

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Thursday 3 December 2015 at 4.15 pm

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

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillors Tony Damms (Chair), Steve Ayriss (Deputy Chair), Penny Baker, David Barker, John Campbell, Richard Crowther, Keith Davis, Tony Downing, Denise Fox, Aodan Marken, Roy Munn, Peter Rippon, Richard Shaw and Zoe Sykes

Substitute Members

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

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

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. 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. 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.

FACILITIES

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.

**SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY AND POLICY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA
3 DECEMBER 2015**

Order of Business

- 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 8 October 2015
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 7. Housing and Planning Bill Update**
Presentation by Janet Sharpe, Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, and Liam Duggan, Manager, Housing Business Plan Team.
- 8. Community Engagement Review**
Presentation by the Housing and Neighbourhoods Advisory Panel (HANAP) Task and Finish Group
- 9. Police and Crime Panel Update**
Councillor John Campbell to report
- 10. Work Programme 2015/16**
Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer

For Information Only

- 11. Right to Buy Update**
Report of the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services
- 12. Sheffield Money**
Report of the Director of Policy, Performance and Communications
- 13. Date of Next Meeting**
The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, 4 February

2016 at 4.00pm in the Town Hall

ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

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.

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 Gillian Duckworth, Director of Legal and Governance on 0114 2734018 or email gillian.duckworth@sheffield.gov.uk.

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Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 8 October 2015

PRESENT: Councillors Tony Damms (Chair), Steve Ayriss (Deputy Chair), Penny Baker, David Barker, John Campbell, Keith Davis, Tony Downing, Denise Fox, Aodan Marken, Roy Munn, Richard Shaw, Zoe Sykes and Geoff Smith (Substitute Member)

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Richard Crowther, with Councillor Geoff Smith attending as his substitute.

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 10th September 2015, were approved as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of an apology at Item 1 (Apologies for Absence) for Councillor Zoe Sykes.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 In response to a series of questions from Alan Kewley regarding the operation of the Local Area Partnerships, the Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership and the Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings, the following points were made:-

- The Local Area Partnership managers would be asked when it would be appropriate for a presentation to be made to the Committee.
- A range of Community Safety issues would be covered at the Committee's February 2016 meeting.
- Information on meetings of the Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership was available on the Sheffield First website.

5.2 The Chair, Councillor Tony Damms, advised Mr Kewley that if he required a written response, he should put his questions in writing to the Policy and Improvement Officer.

6. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN - ANNUAL REVIEW

6.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Communities, which provided an annual review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan, giving details of progress against some of the key themes, as well as looking forward to this year's review and the identification of risks.

6.2 The report was introduced by Janet Sharpe (Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services) and presented by Liam Duggan (Manager, Housing Business Plan Team). The first half of the report considered each chapter of the Business Plan in turn and progress made over the last 3 years. Whilst the second half considered the impact of the Government's recently announced rent reductions, as set out in the Chancellor's Summer Budget, on the HRA and the Council's response to it.

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

- Discussions with officials from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had revealed that proposals on security of tenure would be contained within the forthcoming Housing Bill. In some parts of the country there was already a preference for fixed term tenancies, for a period of say five years, which were not renewed if the property was not felt to be appropriate for the tenants. The Chancellor's Summer Budget announcement indicated a move away from lifetime tenancies and the Bill would need to be carefully considered once tabled. When the contents of the Bill had been considered, a further report would be presented to the Committee.
- In relation to income, the Council was heavily dependent on rents, both for properties and garages. This was supplemented by a small amount of service charges for such items as burglar alarms, furnished accommodation, the district heating charge and communal services for leaseholders. One opportunity for income generation would be to apply service charges to tenants.
- Officers had started to plan for the installation of photovoltaic panels on Council housing roofs, but the announcement by the Government, on 27th August, of its intention to dramatically reduce the subsidy (Feed in Tariff) rates payable for new photovoltaic installations, from January 2016, presented a significant viability risk to the Business Plan. Requests from tenants to have them installed through private firms were always agreed and officers were working with colleagues in Legal Services, with a view to developing a scheme for the installation of photovoltaic panels using private firms.
- The lifecycle for heating systems was 30 years and 15 years for boilers, although systems were sometimes declared obsolete when parts were no longer available.

- The Gateway Project had provided housing for 600 vulnerable individuals and families who were asylum seekers and the Government had asked the Council to take 50 families of Syrian refugees, with funding being provided.
- If damage to properties by previous tenants was wilful, a record of this was taken and attempts were made to recover the costs. It was hoped that the Housing+ operating model would improve the gathering of evidence in this regard.
- If Members wished to submit questions in advance of meetings of the Committee, this would be very helpful. Any Members wishing to do this should do so through the Policy and Improvement Officer.
- It was easier to house refugee families rather than individual asylum seekers and systems were in place to support them.
- The commitment to build 75 new Council homes, made in 2013, had been extended to 1000 new/replacement Council homes by 2019/20, which were to be let at both social and affordable rent. These included 184 new build by the Council and some acquired through developers.
- A contractor going into administration was a rare occurrence and checks were made to assess their viability.
- In relation to vacant properties, people were not allowed to bid for what they were not entitled to. However, if no bids were received, then a first come first served system operated, but affordability was a concern, as were Bedroom Tax issues.
- A representative from the Gateway Project could be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to explain its operation.

6.4 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Janet Sharpe and Liam Duggan for their contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the report and the responses to questions; and
- (c) requests that officers:-
 - (i) give consideration to devising an efficient, streamlined system for tenant, resident and leaseholder consultation; and
 - (ii) liaise with the Policy and Improvement Officer to arrange an appropriate time to present an item to the Committee on the detail of the forthcoming Housing and Planning Bill and its effects.

7. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE

7.1 Councillor John Campbell reported on policing issues in South Yorkshire and informed the Committee that the trial of local policing in Barnsley had gone well, with the Police looking to introduce this throughout South Yorkshire. No figures were available on the cuts in Police Community Support Officers, but these would be shared equitably across South Yorkshire. South Yorkshire Police was also looking to improve its social media presence by using Twitter, Facebook, You Tube and Instagram.

7.2 The last meeting of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel had considered the Police and Crime Commissioner's Draft Annual Report for 2014/15, which included coverage of the priority areas of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, protecting vulnerable people and improving visible policing.

7.3 In response to Members' questions, the following points were made:-

- The Police and Crime Commissioner recognised there was a lack of confidence in the use of the '101' contact number and its effectiveness would be considered as part of the Community Safety item which the Committee was to consider at its February 2016 meeting.
- The Police and Crime Panel had not discussed in detail the availability of Police Officers to attend local community meetings, but it was felt that this would improve when the local policing teams had become established. Councillor Campbell agreed to raise this at the next meeting of the Police and Crime Panel and report back.
- An improved social media presence would provide people with an opportunity to contact the Police and for issues to be shared.
- The minutes of the Police and Crime Panel meetings were available on its website.

7.4 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the information reported.

8. WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

8.1 The Committee received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer which provided details of the Committee's draft Work Programme for 2015/16.

8.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) approves the draft Work Programme 2015/16 as detailed in the report; and
- (b) notes that:-
 - (i) the Challenge for Change item on Vacant Property Management would be dealt with by means of a written report;

- (ii) updates on the operation of Sheffield Money would be presented to the Committee in the form of written reports; and
- (iii) Councillor Aodan Marken would report to the Policy and Improvement Officer on the Prevent meeting at the appropriate time.

9. RIGHT TO BUY UPDATE

- 9.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the contents of the Right to Buy Update report.

10. PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR UPDATE

- 10.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the contents of the Private Rented Sector Update report.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 11.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 3rd December 2015, at 4.00 pm, in the Town Hall.

(NOTE: This was subsequently changed to 4.15 pm on Thursday, 3rd December 2015, in the Town Hall.)

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Housing & Planning Bill: update

The Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny
and Policy Development Committee

3rd December 2015

Liam Duggan/ Janet Sharpe

Housing and Planning Bill

Background

- Queen's speech (May) and Chancellor's Summer budget (July) included significant proposals for social housing
 - Some proposals were included in the *Welfare Reform and Work Bill* (tabled in July)
 - Other proposals in the *Housing & Planning Bill* (tabled in October)
- Scrutiny Committee was briefed in September and requested a further update once Housing and Planning Bill tabled

Housing and Planning Bill

Most significant national policy announcements for social housing in 2015:

1. Change to rent policy
- 2. Extension of Right to Buy***
- 3. Higher rents for higher earners 'Pay to Stay'***
4. Further welfare reforms
- 5. Review of lifetime tenancies***

**To be set out in the Housing and Planning Bill*

Housing and Planning Bill

Housing and Planning Bill

- Introduced to the House of Commons on 13 October 2015
- Part 4: Social Housing
 - Extension of Right to Buy
 - Reducing social housing regulation
 - Vacant high value Local Authority housing
 - High Income Social Tenants: Mandatory Rents
 - ('Review of Lifetime Tenancies'- no reference...yet)

1. Extension of Right to Buy

Voluntary deal

- 5th October: deal announced between Government & the National Housing Federation to extend the Right to Buy to Housing Association (HA) tenants voluntarily.
- Voluntary deal allows for policy implementation without need for primary legislation to be brought before parliament.
- Government anticipate eligible tenants will be able to exercise their RtB with discounts on the sale price and Government would compensate the Housing Association the cost of the discount.
- The compensation to the HA should be used by the HA for reinvestment in new homes (not necessarily social rented).
- Deal includes Government implementing deregulatory measures including enabling HAs to convert vacant properties from social/affordable rent to other tenures & review of nomination arrangements with Councils to give HAs “greater control over who they house”

1. Extension of Right to Buy

Funding the policy

- Government will compensate Housing Associations the cost of the discounts
- Government will raise the income needed to pay this compensation from the sale of vacant high value Local Authority housing

So...

- Councils will continue selling LA homes through the Right to Buy at a discount and sharing receipt income, after discounts, with Government
- Councils will be required to sell vacant council homes on open market to raise funds to reimburse housing associations the full market value of the homes they are selling at a discount

Provision for this is in the Housing and Planning Bill...

1. Extension of Right to Buy

Housing & Planning Bill

1. Extension of Right to Buy (voluntary element)

- Provision for the payment of compensation by Government to Housing Associations (for discounts to tenants)
- Provision for monitoring of the policy by Homes & Communities Agency (HCA)
- Provision for Government consent to HA disposals

2. Reducing social housing regulation (part of the deal)

- Provision for Secretary of State, through regulation, to reduce regulatory control over private registered providers (HAs) of social housing or their affairs

3. Vacant high value Local Authority housing (funding the deal)

- Next slide...

1. Extension of Right to Buy

Housing & Planning Bill – vacant high value LA housing

- Local Authorities (LAs) with a HRA will be required to make a payment to the Government each year reflecting the market value of high value housing likely to become vacant during that year, less costs, whether or not receipts are realised
- Regulations will determine ‘high value’ as applicable to different areas
- The way the annual charge is calculated by Government may vary by area, a particular description of local authority or by individual local housing authority
- LAs must ‘consider’ selling high value homes, leaving open the possibility of funding the charge by other means
- Government may enter into an agreement with a local authority to reduce the amount the LA is required to pay on condition the difference is used *for the provision of housing or things that facilitate the provision of housing*

1. Extension of Right to Buy

Considerations

- The annual bill (termed 'determination') for each LA will be based on assumptions so actual receipts may fall short of the payments due. In this case LAs will need to fund the payments from other resources or pay interest on late payments
- No reference made in the Bill to the proportion of housing debt supported by the future rental income of each sold property and whether this is to be reimbursed to the LA as it is for RTB sales
- The Bill does not address the applicability of this policy to new build schemes which may be the highest value properties in the area

2. Higher rents for higher earners

The Summer Budget announcement

- The Chancellor's Summer Budget included an announcement that registered providers of social housing would be required to charge market or near market rents to tenants where the household income is in excess of £30,000 (outside London)
- The policy, known as 'Pay to Stay', to be implemented from April 2017
- Local Authorities will pay the additional rental income recovered from high income tenants to the Exchequer for deficit reduction. Housing Associations will retain the additional income to reinvest in new housing

2. Higher rents for higher earners

Government consultation

- Government consultation held 9th October – 20th November to help inform the detailed design of the policy in relation to:-
 - How the scheme can support incentives to work (i.e. use of taper)
 - Evidence of administration costs (so LAs can be reimbursed)
- Sheffield City Council responded on 20th November:-
 - SCC does not support the policy (inconsistent with mixed communities, disincentive to work, breakup of families)
 - £30k threshold for household is too low, but simple taper supported
 - Income should be retained locally by Councils as for HAs
 - Impossible to estimate costs until some detail released on the policy/ how it will work. SCC view is income data must be supplied by Gov't

2. Higher rents for higher earners

Government consultation

- 'Household' likely to mean tenant/ joint tenants on tenancy agreement plus any tenants spouse, civil partner or partner where they reside in the rental accommodation
- 'Income' likely to mean taxable income in the tax year ending in the financial year prior to the financial (i.e. rent) year in question
- 'Household income' likely to be the highest two incomes where several people live in the property

2. Higher rents for higher earners

Housing & Planning Bill

- The Bill makes provision for the charging of a rent with reference to the market rate or other factors, and for rent to be different for people with different incomes or for social housing in different areas
- Regulations will define how income is calculated and what constitutes 'high income' and 'household'
- There may be regulation to require tenants to provide information and evidence of income and / or this may be provided through HMRC tax records
- Registered providers may be required to charge rent at the market rate to a tenant who has failed to provide income info/ evidence
- Regulation will require LAs to make payment to Government for estimated additional income generated by higher rents less any deductions for admin costs and with interest charged for late payment
- 1% rent reductions in the Welfare Reform and Work Bill will not apply to high income social tenants

2. Higher rents for higher earners

Key elements of the policy which are still not known:

- 1. Confirmation of the rent thresholds, definition of income and household, and size of the taper** - these factors will determine the number of households affected and the impact of the policy on those households.
- 2. How high earning households will be identified** - will councils be required to write to all households, provide support to tenants to make their returns, validate returns, process information & deal with queries & appeals or will this information be provided directly from HMRC?
- 3. The criteria for setting rent and adapting to changed circumstances** – Government is not yet decided how the trade-off between changing rent more frequently to ensure rents follow earnings and the need for a simple process will be addressed. The outcome chosen will impact on arrears and the cost of appeals and of processing changes of circumstances
- 4. How many households are affected** - it is not known how many tenant households in Sheffield will be affected by the policy

3. Review of lifetime tenancies

- Nothing currently included in the Housing & Planning Bill as published
- The national press has been briefed that, subject to formal approval to the proposals (i.e. Cabinet Committee clearance), Government intends to introduce the proposals into the Bill by amendment at the first opportunity
- Its understood the Bill will require the compulsory introduction of fixed term tenancies ('flexible tenancies') for all new tenants of social housing

Further changes in 2015?

- The Chancellor's Joint Spending Review and Autumn Statement due 25th November (after deadline for Scrutiny papers)
- Chancellor looking for £4bn alternative savings after Lords rejected tax credit cuts
- Housing Benefit (and/ or Universal Credit) reported to be likely targets
- The need to find additional savings could mean further amendment to the Housing and Planning Bill
- Verbal update to be provided to the Scrutiny Committee



Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 3rd December October 2015

Report of: Policy & Improvement Officer

Subject: Work Programme 2015/16

Author of Report: Matthew Borland, Policy and Improvement Officer
matthew.borland@sheffield.gov.uk
0114 273 5065

A proposed work programme is attached at appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration and discussion

The proposed work programme aims to focus on a small number of issues, in depth. This means that the Committee will need to prioritise which issues will be included on formal meeting agendas. In doing this, the Committee may wish to reflect on the prioritisation principles attached at appendix 2 to ensure that scrutiny activity is focussed where it can add most value.

Where an issue is not appropriate for inclusion on a meeting agenda, but there is significant interest from members, the Committee can request written briefings or presentations outside of formal scrutiny meeting time.

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

- Comment on the proposed work programme
 - Identify priorities for inclusion on agendas
 - Identify items for written briefings
-

**Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee
Draft Work Programme 2015-16**

Please note: the draft work programme is a live document and so is subject to change.

Topic	Notes	Date
Community Safety	The Committee agreed to dedicate a whole meeting to Community Safety. Specific aspects to be picked up include: - An update on the reorganisation of local policing - Partner Resource Allocation Meeting (PRAM) - 101 service	February 2016
Welfare Reform	March 2015 meeting requested "officers continue to present update reports to the Committee in their current form, so that Members could request further information on specific items either when they received the report or at the subsequent meeting." The Committee may also wish to consider hearing from external organisations, e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau.	
Housing+ Model and its Implementation	A formal report on the implementation of Housing+ is proposed, following which a Committee visit would be arranged to see how implementation is working 'on the ground.'	
Local Area Partnerships	The Committee has previously requested a report be presented to the Committee, with the Cabinet Member and Lead Officer being invited to attend the meeting.	
Housing Delivery	This has been identified by the Council as a performance challenge and was discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 30 th July 2015. The Economic and Environmental Wellbeing (E&EW) Committee had a Task and Finish Group on this subject in 2014/15. Copies of the report back to the November 2015 E&EW Committee meeting and copies of the minutes have been circulated.	
Committee Annual Report	A short item to comment on a draft of the Committee's section of the Scrutiny Annual Report	April 2016

Written Briefings 'For Information' (Circulated with meeting papers, and officers do NOT attend the meeting)		
Welfare Reform	- July 2013 Committee requested "a one page update on progress with Welfare Reform issues be provided to Committee Members bi-monthly" - November 2014 Committee requested "that future reports be set out to include comparative figures, so that trends could be identified."	Every meeting
Right to Buy Update	The Committee have received a bi-monthly update on Right to Buy since November 2013.	Every meeting
Private Sector Housing Update	Following on from the Committee's discussion at the July meeting a written update is scheduled to be included in the October 2015 and February 2016 meeting papers.	October 2015 and February 2016
Challenge for Change: Vacant Property Management	The Council Housing Service's scrutiny group Challenge for Change (made up of customers) are now concluding their fourth review looking at vacant property management and would like to present to the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee.	TBC
Challenge for Change: Community Engagement	September 2014 Committee requested: "a further report, focusing on progress made in relation to the twelve issues identified in the report, be presented to the Committee in six months' time, with the appropriate officers and tenants' representatives being invited to attend the meeting."	TBC

The Committee's remaining meeting dates are:

- 4.00pm Thursday 4th February 2016
- 4.00pm Thursday 7th April 2016

Selecting Scrutiny topics

This tool is designed to assist the Scrutiny Committees focus on the topics most appropriate for their scrutiny.

- **Public Interest**
The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny;
- **Ability to Change / Impact**
Priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically have an impact on, and that will influence decision makers;
- **Performance**
Priority should be given to the areas in which the Council, and other organisations (public or private) are not performing well;
- **Extent**
Priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or large parts of the city (geographical or communities of interest);
- **Replication / other approaches**
Work programmes must take account of what else is happening (or has happened) in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort. Alternatively, could another body, agency, or approach (e.g. briefing paper) more appropriately deal with the topic

Other influencing factors

- **Cross-party** - There is the potential to reach cross-party agreement on a report and recommendations.
- **Resources**. Members with the Policy & Improvement Officer can complete the work needed in a reasonable time to achieve the required outcome



Report to Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

November 2015

Report of: Janet Sharpe – Director of Housing Services

Subject: Right to buy update report

Author of Report: Andrew Routley – Home Ownership Team Leader (2736338)

Summary:

The attached report provides information about the sales receipt generated from right to buy

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	X
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

The Committee is asked to note the update.

Background Papers: Not applicable

Category of Report: OPEN

1. Introduction

1.1 The following chart provides information as to the total right to buy receipt against the forecasted receipt for the financial year 2015 / 16

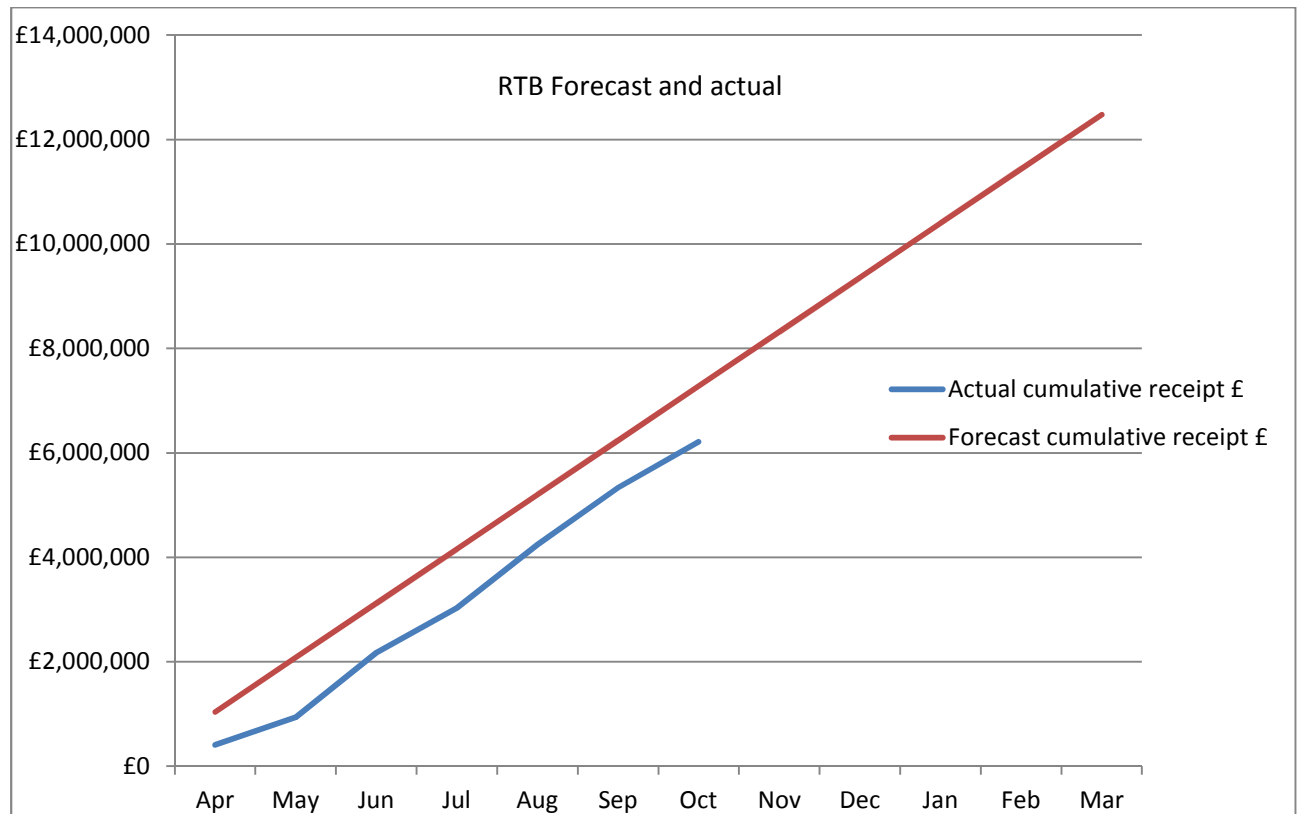
1.2 The forecast for right to buy sales for the year are:

Total sales 320

Average sale price £38,500

Total receipt £12,320,000

Average sales 26.6 per month



2. Activity

2.1 To date, end of October 2015 there have been a total of 158 sales.

April sales = 11

May sales = 15

June sales = 31

July sales = 24

August sales = 28

September sales = 25

October sales = 24

2.2 This is down on the forecasted position by 28, this is due to the low number of sales in April and May sales in the following months have remained around the average monthly forecast. October sales are slightly below the monthly forecast of 26

2.3 The average sale price remains slightly higher than forecast (£38,500) at £39,325

3. Recommendation

3.1 The Committee is asked to note the update.

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APPENDIX 1



Report to:

- **Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee, 3rd December 2015**
- **Economic & Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee, 16 December 2015**

Report of: Director of Policy, Performance and Communications

Subject: Sheffield Money

Author of Report: Cat Arnold, Policy and Improvement Officer, 34529

Summary:

Sheffield Fairness Commission recognised that Sheffield's residents on low incomes frequently have to pay more for products and services, including for credit, and made recommendations which sought to address this inequality. A new not-for-profit organisation, Sheffield Money, was set up with start-up funding from Sheffield City Council to improve access both to affordable credit and other appropriate financial products.

This report has been requested by the Committee following the 2nd September 2015 Full Council Meeting. It provides the background to the establishment of Sheffield Money as an organisation and provides a report about its progress during the first 6 weeks of trading.

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	x
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

Note for information.

Background Papers:

List any background documents (e.g. research studies, reports) used to write the report. Remember that by listing documents people could request a copy.

- Non-Key Officer decision report: Allocation of funding to Finance for Sheffield Limited (Sheffield Money), 26 November 2014
- Non-Key Officer decision report: Allocation of additional funding to Finance for Sheffield Limited (Sheffield Money), 26 August 2015
- Fairness Commission Implementation Budget Executive Leader Report, 20th September 2013
- Understanding and tackling high-cost credit problem in Sheffield. Final Report 15th May 2013. John Jeffries and Bill Truin

Category of Report: OPEN

1. Introduction/Context

- 1.1 This report has been requested by the Committee following the 2nd September 2015 Full Council Meeting. It provides the background to the establishment of Sheffield Money as an organisation and provides an initial report of progress from the first 6 weeks of trading.

2. Main body of report, matters for consideration, etc

- 2.1 The independently-chaired Sheffield Fairness Commission's recommendations, published in 2013, included the following: 'the city establish an ethical and affordable loan scheme; work is undertaken into the size and type of the market for affordable credit in Sheffield; the city continues to support the provision of advice; and preventative work to help people manage their money effectively should be supported'.
- 2.2 The Council allocated £1m in its 2013/14 budget to support the implementation of the Commission's recommendations, and a report to the Executive Leader on 20th September 2013 set out a commissioning process for allocating that money which focused on innovation, scale of impact and ability to be self-sustaining in the long term.
- 2.3 An independent report published in May 2013 presented research into the market for high-cost credit in Sheffield and concluded that there is a large and growing non-standard consumer credit market in the city. People who cannot access mainstream credit are paying a significant premium to borrow cash for emergencies or for ordinary household goods. This increases inequalities in the city and it does nothing to help the Sheffield economy, as the money paid on expensive loans goes outside the city.
- 2.4 The independent report proposed an intervention that provides a more affordable alternative that is at sufficient scale to make a difference to the problem and is sustainable over the long term without public subsidy. It proposed the establishment of a new organisation, the potential viability of which was then tested by working into a full business case that recommended the establishment of a sustainable, independent organisation with a core

financial model that does not depend on ongoing financial support from the public sector.

- 2.5 On the basis of this work a new Industrial and Provident Society, Finance for Sheffield Limited (trading as Sheffield Money) was established, with a board chaired by The Very Reverend Peter Bradley and including representatives from Sheffield First Partnership, South Yorkshire Housing and, later, Sheffield Citizens Advice Bureau.
- 2.6 The Sheffield Money model is innovative because it acts as a broker rather than as a provider in itself. This enables it to establish relationships with appropriate partner organisations, both within and outside the city, in order to provide lower-cost loans and other financial products to customers who would otherwise use high-cost credit providers. Sheffield Money focuses on providing excellent customer service and is aiming to provide the quickest service possible within an ethical framework.
- 2.7 Sheffield City Council has provided start-up funding from the Fairness Commission Implementation Fund of £252k. This includes £40k of additional working capital that is to be repaid in the event that the business has become financially self-sustaining and is in a position to repay the amount.
- 2.8 Sheffield Money started trading to the public on 10th September 2015. They business is still establishing itself, but early indications are positive. They had significant publicity both locally and nationally. The highlights included a full-page article in the Guardian Money section, live evening coverage from BBC Look North and very positive coverage locally on BBC Radio Sheffield and in The Star. They have received requests from other local authorities to visit and requests from individuals wanting to buy shares in Sheffield Money.
- 2.7 They have established partnerships so far with: Five Lamps, a well-established Community Development Finance Initiative based in the North-East, Sheffield Credit Union, Transave Credit Union, Ffrees (an ethical company that provides current-account type products) and an organisation that supplies white goods. Their customers can access their services via a city centre shop, website and phone line. They work with Money Advice Service and Advice Sheffield.
- 2.8 Sheffield Money aims to be sustainable in the long-term by collecting a levy from some or all of their partner organisations to cover their costs in referring customers. This levy is not passed on to customers.
- 2.9 Sheffield Money is also exploring other sources of income to work towards sustainability. This includes a successful application the Key Fund for a long-term loan and developing a model that can be franchised out to other areas, to capitalise on the very great interest that there has been from other parts of the country.
- 2.10 They have expanded their Board to include members with an expertise in accountancy and legal matters. They have also commissioned a bespoke Customer Relationship Management system in order to help them analyse and

understand the makeup of their customers. It will also allow them to operate some automatically generated reminders for customers for budgeting appointments and help ensure customer satisfaction.

2.11 Between 10 September and 30 October, the following statistics were available from the first 6-monthly monitoring report that is submitted by Sheffield Money to the Policy, Performance and Communications Service, Sheffield City Council:

- Loans: 575 loan quotes and 283 customers who went on to make a full loan application. The loan conversion rate is not available for this report for commercial reasons.
- Current Accounts: 18 applications completed (3 in store, 15 online) and 12 accounts issued - 66% conversion rate to date, although there is a delay between applications completed and accounts issued due to confirmation of identity.
- Advice Referrals:
 - Customers who have been officially referred to other organisations and services: Money Advice: 6 appointments; Sheffield CAB: 8 appointments; Food banks: 3 referrals; Electoral Roll: 3 signed up.
 - Sheffield Money frequently give information for relevant services such as CAB, Step Change, food banks, local assistance scheme, housing solutions, etc, and informally recommend that they contact organisations directly. Anecdotal evidence suggests that they have done this over 50 times.
 - In addition to this every declined application customer is contacted with the offer of money advice.

3 What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?

3.1 Work done by the Sheffield Fairness Commission and elsewhere has highlighted that people on lower incomes often pay more for their services than those on higher incomes. This is particularly noticeable in the case of credit. Those on low incomes are less likely to have savings, less likely to have access to mainstream banking and are therefore more likely to have to rely on commercial doorstep or payday lenders in order to borrow the money to fund unexpected expenses. These commercial lenders charge high rates of interest and frequently encourage their customers to become more and more reliant on them.

3.2 Sheffield Money provides access to credit at a lower cost than commercial lenders. It also provides support to customers to help them manage their money and move towards mainstream financial services, and keep money in the local economy.

4. Recommendation

4.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report for information.