

## **Housing & Homelessness Service Review – summary document**

In response to the extraordinary pressure which the housing service is and has been under, a service review has recently been completed. The review highlights the areas of the service where the pressures are most acute, where resources are most stretched and where the proposed changes could have the most significant impact.

The review proposes a more proactive and creative approach to spending Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) in line with government guidance to spend up to 49% of HPG on prevention-based activity and in anticipation of the Renters Reform Bill, which is likely to become an Act by early 2026.

The review advocates a One Council approach to the housing crisis, which brings together multiple disciplines of the Council, recognising that there are several parallel actions which can be taken to reduce the instances and cost of homelessness.

The review focusses on the length of time spent in temporary accommodation rather than solely the total number of households, and specifically highlighted the following priority areas:

- Increased emphasis on prevention-based activity, including expanding the portfolio of private sector landlords to increase availability and access to the private rented sector.
- Increased emphasis on move-on from temporary accommodation, including assisting households into employment to increase their housing options.
- The requirement for a specific role to work with the resource intensive cohort of hospital discharge to cover both physical and mental health discharge.
- Increased focus of front of house triage, to ensure officers are able to intervene at an earlier stage for the more time pressured homelessness approaches.
- Increased resource for the management of temporary accommodation placements and the administration of the housing needs register, to help improve the link between temporary and settled accommodation, and to process the increase in housing register related activity.
- A requirement to revise and update existing policies, which includes a review of the rent deposit offer to landlords, updating the processes for managing and terminating temporary accommodation placements and implementing an out of area settled accommodation policy.