Housing, Health, and Community Committee	
Meeting Date	25th March 2026
Report Title	Temporary Accommodation (TA) Spend – Scrutiny Report
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing and Communities
Lead Officer	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing and Communities
Classification	**Open**
Recommendations	The committee is recommended: 1. To scrutinise the performance report and controls in place to manage the TA budget

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides the Housing, Health, and Community Committee with an update on the current performance in relation to TA and current budget position, the report also discusses the current risks and controls in place to manage the TA budget.

2 Background

2.1 The Council has a Housing Options Improvement Programme (HOIP) in place to manage and control the spend on TA. The costs of TA to Council's are increasing nationally and there is a risk to the overall financial position of the Council if it is not monitored and managed effectively.

2.2 The Housing, Health and Communities Committee have made some significant investment in interventions to support the control of the TA budget, the most significant are the TA Purchase Programme and an investment in additional staff to work with enabling clients to move effectively through the system. Both these interventions have been implemented.

Performance Information

Please note that the information in the tables below is the same as previous report in February, as a further reporting period has not been completed.

2.3 **Table 2 - Statutory Temporary Accommodation Placements – Total Households on last day of period**

	22/23	**23/24**	**24/25**	**Q1 25**	**Q2 25**	**Q3 25**
No. in Statutory TA	337	305	281	273	282	300
SBC Own Stock	3	3	38	44	42	48

Homeless Hostel	8	14	11	8	10	6
Housing Assn	79	84	73	76	81	73
B&B and Nightly Let	247	204	159	145	149	173
No. outside Statutory Duty (RSI Funded)	54	22	23	29	21	21

Table 3 - Statutory Temporary Accommodation Flow (2025/26)

Statutory placements	Households placed in TA	Households left TA	Households at month end
April	15	31	265
May	27	23	269
June	27	23	273
July	32	23	282
August	22	25	279
September	27	24	282
October	21	10	293
November	24	25	292
December	26	18	300

Table 4 - Length of Time in Temporary Accommodation – Over 6 months (2025/26)

Length of time in temporary (6 Months +)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
6 months - 12 months	35	62	81	
12 months - 18 months	50	44	26	
18 months - 2 years	27	25	30	
2 years+	58	74	69	

Table 5 - Temporary Accommodation Purchase Programme – Stock Owned

Number of temporary accommodation units owned by Swale Borough Council	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD 25/26
Total	50	53	55		55
Bedroom size					
1 bed	7	7	7		7
2 bed	37	39	39		39
3 bed	6	7	9		9
4 bed	0	0	0		0
Area					
Sittingbourne	39	42	44		44
Sheerness	10	10	10		10
Faversham	1	1	1		1
Property type					
Bungalow	1	1	1		1
Flat	18	18	18		18
House	29	32	34		34
Maisonette	2	2	2		2

Table 6 - Housing Register – Household and Lets

	22/23	23/24	24/25	Q1 25	Q2 25	Q3 25
No. of households on Housing Register	1,433	1,730	1,816	1,884	2,021	2,046
No. of lets through housing register.	297	423	388	116	79	81

Table 7 - Affordable Homes Delivered

	22/23	23/24	24/25	Q1 25	Q2 25	Q3 25
New Affordable Homes	208	289	228	35	28	53

2.4 Demand for Housing Options services has remained high during Q4, January is usually a high demand month, but this has continued into February. The reason for presentations remains consistent.

2.5 The Housing Register demand is continuing to increase with limited lets becoming available.

Financial Monitoring

2.6 The gross external TA costs from April 2025 – February 2026 was £3.39m which is a reduction compared to the same period in April 2024 – February 2025 of £3.74m. This has been attributed to the reduction in the overall no. of households in TA and the use of our own TA during this financial year. However, with the increase in TA households this quarter and this continuing into Q4 there is an anticipated overspend on the TA net costs of circa. 32% on the profiled budget. This is anticipated to be around £400k.

2.7 We have now completed Phase 1 of the TA purchase programme, as we are still in the mobilisation period it is difficult to report true running costs and this will be covered in the evaluation report due in the Summer.

2.8 Housing salaries are currently underspending by 11%, which gives an underspend of circa. £220k.

Rough Sleeping and Winter Preparedness

2.9 We currently have 11 rough sleepers on the street and 23 in accommodation. We are seeing an increasing number of rough sleepers on the street, and this has seen an increase in complaints from the public.

2.10 Swale operates like most authorities a Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) this is not a statutory duty but is a humanitarian duty. The aim is to minimise harm or death to anyone We have currently activated SWEP for 30 nights. Work has progressed well to establish a night shelter for next winter to ensure a more enhanced wrap around service for rough sleepers throughout the winter period.

2.11 We have again this winter experienced an increase demand on the service due to caravan park closures, we have been approached by 69 households and accommodated 13 households in TA.

Affordable Housing Pipeline

2.12 There are currently 623 affordable homes in the pipeline where an RP has been identified, and the site is underway or due to be underway shortly. This is a mixture of s.106 homes and additional delivery.

2.13 There are currently 189 affordable homes secured through s.106 agreements but without an RP currently identified.

2.13 In addition the Council will be developing 51 affordable homes at Cockleshell Walk.

Risks and Issues

2.14 The following have been identified as the current risks and issues:

- Demand for homelessness services across the country is still high and is anticipated to continue.
- Delivery of Affordable Housing remains an issue, despite planning service securing a strong pipeline, there are not RPs prepared to purchase the properties. I am currently unaware if the announcement on additional Affordable Homes Programme will change this position for our local RPs. Homes England are also introducing a fund to enable unviable S.106 sites, this is due to be fully operational in April 2026.
- RPs have scaled back delivery programmes due to viability and capacity within the sector.
- Caravan Park utilisation as a main home remains a concern.
- Renters Rights Act is predicting some landlords exiting the market.
- We are increasingly seeing demand for hospital discharge support and suitable accommodation.
- The reduction in grant funding over the next three years will likely see an impact on service provision, unless alternative funding or service improvement work realises further impacts.

3 Proposals

3.1 To scrutinise the performance report and controls in place to manage the TA budget.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 None

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 None.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Health & Housing - To aspire to be a borough where everyone has access to a decent home and improved health and wellbeing. Running the Council - Working within our resources to proactively engage with communities and outside bodies to deliver in a transparent and efficient way
Financial, Resource and Property	This report looks at the performance monitoring in relation to the TA budget.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Local housing authorities have a duty to secure accommodation for unintentionally homeless households in priority need under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended). Households might be placed in temporary accommodation pending the completion of inquiries into an application, or they might spend time waiting in temporary

	accommodation after an application is accepted until suitable secure accommodation becomes available.
Crime and Disorder	None at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	None at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	None at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	The TA budget has been identified as a corporate risk, due to demand on the service and the budgetary impacts.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.
Local Government Reorganisation	None identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

None

8 Background Papers

8.1 There are no background papers.