



Committee

**Housing Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**

Date and Time

23rd September 2026
10am

Public

A National Plan for Homelessness

Cabinet Member:	Councillor James Owen – Portfolio Holder for Housing
Lead Director:	Paula Mawson – Service Director for Communities and Customer
Service Area:	Communities and Customer (Housing Services)
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Electoral Divisions Affected	All
Key Decision?	Non Key
Cabinet Forward Plan	Not Applicable
Report considered by	Not Applicable

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To provide Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the council's statutory duty regarding homelessness, temporary accommodation and rough sleeping, including recent national developments and the implications for Shropshire Council and progress made locally in responding to the Government's reform agenda.

2. Recommendations

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to

- 2.1 Note the national homelessness reform agenda and the implications for Shropshire Council, including the National Plan to End Homelessness, the Rough Sleeping Programme, proposed Duty to Collaborate, Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty and care leaver reforms.
- 2.2 Support the development of a local Action Plan in response to the National Plan Delivery Plan, aligned to the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024–2029, to provide a clear framework for local implementation, governance, risk management and performance monitoring.
- 2.3 Recognise homelessness prevention as a whole-Council and whole-system responsibility, requiring strengthened partnership working across Housing, Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Public Health, health, education, criminal justice agencies, registered providers and the voluntary sector.
- 2.4 Note plans to request that this report also be received by People Scrutiny Committee, the Health and Wellbeing Board, and by Cabinet to support shared understanding of homelessness as a whole-system issue and the need for coordinated partnership action across housing, health, social care, children's services and wider partners.
- 2.5 Support continued development of the Temporary Accommodation Suitability Policy, improved move-on pathways, care leaver housing protocols and rough sleeping responses to reduce homelessness, manage demand and improve outcomes for residents.
- 2.6 Agree that Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives further reports on progress in delivering the National Plan locally, including ongoing performance assurance on prevention outcomes, repeat homelessness, rough sleeping, temporary accommodation use, successful move-on, partnership effectiveness and readiness for new statutory duties. This will include review of the proposed key performance indicators and suggested targets to ensure they are meaningful, achievable and aligned to local priorities, with links made to KPI reporting through corporate performance reports.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Government's National Plan to End Homelessness, published in December 2025, represents the most significant homelessness reform programme in recent years. It sets out a national ambition that homelessness should become rare, brief and non-recurring, supported by a stronger focus on prevention, partnership working and accountability across public services.
- 3.2 Alongside the National Plan, Government has announced a new Rough Sleeping Programme and an ambition that everyone sleeping rough should have a route off the streets before Christmas 2026.

- 3.3 The Government is also strengthening protections for care leavers through legislative changes which will prevent eligible care leavers under 25 being found intentionally homeless.
- 3.4 Shropshire Council is well placed to respond to these developments. Much of the direction of travel aligns with work already underway through the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029. National reforms demand development of a supplementary National Delivery Plan (which links with the current strategy action plan), a review of allocations and nominations arrangements, implementation of the Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty and development of a Temporary Accommodation Suitability Policy.
- 3.5 However, the increasing complexity of homelessness presentations means that homelessness can no longer be viewed solely as a Housing issue. Achieving the ambitions of the National Plan will require a whole-Council and whole-system response involving Housing, Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Public Health, health partners, criminal justice agencies, registered providers and the voluntary sector.
- 3.6 The National Plan to End Homelessness is supported by a national performance and accountability framework designed to assess whether homelessness is becoming rarer, briefer and less likely to recur. Whilst Government has set the national priorities and outcome measures, local authorities are expected to establish their own baseline position and publish locally determined improvement targets.
- 3.7 The priorities set out within the National Plan closely align with the Council's existing Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 and much of the activity required nationally is already being delivered locally. The current Strategy focuses on early intervention and partnership working, preventing rough sleeping and repeat homelessness, increasing access to suitable accommodation solutions and delivering an effective and accessible Housing Options service.
- 3.8 The Government's priorities include:
- Preventing homelessness through earlier intervention and partnership working.
 - Ensuring homelessness is brief by reducing reliance on temporary accommodation and improving move-on opportunities.
 - Eliminating the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for families other than for very short-term emergencies.
 - Reducing rough sleeping, including a national ambition to halve long-term rough sleeping.
 - Improving housing outcomes for people leaving care, prison and hospital.
 - Strengthening local accountability, governance and partnership arrangements.
- 3.9 These priorities align strongly with existing work underway in Shropshire, including homelessness prevention and welfare support pathways, temporary accommodation management, development of a Temporary Accommodation Suitability Policy, review of allocations and nominations arrangements with registered providers, rough sleeping outreach and multi-agency responses, implementation of the Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty, and strengthened joint working arrangements with Children's Services, Adult Social Care, health partners and criminal justice agencies.

- 3.10 As part of the National Plan, all local authorities are required to publish targets against six measures contained within the Government's Local Outcomes Framework. These measures will form the primary mechanism through which progress against the ambition to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring will be assessed nationally. The request of Scrutiny is to determine the targets associated with each of these for Shropshire to demonstrate its improved delivery.

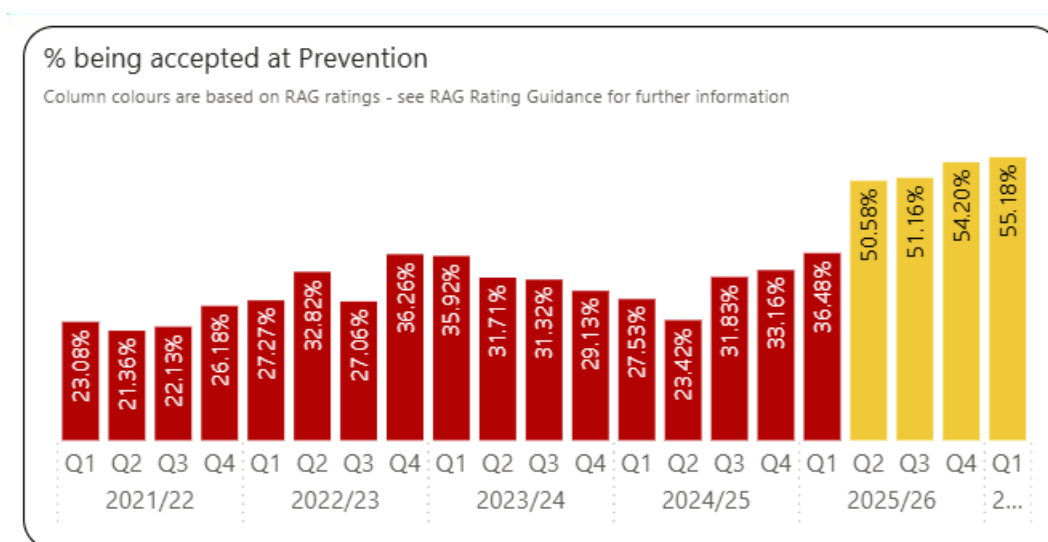
Central Government determined Local Outcomes Framework Measure	National Ambition	Shropshire Baseline
Households with children in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households	Reduce reliance on temporary accommodation and ensure homelessness is brief	H-CLIC April-June 2026 0.40
Households with children in Bed and Breakfast accommodation for more than six weeks	Eliminate family B&B use other than for very short-term emergencies	HCLIC April-June 2026 0
Success at preventing and relieving homelessness	Increase the proportion of households whose homelessness is prevented or relieved	HCLIC April-June 2026 36.89%
Success at preventing and relieving homelessness for households with three or more support needs	Improve outcomes for households experiencing multiple disadvantage	HCLIC April-June 2026 0.44%
People sleeping rough on a single night	Reduce rough sleeping and ensure rapid routes off the streets	As of August 2026 27
People experiencing long-term rough sleeping	Halve long-term rough sleeping by the end of the Parliament	As of August 2026 12

Note – Officers will present data at scrutiny regarding trajectory to date to help aid discussion around future suggested targets.

- 3.11 The baseline position demonstrates both areas of strength and areas where further improvement will be required. Of particular note, Shropshire currently has no households with children accommodated in Bed and Breakfast accommodation beyond the statutory six-week limit, a position that aligns with the National Plan ambition and one which the Council is committed to maintaining. More broadly, the most recent H-CLIC (Homelessness Case Level Information Classification – the quarterly reports we have to return to Central Government on our homelessness performance) records 0.4 households with children in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households in Shropshire, substantially below the national average of 3.5.
- 3.12 Following participation in Shelter's Systems Thinking in Homelessness Services programme in 2024, the Council implemented a range of service improvements from April 2025, including the elimination of historic allocation backlogs, same-day case

allocation, revised triage arrangements, clearer pathways between prevention and homelessness teams, and the introduction of housing options officer specialisms.

- 3.13 Evidence indicates these changes are contributing to improved outcomes for households seeking assistance and supporting earlier intervention across the service. Examples of these improvements can be shown through the measure that demonstrates the proportion of households owed a prevention duty has increased from 36.48% in Quarter 1 2025/26 to 55.18% in the most recent quarter reported. This measure assesses the proportion of households who approach the service before homelessness occurs and are accepted for prevention support, rather than after homelessness has already occurred and a relief duty is owed. When assessed against the benchmarking thresholds used within the Government's statutory homelessness statistical returns, Shropshire has improved from 'red rated' performance in Quarter 1 2025/26 to Amber rated performance in Quarter 2 2025/26. The aim is now to reach the 'green rated' threshold.



- 3.14 Other indicators demonstrate a similar direction of travel. The proportion of duties successfully prevented has increased from 15.75% to 31.93%, whilst the proportion of prevention and relief duties ending with accommodation secured has increased from 30.26% to 36.89%. Independent analysis undertaken with Shelter concluded that these trends are consistent with a service increasingly focused on earlier intervention, reducing escalation into crisis and improving outcomes for applicants.
- 3.15 More recent operational data indicate significant progress in reducing reliance on B&B accommodation. At the end of September 2025, 286 households were in temporary accommodation, including 100 in B&B accommodation and 17 families. By 4 September 2026, this had reduced to 246 households overall, with 20 in B&B accommodation, including nine families. Over the same period, the number of temporary accommodation units available increased from 186 to 226. This equates to an 80% reduction in B&B use and reflects the wider programme of work to increase suitable temporary accommodation, improve move-on and reduce the use of nightly-paid provision.
- 3.16 This demonstrates that many of the improvements sought through the National Plan are already being progressed locally and provides a strong foundation for future target setting and performance improvement.

- 3.17 This report is asking Scrutiny to discuss local improvement trajectories and consider factors to be considered in the recommending of targets to Cabinet for the published targets against each of the 6 Central Government determined Local Outcomes Framework Measures. Whilst Government has specified the outcome measures and reporting methodology, target setting remains a local decision. This provides an opportunity to ensure that targets are both meaningful and achievable, taking account of local housing market conditions, rurality, homelessness demand, accommodation supply, service capacity and existing performance. Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to consider the proposed performance framework and provide views on the level of ambition that should be reflected within the final targets prior to their publication through the Shropshire National Plan to End Homelessness Delivery Plan.

4 Summary of Main Proposals

- 4.1 Implement the National Plan to End Homelessness locally
Shropshire Council should continue to align its homelessness work with the Government's National Plan to End Homelessness, which aims to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. This includes strengthening prevention, earlier intervention, reducing rough sleeping, reducing reliance on temporary accommodation and improving outcomes for people leaving care, hospital and prison.
- 4.2 Develop a local National Plan Delivery Plan
The reforms propose developing a supplementary local delivery plan to set out how Shropshire will respond to the national reform agenda. This will sit alongside the existing Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024–2029 and provide a more focused route for implementing national expectations locally.
- 4.3 Strengthen whole-system partnership working
A key proposal is that homelessness prevention should become a shared responsibility across the Council and partner agencies, not just Housing Services. The report highlights the need for stronger collaboration with Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Public Health, health partners, criminal justice agencies, registered providers and the voluntary sector.
- 4.4 Prepare for the proposed Duty to Collaborate
The proposed national Duty to Collaborate is a significant change. Locally, this means Shropshire will need to strengthen joint pathways, shared accountability and operational arrangements across services so that people with complex needs receive coordinated support before homelessness occurs or escalates.
- 4.5 Embed the Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty
Continue implementation of the new statutory duty requiring Housing Services, subject to consent, to notify relevant education and health services when a child is placed in temporary accommodation. This is intended to support continuity of education, health care and wider support for children experiencing homelessness.

- 4.6 Develop and apply a Temporary Accommodation Suitability Policy
The Council is developing a Temporary Accommodation Suitability Policy to support consistent decision-making and ensure placements are appropriate. This links to the wider aim of reducing unsuitable temporary accommodation and maintaining progress in avoiding the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for families beyond the statutory six-week limit.
- 4.7 Improve pathways for rough sleepers
The reform proposes development of rough sleeping responses in line with the Government's new Programme and the ambition that everyone sleeping rough should have a route off the streets before Christmas 2026. This includes housing-led approaches, Housing First principles, multi-agency case coordination, improved move-on pathways and stronger links with mental health, substance misuse and social care.
- 4.8 Strengthen support for care leavers
The reform highlights legislative changes preventing eligible care leavers under 25 from being found intentionally homeless. The proposal is to strengthen joint working between Housing and Children's Services, review local protocols and ensure care experienced young people are supported to access and sustain accommodation.
- 4.9 Review allocations, nominations and move-on arrangements
The reforms link with the proposed review of social housing allocations and nominations arrangements to improve access to suitable accommodation and support move-on from temporary accommodation, supported housing and rough sleeping pathways.
- 4.10 Improve performance monitoring and scrutiny assurance
This report proposes that scrutiny should receive assurance on whether homelessness is becoming rarer, briefer and less likely to recur. Suggested measures, in line with Government reporting KPI's include prevention outcomes, repeat homelessness, rough sleeping levels, temporary accommodation use, successful move-on, policy readiness and partnership effectiveness.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The Council is required to respond to the Government's National Plan to End Homelessness and associated reforms. Decisions on formal adoption, resourcing and implementation will sit with Cabinet as appropriate. The purpose of this report is therefore to seek the views of Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee to inform the development of a local National Plan Delivery Plan, including the level of stretch that should be reflected in suggested local targets. In the first instance, this work will be progressed using existing resources, with clear prioritisation and ongoing scrutiny oversight. Any future gaps in capacity, funding or delivery can be considered through the Council's normal budget, commissioning and governance processes.

6 Key risks and Opportunities

Risk	Mitigation
Increasing homelessness demand and complexity, including mental health, substance misuse, domestic abuse, care experience, safeguarding concerns and repeat homelessness.	Strengthen early intervention, multi-agency case coordination and referral pathways so that support needs are identified and addressed alongside accommodation duties.
Limited affordable housing supply, restricted private rented sector access and insufficient supported accommodation, which may delay move-on and increase pressure on temporary accommodation.	Continue to review allocations and nominations arrangements, improve move-on planning, work with registered providers and partners, and explore opportunities to increase access to settled and supported housing options.
Growing pressure on temporary accommodation, including cost, availability and suitability of placements.	Maintain a strong focus on prevention, develop and implement the Temporary Accommodation Suitability Policy, monitor placement quality and continue work to avoid unsuitable Bed and Breakfast use, particularly for families.
Homelessness prevention remains seen primarily as a Housing responsibility rather than a whole-system responsibility.	Use the proposed Duty to Collaborate and local National Plan Delivery Plan to strengthen shared accountability across Housing, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Public Health, health, criminal justice agencies, registered providers and the voluntary sector.
New statutory duties and national reforms are not fully embedded consistently across policies, systems and operational practice.	Develop clear operational processes, staff guidance, consent documentation, notification templates and governance arrangements to support implementation of duties such as the Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty and care leaver reforms.
Children and families in temporary accommodation may experience disruption to education, health care and wider support.	Embed the Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty so that, subject to consent, relevant education and health services are notified promptly and can provide coordinated support.
Care leavers under 25 may face increased risk of homelessness and may require additional support to access and sustain accommodation.	Strengthen joint protocols between Housing and Children's Services, reinforce corporate parenting responsibilities and ensure early housing planning forms part of pathway planning for care experienced young people.
Rough sleepers with entrenched and multiple needs may not sustain accommodation without intensive support.	Build on RESET and existing rough sleeping arrangements, strengthen housing-led approaches, apply Housing First principles where appropriate and improve links with mental health, substance misuse and social care services.
Financial and service sustainability pressures increase as demand, temporary accommodation use and complexity rise.	Monitor demand, cost and outcomes closely, prioritise prevention activity, strengthen move-on pathways and use scrutiny and governance

	arrangements to oversee risk, performance and resource implications.
Scrutiny may not have sufficient assurance on whether homelessness is becoming rarer, briefer and less likely to recur.	Develop a clear performance framework for scrutiny, including measures on prevention outcomes, repeat homelessness, rough sleeping, temporary accommodation use, successful move-on, partnership effectiveness and policy readiness.

7 Council Priorities

7.1 A Council that is financially sustainable, with clear priorities and purpose, and a workforce supported to excel

This reform supports the Council's central priority ambition by focusing on prevention, demand management and stronger governance. Homelessness and temporary accommodation create significant statutory, financial and operational pressures for the Council. By prioritising early intervention, reducing reliance on temporary accommodation, improving move-on pathways and strengthening performance monitoring, the proposals support more sustainable use of resources and clearer oversight of demand, cost, risk and outcomes. The development of a local National Plan Delivery Plan will also provide a clear framework for implementation, accountability and assurance.

7.2 Communities that are connected by well-maintained roads, accessible transport and infrastructure

In a large rural county, access to suitable accommodation is closely connected to transport, infrastructure, schools, health services, employment, support networks and community facilities. Homelessness prevention and appropriate temporary accommodation placements help people remain connected to the services and communities they rely on, reducing the risk of isolation and disruption, particularly for families, care leavers, people with health needs and those with complex support needs.

7.3 People live in safe, inclusive places with homes that meet their needs

This is the strongest direct alignment with the Corporate Plan. The reform supports this ambition by setting out the Council's statutory homelessness responsibilities and the actions being taken to prevent homelessness, reduce rough sleeping, improve access to settled accommodation and ensure temporary accommodation is suitable. Work to review allocations and nominations arrangements, strengthen move-on pathways, improve supported accommodation options and develop a Temporary Accommodation Suitability Policy will help more people access safe, appropriate and sustainable homes that meet their needs.

7.4 Everyone has the opportunity to be healthy and to thrive at every stage of life

Homelessness is a significant wider determinant of health and wellbeing. These changes support this ambition by recognising the links between homelessness, mental and physical health, domestic abuse, poverty, substance misuse, safeguarding, care experience, hospital discharge and criminal justice pathways. The Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty will help ensure that, subject to consent, education and health partners are notified when children are placed in temporary accommodation. Strengthened pathways for rough sleepers, care leavers and people

with complex needs will also support earlier intervention and better long-term outcomes.

7.5 An environment that harnesses our natural assets and supports wellbeing

The changes contribute to this ambition through its focus on suitable, stable and sustainable accommodation outcomes that support individual and community wellbeing. Although the environmental link is not the primary focus of the report, safe and settled housing is an important foundation for wellbeing and helps people remain connected to local places, communities and support networks. Future delivery planning should continue to consider the suitability, location and sustainability of accommodation options, particularly in the context of Shropshire's rural geography.

7.6 A thriving economy that benefits everyone

Preventing homelessness and improving access to settled housing supports economic participation and resilience. Stable accommodation helps people sustain employment, education, training and family life, while reducing the disruption and cost associated with crisis placements. This reform also supports more efficient use of public resources by seeking to reduce avoidable temporary accommodation use and improve move-on into settled housing. This contributes to a more inclusive local economy by helping residents remain connected to work, learning, services and community opportunities.

8 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The National Plan to End Homelessness and associated reforms have potential financial implications for the Council wider than just in Housing Services. There will be direct and indirect implications across Adults and Children's services also. The Council is likely to face continued financial pressure through rising homelessness demand, increased complexity of presentations, temporary accommodation costs, and the need to strengthen prevention, move-on pathways and support arrangements for rough sleepers, care leavers and households with multiple needs. Rising homelessness demand would require ongoing mitigations to continue to manage the pressures on the housing budgets.
- 8.2 There is also potential cost pressures linked to implementing new statutory duties, including the Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty and reforms affecting care leavers under 25. These may require operational capacity, system changes, staff guidance, information-sharing processes and stronger partnership arrangements across Housing, Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Public Health, education and health partners.
- 8.3 However, there are also opportunities to reduce longer-term costs through earlier intervention, reduced use of temporary accommodation, improved tenancy sustainment, fewer repeat homelessness presentations and better coordinated support for people with complex needs. Effective implementation of the National Plan locally should therefore be viewed not only as a statutory and strategic requirement, but also as an opportunity to reduce avoidable demand and improve financial sustainability across the wider Council system.

- 8.4 The Council will work with Finance as part of developing the Delivery Plan to model the potential financial implications of the proposed actions, including the impact on Housing Services and wider Council budgets. This work will inform the development of the plan and any future report to Cabinet, ensuring that the financial impacts, risks, assumptions and any resource requirements are clearer at the point Cabinet is asked to consider future decisions.

9 Legal and HR implications

- 9.1 These changes identify a number of legal implications linked to existing homelessness duties and emerging national reforms. The Council must continue to meet its statutory duties under homelessness legislation, including duties to prevent and relieve homelessness, assess applications, provide interim and temporary accommodation where required, and ensure that accommodation offered is suitable.
- 9.2 There are also specific legal implications arising from the Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty, introduced from 1 September 2026 through the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026. This places a new requirement on local housing authorities, subject to consent, to notify relevant education and health services when a child is placed in temporary accommodation. The Council will need to ensure that consent, information sharing, data protection and notification processes are legally compliant and consistently applied.
- 9.3 The report also references legislative changes preventing eligible care leavers under 25 from being found intentionally homeless. This has implications for the Council's homelessness decision-making, Children's Services pathways and corporate parenting responsibilities. Local policies, procedures and joint protocols will need to reflect this change to reduce the risk of unlawful or inconsistent decisions.
- 9.4 The proposed Duty to Collaborate also has potential legal implications. Although further detail is expected, the direction of travel suggests stronger statutory expectations around joint working between housing, social care, health, education, criminal justice and voluntary sector partners. The Council will need to ensure that governance, referral pathways and accountability arrangements are sufficiently robust once guidance and legislative requirements are confirmed.
- 9.5 There are workforce implications arising from the increasing complexity of homelessness presentations and the shift towards prevention, earlier intervention and whole-system working. Staff will need the skills, capacity and confidence to respond to cases involving multiple and overlapping needs, including mental health, substance misuse, domestic abuse, safeguarding, care experience, hospital discharge and rough sleeping.
- 9.6 Implementation of new duties will require staff guidance, training and operational support, particularly in relation to the Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty, consent processes, information sharing, care leaver reforms, temporary accommodation suitability and multi-agency case coordination.

- 9.7 The report also highlights the need for stronger partnership working across Housing, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Public Health, education, health partners, criminal justice agencies, registered providers and the voluntary sector. This may require clearer roles and responsibilities, escalation routes, joint working arrangements and potentially additional management capacity to oversee delivery, performance and risk.
- 9.8 There may also be implications for staff wellbeing and workload, particularly if homelessness demand, temporary accommodation pressures and case complexity continue to increase. The Council will need to monitor capacity, caseloads and service resilience to ensure statutory duties can be met safely and consistently.

10 Electoral Division Implications

- 10.1 None – this report is relevant countywide

11. Health, Social (including “Child Friendly Shropshire”) and Economic Implications

- 11.1 Homelessness and temporary accommodation can have significant adverse impacts on physical and mental health. The report highlights that many people presenting to Housing Options have complex and overlapping needs, including severe and enduring mental health conditions, substance and alcohol misuse, physical health needs, learning disabilities, neurodiversity and safeguarding concerns. Without coordinated support, there is a risk of worsening health inequalities, increased crisis presentations, tenancy breakdown, repeat homelessness and greater demand on health and emergency services.
- 11.2 The implementation of the Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty provides an opportunity to strengthen links between Housing, education and health services. Subject to consent, notifying GP practices, health visitors and other relevant services when children are placed in temporary accommodation should support earlier identification of health needs, continuity of care and improved health outcomes.
- 11.3 There are significant social implications, particularly for vulnerable adults, children, families, care leavers and people experiencing multiple disadvantage. Homelessness can contribute to social exclusion, family instability, disruption to education, poor wellbeing, safeguarding concerns and increased reliance on public services.
- 11.4 The Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty directly supports the ambitions of Child Friendly Shropshire by recognising the impact that homelessness and temporary accommodation can have on children's wellbeing, education, health and family stability. Ensuring that education and health partners are notified when children are placed in temporary accommodation will help children receive earlier and more joined-up support.
- 11.5 Shropshire currently has no households with children accommodated in Bed and Breakfast accommodation for more than six weeks. This is an important position to maintain, as extended use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for families can have significant impacts on children's health, wellbeing, education, privacy and family stability. Continued oversight of temporary accommodation use, suitability and move-on arrangements will be important to ensure this position is sustained.

- 11.6 The report also supports the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities by strengthening protections for care leavers under 25 and reducing the risk that care experienced young people become homeless. A whole-system response involving Housing, Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Public Health, education, health partners, criminal justice agencies, registered providers and the voluntary sector will be essential to improving social outcomes and reducing repeat homelessness.
- 11.7 There are economic implications for both the Council and the wider community. Rising homelessness demand, temporary accommodation pressures and increasing case complexity can create significant financial costs for the Council, particularly where households require emergency accommodation, intensive support or repeated interventions.
- 11.8 However, the report also presents opportunities to reduce longer-term costs through prevention, earlier intervention, tenancy sustainment and improved move-on pathways. Preventing homelessness before crisis point can reduce expenditure on temporary accommodation, reduce demand on health, social care and emergency services, and support better long-term outcomes for individuals and families.
- 11.9 Improving access to settled housing, supported accommodation and effective rough sleeping pathways can also support wider economic wellbeing by helping people maintain employment, education, training, family networks and community connections. This aligns with the Council's wider aim of supporting resilient communities and reducing avoidable demand across public services.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 12.1 There are clear equalities implications because homelessness and temporary accommodation can disproportionately affect people with protected characteristics and those experiencing wider disadvantage. The groups most likely to be impacted include children and young people, care leavers, people with disabilities, people with mental health needs, people experiencing domestic abuse, pregnant women, older people, people with substance misuse needs, people leaving prison or hospital, and people from minority ethnic communities who may face additional barriers to accessing suitable housing and support.
- 12.2 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council will need to ensure that any local delivery plan, policies and operational arrangements have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This will be particularly important in relation to temporary accommodation suitability, access to homelessness prevention services, information sharing, reasonable adjustments, communication needs, rural access barriers and the availability of appropriate support.
- 12.3 The reforms support equality objectives by promoting earlier intervention, stronger partnership working and more coordinated support for those at greatest risk of homelessness. The Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty is particularly relevant for children, as it supports earlier engagement with education and health services and helps reduce the risk of disadvantage arising from homelessness or housing instability. The proposed strengthening of care leaver protections also

supports equality of opportunity for care experienced young people, who are disproportionately affected by homelessness.

- 12.4 The Council should continue to monitor the impact of homelessness services and temporary accommodation placements on different groups, including by age, disability, sex, pregnancy and maternity, race and other relevant protected characteristics where data is available. Equality impact considerations should inform the development of the local National Plan Delivery Plan, the Temporary Accommodation Suitability Policy, care leaver protocols and any changes to pathways or access arrangements.
- 12.5 The report also has implications for the Armed Forces community in line with the Armed Forces Covenant, which seeks to ensure that serving personnel, veterans and their families are not disadvantaged in accessing services as a result of their service.
- 12.6 Homelessness prevention, housing advice, temporary accommodation and move-on pathways should continue to take account of the needs of veterans, serving personnel leaving the Armed Forces, reservists and Armed Forces families. Some members of the Armed Forces community may experience housing difficulties linked to transition from military to civilian life, relationship breakdown, mental health needs, physical injury, disability, financial hardship or limited local connection following service-related moves.
- 12.7 The report supports the Armed Forces Covenant by promoting earlier intervention, targeted prevention for groups at higher risk of homelessness and stronger partnership working across services. This provides an opportunity to ensure that Armed Forces households are identified early, receive appropriate housing advice and are referred to relevant specialist support where needed.
- 12.8 In implementing the National Plan locally, the Council should ensure that staff are aware of Armed Forces Covenant commitments and that homelessness assessments, prevention activity and accommodation pathways recognise service-related circumstances. This may include working with Armed Forces support organisations, health services, voluntary sector partners and housing providers to support sustainable housing outcomes for veterans and Armed Forces families.

13. Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

- 13.1 The report has limited direct environmental implications, as its primary focus is homelessness prevention, temporary accommodation, rough sleeping and statutory housing duties. However, there are several indirect environmental considerations linked to the way homelessness and temporary accommodation services are delivered.
- 13.2 The rural nature of Shropshire means that access to accommodation, support services, education, health care and employment can involve travel across dispersed communities. Where temporary accommodation is located away from a household's existing school, GP, support network or place of work, this may increase travel requirements, transport costs and associated carbon emissions. Ensuring that placements are as suitable and local as reasonably practicable can therefore support both social and environmental objectives.

- 13.3 There may also be environmental implications linked to the quality, condition and energy efficiency of accommodation used for temporary or supported housing. Poor-quality or inefficient accommodation can contribute to fuel poverty, poor health outcomes and higher energy use. The development of a Temporary Accommodation Suitability Policy provides an opportunity to ensure that accommodation standards, including safety, condition and suitability, are considered consistently.
- 13.4 In the longer term, improving access to settled housing, reducing repeat homelessness and strengthening move-on pathways can contribute to more sustainable patterns of accommodation use. This may reduce reliance on emergency or short-term placements, avoid unnecessary travel and support more stable community outcomes.
- 13.5 Overall, while the report does not identify significant direct environmental impacts, there are opportunities to align homelessness prevention and temporary accommodation planning with the Council's wider objectives around sustainable communities, reducing unnecessary travel, improving housing quality and supporting residents to live safely and sustainably.

14. Background Papers

- 14.1. Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2024-2029) - [Preventing-Homelessness-and-Rough-Sleeping-Strategy.pdf](#)

15. Appendices

Appendix A – Suggested Areas of Discussion

Appendix A – Suggested areas of discussion

- **Prevention and early intervention:** What more can be done across the Council and with partners to identify households at risk of homelessness earlier, before crisis presentation or the need for temporary accommodation?
- **Whole-system responsibility:** How can Housing, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Public Health, health partners, criminal justice agencies and the voluntary sector work together more effectively so that homelessness prevention is not seen solely as a Housing function?
- **Complex needs and safeguarding:** Where individuals present with mental health needs, substance misuse, domestic abuse, care and support needs or safeguarding concerns, what assurance does scrutiny need that joint pathways are effective and timely?
- **Temporary accommodation pressures:** What are the key drivers of temporary accommodation demand in Shropshire, and what further action is needed to reduce reliance on unsuitable or costly accommodation while still meeting statutory duties?
- **Housing supply and move-on:** How do limited availability of affordable housing, private rented sector access and supported accommodation affect the Council's ability to bring homelessness duties to an end safely and sustainably?
- **Rough sleeping:** What local arrangements are in place to ensure people sleeping rough have a clear route off the streets, and what are the barriers to sustaining accommodation once it is secured?
- **Care leavers and corporate parenting:** How should the Council strengthen joint working between Housing and Children's Services to ensure care experienced young people do not leave care into homelessness?
- **Policy and operational readiness:** What assurance is needed that local policies, procedures and staff guidance are ready for emerging national requirements, including the Temporary Accommodation Notification Duty, the temporary accommodation suitability policy and changes affecting care leavers?
- **Performance, outcomes and assurance:** What measures should scrutiny receive to understand whether homelessness is becoming rarer, briefer and less likely to recur, including prevention outcomes, repeat homelessness, rough sleeping, temporary accommodation use and successful move-on?
- **Financial and service sustainability:** How should the Council balance statutory duties, increasing demand, financial pressures and the need to invest in prevention and long-term housing solutions?
- **Role of elected members:** How can members support early identification of housing need in their communities, promote partnership working and provide constructive scrutiny of statutory homelessness duties and outcomes?