
Homelessness Review 2022

Housing Scrutiny Committee: 07/11/2022

Asst Mayor: Cllr Elly Cutkelvin

Lead Director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
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- Report version number: Draft

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 During July to September 2022 we consulted with service users, stakeholders and the wider public on the current homelessness strategy, (2018-2023) for their feedback on the successes and gaps in homelessness services. This has informed the homelessness review 2022 and a new homelessness strategy will be developed from this review.
- 1.3 A homelessness strategy is defined as one formulated in order 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.

2. Recommended actions/decision

- 2.1 To seek the comments of the Housing Scrutiny Commission on the draft documents.

3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

- 3.1 A public consultation exercise was undertaken July to September 2022 and the key findings have been summarised in the review document (see Appendix A). The findings of the consultation will also inform development of Leicester's next homelessness and rough sleeping strategy.

4. Detailed report

- 4.1 There is a requirement in the Homelessness Act 2002 for local authorities to carry out reviews and publish strategies to tackle and prevent homelessness in their locality.

4.2 In carrying out a homelessness review, local authorities are required to present a current 'picture' of homelessness provision in their locality and to anticipate future levels of homelessness in their area. Activities and services to prevent homelessness, including the provision of appropriate accommodation and support, need to be identified and adequate resources made available to provide them.

Summary from Leicester's homelessness review 2022 (full document at Appendix A)

4.3 What is the current picture of homelessness in Leicester?

- During the pandemic over 1,000 households were assisted with accommodation and support.
- Generally, the trend of the number of households approaching the Council for assistance have slightly increased year on year (since 2018/19).
- The top three reasons for homelessness are:
 - Eviction from private rented sector
 - Asked to leave by family or friends
 - Domestic abuse
- Support provided by 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 1/5th have complex support needs (2 or more support issues)
- Number of individuals identified by Outreach services as rough sleeping has increased however numbers identified the official count night (yearly snapshot) has been decreasing year on year.

4.4 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 and other pressures facing households.
- Seeing a large number of 'new' individuals not known to 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.

4.5 Activities and services to prevent homelessness

- Leicester's Homeless Charter launched in November 2018.

- Shared accommodation / dormitory accommodation for people sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough was closed during the Covid 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.
- 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 use services, skills and employment services, day centres, food and arts services.
- Nationally recognised specialist health services for individuals who are homeless.
- Need to build on existing partnership working to meet the needs of individuals with complex needs.

4.6 Resources available to fund homelessness services

- Over £5m spent annually by the Council's homelessness services.
- Since 2018 Leicester has secured an additional £10m to support work to tackle homelessness.
- LPT & Leicester City Council Public Health fund specialist primary health, mental health and drug and alcohol services.

5. Next stages

- 5.1 The homelessness review summarises the main points identified over the last 5 years and sets out some of the key challenges which will help inform a new homelessness strategy, paragraphs 5.41 to 5.62 (highlighted in Appendix B).
- 5.2 Local authorities are required to use the review to outline a strategy that plans changes to existing service provision to meet the needs of all homeless people, not just those whom they have a duty to re-house. We will use the evidence base and consultation feedback gathered as part of the review process to help inform a new homelessness strategy for Leicester.

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

6.1 Financial implications

Not required

6.2 Legal implications

Not required

6.3 Equalities implications

Not required

6.4 Climate Emergency implications

Not required

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

None

7. Background information and other papers:

[Homelessness \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicester.gov.uk) - Link to Homelessness and rough sleeping strategy 2018/23

8. Summary of appendices:

Appendix A: Homelessness Review 2022

Appendix B: Key points and challenges identified in the Homelessness Review

9. 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

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

No