**Background**

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) formed in April 2021as a new unitary authority. WNC comprises the former Northampton Borough, Daventry District and South Northants District Councils, as well as disaggregated services of the previous Northampton County Council departments, including Adult Social Care and Public Health.

West Northants geographically incorporates the town of Northampton, the three market towns of Brackley, Daventry and Towcester and a large rural area.

The creation of WNC, alongside the introduction of the new Integrated Care System, provides new opportunities for collaborative working at both strategic and operational levels across health, public health, adult social care, Children’s Trust and housing. Considerable work is being undertaken in all these areas.

**Current delivery of the Homelessness and Housing Solutions services**

Prior to becoming unitary, Housing Options services were delivered via the three legacy councils. In addition, within the Northampton locality, the Street Services Team deliver advice to all non-priority single homeless people, as well as outreach and resettlement services to those who have slept rough or are at risk of doing so.

The unitary council’s Homelessness and Housing Solutions service offers advice and assistance on a range of housing related issues, including the provision of statutory homelessness services and advisory services and utilising various powers to secure accommodation either on an interim basis or as a settled home. The service also manages two housing registers and nominations to our registered providers. The Street Services Team offers a solution-focused, multi-agency approach to tackling rough sleeping, which has substantially reduced the prevalence of rough sleeping, since the pandemic.

Pending service transformation, Homelessness and Housing Solutions services are still delivered primarily through the locality teams. For consideration in a file audit, each team currently has the following number of staff members (excluding managers who do not undertake casework):

* Northampton locality – 28
* Daventry locality – 11
* South Northants locality – 11
* Single Homeless Service – 14

Work has started on the development of a new West Northants Allocations policy, with a timetable for implementation and operation by the 1st April 2024. A separate health check and comparison of the current schemes is currently being undertaken.

**IT function and case recording**

The housing options and homelessness service is carried out by the Council’s in-house, housing solutions and homelessness teams. All locality teams, use the Jigsaw case recording system. The Street Services Team makes use of spreadsheets.

**Homelessness Review and strategy**

WNC is required to publish a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy by the 1st April 2024. We are commencing work on our review and this health check will feed into that. We aim to have the review completed by end March 2023 and to undertake work on the strategy throughout 2023.