

REPORT FROM: HEAD OF HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

TO: EXECUTIVE

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**HOMELESSNESS TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION &
HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2025 – 2030**

LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND 3

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To determine a way forward in relation to the Council's provision of homelessness temporary accommodation

To approve the use of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) programme

To agree the Pendle Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025 - 2030

To note the MIAA – Homelessness Assignment Report 2024 / 2025

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That Executive approves the proposed approach towards purchasing properties to provide appropriate temporary accommodation for homeless households as an alternative to B&B and other high cost nightly paid accommodation.
- (2) That Executive approves the use of LAHF funding to purchase 2 properties in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement.
- (3) That Executive delegates the approval of individual property purchases, for both LAHF and Homeless Temporary Accommodation to the Director of Place within the approved financial envelope.
- (4) That Executive approves the Pendle Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025 – 2030.
- (5) That Executive notes the MIAA – Homelessness Assignment Report 2024/ 25

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Council can ensure provision of suitable temporary accommodation for homeless people in order to meet its legal obligations.
- (2) To approve the purchase of 2 properties using LAHF funding in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement.
- (3) That the Council continues to meet its statutory duty to carry out a Homelessness Review for its district and formulate a Homelessness Strategy based on the results of that Review at least every 5 years.
- (4) That Executive is aware of the recent audit report in relation to homelessness services

ISSUE

1) Provision of homelessness temporary accommodation (TA)

- 1.1) As homelessness cases have increased, the use of temporary accommodation has increased also. At the same time the move on options to affordable housing have reduced as the private rented sector has become unaffordable and social housing availability has reduced and fails to meet demand.
- 1.2) This has resulted in existing temporary accommodation becoming blocked and more utilisation of unsuitable bed and breakfast and expensive nightly paid alternatives. This has created an in-year service budget pressure of c£317k per year and demand is forecast to continue to increase.
- 1.3) An options appraisal (Appendix 1) has been carried out to consider the issue and options available to address this. The report recommends that the Council funds the purchase and renovation of initially 5 2-bed long-term empty properties within Pendle. The properties would be funded in 2025/26 from the CPO budget agreed by full Council on the 27th February 2025.
- 1.4) This scheme will also mean that long-term empty properties, will be brought back into use. Whilst this scheme should support a reduction in temporary accommodation cost, it is not likely to remove the entire cost as demand for temporary accommodation will outstrip the provision and there will still be a need for use of hostel/B&B type accommodation.

For each property prior to purchase a business case will be approved by the Director of Place in consultation with the Leader of the Council following consideration by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).

2) Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)

- 2.1 To support Local Authorities the Home Office and DLHUC/MHCLG implemented a Local Authority Fund 2024-25, allocating initial funding and inviting each local authority to submit a validation form.

- 2.2 The Council has been granted funding of £149,000, to be received in 2025/26 to purchase 2 properties, one for use as temporary accommodation for people who have become homeless. The other home for temporary accommodation for a family that is part of the Government's Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP), for Afghan citizens who worked with the UK Government in Afghanistan and that are deemed eligible by the Ministry of Defence.
- 2.3 This funding will provide the Council with greater control over the standard and management of temporary accommodation and will allow the Council to use them as temporary accommodation for as long as the Council determines there is a need.

3) Pendle Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025 - 2030

- 3.1) Under the Homelessness Act 2002, the Council must carry out a homelessness review for their district and formulate a homelessness strategy based on the results of that review at least every 5 years.
- 3.2) As such, the Pendle Homelessness Review 2025 has been carried out which has considered the levels and likely future levels of homelessness in Pendle. The Review makes a number of recommendations all of which have been added into the Pendle Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2025 – 2030 (Appendix 2).
- 3.3) **Aims of the Pendle Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2025 – 2030**
 - The key aims of the strategy are: -
 - To prevent homelessness
 - To continue to ensure that there is a safety net of accommodation for people who are or who may become homeless
 - To provide support to people who are or may become homeless or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them from becoming homeless again.

3.4) Taking the Strategy Forward

- 3.5) There has been a notable increase in homelessness applications over the past few years which is heavily impacting on the need to provide temporary accommodation for homelessness households. As such, a significant part of the strategy is dedicated to the prevention of homelessness and relieving homelessness where this has already occurred.
- 3.6) The strategy includes an action plan which is intended to help deliver the aims of the strategy. The strategy will remain a working document and as such, the action plan will be added to where required to meet any additional issues which may arise throughout the life of the strategy.

4) MIAA – Homelessness Assignment Report 2024/25

- 4.1) The Council commissioned MIAA to undertake an audit into homelessness services provided by Housing Needs. The overall objective of the audit was to evaluate the design and operating effectiveness of the arrangements that the Council has in place to manage the key risks of Homelessness. The overall assurance rating was – substantial.
- 4.2) Two recommendations were identified in the report

- **Recommendation 1** - The Council should undertake an updated homelessness review and produce an updated strategy which should be approved and published. An action plan should be produced to ensure the strategy is monitored and fully implemented.

A homelessness review has been undertaken to produce an updated strategy which is included within this report for approval. An action plan is contained within the strategy to ensure the strategy is monitored and fully implemented

- **Recommendation 2** - Undertake a review of all of the Homelessness policies and procedures and update as appropriate. The number of procedures should be reviewed and simplified where possible. The policies/procedures should include approval and review dates.

A review of all homelessness policies and procedures has occurred and updated as appropriate.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy

- Improving temporary accommodation provision will help ensure the delivery of the council's proposed Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025 – 2030.
- The Pendle Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025 – 2030 will support some of the key priorities in the Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027.

Financial

- The proposed purchase of temporary accommodation in 2025-26 would be within the agreed Capital budget. Additional costs of running the accommodation (staffing and maintenance) should be partially met by the payments to be received from Housing Benefit. It is also anticipated that use the properties will reduce use of hotels for homeless families which on average costs c£400 / £450 per week. Whilst the initial savings generated will not cover the cost of purchase and setting up of the properties, its anticipated that over a longer period e.g. 5 to 10 years, the properties will prove to have saved the Council more than the purchase and set up costs.
- The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy concerns itself primarily with prevention of homelessness. It is anticipated that whilst measures related to homelessness prevention may require some financial cost, any such costs will be met through existing budgets.

Legal

- Expanding temporary accommodation provision will help the Council to continue to meet its legal duties.
- The Council has a statutory duty to carry out a Homelessness Review for its district and formulate a Homelessness Strategy based on the results of that Review at least every 5 years. It is believed that the Strategy and Homelessness Review 2025 continue to meet this requirement.

Risk Management

Failure to update the Council's Homelessness strategy risks failing a statutory duty which could result in negative publicity for the Council and risk to reputation.

Health and Safety:

There are no health and safety implications arising from this report.

Sustainability:

- The purchase of properties will improve the Council’s temporary accommodation options for homelessness households and should be more cost effective.
- The development of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025 – 2030 and Homelessness Review 2024 ensures that the Council continues to meet its statutory duties towards homeless households. Taking forward the LAHF programme will help improve accommodation options in resettling Afghan households and homeless applicants.

Community Safety:

There are no known community safety issues arising from the contents of this report.

Equality and Diversity:

- There appears to be no known equality and diversity impacts arising from expanding provision of temporary accommodation
- The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025 - 2030 is aimed at the provision of homelessness services for all, regardless of background. A service impact assessment has been undertaken and there are believed to be no known negative impacts on any particular group with protected characteristics.
- There appears to be no known negative impacts on any particular group with protected characteristics in relation to LAHF

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Options Appraisal

Appendix 2 - Pendle Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025 – 2030

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Pendle Homelessness Review 2025

Service Impact Assessment – Pendle Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025 – 2030.