

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY



SCRUTINY PANEL 3 – HOMELESSNESS

(PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY)

CORE QUESTIONS – EXPERT ADVISORS

The Scrutiny Panel is currently undertaking a review: Pre-Decision Scrutiny: To review how the Borough Council and its partners prevent homelessness and respond to those without homes in the borough

Key Lines of Enquiry

- To gain an understanding of the work currently being undertaken by Northampton Borough Council (NBC), partnerships, statutory and voluntary organisations to address homelessness
- To assess the extent of homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough assess the initiatives currently in place to tackle homelessness
- To examine the Council's Severe Weather Provision
- To gain an understanding of the effect on the health, wellbeing and the safety of homelessness people, including rough sleepers
- To gain an understanding of the causes and barriers to support homelessness
- Identify any specific groups that are not accessing services

The expected outcomes of this Scrutiny Review are:

- To reduce homelessness in the borough of Northampton
- An understanding of the local authority homelessness role and the services provided in Northampton
- A review of existing homelessness services in Northampton, in order to assess their quality and effectiveness and identify any significant gaps in service

CORE QUESTIONS:

A series of key questions have been put together to inform the evidence base of the Scrutiny Panel:

1. Please describe your understanding of the nature, causes and extent of homelessness and rough sleeping, and the impact that homelessness has on the health, wellbeing and safety of homeless people.

Please see attachment 1 – Homelessness Scrutiny report question 1

2. Please describe the services, assistance and support that are available to people who are homeless, including rough sleepers.

The local service commissioners and provider would be best place to answer this question. We provide services through our commissioned drugs and alcohol services

3. Please provide details of the contribution that your organisation is making (through its work and the initiatives in which it is involved) to tackle, prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough.

The Public Health team commissions the drugs and alcohol services and through this work has specific services to support homelessness.

Homelessness – Drugs and Alcohol projects

1. PHaSE project run by Bridge – 20 housing units for recovering clients of drug or alcohol addictions [partnered with ORBIT Housing]
2. Outreach worker working with homeless and street drinkers [following blue light – Alcohol Concern principles] working from the Bridge
3. Work with NBC on the homeless strategy.

4. Please provide details of the action that your organisation is taking to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of homeless people.

We are planning to complete a Health needs assessment for homeless in 2017/18, this should contribute to the insight and intelligence required to inform future commissioning intentions for homelessness.

5. Please provide details of the local Homelessness Strategy and Rough Sleepers Strategy and how their implementation is being monitored and assessed.

This question is would be better answered by one of the other experts

6. Please provide details of the arrangements that have been put in place to provide rough sleepers with emergency shelter during severe weather.

This question is would be better answered by one of the other experts

7. Please provide us with any statistics and data you hold in relation to the number of people / households that are homeless, and details of the methodology you have used to count the number of people sleeping rough.

The most robust data we hold is through our drug and alcohol services. Please see attachment 'homelessness clients in treatment'

8. Are you aware of any specific groups that are not accessing local services and, if you are, please can you provide details and describe the reasons why some homeless people are difficult to engage and support?

The providers of services are better placed to give the insight and intelligence required to answer this question

9. Are there any significant gaps in service and do the services link together well enough?

A needs assessment would help to identify gaps. Further intelligence and insight could be provided through the providers of the service

10. How can we increase awareness of the services, assistance and support available to people who are homeless, including rough sleepers?

The Making Every Contact Count (MECC) is a programme to raise awareness and opportunistically delivery of consistent and concise healthy lifestyle information. Enabling individuals to engage in conversations about their health. People working with the homeless could be included as a group to train informing the wider workforce

11. What action is being taken to ensure that all agencies and members of the public know what to do if they know that someone is homeless or sleeping rough?

This question is would be better answered by one of the other experts

12. Do you have any other information you are able to provide in relation to homelessness and rough sleeping?

We hold some information through our adult social care and children's services. Contacts for this information are; Rebecca Brinkworth (for Children and Families)
Simon Bryant (for Adults Social Care)