

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY



SCRUTINY PANEL 3 – HOMELESSNESS

(PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY)

CORE QUESTIONS – EXPERT ADVISORS - Director, Children’s Services, NCC

In July 2016, Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board, together with partners, convened a Task & Finish group in order to gain a clear understanding of activity being undertaken in the county to support families and young people facing homelessness

- Representatives from key partners include:
- Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board
- Northamptonshire County Council – Children’s Social Care and Early Help
- Northampton Borough Council
- Borough Council of Wellingborough
- Northampton Women’s Aid

The Safeguarding Children Board Business Manager is a member of the Chief Housing Officers Group which meets bi-monthly. This ensures the NSCB are aware of key issues facing the county’s housing departments.

Data shows us that for 2015/16, 103 homeless families become homeless ‘intentionally’ (households containing a dependent child or someone who is pregnant) within the meaning of the homelessness legislation. This figure is broken down as follows:

- Northampton – 57
- Corby – 13
- Daventry – 12

- Kettering – 9
- East Northamptonshire – 7
- Wellingborough – 3
- South Northamptonshire – 2

A further breakdown of the analysis will be undertaken via the Chief Housing Officers Group to understand specific reasons for those becoming intentionally homeless and this will include the number and age of children in the household.

The NSCB collects data on the number of initial contacts for 16-17 year olds reporting homelessness. The figure of Q1 2016/17 is 28 to 30th June 2016.

A number of joint protocols are in place or being developed:

A Housing Protocol for the assessment of 16 and 17 year old young people who present as homeless has been in place since November 2015 and whilst commonly used by partners. The Task & Finish group will review and update the Protocol by March 2017.

Northamptonshire Housing Protocol for Care Leavers who are in need of housing and tenancy related support has been effective from 4th April 2016.

A Joint Protocol between Northamptonshire County Council and Local Authority Housing Services to address the needs of intentionally homeless families with children is currently in draft format and is being driven by the Task & Finish group.

A multi-agency case audit on young people facing homelessness is being undertaken on 23rd September 2016.

Ongoing priorities for the Task & Finish group are:

- To understand the data and the impact of homelessness on wellbeing.
- To understand any deficits across the county.
- To understand the scale of those facing homelessness with no recourse to public funds