



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 17 March 2025

Report of Councillor Virginia Moran,
Cabinet Member for Housing

Homelessness and Rough Sleeper update

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To update the committee on the status and recent activity in our Homelessness and Rough Sleeper services

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to note the latest position of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper services

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting communities Housing Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	(All Wards);

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's

declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 Costs associated with the delivery of the homelessness function have fluctuated during the year due to the pressure on the emergency accommodation but with the change in use of the night shelter and further grant funding received in year it is expected that costs can be managed within the existing budget. In total the council has been awarded £592k in Flexible Homelessness Support grant to support specific posts and emergency accommodation.

The Rough Sleeper Initiative is delivered through the pooling of the specific grant funding which for 2024/25 has a budget of £755k made up of a carry forward of £109k from 2023/24 and the grant funding of £646k. Currently an underspend of circa £300k has been forecast which will be ringfenced for future use. It has recently been confirmed we have been allocated another £646k for 2025/26 to enable the programme to continue for at least another year.

All the costs associated with the resettlement schemes are funding through specific grant funding.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of finance (deputy s151 officer)

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 This report is for noting only and serves as an update for Committee members.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. At the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 November 2024 it was agreed that there will now be a standing agenda item updating the committee on Homelessness and Rough Sleeper services. This report will give an overview of the recent work and status of both teams as well as some key updates in specific areas of interest.

3. Key Considerations

Rough Sleeper Initiative

- 3.1. As previously reported, SKDC's Rough Sleeper initiative is delivered via the Change 4 Lincs (C4L) team which covers four local authority areas: South Kesteven District Council, North Kesteven District Council, West Lindsey District Council and South Holland District Council
- 3.2. The team is hosted by South Kesteven District Council and was created by each district council contributing their Rough Sleeper Initiative funding.
- 3.3. The team consists of eight team members who provide an outreach service, support service and access into the private rented sector. The team is managed by the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Manager; managers from the other three districts also provide support to help shape the service.

Up until recently, the future funding for this initiative was looking uncertain as funding had only been confirmed to 31 March 2025. However, it was reported at the last Housing OSC meeting on 20 January 2025 that MHCLG have now announced the funding for 2025/26, confirming that the allocation will mirror that of 2024/25. This totals £646,348 which will be awarded to South Kesteven and must be used to continue to deliver this service for the four districts.

- 3.4. Work has continued to finalise the plans to deliver this service across the four districts. As the funding model has remained the same, it has been decided that all existing staff will be retained by SKDC but tasked to work in other local authority areas where appropriate. This would allow each district to have a dedicated team in place to complement their existing Housing Options service.
- 3.5. The following table details the C4L case numbers as at 25 February 2025.

District	Number in temporary accommodation	Number of open support cases
South Kesteven	3	18
North Kesteven	0	5
West Lindsey	1	10
South Holland	1	19

- 3.6. The number of people in accommodation is low compared to the number of people being supported. This could be because the people being supported are already in accommodation and require support to maintain it, or they have refused the offer of temporary accommodation.
- 3.7. Those who are placed in temporary accommodation must engage with the intensive support that is available to them, or their placement will come to an end.

- 3.8. In January and February 2025, seven people moved on from temporary accommodation and into more settled, longer-term accommodation.
- 3.9. Four people moved on from temporary accommodation due to disengaging with the service.

Homelessness update

- 3.10. The Housing Options team provide the Council's statutory homeless function. The team consists of four Housing Options Assistants, six Housing Options officers, a Senior Housing Options Officer and a Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Manager.
- 3.11. The following table provides details of the homelessness case figures for the last three months:

	November 24	December 24	January 25
Number of active homelessness cases	248	252	294
Number of new approaches	170	157	214
Number in temporary accommodation	57	58	59
Of which – nightly paid	6	11	13
Of which – our stock	51	47	46

- 3.12. It is important to note that not all homelessness cases require temporary accommodation. The team work with households who are threatened with homelessness to try to prevent their homelessness, therefore alleviating the need for any temporary accommodation.
- 3.13. As shown in the above figures, the number of new homelessness approaches and active homelessness cases is steadily increasing, alongside the number of people in nightly paid accommodation.
- 3.14. However, with the launch of the night shelter, it is hoped that an improvement on these numbers will be seen in the coming months.
- 3.15. The Council has also secured direct access to a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) in Grantham via a partner agency. This property will be used as temporary accommodation to further alleviate the need for nightly paid accommodation and will be used by people where the night shelter is not a suitable option.

Night shelter

- 3.16. As reported to the committee on 20 January 2025, SKDC, working in partnership with Grantham Ark launched a new night shelter in Grantham which opened on 19 December 2024.

- 3.17. Individuals placed in the shelter have access to basic food provisions, and a bed in a shared room. In addition, there is a volunteer support worker on site each evening and early each morning to signpost individuals to further support and provisions they can access during the day.
- 3.18. SKDC are funding overnight staff to ensure the safety of all individuals throughout the night.
- 3.19. As the demand for this service increased the decision was made to utilise the community hall to provide additional crash beds. This meant that people using the shelter on a longer-term basis could be moved to the flats for additional support to be provided to source longer term accommodation.
- 3.20. The night shelter has operated for 71 nights from 19 December 2024 up to and including 28 February 2025 at a cost of £14,400. The shelter has been closed on 6 occasions during this period due to a lack of uptake.
- 3.21. 402 bed spaces have been used across this time, accommodating 20 individuals.

If nightly paid accommodation had been used over this period, it would have cost £30,150 based on an average of £75 per night. Therefore, a saving of £15,750 has been achieved.
- 3.22. Long term accommodation for 8 people has been secured and SKDC are still working with others to source suitable permanent accommodation.
- 3.23. This provision ended on 28 February 2025 as the demand for the service reduced significantly over recent weeks meaning it was no longer cost effective to continue with the service when compared to the cost of nightly paid accommodation.
- 3.24. Although the night shelter has closed SKDC has granted a 30-day extension to 3 individuals who are engaging well. There is confidence that during this period longer term housing will be secured for them.
- 3.25. Discussions are ongoing with partners to explore more cost-effective options to relaunch the service and run it throughout the year. Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be kept up to date with this.

Resettlement pressures

- 3.26. Officers have been working closely with partners from the Strategic Migration Partnership and East Midlands Council to deliver our resettlement duties as part of the national resettlement scheme.

- 3.27. Currently there are properties utilised in South Kesteven for the purposes of housing Asylum seekers. When those people are granted asylum, the duty is then on the Local Authority to help rehouse as part of their statutory homelessness duties.
- 3.28. The properties are managed by Serco and are mainly HMO's. Currently Serco manage 94 bedspaces in SKDC with 34 of these occupied.
- 3.29. Funding opportunities are being explored to better equip the Homelessness team to be able to deal with the potential pressure of this scheme.