



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Scrutiny Commission	11 September 2025
Executive	24 September 2025

Wards affected: All Wards

Homelessness Prevention Policy Implementation

Report of Director (Community Services)

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek support for the implementation of a Prevention Policy in the Housing Options Team, to set out clear prevention tactics available to the service to prevent people becoming homeless and assist in getting cases moved on from temporary accommodation.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Prevention policy be supported and endorsed to Executive and the implementation steps in 3.6 be noted.

3. Background to the report

- 3.1 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 introduced new duties for local authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible applicants, regardless of priority need. This has significantly expanded the responsibilities of the Housing Options Team and has also led to an increase in temporary accommodation requirements.
- 3.2 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has developed a comprehensive Prevention Policy to formalise the approach taken by the Housing Options Team in meeting these duties. The policy outlines the tools, interventions and support available to prevent homelessness and reduce reliance on temporary accommodation.

- 3.3 The policy includes a range of measures such as mediation, rent top-ups, financial assistance for deposits and rent in advance, discretionary housing payments, and partnership working with external agencies. It also sets out the Council's approach to supporting specific groups including rough sleepers, prison leavers, hospital discharges, and victims of domestic abuse. The policy is found in Appendix A.

3.4 **Strategic Context**

- 3.5 The Prevention Policy supports the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy and helps meet legal duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. It contributes to the Council's wider aims of reducing homelessness, improving housing stability, and promoting early intervention. The policy is closely linked to the Council's Corporate Plan (see 7.1) and reflects a commitment to preventing all forms of homelessness through targeted support, early intervention, and partnership working.
- 3.6 The policy will be implemented by the Housing Options Team and embedded into day-to-day service delivery. Officers will receive training on the use of prevention tools and the development of Personalised Housing Plans. The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by legislative changes.

4. **Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules**

- 4.1 Open

5. **Financial implications [CS/IB]**

- 5.1 Although there are none directly arising from the report, this policy should help manage the increase in demand on the service. Net homelessness costs have increased from £415,000 in 2022/23 to a current forecast of £800,000 in 2025/26.

6. **Legal implications [ST]**

- 6.1 None

7. **Corporate Plan implications**

- 7.1 The objectives of the report and subsequent service delivery align to the following corporate objective:

People: The policy supports vulnerable individuals and families to remain in or access suitable housing, improving wellbeing and reducing crisis situations.

Places: By preventing homelessness, the policy contributes to safer, more stable communities and reduces the use of temporary accommodation.

Prosperity: Stable housing supports access to employment, education, and health services, contributing to long-term economic and social inclusion.

8. Consultation

8.1 None.

9. Risk implications

9.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

9.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) risks

Risk description	Mitigating actions	Owner
1. Inconsistent application of the policy by staff	Provide comprehensive training and regular refresher sessions for Housing Options Officers	Housing Options Team Leader/Housing Options Manager
2. Insufficient funding to support financial assistance schemes	Monitor budget usage closely and explore external funding opportunities (e.g. grants, partnerships)	Housing Options Team Leader/Housing Options Manager/Head of Housing
3. Increased demand on the Housing Options Team due to broader eligibility criteria	Review staffing levels and caseloads regularly; consider temporary resourcing during peak periods	Housing Options Manager/Head of Housing
4. Legal challenge due to failure to follow statutory duties	Ensure legal compliance through regular case supervision and updates to procedures in line with legislation	Housing Options Team Leader/Housing Options Manager
5. Delays in partnership agency responses impacting prevention outcomes	Establish clear service level agreements (SLAs) and escalation protocols with key partners	Housing Options Team Leader/Housing Options Manager/Head of Housing

6. Unrealistic expectations from applicants regarding housing outcomes	Provide clear, consistent communication and manage expectations from the outset	Housing Options Officers
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10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 10.1 The Housing Options service will assist in people finding accommodation across the Borough, often near to support networks, employment and schools.
- 10.2 The Housing Options service works to meets the needs of all customers approaching for homelessness supporting in accordance with the Equity Act 2010.

11. Climate implications

- 11.1 The Housing Service continues to deliver its services with regarding to climate change impacts.

12. Corporate implications

- 12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:
 - Community safety implications
 - Environmental implications
 - ICT implications
 - Asset management implications
 - Procurement implications
 - Human resources implications
 - Planning implications
 - Data protection implications
 - Voluntary sector

Background papers: Prevention Policy (Appendix A)

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