

Approval of an updated Homelessness Prevention & Assistance Policy 2021

For Councillor Lax Cabinet Member Regulatory Services, Housing and Wellbeing



Date: 11th January 2021

Agenda Item:

Contact Officer: David Whittaker Housing Options Manager
Lucy Robinson Housing and Wellbeing Manager

Tel Number: 01543 308704/308710

Email: Lucy.Robinson@lichfielddc.gov.uk

Key Decision? No

Local Ward Members

**CABINET
MEMBER
DECISION**

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of minor amendments to the Homelessness Prevention & Assistance Policy 2021 to reflect the additional duties placed on local authorities by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Improvements have also been made to the homelessness prevention fund policy in Appendix B and the severe weather emergency protocol in Appendix D.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve an updated Homelessness Prevention & Assistance Policy at Appendix A.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Homelessness Prevention & Assistance Policy sets out how Lichfield District Council will provide assistance to those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and contains a range of schemes to assist in the prevention of homelessness or to assist those who are already homeless, especially rough sleepers. A policy has been in place since November 2011 when delegated authority was given to the Cabinet Member to revise the various schemes as appropriate; the current policy was approved in 2015 but now requires minor amendments.
- 3.3 The overall purpose of the policy has not changed but the eligibility criteria for various schemes has been amended. A full review of the schemes that we have in place has been undertaken, following the process of collating evidence for the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-2024.
- 3.4 The changes that we have made to the policy are as follows:
- 3.4.1 Updates:
- Update to the introduction
 - Revision of the national context, to include Government initiatives and legislation
 - Further updates include reference to the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24

- References to Housing services manager or Strategic director have been replaced with Head of Regulatory Services, Housing & Wellbeing.
- Additional reference in the Homelessness prevention fund to ascertaining the eligibility of the applicant for a discretionary housing payment, before authorisation for a loan is approved.
- Widening the eligibility of the fund to include single people or childless couples under 35 who have demonstrated they are able to fund the shortfall arising from their restricted housing benefit entitlement.
- Widening the definition of severe weather within the Severe weather emergency protocol (SWEP) to include cold, wind, rain and heatwaves.
- Reference to referring any rough sleepers to Spring HA via the homelessness/rough sleeper housing pathway scheme.
- Including in the glossary definitions of homelessness prevention and homelessness relief.

Alternative Options	1. To not approve the revised policy.
Consultation	1. Internal consultation only as only minor updates have been done.
Financial Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Widening the eligibility for applicants to the Homelessness prevention fund may increase the Council's liability in respect of the underwriting of loans made by Fusion Credit Union. 2. Widening the definition of severe weather may mean that the SWEP becomes active more often which may increase the expenditure on temporary accommodation, especially bed and breakfast.
Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Homelessness prevention and assistance policy is linked to the Enabling people section of the Council's Strategic Plan 2020- 24 and outcomes are measured through our corporate indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rough sleeping rate per 10,000 households
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	1. The current Homelessness prevention and assistance policy underwent an Equality Impact Assessment just after adoption. The revised policy will undergo a further assessment to ensure it meets the requirements of the equalities legislation.
Crime & Safety Issues	1. The update does not impact on our duty to prevent crime and disorder within the District (Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, 1988).
Environmental Impact	1. There will be no environmental impact from this decision
GDPR/Privacy Impact Assessment	1. No Privacy Impact Assessment has been undertaken

	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
A	<p>No additional risks are anticipated as a result of this policy update.</p> <p>The key risk to be managed in relation to the Homelessness prevention and assistance policy remains as before; non delivery of the types of assistance outlined in the policy.</p>	<p>There is a service level agreement in place in relation to the loans provided by Fusion Credit Union under the Homelessness prevention fund. This is subject to ongoing monitoring, enabling issues to be identified and acted upon quickly.</p> <p>Target hardening, rent guarantee and severe weather emergency protocol are council-led and well established areas of work. Monitoring and delivery procedures have been established for each.</p>	Green
B	<p>The Council incurs additional expenditure as a result of the widening of the eligibility of the Homelessness prevention fund and the widened definition of severe weather</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If severe weather occurs during the operation of a night shelter, additional accommodation costs should be kept to a minimum. • Increased use of DHP should restrict the number of loans • With additional Government funding, any increased expenditure should be met from existing budgets. 	Green
C			
D			
E			

Background documents

The Homelessness prevention and assistance policy can be found at Appendix A

Relevant web links

<https://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/strategicplan>

Lichfield District Council

Housing Services

Homelessness Prevention and

Assistance Policy

1. Introduction

Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the prevention of homelessness has become a statutory duty for all local authorities. For those applicants whose homelessness cannot be prevented or those who are already homeless when they make initial contact, we have the statutory duty to relieve homelessness.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the range of measures that are available to the Housing Options Team to prevent or relieve homelessness and provide assistance to homeless and potentially homeless people. The original policy was agreed by Cabinet in November 2011 but changes have been made since that time, most notably regarding the provision of loans through Fusion Credit Union¹, rather than the council. Further changes were made in June 2015, to extend the type of loans available through the credit union and to extend the categories of applicant eligible for the loans. We have also discontinued the Sanctuary Scheme, which was designed to provide additional security measures for those victims of domestic abuse wishing to remain in their current accommodation. In its place, we have developed a Target Hardening Scheme, which has widened the scope of those eligible for assistance to include all households who are identified as at risk of violence/threats of violence or harassment.

The options available within this policy are designed to prevent a household from becoming homeless; by enabling a household to remain in their current accommodation, assisting them in accessing alternative accommodation or, to relieve the homelessness of any rough sleepers by ensuring access to accommodation during times of severe weather.

The funding available for each of the schemes will be determined on an annual basis, having regard to the general level of council funding available. We will also seek to identify additional funding from other sources, where possible.

2. National context

The Homelessness Act 2002 placed more duties on local authorities in relation to the prevention of homelessness and in April 2018, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 came into law which placed additional statutory duties on us in respect of the prevention and relief of homelessness. The Government published its rough sleeper strategy in December 2018, in which it pledged to half rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027.

3. Local context

We approved our Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-2024 in July 2020. It contains a priority to '*To prevent or relieve all forms of homelessness, including rough sleeping*'. To achieve this, we have identified three objectives:

- Improve the range of suitable housing options for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Identify and provide support to those who face barriers to accessing and maintaining suitable accommodation.

¹ Fusion Credit Union is a savings co-operative whose members support each other through saving and borrowing together. For more information, please visit www.fusioncreditunion.co.uk

- Tackle rough sleeping so that no one needs to sleep rough

In response to this, we have developed a rough sleeper housing pathway scheme, which will support rough sleepers in making the transition from rough sleeping to securing and maintaining long term accommodation. Jointly with Cannock Chase DC, we have commissioned Spring Housing Association to provide an outreach and support service initially and then to provide tenancy support to enable rough sleepers to move on from emergency accommodation.

4. Prevention schemes

4.1 Rent Guarantee Scheme

To assist homeless households access private rented sector accommodation under this scheme the council will provide a guarantee against the value of the rent deposit or rent in advance, rather than it being actually paid to the landlord.

The full Rent Guarantee Scheme policy can be found at **Appendix A**.

4.2 Homelessness Prevention Fund

The Homelessness Prevention Fund is a financial assistance scheme available to front line officers to use where homelessness and/or the use of temporary accommodation can be prevented or brought to an end.

Full details of the scheme can be found at **Appendix B**.

4.3 Target Hardening Scheme

Target hardening means installing security measures to make a home more resistant to attack or damage. The overall aim of the scheme is the prevention of homelessness by ensuring that survivors of domestic abuse and other violent crimes are able to remain in their homes and feel safer and more secure in doing so.

The full Target Hardening Scheme policy can be found at **Appendix C**.

4.4 Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP)

The aim of this protocol is to ensure that rough sleepers are not at risk of getting hypothermia or dying during periods of severe weather in the district. The protocol will provide assistance in the form of emergency temporary accommodation for any rough sleepers in Lichfield District during periods of severe weather.

Full details of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol are available at **Appendix D**.

LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL RENT GUARANTEE SCHEME POLICY

Aims of the Scheme

The primary aims of the Scheme are to:

- Provide a cost effective means of preventing homelessness.
- Reduce the use of temporary accommodation and in particular bed and breakfast.
- Provide a real and cost effective means for people to access suitable alternative accommodation.
- Reduce the number of applications made to the council on the grounds of homelessness
- Guarantee a rent deposit and/or rent in advance

Eligibility Criteria

a) **To be eligible, an applicant shall**

- Be aged 18 or over
- Be homeless or threatened with homelessness
- Either
 - Be in a priority need category or:
 - Be a single person household or childless couple over the age of 35
- Be unable to obtain the necessary funding from any other source.
- Not have given cause for a landlord to have made a successful claim as a result of a previous guarantee under this scheme.
- Agree to the terms and conditions of the rent guarantee scheme
- Be assessed as having a local connection with the Lichfield District.

b) **A property shall:**

- Be affordable to the applicant taking into account eligibility for benefits and Local Housing Allowance rates.
- Meet the minimum requirements of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System or equivalent legislation.
- Have appropriate Gas Safety and Electrical Safety certification
- Have an Energy Performance rating of E or above where this is reasonable considering the type, age, construction and location of the property. .

c) **A landlord shall be:**

- Encouraged to join and given details of the Midland Landlords Accreditation Scheme.

Scheme Details

1. The scheme shall only be used:
 - To Guarantee the rent deposit or rent in advance to the landlord for a maximum period of 2 years.
 - For any additional periods, the tenant would need to make a further application to the scheme.
 - To assist an applicant in obtaining alternative permanent accommodation for a minimum period of six months.
 - To prevent a homelessness application being made.
 - To avoid the potential use of temporary accommodation.
 - Where the scheme is a cost effective option to other housing solutions
2. Applicants will be encouraged to open a Fusion Credit Union Limited [account](#), in order to save for any future deposit requirements.
3. The Fusion Credit Union account should, wherever possible, also be used to facilitate the payment of rent where the claimant is in receipt of local housing allowance.
4. Only one guarantee can be made per household at any one time.
5. The amount of the guarantee will be agreed with the landlord subject to a maximum value equivalent to six weeks rent of the property having regard to the relevant Local Housing Allowance for the property type and area at the time of the agreement.
6. The guarantee will cover rent arrears and/or the cost of replacement of any items listed on the agreed written inventory that are missing or damaged up to the value of six weeks rent (see point 5 above).
7. If the inventory during the tenancy requires amendment or updating the landlord should notify the council immediately in writing. If he/she fails to do so the item(s) will not be covered by the guarantee.
8. The guarantee will not cover:
 - Any costs incurred as a result of the tenant failing to pay gas, electricity, telephone, water rates, council tax or any other utility bills.
 - Damage resulting from normal wear and tear to the furniture, fixtures and fittings, as well as any items not on the inventory.
 - Any overpayment made by Housing Benefit as a result of the tenant providing them with inaccurate or false information or failing to provide relevant information.

LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION FUND POLICY

1. Aims of the fund

The aims of the fund are to:

- Prevent homelessness by either enabling people to remain in their own home or to access suitable alternative accommodation.
- Reduce the use of temporary accommodation, in particular bed and breakfast.
- Reduce the number of homelessness applications made to the council

2. Use of the fund

The fund shall be used to:

- Prevent an applicant from losing their current accommodation for a likely minimum period of six months and where no other prevention measures would lead to this outcome.
- Assist an applicant in obtaining alternative permanent accommodation for a minimum period of six months*. Avoid the potential use of bed and breakfast accommodation and the expense of this to the council

*where this is for rent in advance and/or rent deposit, the landlord should first be asked whether he/she would consider the rent guarantee scheme.

3. Types of assistance

Assistance will be provided via:

a) A loan from Fusion Credit Union

1. An application for assistance will be made to Lichfield District Council Housing Services.
2. The Housing Options Team will check the eligibility of the applicant for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) award before an application is submitted to Fusion Credit Union. Only if an applicant is ineligible or is assessed as not qualifying for an award will a referral be made to Fusion.
3. Where an applicant is eligible for a DHP but the award cannot be made in time to ensure the prevention of homelessness, a referral for a loan will be made in parallel with an application for DHP. A successful DHP award will be used to pay off the balance of the loan.

4. Where the council approve the application, based on the above criteria, a referral will be made to Fusion Credit Union, who will provide the loan, subject to eligibility criteria.
5. Applicants will be required to enter into a loan agreement, which will be subject to the terms and conditions of Fusion Credit Union.
6. Any payments will be paid to the service provider, eg the landlord or letting agent.
7. The maximum amount available for loan will be £5,000.

b) A loan from Lichfield District Council

1. Where an applicant is refused a loan by Fusion Credit Union or where a loan agreed by Fusion cannot be paid in time for the prevention measure to be successfully completed, the council may provide a grant/loan where:
 - The application for a loan has been approved by the council and
 - The loan will prevent the use of temporary accommodation
2. The council loans will be at 0% interest
3. Applicants will be required to agree to the terms and conditions of the scheme and agree a repayment schedule before the loan is made.
4. Payments will be monitored and action will be taken where applicants miss a scheduled payment

c) A grant from Lichfield District Council

1. A grant may be provided by the council where an eligible applicant is aged 16 or 17 up to a maximum of £1,000
2. Where an applicant is over 18 but it has been demonstrated that they would be unable to pay back a loan, and it is cost effective to do so, a grant of up to £1,000 may be made
3. Where the sum required is less than £50 the council may also decide to provide financial assistance in the form of cash and this will be treated as a grant. Examples of where this might be appropriate include payment of taxi fare to a relative's home to avoid use of temporary accommodation.

4. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for a loan, an applicant (or a member of their household where indicated*) shall:

- Be aged 18 or over
- Be homeless or threatened with homelessness*
- Have a local connection to Lichfield District*

- Either
 - Be in a priority need category or
 - Be a single person household or childless couple over the age of 35
 - Be a single person household or childless couple under 35 who can demonstrate that they are able to afford to fund any rental shortfall as a result of housing benefit restrictions
- Be unable to obtain the necessary funding from any other source
- Be an existing member, or agree to become a member, of Fusion Credit Union, where the loan is provided by them
- Agree to undertake financial advice where requested to ensure the loan and the property where appropriate, is affordable.

5. Proofs Required

In order to satisfy the eligibility criteria, the applicant is requested to provide proof of eligibility by providing the scheme administrator with:

- Photo id/birth certificate
- Bank statement
- Proof of benefits/income
- Proof of homelessness.
- Proof of priority need
- Proof of local connection
- Financial statement where appropriate (for proof of affordability)

This evidence may be shared with Fusion Credit Union, where appropriate in order assist in the approval process.

General points regarding LDC loans/grants

- The maximum amounts available to a single household will be £2,500 (loan), £1,000 (grant). These financial limits will be periodically reviewed and the Head of Regulatory Services, Housing & Wellbeing may approve changes to these limits having regard to the council finances available.
- Only one payment can be made per household in any financial year. However, the Head of Regulatory Services, Housing & Wellbeing, may approve any additional payments needed, having regard to the particular circumstances of a case. If the Head of Regulatory Services, Housing & Wellbeing is unavailable, approval may be sought from the Housing and Wellbeing Manager
- In order to receive a payment from LDC, applicants are required to provide evidence that the cost has been incurred, for example by way of receipts, official estimates or invoices.

LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL

TARGET HARDENING SCHEME POLICY

Aims of the Scheme

The overall aim of the scheme is the prevention of homelessness by ensuring that, by the addition of appropriate security measures, survivors of domestic abuse and other violent crimes are able to remain in their homes and feel safer and more secure in doing so. The Council will work closely with other agencies, such as the Police, the Pathway Project and Victim Support.

The Scheme will:

- enable victims to remain in their own homes, whenever this is possible and desired, rather than being forced to move, thereby maintaining education, employment and family networks.
- install security measures free of charge to all eligible applicants, regardless of tenure or other circumstances, up to a maximum value of £2,500.00.
- This figure may be exceeded in exceptional circumstances where the expenditure is authorised by the Head of Regulatory Services, Housing & Wellbeing. If the Head of Regulatory Services, Housing & Wellbeing is unavailable, approval may be sought from the Housing and Wellbeing Manager. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - Where a move to alternative accommodation would be difficult due to family size, physical disability, housing related debt or other factors.
 - Where the cost of moving would be greater than the additional expenditure via the scheme
- not replace an application on the grounds of homelessness if it is believed the maximum grant will not secure the property to a satisfactory level, based on the risk identified from the perpetrator and an assessment of the property by the Crime Reduction Officer, the Fire Safety Officer and/or other suitably qualified persons. However, the difference could be made up by:
 - A contribution from the householder
 - A loan via the Homelessness Prevention Fund

Eligibility Criteria

- The scheme is available to any person living in Lichfield district who is threatened with homelessness due to domestic abuse, hate crime, racial harassment or other violence.
- The householder must have expressed an intention to remain in the property, if it is safe to do so, and is likely to remain there for at least six months.
- The scheme is available to households regardless of family composition or tenure.
- The perpetrator must not be resident in the property that is the subject of the scheme
- The council must be satisfied that without the scheme measures, the victim would be likely to make an application on the grounds of homelessness, in accordance with Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002).
- The level of security available through the scheme should be sufficient to meet the identified requirements of the householder.
- The householder (and landlord where appropriate) must agree to ALL recommended security measures being installed.

Referrals to the Scheme

Referrals will be accepted from, for example:

- Recommendations from the meetings of the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- Multi Agency Hub (MAH)
- Any other agency, where sufficient information is available to assess appropriately a client's eligibility.

Referrals should be made on the appropriate referral form.

Lichfield District Council

Severe Weather Emergency Protocol

For Rough Sleepers

Contents

1. Background
2. Purpose of the protocol
3. Trigger for putting the protocol into place
4. Eligibility criteria
5. Procedure
6. Financial implications
7. Monitoring and review

1. Background

- (i) In August 2018, the Government launched their rough sleeper strategy, in which they committed to halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027
- (ii) In December 2018, the Government issued the rough sleeper strategy action plan in which it set out the actions it will take to meet those commitments.
- (iii) The council's Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024, reiterates the Council's commitment to the Government target.

2. Purpose of the Protocol

- (i) Severe Weather Emergency Protocols (SWEP) for rough sleepers set out the arrangements to be made to ensure people are not at risk of dying on the streets during severe weather, by ensuring rough sleepers have access to accommodation at night during periods of severe weather.

3. Trigger for Protocol

- (i) The protocol will become effective during severe weather, which is defined as:
 - **Cold:** extreme cold can cause serious health problems and death for those who are exposed overnight or for long periods of time. Historically, SWEP provision was triggered when the forecast was zero degrees or below for three days. It is now best practice to take a common sense approach, where any forecast approaching zero is considered; the impact

of rain, snow and wind chill are taken into account; and the 'feels like' temperature is checked, along with conditions underfoot (e.g. ice). There are benefits to opening provision for temperatures that are above freezing but can be just as harmful, and for maintaining this provision over longer periods.

- **Wind:** high winds can lead to an increased risk of injury through uprooted trees, falling walls, dislodged pieces of roofing and other debris. Local authorities should consider the location of local rough sleeping sites and the potential for harm from gale-force winds. This is a particular issue for rural areas where people are, for example, sleeping in tents.
- **Rain:** heavy or sudden prolonged rain can lead to flooding and landslides. People sleeping under bridges, on river banks or near the sea, streams or canals may be particularly at risk, but there may be less obvious flood risks, for example drains or gullies. Standing water, puddles and flooding may continue to be a risk after rainfall has stopped. As well as increased risk of drowning, being stuck in the rain and unable to change out of wet clothes/shoes afterwards can lead to a range of health problems, including trench-foot. There is also an increased risk of loss or damage to belongings such as identification documents.
- **Heatwaves:** people sleeping rough may find it difficult to source drinking water and sun protection, increasing risks around dehydration, sunburn and sunstroke. Needs are likely be more urgent during daylight hours, so a different approach to SWEP may be appropriate e.g. free water and sunscreen, cool daytime spaces, and links to healthcare.
- **Unsafe shelter:** in addition to the direct risk associated with severe weather, the actions people might take to get out of severe weather can also increase the risk of harm and death. People might find cover in unsafe places e.g. large lidded bins, which can result in crush injuries or death if the bin is emptied. They might enter buildings or property without permission, including derelict structures, with associated risks around fire safety and building collapse. People may also increase their substance use as a coping mechanism during bad weather. Attempting to keep safe and dry in bad weather increases the risk of death and injury to people without shelter.

(ii) The Housing Options Team will determine whether the protocol should be activated by checking the weather conditions before 12.00pm each morning at:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/weather/forecast/322/?area=Lichfield>

(iii) Once the Protocol is triggered, all relevant voluntary and statutory organisations that may come across rough sleepers will be notified by email. The organisations to be notified are listed at Appendix F.

(iv) Notification will also be placed on the council's website:

<http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/index.php>

(v) The out of hours service will also be notified that the Protocol has been triggered, in order that they can arrange temporary accommodation where necessary.

- (vi) Where the Protocol is likely to be in place for an extended period (at least one week), the Housing Options Team will review the arrangements with all relevant parties listed at Appendix F.

4. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, a person must only be at risk by sleeping rough in severe weather, when the Protocol is in force, and accept the assistance offered. Sleeping rough is defined as:

People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or “bashes”).

5. Procedure

- (i) Subject to the above criteria, any rough sleeper will be offered accommodation for the duration of the severe weather, i.e. whilst the severe weather persists.
- (ii) During office hours (8.45am to 5.15pm), rough sleepers will be referred by the Housing Options Team to the temporary accommodation owned by Bromford Living and managed by Bromford Support, located in Lichfield or Burntwood, subject to availability.
- (iii) Referrals will be made under the existing arrangements, relating to the provision of accommodation for those owed a duty under the homelessness legislation, ie a referral form will be completed and a risk assessment carried out.
- (iv) Outside office hours, bed and breakfast accommodation will be provided. For calls out of hours please telephone **01543 574480**.
- (v) The Housing Options Team will confirm the availability of the accommodation before midday on a day to day basis by liaising with the temporary accommodation provider, any relevant agencies and the rough sleeper.
- (vi) All rough sleepers accommodated under the protocol will be referred to appropriate support services, for help with access to services, including benefit entitlement.
- (vii) Rough sleepers will also be offered advice about their housing options.
- (viii) The protocol will only be active whilst the severe weather conditions endure. Once it is determined that the weather has improved, temporary accommodation will no longer be provided. Relevant organisations will be notified when this occurs.
- (ix) The provision of temporary accommodation will be reviewed if there are incidents of anti-social behaviour, or any other behaviour likely to breach the occupancy conditions of the temporary accommodation, by any rough sleeper.

- (x) Separate arrangements will need to be made for any animals that the rough sleeper may have. Dogs will be placed in kennels used by Environmental Health Services in the same way that dogs which have been reported to the council as missing or stray are placed.

6. Financial Implications

- (ii) The cost of temporary accommodation for rough sleepers will be met through existing budgets.
- ii) Where eligible, all occupants will be required to submit a claim for housing benefit, to mitigate the cost to Housing Services.
- iii) There may also be additional costs in relation to the provision of suitable arrangements for any animals belonging to the rough sleeper.
- iv) Widening the range of extreme weather means the threshold for activating the SWEP is lowered which in turn may mean that temporary accommodation is used more often, thus incurring additional costs.

7. Monitoring & Review

- (i) Any rough sleepers provided with temporary accommodation when the Protocol is in force will be encouraged to make an application on the grounds of homelessness, if they have not already done so, so that they can be considered for a referral to the homelessness and rough sleeper housing pathway scheme.
- (ii) There will also be quarterly PI's added to the Housing Services dataset, recording:
- The number of rough sleepers housed during severe weather,
 - The number of nights for which accommodation is provided and
 - The cost of those placements.
- (iii) Further monitoring will be carried out to establish:
- How many of those accommodated can be verified as rough sleepers
 - How many of those accommodated had a local connection.
 - How many of those accommodated had no recourse to public funds.
 - The nationalities of those accommodated.
 - How many of those accommodated were already known to local services
 - What happens to those accommodated after the SWEP is no longer active
- (iv) The protocol will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Housing Options Manager, in consultation with all relevant organisations.

Glossary of Terms

Local Connection

An applicant has a local connection to an area if:

1. They have lived within the area for 6 out of the past 12 months or 3 out of the past 5 years.

And/or

2. Their mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter live within the area and they have continuing close family ties.

And/or

- 3 They are employed within the area on a permanent contract

Priority Need

The categories of priority need are:

- pregnant women
- persons with whom a pregnant woman resides, or might reasonably be expected to reside
- persons with dependent children, or with whom dependent children might reasonably be expected to reside
- persons who are vulnerable because of old age, mental or physical disability, or other special reason
- persons who are homeless in an emergency.
- 16 to 17-year-olds (not 'relevant children'/children in need under Children Act 1989 and Children Leaving Care Act 2000)
- young persons under 21 who are looked after/accommodated between 16 and 18
- young persons under the age of 21 who are vulnerable as result of being looked after/accommodated/fostered
- those who are vulnerable as result of being in HM forces
- those who are vulnerable as a result of custodial sentence/remand to custody/contempt of court/kindred offence
- those who are vulnerable as result of leaving accommodation because of violence or threats of violence

Homelessness Prevention

The formal definition of a 'homeless prevention' is the applicant is enabled to either remain in their current accommodation or is able to access alternative accommodation and that accommodation is likely to be available for a minimum period of 6 months.

Homelessness Relief

Homelessness relief is action taken to help resolve homelessness. Where, for example, an eligible applicant has sought help from the local housing authority (LHA) when they are already homeless or if homelessness prevention work has not been successful, they will be owed the relief duty.

Homelessness due to Violence

As set out in section 177 of the Housing Act 1996, it is not considered reasonable for a person to continue to occupy their current accommodation if it is probable that this will lead to domestic violence or other violence against them, any person who normally resides with them or any person who might reasonably be expected to reside with them.