

North Yorkshire Council

Executive

16 September 2025

**Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030**

**Report of the Corporate Director Community Development**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To recommend to Full Council adoption of the Council's draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030.

**2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 By law councils must have published homelessness strategies. These strategies are used to set the direction of homelessness and rough sleeping services in their areas. This report seeks approval for the first ever Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for North Yorkshire Council.
- 2.2 The draft strategy, Appendix A, was shaped with input from Homeless Link (a national homelessness organisation) and by a wide range of partners. The Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee has also fed into the development of the strategy and reviewed the draft on 11 June 2025.
- 2.3 To support the delivery of the strategy, an action plan for the first year has been developed and will be monitored through the East and West Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Forums and the NY Partnership meetings.
- 2.4 Approval is sought to present the strategy to Full Council for adoption.

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Under the Homelessness Act 2002, Councils must publish a homelessness strategy every five years. These strategies must outline plans to prevent homelessness and ensure adequate accommodation and support for those affected.
- 3.2 North Yorkshire has a strong record in homelessness prevention. This strategy builds on that success, informed by a comprehensive review involving staff, service users, and partners. It reflects past achievements, current service demands, and future needs.
- 3.3 This is the first strategy for the new unitary authority and sets out the Council's vision, priorities, and actions for the next five years.
- 3.4 The vision within the strategy is to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping wherever possible for North Yorkshire residents. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, we aim to make it rare, brief, and non-recurrent. This will be achieved through partnership working and ensuring access to quality temporary and long-term housing with appropriate support.

## **4.0 ALIGNING WITH OTHER NORTH YORKSHIRE STRATEGIES**

- 4.1 This strategy supports the Housing Strategy's "Our People" theme, focusing on:
- Preventing and tackling homelessness
  - Addressing needs across life stages
  - Meeting supported housing needs
- 4.2 The **Housing Strategy 2024–2029** highlights rising demand for homelessness services, limited housing supply (especially in rural areas), affordability issues, and demographic shifts including ageing populations and new groups such as asylum seekers.
- 4.3 The **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023–2030** promotes integrated working across housing, health, and social care to improve population health and reduce inequalities.
- 4.4 Health is a key factor in homelessness. This strategy aligns with:
- NHS Inclusion Health Framework
  - Humber and North Yorkshire Inclusion Health Plan
  - England's 10-Year Health Plan, including Integrated Neighbourhood Teams
- 4.5 The **Substance Use Strategy 2024–2028** includes a cross-cutting theme on 'Homes and Jobs'.
- 4.6 The strategy also aligns with plans on climate change, economic growth, autism, suicide prevention, domestic abuse, mental health transformation, and other local priorities.

## **5.0 KEY PARTNERSHIPS**

- 5.1 The Council cannot effectively achieve the objectives of its homelessness strategy without input and support from a wide range of partners including statutory services, the voluntary sector and landlords. A range of partnerships are in place to support the delivery of the strategy including:
- The York and North Yorkshire Housing Partnership of social landlords, supporting affordable housing and community development (a subgroup of which has been established to focus on preventing homelessness and sustaining tenancies).
  - Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Forums have launched in East and West areas, with around 70 attendees. The overarching Partnership group will drive joint working and strategy delivery.
  - Wider partnerships covering domestic abuse, safeguarding, substance misuse, and public protection.
  - Collaboration with the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority (YNYCA)

## **6.0 STRATEGY- THEMES AND PRIORITIES**

The strategy addresses homelessness and rough sleeping across four themes:

- 6.1 **Preventing Homelessness**
- Early intervention before crisis
  - Improving customer experience
  - Partnering with voluntary and community sectors

## 6.2 **Increasing Suitable Accommodation**

- Expanding access to affordable housing
- Reducing the demand for temporary accommodation and improving the quality of temporary accommodation used.
- Enhancing supported housing provision

## 6.3 **Improving Support Services**

- Strengthening support pathways
- Supporting people with multiple disadvantages
- Promoting inclusive, trauma-informed practice
- Encouraging peer-led and community models

## 6.4 **Reducing Rough Sleeping**

- Meeting accommodation and support needs
- Supporting those with complex needs
- Engaging businesses and voluntary sector

6.5 Actions under each theme form a five-year plan, reviewed annually. Year one actions are detailed in Appendix B.

## **7.0 CONSULTATION**

7.1 The strategy was developed in close collaboration with Homeless Link, who conducted four site visits and reviewed internal and external data including data sent from our system direct to government on a quarterly basis, Young Persons Pathway, NY Home Choice, Discretionary Housing Payments, ONS data, and rough sleeping surveys.

7.2 Feedback was gathered from Housing Options staff via team meetings and draft comments. Around 30 stakeholders, including senior leaders, participated in discussions. Surveys and focus groups were held with service users, including an online Duty to Refer survey.

7.3 In June/July, the draft strategy was presented at the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Forum and shared with internal and external partners for comment. In addition, feedback has been received from Members via the Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **8.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS**

8.1 Homelessness impacts on a host of organisations including housing, health, social care, criminal justice, and the voluntary sector and this strategy seeks to strengthen partnership working and fosters shared understanding of local challenges and priorities. It enables other organisations to align their strategies with housing and homelessness goals.

8.2 The strategy supports the development and implementation of joint protocols, funding arrangements, and coordinated service delivery for complex needs. Internally within the Council it links Housing, Social Care and Public Health, embedding trauma-informed and ensuring that frontline officers understand cultural differences and how this may affect how our customers access services.

## **9.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

9.1 The strategy supports North Yorkshire's Council Plan vision and four key themes:

- Thriving places and empowered communities
- Sustainable and connected places
- Safe, healthy, and well communities

- Maximising potential of people and communities

## **10.0 PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

10.1 The strategy includes a range of performance measures. These include:

- Homeless assessments
- Prevention and relief duties
- Statutory homelessness acceptances
- Successful preventions and reliefs
- Temporary accommodation usage
- B&B and high-cost emergency accommodation
- Housing advice approaches

10.2 Quarterly returns are submitted to MHCLG, including rough sleeper and homelessness data and in 2025 a unified homelessness system was introduced, bringing the 7 former district Council systems together under one case management system.

10.3 In addition to the corporate performance management arrangements the on-going delivery of the strategy shall be overseen by the newly established partnership forums and through regular updates to the Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Council also has regular (monthly) liaison meetings with MHCLG officials around progress.

## **11.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The delivery of the strategy has no new financial implication for the Council, with all proposed interventions included within existing budgetary parameters. Spend by the Council on meeting its statutory duties around homelessness is significant area. In 24/25 £8.5M was spent. This was made up of £4.3M on staffing costs, £2.7M on temporary accommodation and £1.5M on prevention.

11.2 Cost incurred by the Council is however offset with high levels of external grant funding from Government and income from housing benefit subsidy to help offset temporary accommodation costs (£4.3M in 2024/25, gross costs). The funding from Government includes Homelessness Prevention Grant (£2.9M in 25/26). These funds (some of which are ringfenced for specific purposes) cover covering staffing, emergency accommodation, IT, training, and prevention work.

11.3 In addition the Council receives a further Rough Sleeper Grant (£755K) which again funds staffing, partner allocations, and accommodation.

11.4 The net cost per person of providing homelessness services across North Yorkshire is low when compared to most Councils (@ £6 per person compared to the national average of all Councils @ £12 per person) and overall outcomes in terms of service delivery are good (with 0.88 households per 1000 in temporary accommodation as compared to the national average for all Councils of 3.06 per 1000 households).

11.5 However despite this, it is recognised that demand going forward is likely to increase with the associated risk of increased cost. A key financial challenge for the Council remains the cost of providing temporary accommodation. Council considered this issue in June 2024 and approved the adoption of a Business Case to invest £11.6M in capital funds to develop alternative in-house temporary accommodation provision and therefore reduce its reliance on resorting to expensive hotels and B&Bs. The delivery of this is on-going with 20 new temporary accommodation units developed as of August 25, however the focus needs to remain on preventing homelessness in the first place. Council cannot become complacent and the emphasis throughout this first homelessness strategy of the new Council is all

around partnership working, preventing homelessness and reducing demand on statutory service provision.

## **12.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 The Council is legally required to have a current homelessness strategy. This first strategy for the unitary authority meets all statutory requirements and is ready for adoption.

## **13.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed (Appendix C).

## **14.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 A Climate Change Impact Assessment has been completed (Appendix D).

## **15.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 The strategy fulfils the Council's statutory duty and requires Full Council approval.

## **16.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

16.1 Key risks include:

- Resource-intensive housing-first models
- Limited affordable housing supply
- Staffing challenges
- Increased demand due to asylum policies
- External crises affecting resources
- Potential funding reductions

## **17.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

17.1 The recommendation to full council for adoption of the strategy. The strategy is a legal requirement and supports positive outcomes for vulnerable individuals while ensuring effective resource use.

## **18.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

18.1 Executive is asked to:

- i) Recommend approval of the homelessness and rough sleeping strategy 2025-2030 for adoption by Full Council.

## **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030

Appendix B - Year 1 Reducing Homelessness Action Plan

Appendix C – Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix D - Climate Change assessment

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:** none

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Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.