

# **Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee**

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**Thursday 28 November 2013 at 2.00 pm**

**To be held at the Town Hall, Pinstone  
Street, Sheffield, S1 2HH**

**The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend**

## **Membership**

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Councillors Chris Weldon (Chair), Penny Baker (Deputy Chair), David Barker, Simon Clement-Jones, Sheila Constance, Richard Crowther, Denise Fox, Rob Frost, Qurban Hussain, Sioned-Mair Richards, Roy Munn, Robert Murphy and Philip Wood

## **Substitute Members**

In accordance with the Constitution, Substitute Members may be provided for the above Committee Members as and when required.

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## **PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING**

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The Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee exercises an overview and scrutiny function in respect of the planning, development and monitoring of performance and delivery of services which aim to make Sheffield a safer, stronger and more sustainable city for all of its residents.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at [www.sheffield.gov.uk](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk). You can also see the reports to be discussed at the meeting if you call at the First Point Reception, Town Hall, Pinstone Street entrance. The Reception is open between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Thursday and between 9.00 am and 4.45 pm. on Friday, or you can ring on telephone no. 2734552. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked \* on the agenda.

Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Scrutiny Committee meetings and recording is allowed under the direction of the Chair. Please see the website or contact Democratic Services for further information regarding public questions and petitions and details of the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at council meetings.

Scrutiny Committee meetings are normally open to the public but sometimes the Committee may have to discuss an item in private. If this happens, you will be asked to leave. Any private items are normally left until last. If you would like to attend the meeting please report to the First Point Reception desk where you will be directed to the meeting room.

If you require any further information about this Scrutiny Committee, please contact Matthew Borland, Policy and Improvement Officer, on 0114 2735065 or email [matthew.borland@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.borland@sheffield.gov.uk).

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## **FACILITIES**

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There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms.

Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

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**SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY AND POLICY  
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA  
28 NOVEMBER 2013**

**Order of Business**

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- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Public and Press**  
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public
- 4. Declarations of Interest**  
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Minutes of Previous Meeting**  
To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 September 2013
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**  
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 7. Schedule of Requirements for Bed and Breakfast Accommodation Used to House Homeless Households**  
Report of the Executive Director, Communities
- 8. Homelessness Performance Update**  
Report of the Executive Director, Communities
- 9. Management of HRA Land**  
Janet Sharpe, Council Housing Service, to report
- 10. Work Programme 2013/14**  
Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer
- 11. Welfare Reform - November Update**  
Briefing Note for Information
- 12. Council House Sales Under the Right to Buy Scheme**  
Briefing Note for Information
- 13. Date of Next Meeting**  
The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday 30 January 2014 at 2.00pm in the Town Hall



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## ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

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New standards arrangements were introduced by the Localism Act 2011. The new regime made changes to the way that members' interests are registered and declared.

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must not:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner, undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period\* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

\*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority -
  - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
  - which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) -
  - the landlord is your council or authority; and
  - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
  - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
  - (b) either -
    - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
    - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership).

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in

land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or

- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously, and has been published on the Council's website as a downloadable document at -<http://councillors.sheffield.gov.uk/councillors/register-of-councillors-interests>

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from Lynne Bird, Director of Legal Services on 0114 2734018 or email [lynne.bird@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:lynne.bird@sheffield.gov.uk)

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**Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee**

**Meeting held 26 September 2013**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Chris Weldon (Chair), Penny Baker (Deputy Chair), Simon Clement-Jones, Sheila Constance, Richard Crowther, Qurban Hussain, Sioned-Mair Richards, Roy Munn, Robert Murphy and Diana Stimely (Substitute Member)

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received and a substitute attended the meeting as follows:-

Apology

Substitute

Councillor David Barker  
Councillor Denise Fox  
Councillor Rob Frost  
Councillor Philip Wood

No substitute nominated  
No substitute nominated  
Councillor Diana Stimely  
No substitute nominated

**2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

**4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2013 were approved as a correct record and, arising from their consideration, it was noted that the response to the public question regarding the Arbourthorne Fields Redevelopment Scheme, submitted by Mr. Martin Brighton, would be circulated to all Members of the Committee.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

5.1 There were no petitions received or public questions submitted.

**6. REVIEW OF THE PARTNER RESOURCE ALLOCATION MEETING (PRAM)**

6.1 The Committee received a report of the Interim Head of Community Safety which provided details on the progress of the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting (PRAM) and included feedback from a Local Government Association Review of PRAM, which had taken place in June, 2013. This was supported by a

presentation given by Simon Mitchell, Safer Neighbourhood Manager, during which he explained that PRAM had been introduced to the East of the City in August 2012, with the aim of improving the identification and support for vulnerable people experiencing anti-social behaviour. He also provided details of three case studies.

6.2 Members made various comments and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided as follows:-

- In situations where there was an obvious vulnerability, action should be taken straight away.
- It was hoped that, eventually, area-based services would deal with these cases.
- PRAM was presently operating in the East of the City, covering the area from Ecclesfield to Mosborough. It was hoped to extend it to the rest of the City, following the Local Government Association review.
- Attempts had been made not to be too prescriptive with the definition of “vulnerability”, so as to avoid the adoption of too narrow a view. However, it was considered that circumstances such as age, degree of isolation and situations where people were no longer getting a service which they had previously received, were important factors. It was essential that officers were sufficiently knowledgeable to identify vulnerability.
- Councillors could report instances of vulnerability to Safer Neighbourhood Officers, Neighbourhood Policing teams or the Council’s Housing Service. The 101 telephone number was a good place for picking up such intelligence, but reports of vulnerability tended to be simply referred on and there was no feedback, which created something of a gap in the system.
- A new Safer Neighbourhood Officer would be in place within the next two weeks in the Central area of the City.
- There was no reason to think that there was less vulnerability in the West of the City. The function of PRAM was to identify the most vulnerable individuals and then involve the necessary resources.
- Attempts were being made to get officers not to see PRAM as a first port of call, with an area-based forum being required.
- Officers would eventually be working all across the City to look at risk and vulnerability. It was felt that viewing these issues in terms of a reduction in anti-social behaviour was outdated, with a more forward looking approach putting the emphasis on issues such as social care and mental health.
- There was not much of a budget for this work, with a beg, borrow and steal approach being employed. There were no resources to deal with mental health issues and consideration was being given to how health professionals

could get involved.

6.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Simon Mitchell for his contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the report and presentation and the responses to questions;
- (c) approves the proposed City-wide development of the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting;
- (d) requests that:-
  - (i) efforts be made to improve relations between the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting and the Neighbourhood Action Groups;
  - (ii) a quarterly written report on actions relating to the development of the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting in other parts of the City be provided to the Committee;
  - (iii) an annual presentation on the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting be given to the Committee, with up to two additional partners to attend; and
  - (iv) a brief paper explaining what the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting was, including contact details for the Safer Neighbourhood Officers, be circulated to all Members of the Council; and
- (e) appoints the Chair, Councillor Chris Weldon, and Deputy Chair, Councillor Penny Baker, as the main points of liaison between the Committee and the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting.

**7. SHEFFIELD HOUSING COMPANY**

7.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Place, which provided a short history of the Sheffield Housing Company and an update on its progress to date. The report was supported by a presentation given by John Clephan, Regeneration Manager.

7.2 Members made various comments and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided as follows:-

- The properties for sale were generally more expensive than ex-Council houses in the surrounding areas. However, they were cheaper than some new build competitors. It should be noted that they were not subsidised. Initial sales activity showed that there was a healthy demand for these properties.
- Many of the buyers had benefitted from the Help to Buy Government

scheme.

- The average price on the Parson Cross development was up to £155,000 for a four bedroomed property and just over £100,000 for a two-bedroomed property.
- There were approximately 17 different types of property on offer.
- There had been a greater demand for the larger family homes since sales began.
- Phase 2 properties in the Fir Vale area would be located around the Earl Marshal School, near the temporary car wash. It was estimated that 60 homes would be delivered in this location. It was likely that more 4, 5 and possibly 6 bedroomed homes would be included in the mix for this site.
- Whilst the development agreement prevented the sale of these properties to bulk buyers, it did not prevent buyers from renting them out. In the light of this it was important to consider who the properties were marketed to. It should be noted that the properties were not freehold sales and any issues regarding renting could potentially be addressed through the management of the leases. It should also be noted that social landlords were able to bulk buy these properties.

7.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks John Clephan for his contribution to the meeting; and
- (b) notes the contents of the report and presentation and the responses to questions.

## **8. WELFARE REFORM - SEPTEMBER UPDATE**

8.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the Welfare Reform, September Update; and
- (b) requests that it be circulated to all Council Members.

## **9. WORK PROGRAMME**

9.1 The Chair, Councillor Chris Weldon, directed Members of the Committee to the circulated Schedule of Future Agenda Items covering the meetings up to 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2014.

9.2 In response to a question regarding the Kier contract, which ended in March, 2014, the Chair indicated that the Council's Procurement Service were already working with staff and tenants' representatives in relation to the new contract. A report would subsequently be produced, which the Committee would scrutinise to ensure proper practice and make any recommendations.

9.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee agrees the contents of the circulated Schedule of Future Agenda Items.

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

10.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2013 at 2.00 p.m. in the Town Hall

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## Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

**Report of:** Richard Webb, Executive Director Communities

**Subject:** Schedule of Requirements for Bed and Breakfast accommodation used to house homeless households

**Author of Report:** Belinda Gallup, Service Manager Housing Solutions  
273 5239

**Summary:**

Following a presentation to Scrutiny in March 2013 and a subsequent visit by some Members to a B&B establishment used by the Housing Solutions Service, Scrutiny have requested an opportunity to provide input into the revision of the Schedule of Requirements, SOR, that is in place between the Council and B&B establishments.

**Type of item:** The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	X

**The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:**

Scrutiny is requested to suggest any changes for officers to consider during the forthcoming review of the SOR.

**Background Papers:**

Current SOR

**Category of Report:** OPEN

## **Report of the Executive Director of Communities**

### **Schedule of Requirements for Bed and Breakfast accommodation used to house homeless households**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The local authority is not required to provide accommodation for all homeless people in the city but commissions a range of supported housing and helps people to find private rented accommodation. The Council does have a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation for households who are homeless, eligible for assistance and whom the authority has reason to believe are in a priority need group, i.e. are vulnerable within the definition of the legislation governing homelessness. This accommodation is provided whilst the authority carries out enquiries to determine whether a full rehousing duty is owed.
- 1.2 Many people who experience homelessness are able to secure their own alternative settled accommodation and to return to a stable and settled life. However, many others require the intervention and support of services, including the local authority, to assist them in securing alternative accommodation.
- 1.3 As well as temporary accommodation which is used to house homeless households, the Council also uses B&B accommodation because of the requirement to provide emergency accommodation on the day of presentation. It is widely recognised that B&B is not suitable accommodation for homeless people. There are statutory requirements on local authorities, which the Council meets, to ensure that no family is placed in B&B accommodation for a period of longer than 6 weeks. It is also acknowledged that B&B accommodation is not suitable for 16 or 17 year olds, even in an emergency.
- 1.4 The Council's reliance on B&B accommodation to house homeless people has reduced significantly in recent years. In April 2008 there were nearly 150 households in B&B accommodation, by September 2013 this figure had reduced to around 4 households. Recently there have been a number of days when Housing Solutions have had no placements in B&B and the service now consistently meets its target of 5 or less households in B&B. Where we do have to use B&B the average stay is now less than 5 days.

#### **2. Schedule of Requirements**

- 2.1 The B&B establishments that the service uses are run as private businesses and Housing Solutions have a spot booking arrangement with them, and as such the Council cannot require any B&B to agree to any service level agreement or Schedule of Requirements (SOR) and are instead reliant on their willingness to do this.
- 2.2 B&Bs are, however, required to comply with all relevant licensing and registration requirements relating to houses in multiple occupation. Prior



to the service using an establishment colleagues in Private Sector Housing will inspect a B&B to determine whether licensing is required and that they meet the appropriate standards in relation to numbers of bathrooms, WC facilities and possible additional kitchen facilities. Fire safety is also inspected to ensure that there is an appropriate fire detection system in each premises. Additionally, gas, electric and insurance certificates are requested at the required times.

- 2.3 As previously reported to Scrutiny, officers in Housing Solutions, working with the legal team, developed a SOR which was sent to the five B&B establishments which the Council were using at the time for homeless households. This schedule is attached in the background papers.
- 2.4 The service currently refers to three B&Bs and of these, two are signed up to the SOR. Whilst the third has not signed the SOR it does comply with its requirements.
- 2.5 The schedule details a minimum level of service and standards, including, but not limited to ensuring that:-
  - 2.5.1 a member of staff is available on site 24/7;
  - 2.5.2 bedrooms are for the sole use of the customer, with a minimum of a bed per person, wash hand basin and a wardrobe;
  - 2.5.3 customers are able to secure belongings in a lockable space or able to access use of a safe;
  - 2.5.4 bins are emptied daily and rooms cleaned immediately before occupancy and daily thereafter;
  - 2.5.5 bathroom facilities are available at all times and towels changed on a daily basis;
  - 2.5.6 bedding is available for each bed, cot or moses basket and changed weekly, or when there is a change of occupancy;
  - 2.5.7 breakfast is available everyday between 7am – 9.30am, with minimum requirements about what is to be provided.
- 2.6 Establishments are required to report onto the appropriate body any incidents of abuse which are disclosed to them, or where they have a concern about potential abuse or neglect.
- 2.7 Referrals can be made 24/7 and establishments are responsible for booking out customers when the local authority ends its duty to provide temporary accommodation.

### **3 What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?**

- 3.1 As the changes in Welfare Reform are rolled out it is anticipated that the levels of homelessness will increase throughout the UK. It is therefore essential that the focus of the Council's homelessness services is to prevent homelessness at the earliest point and thereby reduce the numbers of households in the city who do become homeless. This is currently a priority area for the service.
- 3.2 As reported to Scrutiny in March 2013 the service is working with partners across the city to introduce a supported accommodation pathway which will provide homeless households with temporary or

supported accommodation, dependent on need, with the necessary support to enable people to move on and sustain suitable housing.

- 3.3 Whilst there may always be a need to use B&B accommodation, this should only be regarded as an emergency, short term option, until supported accommodation is available and only in exceptional circumstances. Should the people of Sheffield become homeless they have a right to expect that they will be housed in suitable, appropriate accommodation and there needs to be a range of accommodation available to meet the differing needs of individuals and families.

#### **4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 Officers will be reviewing the SOR over the coming weeks and Members are invited to suggest amendments, revisions and comments for officers to consider as part of this revision process.

# Housing Solutions

## Bed and Breakfast

### SCHEDULE OF REQUIREMENTS

#### 1.0 SCOPE

This Schedule sets out requirements by Sheffield City Council Housing Solutions (Housing Solutions) of providers of a Bed and Breakfast service (Providers) for Homeless people (Service Users) and of establishments where that service is provided (Establishments).

In accepting a referral from Housing Solutions or by the Out of Hours Service, Housing Solutions and the Provider will agree to the terms as stated in this Schedule.

#### 2.0 MINIMUM STANDARDS OF SERVICE

**Where applicable standards will comply with those cited in ‘Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006’ and where applicable the Establishment must be licensed by the Local Authority.**

**Plus:**

- 2.1 **Staffing:** the Provider will ensure a member of staff is available on site 24 hours a day , seven days a week, 365 days a year
- 2.2 **Heating and Lighting:** the Provider will ensure that there is available heating and lighting reasonable to the season.
- 2.3 **Decoration:** the Provider will ensure that wall and ceiling decorations are clean and not stained.
- 2.4 **Bedroom Provision:** the Provider will ensure that bedrooms are for the sole use of the Service User. The bedroom will include a bed per person\*, wash hand basin and a wardrobe as minimum.

\*a maximum of two people to be expected to share a double bed (with their agreement to sharing).

A cot or moses basket should be provided for children under 6 months old.

A cot should be provided for children under 2 years old.

A z-bed or similar should be provided for children sharing a room with parents.

- 2.5 **Security:** the Provider will ensure that the Service User is able to secure belongings through a lockable space or able to access use of a safe.

- 2.6 **Cleanliness of Rooms:** the Provider will ensure that bins are emptied and rooms cleaned immediately before occupancy and daily thereafter. The

Provider will arrange with the Service User in advance the time of day that the room will be made available for cleaning.

- 2.7 **Bathroom Facilities:** the Provider will ensure that a bath and/or a shower, toilet, wash basin and hot and cold water and clean towels for each Service User are available at all times. Towels are to be changed on a daily basis.
- 2.8 **Bedding:** the Provider will ensure that sheets, blankets or Duvets, pillows and pillowcases are clean and available for each bed, cot, Moses basket and z-bed. These will be changed weekly or when there is a new Service User using the bed.
- 2.9 **Breakfast:** the Provider will ensure that breakfast is available for Service Users everyday between 7am and 9.30am, including food that is appropriate for babies and children, which includes a minimum of a hot drink, cereal and toast with a source of protein i.e. egg/ bacon/cheese/beans. A high-chair and sterilizing equipment should be available for families with babies.
- 2.10 **Prior to the agreement being signed.** All Establishments will be inspected by Housing Solutions or its agent to ensure they are fit for purpose and meet the minimum standards of service. All Establishments will be required to provide Housing Solutions with copies of the Gas and Electricity Safety Certificates, and a copy of the Public Liability Insurance Certificate. Housing Solutions staff may then inspect the Establishments annually, and may organise an inspection by Private Sector Housing. If Private Sector Housing do inspect and make recommendations, the Provider is required to comply with these.

### **3.0 OFFENSIVE MATERIAL**

- 3.1 The Provider will ensure that material is not displayed in their Establishment that could offend on the grounds of race discrimination, sex discrimination, sexual preference or religious discrimination.

### **4.0 VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES**

- 4.1 In the event that a Provider has an incident of abuse disclosed to them, sees an incident, or has concerns about potential abuse or neglect, they have a duty to pass the information on to either the Adult Access Team on 0114 2734908, the Children's Access Team on 0114 273 4855, and/or the Police on 0114 2202020 and notify Housing Solutions on 0114 27 35335.

### **5.0 CHARGES**

- 5.1 Housing Solutions will pay the following rates for Bed and Breakfast:

Single Service Users (one adult and up to one child under 6 months old):  
£28.20 per room per night including VAT (£23.50 excluding VAT)

Couples: (2 adults and up to one child under 6 months old):

£50.04 per room per night including VAT (£41.70 excluding VAT)

Families: (up to 2 adults and up to one child under 6 months old, and at least one child over 6 months old):

£54.96 per room including VAT (£45.80 excluding VAT) plus £10.08 per additional child per night including VAT (£8.40 excluding VAT).

There will be no extra charge for Bank Holidays.

Housing Solutions will not pay for any damage caused by Service Users.

5.2 Cancellation Penalties: Housing Solutions will pay penalties for late cancellation notifications after 1700 hours at the following rates:

Single Service Users: £20.04 including VAT (£16.70 excluding VAT)

Couples: £40.08 including VAT (£33.40 excluding VAT)

Families: £40.08 including VAT (£33.40 excluding VAT)

Housing Solutions will pay a standard single (£28.20) or double (£50.04) room rate where the Service User fails to arrive at the Establishment on the arranged day of arrival, providing the Out of Hours Service do not subsequently make a “like for like” booking that night.

## **6.0 PROCEDURE FOR REFERRALS TO BED AND BREAKFAST**

6.1 Housing Solutions will allocate Service Users to Providers who have signed this Schedule of Requirements as fairly as possible, to distribute Service Users evenly across the range of Establishments (unless the circumstances of an individual Service User mean that that Service User can only be placed in a particular location).

6.2 Housing Solutions will make a telephone call to the Provider requesting details of accommodation available and giving brief details and a risk assessment of the Service User. If suitable accommodation is available with the Provider; Housing Solutions will seek to obtain immediate verbal acceptance of the referral from the Provider. Housing Solutions will then e-mail a Confirmation of Booking form (Appendix A) confirming details of the booking to the Provider.

6.3 The Provider will, upon receipt of the emailed Confirmation of Booking form from Housing Solutions, acknowledge by return email.

6.4 When the Provider accepts a referral of a Service User, the Provider will provide Housing Solutions with a sample copy of their standard Agreement which the Provider intends to use with each Service User whilst they stay in that accommodation. The documentation that must be given to Service Users will include:

- a copy of the Provider’s Formal Complaints Procedure,
- Health & Safety Procedure,
- Equal Opportunities Procedure,
- Drugs/Alcohol Policy

- Any other rules and procedures which the Provider currently operates at their Establishment.

## 7.0 HOUSING SOLUTIONS SERVICE TERMS & CONDITIONS OF BOOKINGS

- 7.1 Housing Solutions Service will issue the Service User with a “Confirmation of Booking into Hotel/Bed and Breakfast Accommodation” form (Appendix A). The Service User is required to arrive at the Provider’s Establishment with this form. This includes an explanation of what actions or behaviour would be likely to result in the council’s duty to provide interim accommodation to cease (see Appendix B).

In the event that the Service User fails to arrive at the Establishment, the Provider will telephone **and** e-mail the Housing Solutions as soon as this becomes apparent to inform them of this.

- 7.2 Upon arrival at the Establishment, the Provider will ensure that there is a member of staff available to greet the Service User and to show them to their room and around the facilities available at the Establishment, including Health and Safety, visitors/signing in book, key procedure and Fire procedure.
- 7.3 The Provider is to verify that the Service User has a valid receipt from Capita in respect of Housing Benefit (Housing Benefit Receipt) **prior** to booking the Service User into the Establishment. Where the Applicant does not provide the Housing Benefit Receipt upon request by the Provider, the Provider will telephone Housing Solutions (during working hours) in order to try to obtain confirmation of this.

If the Service User is booked into the Establishment without this confirmation, Housing Solutions will **not** be responsible for payment of the service.

- 7.4 Where a Service User is placed in the Establishment via the Out Of Hours Service, the Service User will not be in possession of a Housing Benefit Receipt. The Provider is able to accept the Service User in such cases. However, the Provider is required to inform the Service User that they **must** attend the Housing Solutions Service at Howden House **by 10.00am on the next working day** in order to have a housing options interview and to make a claim for Housing Benefit.
- 7.5 As soon as the Service User arrives at the accommodation, the Provider must ensure that the Service User is informed they will be required to sign the ‘Daily Signing-In Sheet’ **by 9.30am the following morning for that night’s stay**. An example of the form appears at **Appendix C**. This sheet must be signed each day in respect of that particular night. The Accommodation Provider must **not** ask the Service User to sign the sheet in advance of any subsequent nights **under any circumstances**. The Provider is required to e-mail a copy of the Daily Signing-In Sheet to Housing Solutions **by 9.30am on the next working day** showing the full name/s and corresponding signature of all persons who stayed at the accommodation the previous night.

- 7.6 If the Provider is unable to obtain the signature of a Service User, full reasons for this must be noted on the Daily Signing-In Sheet and the Provider must telephone Housing Solutions by 9:30am on the next working day to advise them of this. A decision will then be made by Housing Solutions as to whether the Service User should be booked out of the Establishment. If the Provider fails to notify Housing Solutions that it has not been able to obtain the signature of the Service User, Housing Solutions shall not be liable for payment of the Bed and Breakfast which has already been provided, and will **not** pay for any subsequent Bed and Breakfast for the Service User.
- 7.7 The Provider will ensure that Service Users receive any telephone messages with information from Housing Solutions.
- 7.8 Housing Solutions reserves the right to visit the Establishment including the individual rooms at any reasonable time to either visit the Service User, inspect the rooms and the Establishment or to check that records are being maintained and practices are being followed by the Provider.
- 7.9 Housing Solutions reserves the right to immediately suspend use of an Establishment whilst investigating serious complaints or allegations. The Provider will be informed of the reason for the suspension and given an estimate of how long the investigation will take to conclude, as well as informed of the outcome of the investigation.
- 7.10 The Provider will supply Housing Solutions with a weekly invoice stating the following information;
- Invoice date
  - Invoice number
  - Name & case number of client
  - Dates accommodated (from/to)
  - Total number of nights
  - Total charge per Service User
  - Total value of invoice

Housing Solutions can provide a template for this information if required.

## **8.0 REFERRALS / BOOKINGS MADE BY THE OUT OF HOURS SERVICE**

- 8.1 The Out of Hours Service will normally operate between the hours of 5.00pm – 8.30am Monday to Friday, at other times as may be directed and, 24 hours during weekends and Bank Holidays.
- 8.2 When the Out of Hours Service is in operation, all referrals/bookings made to Providers are in accordance with the above schedule of requirements set out for referrals/bookings usually made by The Housing Solutions Service, except that no paperwork will be given to the Service User.

## **9.0 BOOKINGS OUT**

- 9.1 Housing Solutions will telephone the Provider and confirm the date of the last night for staying at the Establishment. Housing Solutions will then e-mail a Confirmation of Booking Out Form (Appendix D) to the

Accommodation Provider. The Provider will then be required to acknowledge the receipt of the form.

## **10.0 GUIDANCE FOR DEALING WITH SERVICE USERS WHO DO NOT STAY IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OVERNIGHT**

- 10.1 In the event of an emergency, where a Service User intends to spend one night away from the Establishment, the Service User will be requested to contact Housing Solutions in advance in order to discuss the reasons for doing so. **Any Service User who does not comply with this procedure will be automatically booked out of the Establishment.**

If the Provider has been informed by the Service User **or is aware** that the Service User will be staying elsewhere overnight, the Provider is also required to contact Housing Solutions that same day or, by 9.30am at the latest on the next working day, and provide reasons for the Service User's absence from their Establishment.

Once Housing Solutions has been informed with reasons, either by the Service User or by the Provider that the Service User will be staying elsewhere overnight, Housing Solutions will make a decision as to whether or not the Service User will continue to be further provided with Bed and Breakfast accommodation. Housing Solutions will inform the Provider, by telephone, as to the decision reached and will e-mail written confirmation of this decision.

- 10.2 The Provider is required to enter details of this decision by Housing Solutions on the Daily Signing-In Sheet, which will then be subsequently submitted to Housing Solutions when payment is requested.

## **11.0 PAYMENT CONDITIONS**

- 11.1 The Provider is to provide invoices to:

Accommodation Team  
Housing Solutions  
Sheffield City Council  
Floor 3, Howden House,  
1 Union Street  
Sheffield.  
S1 2SH

Any queries regarding payments should be put in writing and sent to the above address so that they can be investigated.

- 11.2 Sheffield City Council will make reasonable endeavours to pay all invoices within 30 days of receipt by cheque or BACS method subject to the following conditions:

- Each invoice submitted is accompanied by the fully completed Daily Signing- In Sheet for that Service User which **must** cover their full period of stay.
- The name of the Service User on the invoice matches the name provided on the Daily Signing- In Sheet.



- The Provider provides a clear written explanation on the Daily Signing-in Sheet where they are unable to provide a Service User's signature.
  - Housing Solutions has not already issued a booking out form by **3.00pm** in respect of the day to which the invoice relates.
- 11.3 Payment will be delayed pending the outcome of any investigation required where one or all of the conditions in Clause 11.2 are not complied with and/or where information provided in respect of the Service User and/or periods of accommodation on invoices does not match the information shown on the City Council's own records.

Click to Send

**CONFIRMATION OF BOOKING INTO HOTEL / BED AND BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION**

Name of Establishment:

Date of Booking:

Time:

Case No.:

<b>Household Details</b>				
First Name	Surname	D.O.B.	M/F	Cost Per Night £ Inc. VAT
<b>Total</b>				£            -

**To accommodation reception staff:**

Please accommodate the above household.

**Note:** This booking is made in accordance with the conditions of the Referral Agreement and Schedule of Requirements annexed thereto between the City Council and the Accommodation Provider.

From:  Inclusive ONLY  
 To (last night):

Housing Solutions Officer:

**Instructions for Hotel / Bed and Breakfast Accommodation Provider:**

## APPENDIX B

Name Of Establishment:

You have been booked into temporary accommodation under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, whilst we (Sheffield City Council Housing Solutions service) investigate your Homeless application. Please note that you may be moved to alternative temporary accommodation as required without consultation or notice.

You must keep to the Accommodation Provider's Terms and Conditions whilst staying in this accommodation. Upon your arrival at the Establishment, the Accommodation Provider will issue you with a copy of these Terms & Conditions and will show you around the accommodation being provided for you and the facilities available.

**NOTE: You will *not* be admitted to this Establishment unless you provide your Housing Benefit Claim receipt. Please ensure you take this with you.**

You will be required to sign a sheet for each night that you stay in the accommodation. If you do not sign this sheet, you may be booked out and other accommodation may not be provided for you. You must ensure you sign this sheet only for each night you stay there. Under no circumstances must you sign the sheet if you are not staying in the accommodation that night, and you must not sign the sheet for more than 1 night at a time.

If you intend not to stay at any time you must inform both the Accommodation Provider and Sheffield City Council's Housing Solutions Service (Tel: 273 5142) in advance of this to discuss the reasons. We will then make a decision as to whether or not we will continue to provide accommodation to you after this. If you do not stay at the accommodation and fail to inform Housing Solutions we will book you out of the accommodation immediately and we may not provide you with further temporary accommodation.

**If you lose this accommodation because you have failed to comply with the Accommodation Providers' Terms and Conditions, Sheffield City Council may have no duty to provide you with any further temporary accommodation.**

You should be provided with;

- Clean towels and bed linen
- A cot or moses basket if you have a child under 18 months old
- Enough beds for each member of your family
- Use of a safe for valuables
- Breakfast between 7am-9:30am
- A clean room that is cleaned daily

Please be mindful that the B&B is a private establishment with other paying guests and your behaviour whilst staying here needs to be respectful of this.

We expect you to;

- Leave the room at a time agreed with the B&B staff so that the room can be cleaned every day
- Keep your appointments at Howden House with Housing Solutions staff
- Treat the B&B staff and property with respect

Please note that if you, or any member of your household or visitors, threaten or abuse staff, or damage property, then the B&B staff may call for the police and arrests may follow.

**If you, your household, or one of your visitors cause excessive damage or disturbance, then Sheffield City Council may consider ending the duty to continue providing you with accommodation while we investigate your homeless application.**

The Housing Solutions Officer will contact you at this address about your homeless application. **It is very important that you contact us if we leave a message for you to do so.**

If we subsequently agree to re-house you, you will be made **one suitable offer of accommodation** and will be required to leave this Establishment. The Housing Solutions Officer will let you know how long you can stay in this Hotel/Bed & Breakfast accommodation after the offer has been made.

**Other Important Information**

If you are not happy with the accommodation provided, in the first instance, you should raise your concerns with the Accommodation Provider. If this does not resolve the matter, you should then contact the Housing Solutions Service on 273 5142 to discuss the matter further.

Signed ..... Applicant

Signed ..... Applicant

Witness .....

Date .....

**Please see separate sheet for instructions on how to get to this Establishment**



# Sheffield City Council – Housing Solutions – Daily Signing-In Sheet

Establishment Name: \_\_\_\_\_ W/E \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

**Note for Resident before signing (please read carefully):**

Please sign below only for the night that you have stayed. You **must not** sign for nights that you have not yet stayed. If it is found that you have signed for nights that you have not yet stayed then Sheffield City Council will book you out immediately and will **not** provide you with any further temporary accommodation. If you are asked by any member of staff at this Establishment to sign for nights you have not yet stayed, **you must inform Housing Solutions immediately on 0114 273 5142.**

If you are unable to sign this sheet for any reason, **you must inform Housing Solutions immediately on 0114 273 5142.** Failure to sign this sheet **daily** will result in immediate booking out of this Establishment and further temporary accommodation may not be provided.

## SIGNATURES

PRINT FULL NAME HERE	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Page 25							

**Note for Accommodation Provider: Please indicate first and last night of stay above**

## APPENDIX D

Sheffield City Council  
Housing Solutions  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Howden House, Sheffield S1 2SH  
Tel: (0114) 273 5142 Fax: (0114) 273 5549

### CONFIRMATION OF BOOKING OUT OF HOTEL / BED AND BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION

Name of Establishment:

Date:

Time:

Applicant Name:

Case No.:

**To Accommodation reception staff:**

Please book out the above applicant:

Date of last night of residence:

Housing Solutions Officer:

#### Instruction for Hotel / Bed and Breakfast Accommodation Provider:

1. Reply to this email

This will confirm that the above booking out details have been accepted by you in accordance with the conditions of the Referral Agreement and Schedule of Requirements annexed thereto between the City Council and the Accommodation Provider.

**Sheffield** *where everyone matters*



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE





## Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

**Report of:** Executive Director, Communities

**Subject:** Homelessness Performance Update

**Author of Report:** Zoe Young Service Manager Housing Options and Advice

**Summary:**

This report provides an update on homelessness key performance issues. The information contained in this report has been requested by the committee as an update to the report discussed on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2012 to enable it to have an up to date picture of what's happening in the city and to enable it to scrutinise performance.

**Type of item:** The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	√
Other	

**The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:**

The committee is asked to consider the report and provide views, comments and recommendations.

**Background Papers:**

**Category of Report:** OPEN

## **1. Introduction/Context**

- 1.1 Becoming homeless has a huge impact on people which can include damaging their mental health and physical health, chances of finding work or attending training or education and disrupt their family life. For many people they are able to find suitable alternative accommodation and move on to a more settled life quickly for others homelessness can go on for some time or recur and they may need more help and support to find a settled home.
- 1.2 In 2010 SCC agreed a 3 year Homeless Strategy at a time when homelessness was decreasing. The Strategy is now due to be updated. EMT has agreed that a revised Homeless Strategy should be produced. The strategy will focus on improving prevention work and ensuring sufficient access to housing. It will address youth homelessness, rough sleeping and the quality of accommodation.
- 1.3 Sheffield historically has had a relatively high level of homeless presentations and acceptances compared to other cities. This is linked to encouraging people to register for housing when the city had more stock than demand. There has been a relatively generous approach to undertaking investigations and accepting duties.
- 1.4 Targets for the use of Temporary Accommodation were set in 2004 by Government. The targets were set to half the use over a 5 year period up to 2010. The Target for Sheffield was 121. Sheffield did not meet this target and for the first 4 years increased use rather than decreased it. Current use should be understood in the context of previous performance. In 2008/09 at the height of use 400 households in Temporary Accommodation and 150 of these were in Bed and Breakfast. We have now met this target for the first time.
- 1.10 Homelessness has a disproportionate impact on young people (half of our applicants are under 25) – they are generally more financially vulnerable and are less likely to have secure accommodation available to them.
- 1.12 Accepting someone as homeless and having a duty to rehouse them is only a route that benefits families or vulnerable homeless people. Other homeless people (e.g. single people without a priority) are not owed a duty and only benefit from prevention and advice.
- 1.13 The main reasons for homelessness have continued to be being asked to leave by parents, friends and family and relationship breakdown. This can mask underlying reasons such as economic factors that can make it more difficult for people to sustain existing living arrangements.



- 1.16 The budget for Housing Solutions was reduced in the past 2 years but we have achieved this by reducing B+B costs and reducing management posts. Proposals are currently being considered about how further savings can be made in 2014/15
- 1.17 The government published “Making Every contact Count, a joint approach to preventing homelessness in August 2012. This report sets out a number of challenges to local authorities and partners. This includes a commitment to prevent homelessness, working in partnership with the voluntary and faith sector and other local partners and offering a Housing Options Prevention Service.
- 1.18 The Government also asks that Local Authorities adopt a no second night out model or an effective local alternative

## 2 Homelessness Key Performance Issues

### 2.2 Current Performance Update against Key Targets

Scrutiny has asked to receive an update on current homelessness performance. This information will also inform what the priorities should be in a new homeless strategy.

	Yearly Target	2012/2013 Actual	2013/14 Quarter 1	2013/14 Quarter 2	Rag Rating
Homeless Acceptances	1106	1218	283	247	G
Homeless Acceptances per 1000	4.57	5.0	1.17	1.02	G
Households in Temporary Accommodation	121	160	134	101	G
Number in Bed and Breakfast	5	23	6	4	G
Homeless Preventions per 1000	6	3.9	0.9	0.96	R
Number of 16/17 year olds accepted as Homeless	40	60	10	18	
Number of Section 20 Children Act duties as homeless 16/17 olds	-	1	0	0	
Number of 16/17 year olds and families in B&B year end	0	0	0	0	G
customers rehoused in 12 weeks	75%	65%	57%	65%	R

- The target for reductions in homeless acceptances to 6 per 1000 households was exceeded in 2012/13. A revised target of 4.57 acceptances per 1000 has been set for this year. In the second quarter

a further reduction to 1.02 per thousand was achieved which means we are on track to achieve the target .

- The target for B+B has been reviewed and revised upward from zero to 5 because until the Supported Accommodation Pathway is introduced and 24 hour access emergency housing is commissioned, there is little alternative to Bed and Breakfast out of hours. From December, 2 units will be available out of hours within Temporary Accommodation provided by Council Housing Services out of hours which will further reduce use of B+B.
- There is also a lack of suitable accommodation for single people with complex needs who have been refused or lost supported or social housing and in these cases B+B accommodation is still used. At the end of the Quarter 2 there were 4 customers in B+B which was an improvement on the previous quarter and there have been many occasions in the last two months when this figure has been at zero.
- A significant reduction in usage of TA was achieved in Quarter 2 from 134 to 101 by minimising the number of placements and efficient casework and increasing access to assessment beds in supported housing. There is some seasonal element to usage that has also contributed to this. This is the first time that the TA target of 121 has been reached.
- The percentage rehoused of homeless customers rehoused within 12 weeks declined to 65% in 2012/13. In the 1st Quarter of 2013/14 this further decreased to 57% and in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter increased to 65% as there are fewer available properties that match the size and type required by homeless households. The Council Housing Service and Housing Solutions Service are working together to identify what the specific issues are for individual customers, and actions that can be taken for example offering private rented accommodation.
- In 2012/13 performance worsened on recorded homeless preventions and the rate recorded was 3.9 per 1000, down from 6 in the previous year. Quarter 1 performance was 0.9 preventions per 1000 and in Quarter 2 0.96 which is similar to last year. This performance measure captures actions that lead to homelessness being prevented for more than 6 months. The government definition specifically excludes some of the most significant activity the Council invests in including Supporting People funded tenancy support. However, the securing of Supported Housing for a customer is included.
- Reported prevention performance does not reflect the reduction in the number of homelessness acceptances or the actual prevention work that

is being undertaken . There has been an under-reporting of preventions and as the case work system does not capture all prevention activity there is reliance on supplementary spread sheets. This is being addressed within the service to make sure prevention activity is being consistently recorded.

- As well as local data issues, there are inconsistencies in recording of preventions across all local authorities so the benchmarking data is not wholly reliable. Nationally, the rate of homeless preventions was 9.2 per 1000, and the Core Cities Average was 14.7 per 1000 in 2011/12. It appears other authorities report activity which we do not interpret as falling within the guidance provided by DCLG such as one off advice.
- However, we do need to improve the total number of preventions achieved in securing current accommodation or alternatives to further reduce acceptances and move towards the core city average and targets have been set for this.
- Since the joint protocol with CYPF was introduced and assessment beds made available in Supported Housing in 2010/11, acceptances from 16/17 year olds have reduced from 129 in 2009/10 to 60 in 2013. The number of 16/17 year olds in TA has reduced from 34 to zero. We are confident there has been a genuine reduction in homelessness as the majority of young people now return home with support and there has been no increase in acceptances of a duty to provide accommodation under the Children Act. It remains a priority to achieve more in this area, particularly for customers with complex needs and work is being undertaken with colleagues in CYPF, Public Health and the Housing Independence Service . We will also gather benchmarking data from other authorities as other Councils have reported a reduction in homeless acceptances but an increase in Children Act duties for this customer group.

### 3.2 Comparison of Homeless Acceptances with Core Cities

The table shows the year end position on Homeless Acceptances with core cities.

City	Number of Homeless Acceptances per 1000 2011/12	Number of Homeless Acceptances per 1000 2012/13
Birmingham	9.7	9.7
Bristol	1.6	1.6
Leeds	2.1	2.3
Liverpool	1.4	1.0
Manchester	2.9	2.5

Newcastle	1.7	1.7
Nottingham	4.8	3.8
Sheffield	6.0	5.0

There remains a risk that homelessness will increase due to welfare reforms that have not yet been implemented fully – mitigating actions have been put in place and will need to be embedded in a new strategy.

### 3.3 Key customer Information

Key customer profile information will be used to develop future strategies and inform where resources need to be targeted. Some of the key customer profile information for 2012/13 is set out below:

- 35% of customers accepted as homeless are young families headed by a female lone parent, and 44% are single vulnerable people
- BME groups are disproportionately affected with 30% of all homelessness presentations coming from these communities
- 40% of applicants are aged 24 or under
- 23% of applicants have children
- 49% of customers accepted as homeless have dependent children
- 51% of Sheffield acceptances are from people without children compared to the national average of 28%.
- 40% of applicants were either living with friends or family
- Relatively few are the tenants of social housing, however many have a previous council tenancy and are in arrears to the Council or have been living with a Council tenant
- 46 families with children were found to be intentionally homeless
- 407 families were placed in temporary accommodation representing 39% of the total number of families who presented.
- .

### 4. Update on Key Actions

The key actions to address homelessness have previously been reported to the Scrutiny Committee in November 2012. This section of the report provides a brief update these.

- **Homeless Strategy** is being reviewed because the national landscape has changed with increase in homelessness, economic environment and welfare reforms. A steering group is being convened made up of internal and external partners to oversee the development of the Strategy and will be considered by Cabinet in 2014.

- **Prevention of Homelessness** – remains a key priority and will continue to be the focus of our local approach. Guidance has recently been reissued to staff on recording preventions which should increase the numbers recorded and the quality of recording will be monitored as part of casework supervision in future. A prevention action plan has been written which outlines key measures to ensure that preventions are increased. The key action points are shown in appendix 1
- **Supported Accommodation Pathway** This is a major initiative that has been agreed to reduce the use of B&B and temporary accommodation. Funding for this has now been agreed and work on the project is on track to start operating a revised pathway from July 2014 . The pathway will ensure that available supported housing is used as a city wide resource and best match customer need to available resource and we are working closely with housing providers to develop a common assessment and process that will maximise positive outcomes for customers and reduce duplication.
- **Welfare Reforms** As stated earlier in the report there has been a decrease in homelessness locally but there does remain a risk that this will increase for people affected by Welfare Reforms. The most recent change introduced has been the benefit cap in August 2013. Across the region in the region of 300 households have been affected by this and the majority of these households will be families with children. Housing Solutions is offering targeted homeless prevention advice to these households in private rented accommodation as well as working closely with the credit union and money advice agencies to try and mitigate against these families becoming homeless. Council Housing Services are supporting tenants affected by the changes as are other Social Landlords. The majority of customers affected by the ‘bedroom tax’ in council housing are without children. Due to this there may be an increase in demand for services if vulnerable customers require further support due to housing difficulties. Housing Solutions and Council Housing Services Income management team are working on a joint protocol to enable advice and assistance to be given to those households at risk of eviction due to rent arrears.

## 5. What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?

- Increasing prevention activity will mean that more people across tenure in Sheffield will be able to remain in their home and gain support to do so.
- The Supported Accommodation Pathway will mean that vulnerable people in Sheffield will be matched to the most appropriate supported accommodation according to their needs.
- Due to the implementation of the pathway resources will be targeted at those who need it most.
- Welfare reforms will impact on the people of Sheffield, giving good early prevention advice and referral routes to money advice services alongside a protocol with council housing services to offer prevention services to those threatened with eviction and work with those across tenure will aim to mitigate against this.

## **6. Recommendation**

The Committee is being asked to consider the report and provide views and comments.

**Prevention Action Plan Key Points**

<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Offer training to all Housing Options staff to improve consistency of casework and Prevention work. Including internal sessions to discuss prevention cases and lessons learnt.	March 2014
Carry out home visits where needed	Sept 2013
Link in with mediation services to try and support people to return home.	March 2014
Triage customers in First Point to establish if a Homeless Case needs opening and if intensive prevention work can be undertaken first ensure prevention work starts at the earliest possible date.	September 2013
Customers who telephone service to speak to Housing Options/Aid worker and not business support to offer advice and assistance on prevention straight away rather than waiting for an appointment.	November 2013
Review interview form and personal plan to include a more focused approach based on prevention.	November 2013

Develop and Implement the Supported Accommodation Pathway	July 2014
Develop PRS service	Sept 2013
All Households to sign up for PRS tenancy to be referred to Shelter Floating Support	Sept 2013
Individual Cabinet Member decision to use PRS to discharge homeless duty	October 2013
Start using PRS to discharge Homeless Duty	October 2013
Create shared PRS tenancies	October 2013
Manage Customer Expectations and make lettings information readily available to customers.	September 2013
Work with partners to improve prevention options	
Create links with Building Successful Families, MAST and social care to ensure families are supported and homelessness prevented.	October 2013
Develop and agree a protocol with Adult Social care	December 2013
Revise and review protocol with CYPF	December 2013

Set up referral routes with money advice and credit union	November
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	2013
Establish an agreed protocol with Council Housing Services for customers at risk of losing their home to offer prevention advice and early intervention	January 2014
Define prevention and relief to all staff. Agree a constant approach to recording prevention activity and give staff individual prevention Targets	October 2013
Quality check prevention work.	November 2013
Celebrate success. Share successful innovative preventions and share good practice	October 2013





## Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

**Report of:** Richard Webb and Simon Green

**Subject:** LAND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN HRA

**Author of Report:** Janet Sharpe, Interim Director of Housing and Paul Billington, Director of Culture & Environment

### Summary:

This report confirms detailed work that has recently commenced between the Communities and Place portfolio to look at future land responsibility and management arrangements within the Council. This draft project is at an early stage and any recommendations will be subject to more detailed consultation with Cabinet members. This project will also incorporate a number of core principles.

1. Positive outcome for tenants and residents
2. Consultation with tenants and residents on future proposals
3. To improve the quality of green-space management
4. Seek ways of maximising efficiency and effectiveness in the way the Council maintains open space

**Type of item:** The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance/budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	✓
Other	

### The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

Approve the formation of a project to look at Council owned land across the city.

### Background Papers:

There are no background papers.

**Category of Report:** OPEN

## **Background:**

Sheffield is the most geographically diverse city in England and built on a number of hillsides making it an attractive city. It is approximately 1/3<sup>rd</sup> urban, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> rural and 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of its land within the Peak District. Sheffield also has more trees per person than any other city in Europe making it an attractive 'green' city where trees outnumber people 4 to 1. It also has:

- Over 170 woodlands covering 6,985 acres (28.27km<sup>2</sup>)
- 78 public parks covering 4,522 acres (18.30km<sup>2</sup>)
- 10 public gardens
- 33,275 acres of national park areas (134.66km<sup>2</sup>)
- 2,686 acres of water (10.87km<sup>2</sup>)

Approximately 61% of the total land area that the city encompasses is green space. A significant proportion of land in Sheffield still remains in Council ownership and is maintained each year from funding from the Council's own resources, mainly general fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Over the last 50+ years Council land has been divided up and managed within Council individual portfolios and based on old historic agreements. This makes having a consistent maintenance standard difficult to achieve and communicate to customers in the city.

The Housing Service re-joined Sheffield City Council in April 2013 and detailed work has taken place to develop a 30 year Housing Revenue Account Business Plan to ensure that all housing, community assets and land is well maintained over the next 30 years. As part of this work an audit of land that sits within the HRA is required to make sure that the general fund is not subsidising the HRA and vice versa.

Discussions have taken place at the Great Place to Live (GPL) Strategic Outcome Board as part of the review of budgets for future years to agree a consistent maintenance standard for open space, parks and, highways which will also take on board any outcomes from the HRA audit.

## **Future Maintenance**

Over the years pockets of land have been in a number of portfolios. As part of the Future of Council Housing Project during 2013 a number of Service Design Project Groups were established with tenants, leaseholders and officers to develop a vision for the city for each service area within the Housing and Neighbourhood Service. The 'Greener, Cleaner, Safer Group' recommended that this mapping exercise takes place and a consistent standard for the maintenance of Council land is considered. This would also enable tenants to have a greater say in the management of all the green open space funded from the HRA within their neighbourhoods and improve customer satisfaction, value for money but also what a single green 'operating model' to manage the Council's open space would look like for customers.

## Project Proposal:

A draft project brief has been agreed between the Communities and Place portfolios to carry out a review of land management arrangements and a project group made of officers from both portfolios has been established.

The Project Group will comprise of:

<b>Communities Portfolio</b>	<b>Place Portfolio</b>
Jayne Foulds	David Hargate
Mark Cowley	Ian Turner
Zoe Barlow	
Liam Duggan	
<b>Project Sponsor:</b>	<b>Project Sponsor:</b>
Janet Sharpe	Paul Billington

The project will initially look at around 400 Housing Sites where land sits in or has the potential to be managed in future from the HRA:

This land has been categorised into the following:

- All the sites form part of the local environment for housing areas and form part of the natural infrastructure and/ or, the majority of people who benefit from the sites are tenants or leaseholders of Council Housing
- Each site will be measured to quantify the approximate percentage of Council Housing in the catchment for each site
- Sites that form part of a larger site that has a greater catchment will be excluded
- Identification of any site that does not have Council housing nearby but is being managed from within the HRA

**Project timescale and next steps:**

- It is estimated that the project will complete in January 2014 with recommendations to Cabinet members by the end of the financial year and if required will be presented to the Council's Cabinet meeting in June 2014.

**Janet Sharpe**  
**Interim Director of Housing Service**

**Paul Billington**  
**Director of Culture &  
Environment**

**21 November 2013**



## Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

**Subject:** Work Programme 2013/14

**Author of Report:** Matthew Borland  
Policy and Improvement Officer  
matthew.borland@sheffield.gov.uk

**Summary:**

This report provides the Committee with the Work Programme for the municipal year 2013/14.

The work programme is based on the Committee's previous discussions.

**Type of item:** The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	<b>X</b>

**The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:**

- 1) Comment on the Work Programme
- 2) Approve the Work Programme

**Background Papers:** None

**Category of Report:** Open

**Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee  
Work Programme 2013/14**

<b>Safer &amp; Stronger Communities Scrutiny</b>		
<b>Committee Meeting Date</b>	<b>Agenda Item/s</b>	<b>Detail</b>
<b>30th January 2014</b>	Welfare Reform	Update following the 25th July Discussion
	Private Sector Landlords	Request from 25th July meeting
	Community Safety Partnership	Statutory requirement
	BRIEFING: Right to Buy Update	
<b>27th March 2014</b>	<b>Tenant Participation:</b>	
	Implementation of Allocations Policy	Update on progress
	Relationships between external contractors and housing.	To include tenant influence; clarity of specification; more effective and transparent monitoring
	Kier Contract	
	Review of HRA Business Plan	
	Challenge for Change: Grass Cutting	Cabinet member to return following discussion at July 13 meeting.
	BRIEFING: Welfare Reform	
	BRIEFING: Right to Buy Update	

**Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to:

- 1) Comment on the Work Programme
- 2) Approve the Work Programme



## Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

28 November 2013

**Report of:** Director of Policy, Performance and Communications

**Subject:** Welfare Reform – November Update

**Author of Report:** Nicola Rees, Policy and Improvement Officer

0114 27 34529

[nicola.rees@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.rees@sheffield.gov.uk)

### Summary:

At the meeting of the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee in July 2013, members requested that a one-page update on progress with Welfare Reform issues be provided to Committee Members bi-monthly. This report provides the update for November.

### Type of item:

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	X

**The Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee is asked to note the contents of the update report.**

**Category of Report:** OPEN

# Welfare Reform in Numbers

**4,261**

Sheffield council tenants are affected by under-occupancy rules ('bedroom tax')



140 less than two months ago

**38%**

have paid in full the shortfall in their benefit resulting from under-occupancy

without receiving a DHP\* payment



up from 23% two months ago

**10%**

have paid nothing towards the shortfall in their benefit resulting from under-occupancy

compared with 11% two months ago

**33,000**

working age tax payers in Sheffield receive council tax support



All of whom must now pay 23% of their Council Tax

**15,645**

summonses have been issued to Council Tax Support customers since April 2013 for non payment of Council Tax



**£4.02m**

= value of summonsed debt for Council Tax Support customers



Average amount of debt = £260\*\*

**988**

Local Assistance Scheme grants have been awarded since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013

**4,181**

Council Tax Hardship Scheme awards have been made since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013

**948**

Local Assistance Scheme loans have been awarded since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013

**3,610**

Discretionary Housing Payment awards have been made since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013



**168** households in Sheffield are subject to the Benefit Cap\*\*\*

=

around 900 children



All figures are to 31 October 2013, unless otherwise stated

\* DHP = Discretionary housing payment

\*\* At this stage the full annual outstanding debt is summonsed, not the unpaid debt to that date

\*\*\*Data accurate at 30 September 2013



## Welfare Reform: Key Updates November

- Following a meeting between council officers and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in November 2013, the Council now understands that the earliest that Universal Credit will be introduced in South Yorkshire will be April 2015.
- A Universal Credit Project Group has been established to enable the Council and its customers to prepare for the introduction of UC. On-going progress updates will be provided to the Scrutiny Committee.
- Following an initial trial, the Income Management Unit of Council Housing Services are continuing to work in close partnership with the Sheffield Credit Union to set up budgeting accounts for tenants affected by welfare reforms. A budget has been established to fund the initial setting up of the budgeting accounts. Tenants will be supported to gain budgeting and money management skills, which will in most cases allow them to operate a normal current account in the future, at no further cost to the Housing Revenue Account.
- Work has now commenced to review the Local Assistance Scheme design and delivery options for Phase 2 of the scheme (from 2015/16). This will include consideration of future options for the scheme, ensuring that the emerging scheme is in line with the wider policy of the Council, including the vision set out by the Sheffield Fairness Commission.
- From October 2013 onwards, people aged between 16 and 64 who currently receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA) were due to start to be reassessed for a new benefit called Personal Independence Payments (PIP). The timetable for PIP replacing DLA has now been changed. All claimants receiving DLA in South Yorkshire will now continue to claim DLA until at least October 2015.<sup>1</sup> From October 2015 claimants receiving DLA will start to be reassessed for PIP and by October 2017 all existing DLA claimants will have been reassessed for PIP.

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that since June 2013 the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has no longer accepted **new claims** for DLA from anyone aged 16 to 64, unless they are making a renewal claim from a fixed term DLA award that is due to expire before 17 March 2014. These claimants will re-claim DLA, and will be reassessed for PIP at a later stage.

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## Update Report – Council House Sales under the Right to Buy Scheme

### **History**

The right to buy was introduced in 1980 as a means for tenants of Local Authorities to purchase their properties. It offered generous discounts for tenants to buy their properties. It has proved a popular scheme with over 30,000 properties in Sheffield being sold.

Originally the scheme required tenants to have had a secure tenancy for two years to enable them to buy their property. The more years a tenant had the greater the discount they received, there were also greater discount for tenants purchasing leasehold properties.

For tenants purchasing freehold properties providing they qualified for the scheme they initially received a 30% discount and then gained an additional 1% for every year of tenancy they accrued. For leasehold properties the tenant started at 40% and gained 2% for every year.

The maximum percentage discount a tenant could receive was 60% for freehold (30 years tenancy) and 70% for leasehold (15 years tenancy), these maximum discounts remain the same today.

Due to the popularity of the right to buy a maximum cash discount was introduced in 1999 which limited the discount to £24,000 despite how many years tenancy they had accrued. This remained in place until 2012 when the discount limit was raised to £75,000.

The biggest changes came to the right to buy scheme in the Housing Act 2004, this changed the qualification period from two to five years tenancy. It also amended the discount repayment period from three to five years. This means where a tenant sells their property within the first five years a percentage of the discount they originally received when they purchased the property would have to be repaid to the former Landlord, it previously used to be three years

It also inserted a clause into the conveyance / lease where the property has to be offered back to the former landlord for repurchase if it is sold within the ten years after the sale.

### **Housing Market**

In 2007 the general collapse in the housing market also had a dramatic effect on right to buy sales. In 2005 / 06 Sheffield sold 950 properties in 2007 / 08 this had

reduced to 376 and the further decline in sales continued year on year to a low of 76 sales in 2009 / 10.

The subsequent years have seen gradual increases in sales until 2012 /13 where the increased discount limit saw a total of 149 sales. The upward trend has continued with sales for 2013/14 to date being 124 (as at end of quarter 2) with forecasted sales for the year predicted to be 243.

The table below shows the trend for RTB sales and applications over the past 10 years.

Year	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Apps	3508	3109	2968	1927	1866	904	371	275	339	339	561
Sales	1520	2252	1375	950	578	376	106	76	88	104	149

### **Future for the right to buy**

The coalition Government still see the right to buy scheme as an important tool to increase home ownership and also with the retained additional receipts from sales as a means for local authorities to start building new social housing.

The Government is keen to increase right to buy sales to fund this new build programme and is actively promoting the right to buy. A general advertising mail out has been planned by DCLG focussing on a number of Sheffield postcodes where there are known Council properties. DCLG are also doing a targeted mail out to 55-65 year old who live within those postcodes as they see this group of people as the most likely to purchase their property.

To further boost the right to buy the Government are also planning changes to the qualification criteria. The proposals are for the current five year qualification to be reduced to three years to allow more tenants to access the scheme. The change in the reduction in qualifying years is likely to be introduced in autumn 2014.

### **Future sales predictions**

Whilst there has been a gradual recovery in the general housing market it is difficult to predict the effect it will have on the right to buy. Historically mortgage providers were happy to lend on the basis that the discount a tenant received could be used as the deposit. Following the downturn in the housing market mortgage providers were less willing to lend on this basis and generally saw right to buy as a higher risk and restricted their lending to this market.

Modest rises in right to buy sales are predicted for the next few years providing there are no further changes to the scheme that we are not already aware of.

2013 / 14 – 243

2014 / 15 – 265

2015 / 16 – 290

### Capital receipt

The introduction of higher the maximum discount of £75,000 in 2012 has meant that properties are being sold for less and therefore the capital receipt per sale has reduced however because the number of sales is increasing the level of receipt overall is increasing and will assist the building of new homes in the city.

The table below shows the total sales, total capital receipt (millions), average property price and average property discount for the past 10 years.

Year	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Sales	1520	2252	1375	950	578	376	106	76	88	104	149
Cap mill	25.2	46.6	37.9	35.8	25.6	18.7	5.3	4.4	4.2	4.5	5.6
Avg Sale price	16567	20703	27542	37731	44257	49604	50276	58212	47793	43080	37704
Avg Disc	14770	17623	19558	22553	23086	23634	21762	23650	23622	23415	37874

The projected capital receipt from the right to buy sales for the next 3 years is

2013 / 14 - £9.2m – based on 243 sales at £38,033

2014 / 15 - £10.6m – based on 265 sales at £39,950

2015 / 16 - £12.2m - based on 290 sales at £41,950

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