

<p style="text-align: center;">Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday 10th February 2021</p>	
<p>Report of: Karen Swift, Divisional Director of Housing & Regeneration</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted briefing note</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Update briefing note - Homelessness Reduction Act – One Year On</p>	

INTRODUCTION

This briefing note provides the context behind the resubmission of the Homelessness Reduction Act – One Year On report and recommendations following the decision at the last Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting to revisit the report and its findings.

BACKGROUND

The Homelessness Reduction Act challenge session was held on the 2nd March 2020, just before the first National lockdown was introduced as a result of the emerging Covid-19 pandemic. Consequently, the Council's scrutiny activities were curtailed with the resumption of its activity in the autumn of 2020.

Over that period, the membership and chair of the H&RSSC changed and work to improve the Housing Options Service was progressed. At the first "re-convened" meeting held on 3rd November 2020, Members were not in a position to approve the report and its findings, due to the effluxion of time, and requested that:

1. A resumed/additional challenge session be arranged to re-explore the matters raised in the report and draft new recommendations, if appropriate.
2. Any resumed/new challenge session to include consideration of evidence provided by councillors from beyond the sub-committee.

CONCLUSION

After further discussion between the Chair and senior officers, it was agreed that the report arising from the challenge session would be distributed to both current and previous sub-committee Members for them to review content and suggest amended recommendations.

In the time between holding the challenge session and the resumption of the H&RSSC meetings, the Housing Options Service has continued to push forward with its transformation programme and developed its operational practices to encompass appropriate ways of working as necessitated by the pandemic.

As a result, the original report and recommendations emanating from the challenge session have been amended, as discussed with the Chair and current members, to reflect the progress of the Housing Options Service and the final report and recommendations are presented to the H&RSSC for approval.