

**REPORT FOR: PERFORMANCE &
FINANCE SCRUTINY
SUB-COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting:	19 March 2018
Subject:	Review of Homelessness Review Recommendations
Responsible Officer:	Nick Powell Divisional Director – Housing Services
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	Councillor Jeff Anderson (Environment and Enterprise – Policy Lead) Councillor Manjibhai Kara (Environment and Enterprise – Performance Lead)
Exempt:	No
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1- Table of recommendations

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report provides an update on the recommendations of the Homelessness Scrutiny Review Challenge Panel which was presented to Cabinet on 8 December 2016.

Recommendations:

The Performance & Finance Scrutiny Sub-committee is requested to consider and note the update on the recommendations.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

1. This report provides an update on the recommendations from the Homelessness Scrutiny Review.
2. The Homelessness Scrutiny Review Challenge Panel was held on 12 October 2016 to scrutinise the issue of homelessness and to understand the drivers of homelessness in the local area, examine whether or not the solutions currently being implemented effectively address these drivers and scrutinise local land and supply issues.
3. The members of the Homelessness Scrutiny Review Challenge Panel scrutinised the work of the Housing Needs and Housing Regenerations teams and challenged officers.
4. The key themes that emerged were housing supply, registered providers, finance, staffing, local impact and strategy. Recommendations were made and presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 8 November 2016.
5. The report of the Homelessness Scrutiny Review Challenge Panel, including recommendations, and the response report from Housing Services were presented to Cabinet on 8 December 2016.
6. The landscape has changed considerably since 2016. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has been introduced and will be implemented from 3 April 2018. This includes a new Homelessness Code of Guidance.
7. Housing supply and the affordability of housing continue to be key issues faced locally and nationally. Our response since 2014 has been to start building the first new council houses in a generation with a target of 500 new council homes built by 2020; to regenerate the Grange Farm estate and invest in building our own Private Rented housing.

8. To date we have completed 16 new social homes, with 91 more affordable homes in development and a further 30 for which we have secured planning permission. Plans have been submitted for 241 new affordable homes on the Grange Farm estate. We are also improving our homeless hostel accommodation, Vernon Lodge.
9. We have successfully brought down the number of households in emergency B&B accommodation by over 60% from a peak of 307 families in June 2016 to 116 families by the end of 2017.
10. We have largely done this through our Property Purchase programme; actively working with private landlords to prevent homelessness so families don't have to move and offering longer term private rented accommodation in London and elsewhere to end the uncertainty of homelessness.
11. The Homelessness Strategy is being updated and it is proposed that it will now incorporate the Homelessness Accommodation Selection Policy and the Homelessness Accommodation Procurement Strategy and introduces a new Prevention or Relief Assistance Policy. The Homelessness Strategy is required under the Homelessness Act (2002) and should be updated every 5 years. The Council's current Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018 was approved in April 2013.
12. Our proposal is to amend the current Homelessness Strategy sufficiently to meet the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, extend it until the end of December 2019 and conduct a full review during 2019 after the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the revised Homelessness Code of Guidance.

Update on Recommendations

An update on the recommendations is provided in Appendix 1.

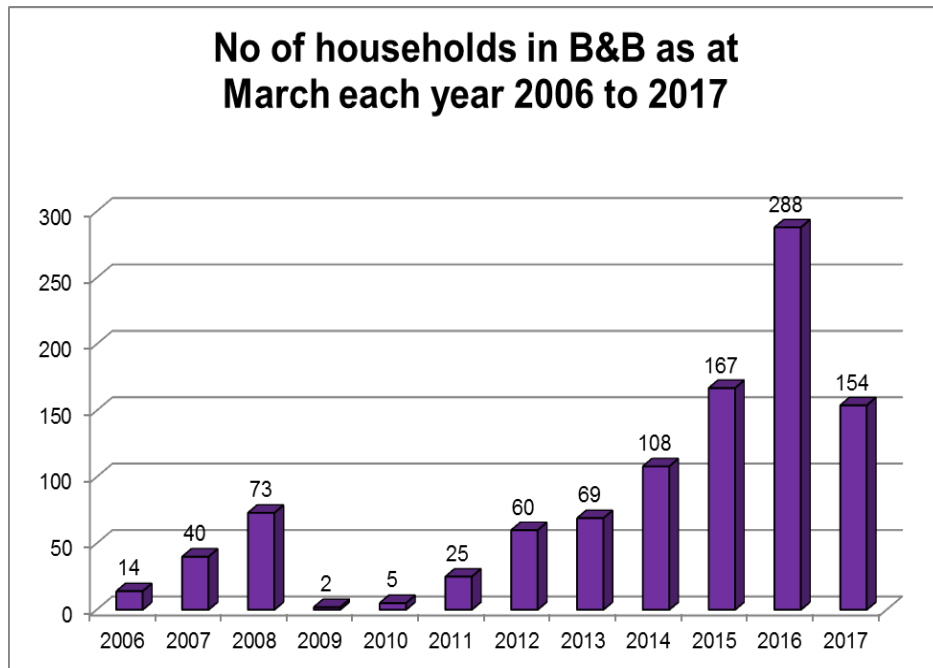
Financial Implications

There are no specific financial issues relating to this report.

Performance Issues

There are no specific performance issues relating to this report.

With regards to the performance in relation to the additional resources and staff agreed with CSB the use of B&B has been reduced significantly, from a peak of 307 families in June 2016 to 116 families by the end of 2017, and the MTFs savings in relation to those extra resources have been met.



Environmental Impact

There are no specific environmental issues relating to this report.

Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? Yes

Separate risk register in place? Yes (Housing Risk Register)

Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No

An Equality Impact Assessment was not carried out in relation to this Homelessness Scrutiny Review Challenge Panel but EqlAs are carried out when reviewing or introducing strategies and policies relating to homelessness.

Council Priorities

The Council's vision:

Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow

Please identify how the report incorporates the administration's priorities.

- Making a difference for the vulnerable
- Making a difference for families

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Not Required

Ward Councillors notified:	NO – affects all wards
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Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

Meghan Zinkewich-Peotti
Housing Strategy Project Manager
Housing Services
Community Directorate
Meghan.zinkewich-peotti@harrow.gov.uk
Internal: 2346
External: 020 8424 1346

Background Papers:

Response to Scrutiny's Review Challenge Panel on Homelessness
8 December 2016

<http://moderngov:8080/documents/s140445/Response%20to%20the%20SCP%20review%20of%20Homelessness.pdf>

Report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee 8 November 2016

<http://moderngov:8080/documents/s139982/Homelessness%20Challenge%20Panel%20Report.pdf>

Report of the Homelessness Scrutiny Review Challenge Panel October 2016

<http://moderngov:8080/documents/s139981/Homelessness%20Challenge%20Panel%20-%20Appendix%201.pdf>