Report to Cabinet

Subject: Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2026/27

Date: 26th November 2026

Author: Paul Whitworth – Assistant Director for Housing & Resettlement

Wards Affected:

All wards

Purpose

To seek Cabinet approval to publish and implement the Council's Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2026/2027, and to seek delegated authority for minor amendments, ongoing delivery and regular review of the Action Plan.

Key Decision

This is a key decision

Recommendation(s)

THAT Cabinet:

1) **Approves the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2026/2027 for publication and implementation;**

2) **Delegates authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth and Economy, to make minor amendments to the Action Plan and to oversee its implementation, monitoring and regular review; and**

3) **Notes that progress against the Action Plan and the Local Outcomes Framework will be monitored by the Assistant Director for Housing and Resettlement, and that delivery will be aligned with the countywide Action Plan to support a coordinated approach across Nottinghamshire.**

1 Background

1.1 In December 2025, the Government published *A National Plan to End Homelessness*, setting out a long-term, cross-government approach to ending homelessness and rough sleeping in England. Its vision is that homelessness should be rare, brief and non-recurring, with everyone able to access a safe, decent and secure home. The Plan recognises that achieving this requires both immediate actions to address the current crisis and sustained reform to tackle the underlying causes of homelessness.

1.2 The national approach places prevention at the heart of public services and combines long-term action to increase the supply of social and affordable housing, improve security in the private rented sector and address poverty with medium-term reforms to strengthen collaboration, accountability and earlier intervention. It also prioritises more coordinated support for people leaving institutions, including prisons, hospitals and care, where the risk of homelessness is known to be higher.

1.3 Alongside structural reform, the Government has set national priorities for this Parliament, including increasing the proportion of households helped to remain in their existing home or secure alternative accommodation, ending the unlawful use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for families, including placements exceeding six weeks, and halving long-term rough sleeping. Delivery is intended to be supported by clearer national and local outcomes, stronger partnership working and improved use of evidence and lived experience.

1.4 The new Rough Sleeping Programme supports the Government's ambition to end rough sleeping by providing support and accommodation options for people sleeping rough or at immediate risk of doing so. It aims to offer everyone sleeping rough a route off the streets and help as many people as possible move into accommodation before Christmas 2026. The Council's Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2026/27 will support these aims by, among other actions, identifying and engaging with all known veterans sleeping rough in the Borough and offering tailored support to help them move off the streets.

1.5 The Homelessness Act 2002 requires local housing authorities to undertake periodic reviews of homelessness within their district and to publish a homelessness strategy based upon the findings of that review. Gedling Borough Council fulfils this requirement through the South Nottinghamshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-2027, developed jointly with neighbouring authorities. The proposed Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2026/27 supports implementation of that Strategy and translates its strategic priorities into measurable local actions and outcomes.

1.6 Homelessness demand remains significant both nationally and locally. During 2025/26 the Council achieved 611 successful early intervention, prevention or relief outcomes, placed 159 households into temporary accommodation and made 52 main housing duty decisions. Increasing pressure within the housing market, affordability challenges, domestic abuse, relationship breakdown, mental ill-health and wider cost-of-living pressures continue to drive demand for homelessness services.

1.7 The Council's Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2026/27 provides the local framework for responding to these priorities and will operate alongside a wider countywide Action Plan. It will translate the national direction into practical, measurable activity reflecting local needs, with a focus on early prevention, reducing reliance on temporary and Bed and Breakfast accommodation, supporting people sleeping rough into settled housing, and strengthening joint working with statutory, housing, health and voluntary-sector partners. Progress will be monitored through defined actions, responsible leads, timescales and outcomes, enabling the Council to demonstrate its contribution to the national ambition to end homelessness.

1.8 Councils should have a clear Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy that sets out how temporary accommodation is used, allocated, monitored and reduced.

1.9 BDO were asked to provide assurance to the Council that its Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Action Plan meets the requirements placed on local authorities as a condition of the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant. Based on their assessment the Council's Action Plan met all three must requirements.

For this reason, BDO have provided Substantial assurance over the design of controls as set out in the Action Plan. This review did not assess the effectiveness of controls.

2 Proposal

2.1 The National Plan to End Homelessness sets out a stronger national focus on prevention, improved temporary accommodation, reducing repeat homelessness, and halving long-term rough sleeping by the end of this Parliament. The plan also places greater emphasis on strategic and partnership working, lived experience, public service collaboration, clearer accountability, and better use of data to ensure homelessness is prevented earlier and services are better targeted to local need.

2.2 The new requirements for the Council to publish an Action Plan are detailed in the "National Plan to End Homelessness" guide and in the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant 2026/27 – 2028/29 conditions. Those conditions are: -

- Action Plans must be published by Autumn 2026 (1st December 2026)
- Action Plans must be regularly updated
- Action Plans must include:

  a) **Targets** to improve performance against each of the Local Outcomes Framework metrics for homelessness and rough sleeping.

  b) **Local Governance structures**

  c) How **partnerships** work across the local area

  d) Reference to **specific plans**, where appropriate, such as Bed and Breakfast elimination plans and long-term rough sleeping partnership plans

  e) For ensuring **suitability of temporary accommodation**

2.3 The **Local Outcomes Framework** sets shared priority outcomes between central and local government, replacing fragmented ring-

fenced funding with six measurable indicators against which councils will be evaluated:

i. Households with children in temporary accommodation

ii. Households with children in bed and breakfast accommodation beyond six weeks

iii. Successful prevention and relief outcomes

iv. Successful prevention and relief outcomes for households experiencing multiple disadvantage

v. People sleeping rough on a single night

vi. People experiencing long-term rough sleeping

2.4 From April 2026, national funding arrangements changed with the introduction of the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant, providing multi-year allocations directly to local authorities. The grant consolidates the prevention, relief and staffing element of the former Homelessness Prevention Grant, the Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant, the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme, Renters' Rights Act new burdens funding and specified domestic abuse and supported housing allocations. Funding previously provided through the temporary accommodation element of the Homelessness Prevention Grant has been separated from the new grant and incorporated into the Revenue Support Grant. The homelessness and rough sleeping element of the new grant is ringfenced and must be used in accordance with the grant determination and associated conditions. Within those requirements, the arrangements provide greater flexibility for the Council to target expenditure towards local priorities, while demonstrating progress through the Local Outcomes Framework.

2.5 The Council will deliver the Action Plan through a coordinated programme of activity focused on preventing homelessness at the earliest opportunity; improving successful prevention and relief outcomes, including for households experiencing multiple disadvantage; reducing the number of families in temporary accommodation and ending the unlawful use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for families, including placements exceeding six weeks; ensuring all temporary accommodation is suitable and effectively managed; and providing timely outreach, assessment, accommodation and support for people sleeping rough, with a particular focus on reducing long-term rough sleeping. Delivery will be supported by stronger partnership working across housing,

health, social care, criminal justice and the voluntary sector, informed by lived experience and improved use of data. Gedling's local Action Plan will ensure that activity is tailored to the specific needs and priorities of the Borough. It will be complemented by a countywide plan that provides a wider, joined-up approach to preventing and addressing homelessness across Nottinghamshire, supporting consistent pathways, coordinated commissioning, effective information sharing and stronger partnership working across local authority boundaries. Each action will have a responsible lead, timescale and measurable outcome, with progress monitored against the Local Outcomes Framework and the Action Plan reviewed and updated regularly.

3 Alternative Options

3.1 There is no viable 'do nothing' option. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) requires councils to publish locally tailored action plans by 1 December 2026. Failure to meet this requirement could place future funding allocations at risk.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 Approval of the Action Plan does not, in itself, create an immediate additional financial commitment. Delivery will be managed within existing approved budgets and available staffing resources, including the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant 2026/27–2028/29.

4.2 Some actions may require additional expenditure or the commissioning of services. Where costs cannot be met from existing budgets or confirmed external funding, a separate financial assessment and appropriate approval will be required before any commitment is entered into. Opportunities for joint commissioning and the effective use of funding through the countywide Action Plan will be explored.

4.3 Effective homelessness prevention and reduced reliance on Bed and Breakfast and other high-cost temporary accommodation may result in cost avoidance. However, these benefits cannot be quantified at this stage and will depend on demand, housing supply and delivery outcomes. Expenditure, grant conditions and financial risks will be monitored through the Council's established budget-monitoring arrangements.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 requires the Council, as the local housing authority, to review homelessness in its area and to prepare and publish a homelessness strategy at least every five years. The Council must have regard to that strategy when exercising its functions. The Action Plan supports the implementation of the South Nottinghamshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022–2027 and should be kept under review to ensure that it remains consistent with the Council's statutory duties and current Government guidance.

5.2 Delivery of the Action Plan must comply with the Council's statutory homelessness duties under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, together with any other applicable requirements of the latter Act. These duties include providing advice and assistance, assessing eligible applicants, preventing and relieving homelessness, and securing suitable accommodation where the relevant statutory duty is owed. In exercising its homelessness functions, the Council must have regard to the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities. Decisions on homelessness applications and temporary accommodation must be lawful, reasonable and evidence-based, with applicants informed of applicable review and appeal rights. Decision-making must also comply with the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty, and take account of children's welfare and safeguarding responsibilities where relevant.

6 Local Government Review

6.1 Local government reorganisation may result in changes to governance, accountability and the future delivery of housing and homelessness services across Nottinghamshire. Gedling's local Action Plan will provide a clear framework for meeting borough-specific needs and maintaining statutory service delivery during the transition. This will be complemented by a countywide Action Plan, which supports the local government reorganisation agenda by establishing shared priorities, consistent service pathways, coordinated commissioning, improved information sharing and stronger partnership working across existing local authority boundaries. Together, the plans will provide an evidence base to inform the design of future homelessness services and help identify implications for funding, staffing, contracts, governance and delivery arrangements. Both plans will be reviewed as reorganisation proposals develop to protect service users, maintain continuity and ensure that local needs and countywide opportunities are reflected in the new local government structure.

7 Equalities Implications

7.1 The Action Plan is expected to have a positive equality impact by strengthening early intervention and improving access to homelessness prevention, suitable accommodation and support. People with protected characteristics may be disproportionately affected by homelessness or face additional barriers when accessing services, including disabled people, older and younger people, pregnant women, families with children, people from minority ethnic communities, and victims of domestic abuse.

8 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

8.1 The Action Plan is not expected to create any significant direct adverse environmental impacts. By preventing homelessness earlier and helping households to secure and sustain suitable accommodation, it may reduce the need for repeated emergency placements, avoidable household moves and travel between temporary accommodation, support services, schools and employment.

8.2 Environmental considerations will be taken into account during implementation and when relevant services or accommodation are purchased or commissioned.

9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Action Plan 2026/2027

9.2 Appendix 2 – Equalities Impact Assessment

10 Background Papers

10.1 A National Plan to End Homelessness

11 Reasons for Recommendations

11.1 Approval of the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2026/27 will enable the Council to meet the Government requirement to publish a locally tailored and regularly updated Action Plan by 1 December 2026. It will also demonstrate how the Council will deliver its statutory homelessness responsibilities, respond to the Local Outcomes Framework and protect access to future homelessness funding.

11.2 The recommendations will provide clear authority and accountability for implementation, monitoring and proportionate updates to the Action Plan. This will support earlier prevention, improved outcomes for households at risk of homelessness, reduced reliance on unsuitable temporary accommodation and more effective partnership working. Alignment with the countywide Action Plan will also promote consistent service pathways, coordinated commissioning and a joined-up approach across Nottinghamshire, supporting continuity and future service design through local government reorganisation.

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by: Tina Adams

Date: 17/11/2026
On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Approved by: Fran Whyley
Date: 17/11/2026
On behalf of the Monitoring Officer