

O&S REVIEW PROGRESS REPORT



Part 1: About the review	
Subject:	Housing Services
Lead review member:	Councillor Derek Conway
Other review members:	Councillors Mike Dendor, Mick Galvin and Samuel Koffie-Williams
Review type:	Performance review
Objective	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To understand the reasons why the provision of temporary accommodation in Swale has been consistently problematic and how this can be overcome; ▪ 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; ▪ To review what effect the purchase of a property to house homeless families has had and whether this initiative should be extended; and ▪ To make recommendations to Cabinet as necessary. 	

Part 2: Progress report		
Overall progress		
X	Either: The deadlines on the work programme are expected to be met.	
	Or: The deadlines on the work programme are not expected to be met.	
Changes to deadlines	<u>Original expectation</u>	<u>Revised expectation</u>
Begin evidence gathering:	July 2016	July 2016
Committee sessions (if any):	N/A	N/A
Draft report to committee:	12 January 2017	12 January 2017
Note: Changes to dates of committee session(s) and for the draft report to be presented to committee must be reflected in the committee work programme.		
Progress against main review stages		
Inception:	Completed	
Evidence/input:	In progress	
Report:	Not yet started	
Follow-up:	Not yet started	
Commentary on progress		

This review was originally identified several years ago and the Scrutiny Committee adopted the review plan in early 2015/16. Two sessions on Housing Services were held at the Scrutiny Committee meetings on 14 October and 11 November 2015. Since then, work on the review fell into abeyance.

The Scrutiny Committee appointed a Task and Finish Group to see the review through to completion and appointed a review coordinator and other members.

Members of the Task and Finish Group met on 30 June to take stock of the review so far, review the objectives, identify what evidence was needed to be collected and who would be able to provide it. The Task and Finish Group agreed a review plan setting out how the evidence was to be collected.

The Group has been meeting with various officers to gather evidence including:

- Hyde Housing Association (2 August);
- Officers from SBC Resident Services (4 August);
- AmicusHorizon (24 August); and
- Moat Housing Association (31 August).

The Group is awaiting further information from these officers.

Visits are being organised to two other district councils (possibly Maidstone BC and Tendring DC in Essex).

The Group also noted that housing was a wide and multi-faceted area and they would need to make clear to the Scrutiny Committee that any suggested broadening of the current objectives of the review would have a knock on effect on the deadline for reporting. This was one of three reviews identified by the Committee in the previous Municipal Year on which rapid progress was expected.

Various key themes are emerging from the review and once all of the evidence has been collected, the Group will meet to produce a report and recommendations which will be brought before the Committee for its consideration at the meeting scheduled for 12 January 2017.