

# O&S REVIEW PLAN: PERFORMANCE REVIEW



## About performance reviews

The objective of a performance review is to examine the reasons for apparent under-performance of a council service, to assess prospects for improvement, and to make recommendations to Cabinet where appropriate. The output of a policy review is always a report to Cabinet. Typical questions for this type of review are:

- Is this service genuinely under-performing, and if so why?
- Are there plans and systems in place which will help it improve?
- What more needs to be done?

The review needs to be tightly focused on a single service area which appears to be under-performing against performance indicators, planned actions, customer satisfaction or budget management. A performance review could also be conducted on a service run by one of the council's partners, but in this case the committee will need to be clear that it has sufficient powers to review the service and make recommendations for improvements – if it does not, then the issue should be treated as an information item.

## Part 1: Business Case

<b>Subject:</b>	<b><i>Housing Services</i></b>
<b>Proposed by:</b>	Scrutiny Committee
<b>Length:</b>	Expected to take [??] months from start to finish.
<b>Objective</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To understand the reasons why the provision of temporary accommodation in Swale has been consistently problematic and how this can be overcome;</li> <li>▪ To explore the causes of pressures on housing services (lack of availability of affordable private rented sector housing, low numbers of affordable houses being built in the Borough, lack of available properties for tenants to 'down-size' to) and possible measures for alleviating them;</li> <li>▪ To review what effect the purchase of a property to house homeless families has had and whether this initiative should be extended; and</li> <li>▪ To make recommendations to Cabinet as necessary.</li> </ul>	
<b>Justification</b>	
<p>The number of households contacting Swale's Housing Service for help is increasing. The number of homeless applications has increased from 104 in 2009/10 to 217 in 2013/14. The number of households placed into temporary accommodation has increased from 57 in 2009 to 76 in 2013/14. The number of households placed into bed and breakfast has increased over the past three years resulting in net expenditure rising from £69,373 to £222,046 (due in part to the reduction in the amount of Housing Benefit that can be claimed back on B&amp;B costs). The total number of affordable homes built is decreasing year on year with only 73 delivered last year.</p>	
<b>Evidence and information to be gathered</b>	

Information around the lack of suitable temporary accommodation in Swale and lack of alternatives to bed and breakfast. Information on the reasons why more affordable homes are not being built in what is a growth area. Why the costs of renting privately are so high and why some landlords are unwilling to let to benefit dependent households. The role of registered social landlords.

<b>Sources of information and evidence</b>			
<i>Individual or organisation</i>	<i>Committee session</i>	<i>Task and finish panel, site visit, correspondence, or other method</i>	<i>To be decided</i>
Cllr John Wright, Cabinet Member for Housing; Amber Christou, Head of Resident Services.	√	X	X
Amicus Horizon	X	X	√
[Representatives from the Landlord Forum?]	X	X	√
<b>Organisation(s) to be reviewed</b>	If partners' activities are to be reviewed, what powers or influence does the committee have?		
<b>X</b> SBC only.			
Partner organisation only.			
<b>X</b> SBC working in partnership.			
<b>Timing constraints</b>	None.		

<b>Part 2: Review Plan</b>	
<b>Review team</b>	
Lead review member:	Whole Committee review
Other review members:	All members of the Committee
O&S support officer:	Bob Pullen, Policy and Performance Officer
SBC service liaison officer:	Amber Christou, Head of Housing
<b>Key dates</b>	
Date to begin evidence gathering:	14 October 2015
Date(s) of committee sessions (if any):	14 October 2015
Date for draft report to be presented to committee:	TBC
<b>Note:</b> Dates of committee session(s) and for the report to be presented to committee must be added to the committee forward plan.	