented accommodation	Improve standards in the private rented sector	LCC Selective Licensing Manager	
Develop the private sector offer, building links with landlords and private sector tenants	Ensure early advice and guidance can be provided to both landlords and tenants to prevent homelessness		
Research customer journeys into homelessness and address any barriers to access support	Identify early opportunities to prevent homelessness		
Review, evaluate and monitor data to predict future trends of homelessness	Identify households at risk of homeless to inform new service improvements		
Develop homelessness prevention toolkit that can be used in local schools	Provide information and advice available to young people		
Improve and develop improved early referral protocols with JobCentre Plus, Childrens services and other duty to refer organisations	Clear offers and pathways to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping		
Access to free, confidential, and independent housing advice / advocacy	Timely independent social welfare advice is provided	LCC Welfare & Advice Services	

Aim 2: Intervention – improve early action and support so homeless is as brief as possible and that rough sleeping to move off the streets

Action / Improvement	Target / Outcome	Lead	Timescale
Commissioning programme and maximise other funding opportunities to develop homelessness services	A range of different accommodation and support options and ensuring specialist provision is available to those most of need of this support	LCC Head of Homelessness	
Work with accommodation providers to ensure all move-on options are explored and address barriers to move-on	Residents are fully informed of the likelihood and issues regarding different settled housing options	LCC Head of Homelessness	
Explore with third sector partners additional offers of accommodation e.g., hosting schemes	Increase the range of accommodation options	LCC Director of Housing	
Improve information sharing with the Home Office regarding the numbers of individuals who have no leave to remain who were located within Leicester at the time of decision	Improved joint working to reduce individuals rough sleeping	LCC Head of Homelessness	
Work to prevent homelessness from occurring and increase self-contained temporary accommodation for families	Work to eliminate the use of bed & breakfast accommodation	LCC Head of Homelessness	
Improving the support for people who are or have been rough sleeping and ensure	Strengthened outreach offer	LCC Head of Homelessness	

support plans follow individuals even when there are breaks in accommodation			
Improve access to support veterans	Improved information and advice and access to services for veterans	YMCA / Turning Point	
Review joint protocol for homeless 16-17 year olds and oversee implementation into working practices and deliver joint training (including safeguarding, awareness & practice for housing and Outreach team) and identify a single point of contact for young people in the housing options services complimenting early help prevention offer	Improved homeless services for young people	LCC Housing & Children's Services	
Introduce earlier stage of multi-agency meetings for young people when an Introductory Notice to Terminate is served	Early intervention to prevent social housing tenancy breakdown for young people	LCC Housing & Children's Services	
Exploring all funding opportunities to develop specialist accommodation schemes	Meet the needs of individuals with complex needs	LCC Director of Housing	

Aim 3: Recovery – enable access to settled housing and those who need support that have been homeless, so homelessness doesn't reoccur and enhance support to those who have slept rough to ensure they don't return to the streets

Action / Improvement	Target / Outcome	Lead	Timescale
Embedding of transitions team (families and singles) to provide individualised support	Individualised support available to families and singles who most need help	LCC Head of Homelessness	
Develop package of support for council tenants to move between council properties of an appropriate size for their household	Make it easier and attractive for council tenants to downsize/upsized	LCC Head of Homelessness	
Social housing development through the Council's Local Plan and Affordable Home Programme and ongoing council house building and acquisitions	Increased stock of council houses for rent	LCC Director of Housing	
Review rent deposits schemes	Ensure as many people can access the private rented sector where having a rent deposit is a barrier	LCC Head of Homelessness	
Explore development of move-on accommodation for young people (AST) and Advantage Thinking Model for young people	Exceptional range of homelessness services for young people	Leicester YMCA	
Explore policy change to council tax support to enable this to remain in place for 6 weeks after move-on	Help ensure individuals time to make a claim and do not occur any arrears	Head of Revenues & Customer Support, LCC	2023/24

<p>Develop a housing and leaving care protocol including approach to transition planning, skills preparation, accommodation & support options and appropriate workforce training Work towards an enhanced letting standard for care leavers moving into non-LCC tenancies Develop second chance scheme to help care leavers take a step back into supported housing when living independently does not work out Review allocations policy to enable bidding for properties pre-18th birthday for care leavers</p>	<p>Improve services for young people leaving care who face homelessness</p>	<p>LCC Housing & Children's Services</p>	
<p>Develop a resettlement panel for young people leaving custody with youth justice service, probation, housing and children's services</p>	<p>Track plan and monitor stability of accommodation to avoid homelessness and provide reassurance to young people</p>	<p>LCC Housing & Children's Services</p>	

Aim 4: Working in partnership – enhance partnership working to improve services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

N.B: Working in partnership happens in most of the actions above, listed below are cross-cutting work that has not been covered in aims 1-3

Action / Improvement	Target / Outcome	Lead	Timescale
Improve communications from the Council to local homelessness partners and share knowledge and experience across the sector	Increased knowledge and joint working across the sector		
Raise awareness of homelessness support and services available for people locally and that local organisations know where to signpost individuals looking for support	Individuals and local organisations know what services are available		
Apply for any further funding bids the Government launch that are appropriate to meeting the needs of our City and explore other funding streams with partners where appropriate.	Maximise all funding opportunities to improve homelessness services in the city		
Enhance working in partnership with prison, probation and district colleagues to prevent homelessness on discharge or release from prison	Increased community safety and enhanced joint working		

Work with partners to identify how those with lived experience of homelessness can be included in the design and delivery of services	Improved services meeting the needs of service users		
Registered providers with properties in Leicester City to take an active role in tackling homelessness	All social housing providers working to tackle homelessness in the city		
Improving the way in which organisations and agencies work together	Making the most of limited resources and provide effective services		
Work with voluntary and third sector, empowering and growing their homelessness service provision	Sustainable and resilient to funding changes voluntary and third section		
Strengthen the links between homelessness service and health services	Improved joint working enhancing the experience of service users		