POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL REPORT

REPORT TO:	Environment and Communities Committee		
DATE:	24 November 2026		
TITLE:	The King's Lynn and West Norfolk Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029. Progress Report and Action Plan Refresh		
TYPE OF REPORT:	Post Implementation Review		
PORTFOLIO(S):	People and Communities		
REPORT AUTHOR:	Andy King		
OPEN/EXEMPT	Open	WILL BE SUBJECT TO A FUTURE CABINET REPORT:	No

REPORT SUMMARY/COVER PAGE

PURPOSE OF REPORT/SUMMARY:
The report summarises the progress made in delivering the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 and presents a revised action plan for consideration.
KEY ISSUES:
The revised action plan has been produced by officers in line with our commitment to inform members on an annual basis of the progress of the strategy. It also follows a central government requirement for all local authorities to publish a refresh homelessness and rough sleeping action plan, alongside measurable targets against a set of key metrics. The report outlines strong progress in preventing and relieving homelessness, a reduction in use of nightly-paid accommodation, and minimal instances of rough sleeping. It draws both from data gathered over the past two years and from the experiences of people who have been supported to sustain accommodation and plan for the future. However, it highlights the continued difficulties experienced when working with people who face multiple barriers to finding and sustaining accommodation. It highlights scope for improving access to health and social care provision for people experiencing prolonged or repeated homelessness.
OPTIONS CONSIDERED:
Not applicable: as a progress report, it does not present options as such. We considered whether to opt for a fully rewritten and relaunched strategy. However, the original strategy was intended as a long-term statement of ambition, which was developed and agreed by the borough's homelessness partnership and approved by councillors. It aligns closely with the national strategy, with its five strategic strands bearing a close resemblance to the government's "pillars". The partnership is delivering on the strategy's aims, and data tells us that, person by person, the strategy is working. We have opted to retain the vision, values and key strategic strands of the original document, revising the action plan to reflect current data, challenges and risks.
RECOMMENDATIONS:
To note the attached report and the revised action plan.
REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:
The report is a fair and balanced summary of progress made towards delivering the council's homelessness and rough sleeping strategy. The action plan is a comprehensive revision of measurable actions towards ending homelessness in King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Introduction

1.1. This report acts as an 'executive summary' of a progress review of the borough's *Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029, Ending Homelessness, Person by Person*. It summarises a refreshed action plan, which will be delivered over the remainder of the strategy period.

1.2. The review has been undertaken in line with our commitment to inform members on an annual basis of the progress of the strategy. It also responds to the Government's requirement for local authorities to publish and regularly update homelessness action plans and set targets against key homelessness metrics.

1.3. The review also represents an opportunity to evaluate progress at the strategy's midway point and ensure that local services are in the strongest possible position as Local Government Reorganisation progresses.

1.4. Since the strategy was launched in November 2024, the council and its partners have continued to work towards a shared ambition of ending homelessness through a person-centred, partnership-based approach.

1.5. Significant progress has been made against the original action plan, and the evidence suggests that the partnership is heading in the right direction. However, homelessness remains a significant challenge, with around 150 households approaching the Housing Needs Service each month (resulting in around 50 homelessness applications per month), and further work is required before the borough can achieve its ambition of ending homelessness, person by person.

2. Post Implementation Review

2.1. The original strategy was intentionally ambitious. It acknowledged that ending homelessness may not be achievable within the lifetime of the strategy, but committed partners to measuring, recognising and celebrating progress towards that aim.

2.2. The strategy was structured around five delivery strands: Prevention, Intervention, Accommodation, Recovery, and Systems Support and Service Culture. Delivery has been overseen through the Homelessness Strategy Implementation Partnership and a range of supporting sub-groups.

2.3. Progress against the original action plan has been positive. Of the 60 actions contained within the original strategy, 26 have been completed, 24 are in progress and 10 have not yet commenced. The review demonstrates growing ownership of the strategy across the borough, with many actions delivered independently by partner agencies rather than by the council alone.

2.4. Key achievements include:

- Redesign of the council's social housing allocations policy to improve access for households experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.
- Commissioning of new temporary and emergency accommodation, reducing reliance on nightly-paid and Bed and Breakfast accommodation.
- Reinstatement of a home visiting function to improve access to homelessness prevention services.
- Development of the By Name partnership to support people who experience the most severe forms of homelessness and multiple disadvantage.

- Continued provision of Housing First and Intensive Support Services to support people furthest from having their housing needs sustainably met.

2.5. Performance data demonstrates positive progress towards the strategy's aims over the last two years:

- Success in preventing homelessness has increased from 62% to 68%, whilst homelessness relief outcomes have improved from 42% to 60%.
- Temporary accommodation use has reduced significantly, with the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for families now rare and only used in emergencies.
- Levels of rough sleeping have remained low throughout the reporting period.

2.6. The review also highlights areas requiring further attention. Firstly, the partnership continues to face challenges in ending homelessness for people experiencing multiple disadvantage, particularly where homelessness is combined with mental ill-health, substance misuse, offending histories or domestic abuse. Partners emphasises the importance of a **person-centred approach** to resolving homelessness, designing and delivering services around the needs of the individual

2.7. Secondly, partners identified the need for a **whole-system approach**. Whilst there are excellent partnerships between services and across statutory, commissioned and voluntary sector boundaries, stronger engagement from health, mental health and social care services is key to delivering against the action plan.

2.8. Thirdly, the review highlights the importance of **two-way communication**, both between agencies and with residents. Partners reported that opportunities for earlier intervention are still being missed and that some individuals continue to seek assistance only at crisis point.

2.9. For these reasons, the partnership has refreshed rather than rewritten the original strategy. The revised action plan contains 67 actions, including seven new actions designed to respond to emerging evidence and current challenges.

2.10. The review sets out a series of targets, based on metrics outlined by the government. The targets include:

- Preventing homelessness in 75% of cases by September 2028
- Relieving homelessness in 67% of cases by September 2028
- A snapshot count of zero both for households with children in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, and for individuals sleeping rough, by September 2028

2.11. Additionally, the review commits to involving people with lived experience, both in terms of defining what success looks like and in terms of reviewing and responding to customer feedback.

3. Issues for the Panel to Consider

3.1. Members are invited to note the revised action plan prior to its publication and seek any additional clarification required, regarding the council's work towards ending homeless.

4. Corporate Priorities

4.1. The refreshed action plan aligns strongly with the council's Corporate Priorities. Its strongest alignment is with the aim to "support our communities", with strong focuses

on homelessness prevention, tacking social inequalities and supporting formerly homeless people to live safe and healthy lives.

4.2. Additionally, the action plan promotes “efficient and effective delivery of services”. As well as promoting homelessness prevention and providing a more suitable emergency accommodation offer, a reduction in nightly-paid accommodation costs results in a more efficiently delivered service.

4.3. The action plan seeks to “promote growth and prosperity” in the borough. It aims to enable “formerly homeless people to thrive in the borough”, supporting them to sustain suitable employment. Additionally, the council’s Strategic Housing team has supported the delivery of over 200 new affordable homes in the last year, which supports both the homelessness strategy and the council’s own corporate priorities.

5. Financial Implications

5.1. The action plan differentiates between activities that are:

- Fully funded through existing staffing resources, commissioned services and established partnership arrangements
- Partially funded, but that could be extended through additional funding or resources
- Not yet funded, and that would require external funding to deliver.

5.2. The partnership will continue to seek out opportunities for external funding, as evidenced by Shelter obtaining Lottery funding for a county-wide Lived Experience Coordinator post. Possible funding opportunities are detailed in the “funding and resourcing” column of the plan.

5.3. The government has committed to funding for homelessness services through its Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant (HRSDAG), which covers the period to 31 March 2029. There is sufficient funding to cover all commissioned services for their current contract periods.

5.4. Reducing reliance on costly nightly-paid accommodation remains a significant financial benefit and allows resources to be redirected towards prevention, recovery and person-centred support.

6. Any other Implications/Risks

6.1. The principal risks identified through the review include:

- Insufficient buy-in from health and social care partners.
- Limited progress in improving outcomes for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.
- Demand for homelessness assistance increasing faster than anticipated.
- Opportunities for prevention being missed due to operational pressures.
- Insufficient engagement of people with lived experience.
- Disruption arising from Local Government Reorganisation.
- Workforce fatigue and recruitment challenges.
- Insufficient funding or staffing resources to deliver the action plan.

6.2. The refreshed plan includes a range of mitigations focused on partnership working, use of data, co-production and early intervention.

7. Equal Opportunity Considerations

7.1. An Equality Impact Assessment was conducted to cover the original strategy, which highlighted the positive impact for many groups with Protected Characteristics as defined by equality law.

7.2. The strategy promotes equitable access to housing, homelessness services and support provision. It aims to improve outcomes for groups who face multiple barriers to accessing and sustaining accommodation, including people experiencing multiple disadvantage, victim-survivors of domestic abuse, people with mental health difficulties, refugees and people with learning disabilities or brain injuries.

7.3. As stated above, the strategy aims to align itself with the borough's efforts to become a Marmot place, tackling health inequity.

8. Environmental Considerations

8.1. There are no significant environmental implications arising directly from the plan.

9. Consultation

9.1. The original strategy was developed in consultation with over 100 internal and external stakeholders including just under 30 people with lived experience of homelessness.

9.2. The review has been informed by extensive consultation with members of the Homelessness Strategy Implementation Partnership, its Prevention and Recovery Subgroups, council officers, commissioned providers and wider stakeholders. Over 50 people took part in the consultation process.

9.3. Feedback was also informed by service visits, performance analysis, partner discussions and circulation of the draft action plan to over 80 internal and external partners.

9.4. The partnership remains committed to strengthening co-production through engagement with people who have lived experience of homelessness. At least ten of the individual actions with the plan will be developed or evaluated by people who are experiencing (or have experienced) homelessness.

10. Conclusion

10.1. The review concludes that the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy remains fit for purpose and is delivering positive outcomes.

10.2. The evidence demonstrates that the partnership is making measurable progress towards its ambition of ending homelessness, person by person. Prevention and relief outcomes have improved, reliance on unsuitable temporary accommodation has reduced and rough sleeping remains low.

10.3. However, the review also recognises that homelessness has not yet been ended for many residents, particularly those experiencing multiple disadvantage. The refreshed action plan therefore retains the original vision and values of the strategy whilst sharpening focus on the challenges identified through consultation.

10.4. The partnership remains committed to working as one borough, through a person-centred and whole-system approach, to ensure that homelessness becomes rarer, briefer and less harmful for the residents of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

11. Background Papers

All references are embedded in the attached document: *Ending Homelessness, Person by Person: The King's Lynn and West Norfolk Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029. Progress Report and Action Plan Refresh. Autumn 2026.* The document refers heavily to:

- The council's original strategy document, *Ending Homelessness, Person by Person: The King's Lynn and West Norfolk Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029.* BCKLWN, 2024
- The Government's national strategy, *A National Plan to End Homelessness,* MHCLG 2025
- The Government's toolkit, *A Local Plan to End Homelessness. Local Performance and Accountability: A Toolkit for Developing Homelessness Strategies and Action Plans.* MHCLG, 2026