



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4 February 2019

BRIEFING NOTE:

SCRUTINY PANEL 1 - HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPERS

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Since the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Scrutiny Panel has held an evidence gathering meeting scheduled with a further ones scheduled for 24 January and 14 March 2019.

2 UPDATE

- 2.1 At the meeting held on 8 November 2018, the Scrutiny Panel received responses to its core questions from key internal expert advisors; received a briefing note around published papers about rough sleeping and homelessness, best practice and relevant legislation. The findings from the site visits were also reported to the meeting.
- 2.2 At this meeting, the Scrutiny Panel undertook performance management scrutiny on:
- HML01 - Total number of households living in temporary accommodation
 - HML07 - Number of households that are prevented on becoming homeless
- 2.3 It was noted that over the past two and a half years, the number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation had increased from 66 to 303. More than half of the households that approach the Council for assistance had lost their private rented accommodation and been unable to secure a suitable property to move into. Preventing homelessness is essential, but is proving very difficult, given the severe shortage of affordable housing. A restructure of the Housing Options & Advice Service is underway and will increase the capacity and the level of expertise in the team. The need to recruit staff to manage temporary accommodation and 'free up' the social lettings agency staff to focus on private rented accommodation was realised.

- 2.4 At the meeting scheduled for 24 January 2019, the Scrutiny Panel will receive further responses to its core questions from key external expert advisors and hear about the recent site visit to Manchester.
- 2.5 It is expected that the Panel will continue to short relevant films and interviews in relation to its scope.
- 2.6 Further evidence gathering meetings are scheduled, with the next one set for 24 January 2019.
- 2.7 In accordance with the Scrutiny Panel Protocol the Chair of this Scrutiny Panel will provide written progress reports to future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the progress report.

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