



## Cabinet Member Report for Housing and Wellbeing

### Northampton Borough Council

10<sup>th</sup> September 2018

#### **Tackling, preventing and reducing rough sleeping**

Everyone knows that sleeping rough is dangerous and reduces life expectancy. That is why it is so important that everyone in the borough does everything in their power to encourage people who are sleeping rough to engage with housing and support providers and leave the streets.

During the coming winter, SWEP will be delivered by the Housing & Wellbeing Service and new arrangements will be put in place to ensure that everyone who accesses the winter shelter receives the help, advice, encouragement and support they need to come off the streets.

Work has already started on the Overview & Scrutiny Panel's review of rough sleeping and homelessness which will recommend improvements to the way in which everyone engages with people who are sleeping rough. It will also make recommendations on how Northampton can make best use of the 'Housing First' model to reduce rough sleeping in the borough.

On 17<sup>th</sup> October 2018, Cabinet will consider a Business Case for the relocation of Northampton's Emergency Nightshelter to a new site that has the capacity to accommodate men and women.

For more information about what the Council and its partners are doing to tackle rough sleeping in Northampton, please visit [www.northampton.gov.uk/rs](http://www.northampton.gov.uk/rs)

#### **Northampton showcased at summer roadshow**

In July 2018, the MHCLG (Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government) held four Summer Roadshows at various locations around the country to encourage local authority private sector housing professionals to use their powers under the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

At the East Midlands event in Birmingham on July 18<sup>th</sup> 2018, Northampton was the only local authority invited by the MHCLG to give a presentation. Its presentation, delivered by the Private Sector Housing Manager, focused on Northampton's innovative, intelligence led, targeted approach to dealing with criminal, rogue and irresponsible landlords.

Our approach continues to attract interest from the MHCLG, CIEH and other local authorities.

#### **Member Briefings on HMOs**

On 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018, the Head of Housing & Wellbeing and the Private Sector Housing Manager delivered a couple of Member Briefings on HMO licensing, standards and enforcement:

- How we tackle criminal, rogue and irresponsible landlords
- The housing legislation that applies to all HMOs (licensable and non-licensable)
- The impact of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 – banning orders, civil penalties, rogue landlord database and rent repayment orders

- Northampton's intelligence-led, targeted approach to housing enforcement

### **Member Briefings on the Homelessness Reduction Act**

On 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018, the Head of Housing & Wellbeing and the Housing Options & Advice Manager delivered a couple of Member Briefings on the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017:

- The aims of the Homelessness Reduction Act
- The Act's 12 clauses and their implications
- Implementing the Act
- Single homelessness service
- Challenges, concerns and future developments

### **Encouraging better student housing**

I am delighted to report that the Student Housing Group (a good practice alliance comprising the University of Northampton, the Council, DASH, the Northampton Student Landlords Network and the Students' Union) continues to meet regularly to improve student housing.

Members of the Student Housing Group will be attending the University's Freshers Fair on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018 to provide students with advice and information on a range of housing issues.

The Group is also developing an annual landlord awards scheme that will provide students with the opportunity to acknowledge and nominate their excellent landlords. It is hoped that the first annual landlord awards will be presented at the Landlord Forum during the next university year.

### **Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH)**

Following Cabinet's approval of NPH's new house building development programme, NPH has completed an EU compliant tender to create a framework of contractors that are able to deliver small scale housing projects.

The standardised house designs and specifications will result in competitive pricing, the speeding up of the contract process and, a consequence, value for money.

NPH is delighted to announce that it has appointed four contractors to three lots (small, medium and large-scale projects) and that three of these four contractors (An Ainge & Sons and Excelsior Land, based in Northampton, and Jeakins Weir, based in Corby) are Northamptonshire-based small and medium enterprises. The fourth contractor is Engie.

As the framework is for four years, all three locally-based companies are committed to exploring direct appointment of tradespeople (rather than sub-contracting) as the pipeline of work develops.

This is great news for investment in the local economy and for local jobs.

**Councillor Stephen Hibbert**  
**Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing**