

Community wellbeing and Housing Committee 2 June 2026

MHCLG review of Spelthorne Homelessness Service
Karen Sinclair/Emily Corfield

Context

- One of the Council's key priorities, within the Corporate Plan, is 'Addressing Housing Need'
- The Council have agreed an Improvement and Recovery Action Plan and Housing is within the theme of Commercial and Regeneration
- The Council recognised the increasing reliance on nightly paid and temporary accommodation and the effects on the health and wellbeing of homeless households, along with associated rising costs and pressure on revenue budgets
- We requested MHCLG Homelessness specialists undertake an independent review of our homeless services to ascertain areas of good practice and areas for improvement

MHCLG review

- Desktop review of Spelthorne data based on statutory returns and comparisons with other local authorities
- On site two day visit December 2025, shadowing and discussions with Housing Option team members and review of cases
- Extensive consultation meetings including with Chair and Vice Chair of CWCH committee, Leader and Deputy Leader, members of Management team
- Consultation with key partners such as Rentstart, Probation, Adult Social Care, A2Dominion
- Feedback provided February 2026



SUMMARY (INCLUDING RAG RATINGS)

Housing Advice & Homelessness Services (Housing Needs)

Strategic	Management	Front Door / Prevention	Relief	Move-On
Excellent member & senior leadership support with key understanding of risks & challenges	Close working relationship with all aspects of service delivery with open lines of communication	Accessible and effective front door offering face to face (however online access should be reviewed)	Good & effective single homeless service with good PRS offer	Spelthorne Rent Assure is a high financial risk product and we recommended review and look at other models
New homelessness strategy in place with smart objectives and clear action plan in place	Positive team cultures and commitment to deliver high performing services is excellent & clearly visible	Good & effective partnership arrangements and good use of non-stat duty to refer	Keep under review timescales from initial approach to assessment of circumstances of need (first HCIC trigger)	Limited use of out of borough PRS placements
Strong oversight through Strategic Housing Group	Good levels of professionalisation in the service with officers being supported through accredited qualifications	Potential under reporting of prevention activity with casework taking place outside of a statutory framework	Over-reliance on nightly paid TA with no contracts in place to be assured of quality	Could make better use of HA move-on in the medium term to reduce TA

Green

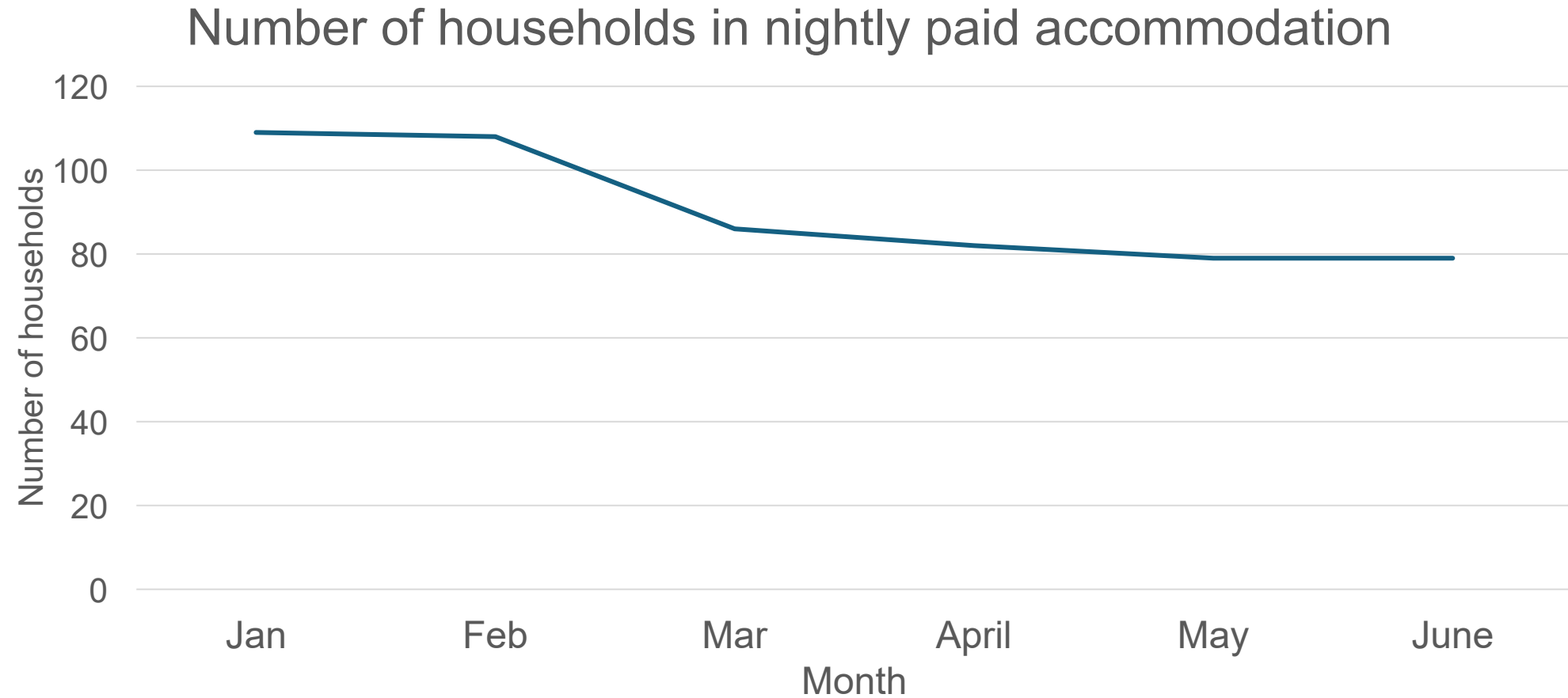
Amber

Red

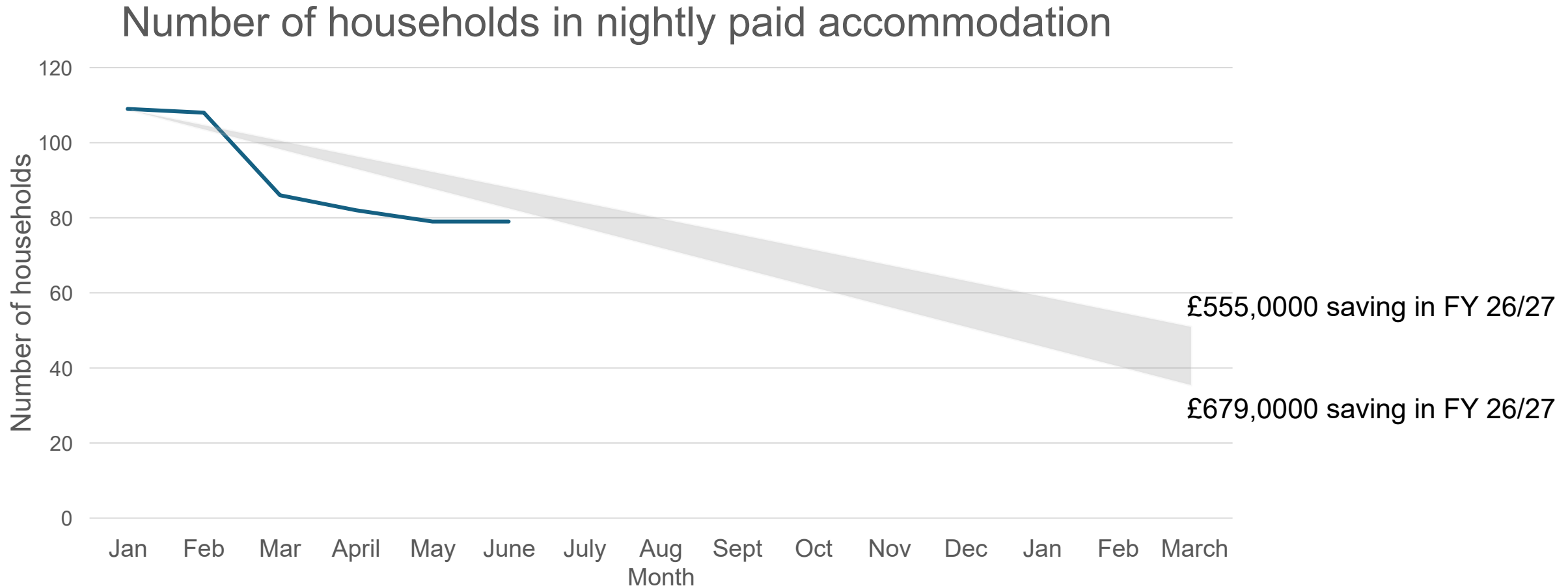
What we're doing to reduce use of nightly-paid accommodation

- Direct lets
- TA move on
- Recruiting additional staff- invest to save
- Tighter sign-off process for nightly-paid placements
- Reviewing Private Rented Sector scheme
- Working closely with A2Dominion
- Nominations agreements
- Creating a procurement framework
- Starting a Housing Delivery Group
- Purchasing street properties for TA or social housing

Impact so far



Targets and trajectory



Next Steps

- Improved decision making through performance management
- Review consultant findings on casework and engagement with the private rented sector
- Investigating high number of sensitive lets and age-restricted properties, and potential to change this
- Rate negotiations