

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Thursday 7 April 2016 at 4.00 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 Diane Owens, Policy and Improvement Officer, on 0114 2735065 or email diane.owens@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
7 APRIL 2016**

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 4 February 2016
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 7. Rough Sleeping in Sheffield**
Report of the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services
- 8. Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee Annual Report 2015/16 (draft content) and Work Programme 2016/17**
Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer
- 9. Police and Crime Panel Report**
Councillor John Campbell to report

For Information Only

- 10. Written Responses to Public Questions**
Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer
- 11. Challenge for Change: Community Engagement Report - Progress Update**
Report of the Challenge for Change Tenant Scrutiny Group
- 12. Right to Buy Update**
Report of the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services
- 13. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on a date to be arranged

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 4 February 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Tony Damms (Chair), Steve Ayris (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

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 There were no apologies for absence.

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 3rd December 2015, were approved as a correct record and, arising from their consideration, it was noted that:-

- (a) the Gateway Project had been added to the Committee's Work Programme;
- (b) the link to the TellMAMA website had been circulated to Committee Members; and
- (c) the report of the Prevent Task Group would be circulated to Committee Members when it had been finalised.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 In response to a question from Neil Fitzmaurice regarding the Committee's role in scrutinising the effectiveness of Locality Management, the Chair, Councillor Tony Damms, confirmed that Locality Management was being considered as part of a review being headed by Councillor Sioned-Mair Richards (Acting Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods) and stressed the importance that this review be completed properly and not necessarily quickly. There was a commitment to having effective mechanisms for community engagement within the organisation and, should it be necessary, the Committee could be provided with an update on the review's progress. The Chair added that Mr Fitzmaurice would be provided with a full

written reply.

- 5.2 In response to a question from Alan Kewley regarding prior notice of meetings of the Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership, the Chair indicated that there was a commitment to publishing the meeting agenda seven days in advance of the Board meetings and asked Maxine Stavrianakos (Head of Neighbourhood Intervention and Tenant Support) to check on this and provide Mr Kewley with a written reply.

6. COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 6.1 The Committee received a presentation given by Chief Inspector Simon Wanless, South Yorkshire Police, which provided an introduction to the new Local Policing Model. Also in attendance for this item were Adel McGowan (Deputy Head of Communications, South Yorkshire Police), Ryan Swift (Communications Manager, South Yorkshire Police) and Maxine Stavrianakos (Head of Neighbourhood Intervention and Tenant Support).

- 6.2 Chief Inspector Wanless took the Committee through the circulated presentation, making reference to the financial context, the requirements for the new Local Policing Model, how savings were to be achieved in local policing, headline changes, details of Local Policing Units, Teams and Support Units, specialist support and reducing demand.

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

- There was a conscious need to maintain a local footprint but the service could not afford to have duplication by Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). Each community should have a dedicated PCSO, but there may be capacity issues in relation to them attending local meetings.
- Council officers were looking to improve communications to local Members in relation to neighbourhood incidents and events. Information reported by the public to the Police was collated to senior officers and this was passed on to the Corporate Communications Department, which would put this out through social media. Much information was made available through social media, with use of the Crimestoppers telephone number also being encouraged.
- The Local Policing Model went live in September 2015 and was subject to review.
- Approximately 145 Police Officers would be removed from the local policing structures by disestablishing posts, as officers retired, over a two year period. There had been no noticeable rise in reported illness amongst Police Officers as a result of the funding challenge, but morale was an issue nationally. A raft of potential savings had been identified and this included savings on Police Officer posts, but due to natural wastage there would still be a need to recruit over the next three years. In relation to staff welfare, the service's

Occupational Health Unit managed stress, Police Officers underwent counselling following any major incidents and were also subject to a system of appraisals. However, there was still a demand for police services and morale was a challenge. It had been necessary to reduce the number of community teams and the focus was now on the right resource first time, but it should be noted that assessing those reporting incidents for vulnerability and risk did take longer.

- Each Local Policing Team had a Local Inspector and, in the case of serious incidents, the Critical Incident Manager should inform the Council Leader and the Police and Crime Commissioner, who should then disseminate the information to appropriate members of staff. It was acknowledged that the Council did get to know about critical incidents, but there was still a need to improve communications.
- In relation to shared functions, the South Yorkshire Police participated in regional prison intelligence and there were proposals for a shared special operations unit and premises sharing. In addition, South Yorkshire Police were looking at a collaboration with Humberside Police with regard to call handling, stores and human resources.
- The Safer Roads Partnership was a service-wide function and not dealt with on a district level.
- The 'Confirm a Message' system was a county-wide one but was not used widely by Police Officers.
- Any increase in links between the South Yorkshire Police and the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service was an issue for the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

6.4 The Committee then received the circulated presentation on Community Safety which was given by Maxine Stavrianakos. She took the Committee through the presentation, making particular reference to the Sheffield Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership, Community Safety priorities, current performance, meeting structure, the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting (PRAM) and future proposals.

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

- There had been reductions in burglaries in the last 18 months and the increase in violent crime, whilst reflecting the national trend and a change in recording processes, was still of concern.
- A change in the recording processes for the reporting of hate crime had caused levels to show an increase, but it was also felt that victims were now more willing to come forward. It should be noted that reports of hate crime did not come from any particular group. A tasking meeting was held each

morning to assess the previous day's hate crime reports.

- The South Yorkshire Police engaged with the private security industry in relation to the night-time economy but, as far as further involvement was concerned, it should be borne in mind that its employees did not have the warrant powers of a Police Officer and that there were vetting and security issues involved.
- Whilst there was a drive to recruit Special Constables, people finding the time was proving to be an issue. It also took a long time to get Special Constables fully trained, but in terms of increasing the numbers of Police Officers, PCSOs and Special Constables would get priority.
- The operation of the national 101 telephone service had experienced a number of challenges but it was felt that the picture was improving with average waiting times being reduced. Business Continuity Officers were able to assist with any major failings in the system. Work was being undertaken with Communications staff to ensure that the right result was provided at the first time and incidents were now being risk assessed. Furthermore, new technology would automatically feed 999 calls to the appropriate people for major incidents and work was being undertaken with partner agencies dealing with mental health and looked after children. Online reporting was also being encouraged by means of a specific e-mail account and the South Yorkshire Police website contained a section on frequently asked questions.
- Representatives of the South Yorkshire Police were willing to attend community meetings in Sheffield.

6.6 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks those attending for their contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the presentations and responses to questions; and
- (c) requests the Policy and Improvement Officer to circulate the Police e-mail address for reporting incidents to Members of the Committee.

7. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE

7.1 Councillor John Campbell reported that the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner had now moved to Carbrook House in Sheffield, with a cost saving of over £100,000. He also reported that the last meeting of the Police and Crime Panel had approved the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed Council Tax precept for 2016/17, which was for an increase of £5 on a Band D property. Reference was also made to the significant budget challenges, which included a pay award and reducing employee numbers.

7.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee thanks Councillor John Campbell and 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 a report on the issue of support for Rough Sleepers in the City, as requested by Council at its January meeting, would be submitted to the Committee's meeting on 7th April 2016.

9. WRITTEN RESPONSES TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS

9.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the contents of the Written Responses to Public Questions report.

10. RIGHT TO BUY UPDATE

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

11. UPDATE ON THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

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

12. CHALLENGE FOR CHANGE: VACANT PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

12.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the Challenge for Change: Vacants report; and
- (b) requests that an update on progress in implementing the report's recommendations be presented to the Committee at an appropriate time.

13. MATTHEW BORLAND

13.1 The Chair reported that Matthew Borland, Policy and Improvement Officer, was attending his last scheduled meeting of the Committee, as he would be taking up a post at the University of Sheffield on 15th February 2016.

13.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee places on record its thanks and appreciation for the excellent service provided by Mr Borland, which he always undertook with a very amiable manner, whilst in the post of Policy and Improvement Officer during the last two years.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 14.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 7th April 2016, at 4.00 pm, in the Town Hall.



Agenda Item 7

Report to Safer and Stronger communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 7th April 2016

Report of: Janet Sharp – Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service

Subject: Rough Sleeping in Sheffield

Author of Report: Zoe Young – Housing Options and Advice Service Manager
Zoe.young@sheffield.gov.uk
 0114 2053118

Summary:

A petition calling on Sheffield City Council to open empty buildings as winter shelters for homeless people was brought to full council meeting on 6th January. The Council's Petition Scheme requires that any petition with over 5,000 signatures be the subject of debate at the council meeting and as the petition submitted was over the threshold a debate was held. The outcome of the discussion was to discuss rough sleeping at the Safer Stronger Communities Scrutiny and development Committee. As shown in the recommendation below:

“That this council

- (a) welcomes the work taking place across the city to tackle homelessness, and the concerns of local people on this issue;
- (b) Understands that because local services are able to meet demand for homelessness services at present, there is no need to open up empty buildings for rough sleepers, but if this situation was to change in future the Council would consider all options, working alongside its partners, which could include opening empty buildings; and
- (c) Nevertheless, requests that a report on the issue of support for rough sleepers in the city be submitted to the relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee for consideration”

This report discusses the issue of rough sleeping in Sheffield and the provision in the city to support those people who are sleeping on the streets.

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	X

Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

Note the contents of this report and to provide views and recommendations on the council's approach to working with rough sleepers.

Category of Report: OPEN

Report of the Director of Housing and neighbourhoods

Rough Sleeping in Sheffield

1 Context

- 1.1 A petition calling on Sheffield City Council to open empty buildings as winter shelters for homeless people was brought to full council meeting on 6th January. The petition “To: Sheffield City Council. Follow the lead of Ryan Giggs, Gary Neville and Manchester City Council and open empty buildings to our homeless this winter. Why is this important? For people in one of the wealthiest societies that has ever existed to be sleeping in the open in winter is inhumane. It's also inexcusable when we have so many empty buildings.”
- 1.2 The Council’s Petition Scheme requires that any petition with over 5,000 signatures be the subject of debate at the council meeting and as the petition submitted was over the threshold a debate was held. The outcome of the discussion was to discuss rough sleeping at the Safer Stronger Communities Scrutiny and development Committee. As shown in the recommendation below:

“That this Council (a) welcomes the work taking place across the city to tackle homelessness, and the concerns of local people on this issue;

(b) understands that because local services are able to meet demand for homelessness services at present, there is no need to open up empty buildings for rough sleepers, but if this situation was to change in future the Council would consider all options, working alongside its partners, which could include opening empty buildings; and

(c) Nevertheless, requests that a report on the issue of support for rough sleepers in the city be submitted to the relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee for consideration.”

2 Introduction

- 2.1 Rough Sleeping is the most visible sign of homelessness. There are many other people who are homeless in the city but are not sleeping on the streets. These people are often in temporary accommodation or living with family and friends. Many people are able to find their own solutions. All of these people can approach the Sheffield City Council’s Advice and Options Service for advice, support and assistance with their housing problems.

Some people who appear to be sleeping rough may be engaged in street activities such as crime, drinking or begging, but in fact have somewhere to stay.

3. Rough Sleeping in Sheffield

- 3.1 In 2014/15 it was estimated nationally that 2,744 people were sleeping rough at any one time. This was up 14% from those estimated in 2013 and a 55% increase from 2010.
- 3.2 In Yorkshire and the Humber there has been a steady decrease in the number of people sleeping rough which is opposite to the national trend. As far as Local Authority areas go the biggest increases in Rough Sleeping have been seen in Westminster (89% increase) and Manchester (79% increase).
- 3.3 There has been a steady decrease in the number of people sleeping rough in Sheffield over the last few years. In 2013 Sheffield had 17 rough sleepers whereas in 2014 there were 10 and in 2015 there were 11. Of the 11 people sleeping rough in 2015/16 one person owned their own house but refused to return, 2 had no recourse to public funds and three others gave up their hostel beds because they preferred to sleep rough.
- 3.4 In Sheffield we are confident that we know who is sleeping rough at any one time and we have mechanisms in place to identify people who find they having to sleep on the streets.

4 Identifying and Supporting Rough Sleepers in Sheffield

- 4.1 SCC's Housing Advice and options Service Manager chairs a multi-agency group where each individual rough sleeper is discussed and an action plan put in place for each person with an aim to getting them off the streets and finding suitable accommodation. This includes putting support in place to help people maintain this accommodation. Members of this group include SCC, health, police, community support officers, drug and alcohol services and the voluntary and faith sector.
- 4.2 SCC commission a Rough Sleepers Service through Turning Point. Turning Point focuses on identifying rough sleepers and supporting them to secure accommodation and support. Every week they undertake a number of early morning outreach sessions to identify and support people sleeping rough.
- 4.3 Once per week a multi-agency outreach session is undertaken early morning led by the police. Staff from SCC and Turning Point also take part.
- 4.4 Many people who sleep rough have high and complex needs and are not engaged with other services such as health. SCC has a monthly complex cases panel to discuss those people with severe and enduring mental health issues who are in housing difficulty to ensure that multi-agency solutions are in place.
- 4.5 If people do find themselves homeless (people without a permanent home but have somewhere to stay which could be sofa surfing or temporary accommodation) and /or roofless (people who have nowhere at all to go and may have to sleep rough) they can contact the SCC Housing Options and Advice Telephone Access Team. Some people are homeless but have somewhere to stay temporarily and others potentially have to sleep on the streets. An experienced officer will offer support and advice to individuals as well as starting to determine if the council

has a duty to provide accommodation. The team will also refer to supported housing if the customer has a particular housing support need. There is also an out of hours for people who find themselves roofless outside office hours.

- 4.6 The Rough Sleepers Service can also be contacted by agencies and members of the public if they identify someone they consider may be sleeping rough.
- 4.7 Sheffield has a number of non – accommodation based services who offer practical help and advice to homeless and vulnerable people. These include offering one to one support as well as food, clothing, showers and laundry facilities. The Archer project also offers a drop in service with a nurse and a local GP and a SCC housing options officer also does a surgery once a week on their premises.

5. Severe Weather provision (SWEP)

- 5.1 There is a humanitarian obligation on all local authorities to prevent deaths on the streets caused by severe winter weather. The council's responsibilities towards those households who are owed a duty under the homeless legislation are not affected by severe weather.
- 5.2 The Met Office weather forecast is used and when temperatures are forecast to drop to zero degrees or below for the three consecutive nights the SWEP should be implemented on day one of the three day forecast.
- 5.3 Once SWEP provision is in place anyone who finds themselves in a position where they have to sleep rough are placed in accommodation. This accommodation includes crash pads, hostels including their communal areas and Bed and Breakfast. The Rough Sleeper Service also works with these customers who were placed in SWEP provision to try and identify move on accommodation.

6 What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?

- 6.1 The people of Sheffield can be reassured that there is provision and support for Rough Sleepers in the city.
- 6.2 If a member of the public finds a rough sleeper to enable the person to get help and support there are a number of organisations that can be contacted. Including the police via 101, Sheffield City Council Housing Options and Advice line, Homeless out of Hours Service and the Turning Point Rough Sleepers team

7 Recommendation

- 7.1 The Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and policy development Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and to provide views and recommendations on the council's approach to working with rough sleepers.

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Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 7th April 2016

Report of: Policy and Improvement Officer

Subject: Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee:
Scrutiny Annual Report 2015-16 (draft content) & Work
Programme 2016-17

Author of Report: Diane Owens, Policy and Improvement Officer
diane.owens@sheffield.gov.uk
0114 273 5065

Summary:

This report provides the Committee with a summary of its activities over the municipal year for inclusion in the Scrutiny Annual Report 2015-16. The Committee is asked to consider and comment on this document (Appendix 1).

The report also includes a list of topics which it is recommended be put forward for consideration as part of the 2016-17 Work Programme for this committee.

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:

- Consider and comment on the summary of activity for inclusion in the Scrutiny Annual Report 2015-16
- Agree that the list of topics outlined in section 3.0 be put forward for consideration as part of the 2016-17 Work Programme for this committee; and provide any further comment.

Background Papers: None
Category of Report: OPEN

**Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee:
2015-16 Annual Report (draft) & 2016-17 Work Programme**

- 1.0 A proposed summary of this Committees activity over the municipal year, for inclusion in the Scrutiny Annual Report 2015-16 is attached - please see Appendix 1.
- 2.0 Each Scrutiny Committee will produce a summary of their activity for inclusion in the Scrutiny Annual Report. In addition the Annual Report will also provide an overview of the role of scrutiny within the authority and a summary of some of the activities and outcomes across the Council's five Scrutiny Committees.
- 3.0 The list below outlines topics which it's recommended be put forward for consideration as part of the Work Programme for the 2016-17 municipal year. This includes topics that the Committee have considered and recommended there be a future update on and also items that were identified, but not considered in 2015-16.
 - Welfare Reform
 - Housing & Planning Bill 2016
 - Challenge for Change: Vacant Property Management (update on progress)
 - Local Area Partnerships
 - Gateway Project
 - Housing+ Model
- 3.0 Appendix 2 outlines the PAPER selection criteria which have been designed to assist Scrutiny Committees to focus on the topics most appropriate for their scrutiny.

Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee
Chair: Cllr Tony Damms

Appendix 1

Implications of the National “Summer Budget” for Housing

The Governments’ **summer budget announcement** on 8th July 2015 had a number of housing implications, both for Local Councils and Housing Associations. The Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny committee therefore dedicated its September 2015 meeting to focus on this topic, this included presentations from both the Council and South Yorkshire Housing Association (SYHA).

The Committee heard about the key policy changes and how the Council was planning to respond. This included changes to rent policy, the extension of the Right to Buy Scheme to Housing Association Tenants through a new Housing Bill, higher rents for higher earners, further welfare reforms and a review of security of tenure. The Committee also heard about the impact of the changes on the Council Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan and associated risks; along with the impact on longer term development plans for South Yorkshire Housing Association. The Committee asked questions across a broad range of topics, including engagement with tenants, sharing learning, financial implications for the local authority, rent reductions, housing benefit eligibility for 18-21’s, the enforced sale of assets, long term investment and the impacts on younger people.

The Committee agreed to note its concerns in terms of the impacts of the proposed policy changes, for both the local Council and Housing Associations in the city and in light of these changes subsequently received a further report on the **Housing Revenue Account Business Plan** in October 2015 and the further developments surrounding the **Housing & Planning Bill** in December 2015. Given the significance of these changes the Committee also agreed to retain an open invitation for officers to return again in the future.

Housing Revenue Account Business Plan

In October 2015 the Committee received a report which provided an annual review of the **Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan**. Members of the committee made a number of comments and asked questions across a range of topics including, tenancies, income generation, photovoltaic installations and reduced subsidies, the building of new Council homes and vacant properties.

The outcome of the meeting was a request from the Committee that officers give consideration to devising an efficient, streamlined system for tenant, resident and leaseholder consultation.

Community Safety

The Committee dedicated its February 2016 meeting to focus on **community safety** issues. This included an introduction to the new Local Policing Model which covered the financial context, achieving savings, Local Policing Units, specialist support and reducing demand.

The Committee also received an update on Community Safety, this made particular reference to the Sheffield Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership, community safety priorities, current performance, meeting structures, the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting (PRAM) and future proposals.

Members of the committee raised a number of areas for questioning and discussion including, communications, resources, shared functions, serious incidents, crime rates and recording processes.

The Private Rented Sector in Sheffield

The Committee looked at the **private rented sector in Sheffield**, including the percentage of private sector accommodation in the city, the increasing numbers of people living in private sector accommodation and the implications of this along with the legislative framework that the Council works within. The Committee also received an update on the Selective licensing Scheme that is running in Page Hall.

The Committee raised questions and discussed a number of areas including tenancy support and durations, the buy to let market, council resources, enforcement action, houses in multiple occupation (HMO's), legislation and opportunities for further cross border working with local towns and cities.

To enable the Committee to continue to monitor progress, they also received two further written updates on private sector housing (in October 2015 and February 2016), this included specific updates on legal action, the Letting and Managing Agents Redress Scheme, the selective licensing scheme in Page Hall, the new stock condition survey and the work of the Member Task & Finish Group.

This year the Committee has also considered and commented on:

- Customer engagement in the housing repairs insourcing project
- Community Engagement Review – presented by the Housing & Neighbourhoods Advisory Panel (HNAP) Advisory Panel
- Homelessness: rough sleeping in Sheffield – at its January 2016 meeting Council requested scrutiny consider this issue

Police & Crime Panel Links

The Committee's remit includes Community Safety and part of its work has been to build links with the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel. The South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel's role is to scrutinise and hold to account the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Yorkshire, who at present is Dr Alan Billings.

Cllr John Campbell is one of the Council's representatives on the Panel and is also a member of the Scrutiny Committee and so provided a link between the two bodies by providing regular updates to the Committee and feeding back any comments and raising questions at the Police and Crime Panel on the Committee's behalf.

This has included questions and discussion on the policing budget, neighborhood policing teams, the 101 number and the Annual report of the Police Crime Commissioner.

In brief

The Committee have also requested a number of written updates where it wants to be kept up to speed on particular topics, these have covered the following topics:

- Welfare Reform
- Figures on Right to Buy
- Private Rented Sector Housing
- Sheffield Money
- The Challenge for Change review of Community Engagement
- Challenge for Change: Vacant Property Management

You can find papers and minutes of meetings [here](#)

Selecting Scrutiny topics – PAPER Criteria

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

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Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 7th April 2016

Report of: Policy and Improvement Officer

Subject: Written responses to public questions

Author of Report: Diane Owens, Policy and Improvement Officer
diane.owens@sheffield.gov.uk
 0114 273 5065

Summary:

This report provides the Committee with copies of written responses to public questions asked at the Committee's meeting on 4th February 2016.

The written responses are included as part of the Committee's meeting papers as the way of placing the responses on the public record.

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:

Note the report

Background Papers: None

Category of Report: OPEN

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee 7th April 2016

Written response to public questions asked by Mr Alan Kewley from Sheffield for Democracy.

Question regarding the Safer & Sustainable Communities Partnership Board

Assuming the public can attend these Partnership Board meetings, and submit questions, how can we get prior notice of their agenda & minutes of their previous meeting?

Response provided by Maxine Stavrianakos, Head of Neighbourhood Intervention & Tenant Support

- Papers, including the agenda for the next meeting and draft (i.e. unapproved) notes from the last meeting go on the website, a week before the next meeting is held.
- Included in the published papers is an outline 'forward plan' for the current financial year which highlights agenda topics that are going to be considered at future Board meetings.
- There is a link to the Sheffield First website from the Safer Neighbourhoods Team page on the SCC website – [Safer Neighbourhood Team](#)
- Guidance for public questions to the Board is included on the "Board Meetings" page, Sheffield First site and available to view from SSCP Board February 15 papers.

Written response to public questions asked by Mr Fitzmaurice from Sheffield for Democracy.

Question

How do the members of the committee see their roles in scrutinising the effectiveness of Locality Management and should the public be involved in contributing towards any review and the emergence of a new Neighbourhood Strategy?

Response from Cllr Tony Damms, Chair of Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee:

- Scrutiny Committees reflect the political proportionality of the local authority. The Safer & Stronger Communities Committee has Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green and UKIP members
- It is convention that politics is left at the door of scrutiny committee meetings.

- All Elected Members are committed to Sheffield Council having effective mechanisms for community engagement.
 - The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods is currently leading a review which will look in detail about how we work with local communities; time needs to be given to enable this piece of work to be done properly.
 - The Committee has a number of options available in terms of how it could choose to scrutinise or maintain oversight of an issue, one of which would be to receive regular written updates.
 - Due to the likely timescales of the review the Safer & Stronger Communities Committee may choose to look at this topic as part of its work programme for 2016/17.
 - Following the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 4th February the understanding of the Chair is that representatives from Sheffield for Democracy met with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Cllr Sioned-Mair Richards in early February to discuss a number of issues including locality management.
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Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 7th April 2016

Report of: Challenge for Change Tenant Scrutiny Group

Subject: Challenge for Change: Community Engagement Report
- Progress Update

Author of Report: Catherine Hill, Manager Community Engagement
Council Housing Service, Communities and Nassim
Koriba, Manager Communications, Resources.

Summary:

The customer scrutiny panel known as Challenge for Change (C4C) was set up in 2011 to perform an independent review of services delivered by the Council Housing Service. They presented their review of Community Engagement to scrutiny in September 2014. This report provides a progress update against the reviews recommendations.

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:

Note the contents of this update.

Background Papers:

Challenge for Change: Community Engagement Review - Report
Challenge for Change: Community Engagement Review - Recommendations
Category of Report: OPEN

Challenge for Change - Community Engagement review : Progress Update April 2016

1. Introduction and background

Challenge for Change (C4C) is a tenant led scrutiny group that reviews aspects of the Council Housing Service and produces reports and recommendations. In September 2014, the group presented its review of Community Engagement to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee. A request was made for officers to provide a progress update against the recommendations that the group made. These are presented below

	What is the C4C Judgement?	C4C's Recommendations	April 2016 progress update
1	Engagement is <u>difficult</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Even harder with underrepresented groups such as young people 	R5 -Go to where people are – young people/ single Mums R9 - Tell Job Centres to encourage people to get involved R10 - Use tenants that are involved to promote benefits	Greenhill and Bradway TARA run a successful annual festival. A number of TARAs run one off activities for children and have supported <i>Activity Sheffield</i> events using it to promote the TARA TARAs encouraged to use the tenants levy to support existing local groups. We still lead with a tenant editor of The Bridge (magazine for TARAs) and a double page feature with an interview with a TARA in each edition. Despite pushing for stories and tenants to come forward we have had very little response.
2.	There is general apathy towards involvement and volunteering	R10 - Use tenants that are involved to promote benefits R11 - Recruit to specific things not general R13 - Campaign to tell people benefits of getting involved R14 -Use more “event driven” recruitment in “special” locations R18 - Use a wide variety of methods	‘Around the Areas’ page in The Bridge. TARAs supplying articles to promote activities and share best practice. We encourage TARAs to put copies of The Bridge in community venues and pass it round their members. Market Stalls at last two annual tenant conferences have promoted VCF and SCC teams including opportunities for getting involved. Positive feedback received from both tenants and stallholders. We actively pushed greater involvement through the TLO

		to recruit volunteers and involve tenants in the process	<p>routes and even did a feature in The Bridge and a push through social media. Again we received virtually no increase in involvement</p> <p>Have promoted Locality Management Blogs with TARAs to get latest volunteering opportunities and news on community activities. Take up is variable across the city but a number of TARAs e.g. Gleadless Valley are actively using these to share information and promote their own activities.</p> <p>We still have events pack. The communications service also now uses mosaic data to understand better our audiences, their channel preferences for how they prefer to receive information and where they go, even down to which buses they use. We use this to deliver more targeted campaigns which could be applied to community engagement activity</p> <p>We take a belt and braces approach including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online (website, social media and direct email) - Information leaflets (At events, all housing offices and first points and PDFs online) - Through TARAs - Piggy backing at events - TLO's - Articles in In Touch and The Bridge. - Public Relations - And recently added Gov delivery email alerts which has over 13,000 tenant email addresses.
3.	Specialist activity has less of a problem with recruitment	R11 - Recruit to specific things not general and promote the fact that	Recently added Gov delivery email alerts which has over

		<p>volunteers can pick and choose how much involvement they would like</p> <p>R6 - Email adverts re recruitment activity</p> <p>R16 - Offer flexible involvement – home based / not dependent on attending meetings</p>	<p>13,000 tenant email addresses. This has been used to promote tenant participation and activity.</p> <p>Volunteer opportunities promoted to TARAs through Locality Management blogs and email. Regularly promote these with TLOs at service development group who are encouraging TARAs to sign up for this.</p>
4.	People don't understand what Community Engagement actually means	<p>R1 - Promote TARA's at New Tenancy Visit – how many people get referred on and what do TARA's do with them?</p> <p>R7 - Use social media to feed back on action taken</p> <p>R15 – Revamp the communication strategy and explain/define/promote what Community Engagement actually is and possibly rename as something more meaningful</p>	<p>South East housing area model office have developed a process during the new tenancy sign up process - details of local TARA discussed. Also during Housing + plan appointment officer discusses local TARA and provides details to tenant.</p> <p>Future agenda item for CEPG around TARAs and social media. Sharing current best practice and ideas for increasing use of social media by TARAs to promote themselves and wider CE activities.</p> <p>Naming of teams being considered as part of the Council Housing Service restructure</p> <p>The communication plan is aligned against CE's objectives. If this changes the plan will reflect this. This year there has been a strong focus on supporting the communications review. Part of this has been to support the consultation with tenants and increasing participation in the review. If the review identifies a demand to rebrand the service, communications will support this.</p>
5.	Communication methods are not clear enough in explaining what involvement entails	<p>R7 - Use social media to feed back on action taken ask new tenants to use Facebook</p> <p>R15 - Revamp the communication strategy</p>	<p>Promote CE through Locality Management blogs.</p> <p>Communications have trained 20 TARAs to manage their own webpages</p>

		R20 - Make the website more attractive with less text / more visuals and provide appropriate links to relevant external organisations	Progress has been made regarding the transfer of the Council housing website over to the main Council website. SCC will be appointing a web partner to revamp their web offer. Part of this will encompass the housing website. The project team have advised that they should be able to provide timescales of when this will happen in the next couple of months.
6.	The variety of people involved is limited and does not broadly reflect the customer profile	R5 - Go to where people are – young people/ single Mums R9 - Tell Job Centres to encourage people to get involved R13 - campaign to tell people benefits of getting involved R14 - Use more “event driven” recruitment in “special” locations R26 Promote types of involvement that do not involve attending meetings and research what people are actually interested in	Have continued with business as usual communications around promoting involvement in the service. Also on standby to understand the outcomes of the Community Engagement review and what the new/different opportunities will be to get involved. As part of the HANAP Task and Finish Group they conducted a survey of meeting attendees to find out why they attend meetings and what they hope to get out of attending. Feedback informed their recommendations.
7.	The impact of involvement is not made clear to those getting involved	R27 Use case studies to publicise the impact of involvement more widely and provide regular updates	No update
8.	Communications not effective – social media is under used	R8 - Monthly campaigns using social media on specialist topics R17 Useblogs/videoclips.vox pops -Webchats on live topics -Use Sheffield Forum -Balanced use of Facebook i.e. not all about evictions	Outcome of HANAP Task and Finish Group review recommendations include – Explore other methods of engaging – including online, Citizen Space, Social Media to help reach a wider audience and increase the number of residents we engage with. It is essential that the council website and Facebook page are brought up to date and continually updated. Other digital tools available include -You Tube channel (Housing+) -Website that supports video

			<p>-Gov delivery email alerts -Twitter now supports video -We can now edit video and produce animations</p> <p>CE/Governance Team carried out a survey of TARAs to identify use of IT for their TARA activities. Information from the survey fed into the SCC IT strategy.</p> <p>TARAs working with Heeley Development Trust to deliver IT training in some areas.</p>
9.	The benefits of involvement are not made clear to individuals	R9 - Ask Job Centres to encourage people to get involved	No yet actioned
10.	The “getting involved” section of the website is not inviting / warm / welcoming enough, or easy to navigate	<p>R28 Navigation on the website needs to made easier – especially the mobile platform. Links should be easier to find</p> <p>R19 - Integrate the Council Housing Service within the main Council website</p>	Web pages to be redesigned as part of overall redevelopment of SCC website
11.	There is a lack of understanding within the service of the role of TLOs and also by tenants and TARAs. The role could be more “community” driven	<p>R12 - Clearer role for TLOs – role in the community and for this to be communicated.</p> <p>R21 - Consider renaming TLO to Tenant and Community Liaison Officer - TCLO</p>	<p>Officer roles, including TLOs reviewed as part of MER restructure of the Housing Service.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Officers will undertake a greater role in wider engagement with TARAs on their ‘patch’ and identify opportunities for wider engagement.</p>
12.	TARAs do not operate consistently	<p>R1 - Promote TARA’s at New Tenancy Visit – how many people get referred on and what do TARA’s do with them?</p> <p>R2 - Consistent staff numbers committed to CE and TARA support.</p>	South East housing area model office have developed process - during sign up process details of local TARA discussed. Also during Housing + plan appointment officer discusses local TARA and provides details to tenant.

		<p>R22 - The new recognition policy should be reasonably and consistently applied and enforced where appropriate</p> <p>R23 - A minimum TARA communication standard should be applied across all areas e.g. at least one newsletter a year</p> <p>R24 - TARAs should be encouraged to share good practice</p> <p>R25 - Provide information to levy payers about how the levy is used</p>	<p>Staffing levels identified as part of the restructure of the Council Housing Service.</p> <p>All TARAs have adopted the revised Recognition Policy at their AGM. Training and support given to individual TARA to ensure understanding of the more stringent requirements of the policy.</p> <p>Compliance being monitored through quarterly desk top reviews between CE/Governance Team and Area CE team.</p> <p>Following implementation of Council Housing Service Restructure compliance will become the responsibility of CE/Governance team with ongoing monitoring and support tailored to individual TARAs.</p> <p>Using CEPG to share best practice. South West housing area organised networking event to discuss recognition policy and annual return.</p> <p>Currently undertaking review of the residual levy, recommendation made for consultation with residual levy payers on ideas for use of monies in their area.</p>
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Glossary

CE – Community Engagement

CEPG – Community Engagement Partnership Group

HANAP – Housing and Neighbourhoods Advisory Panel

IT – Information Technology

SCC – Sheffield City Council

TARA – Tenants and Residents Association

TLO – Tenant Liaison Officer

VCF – Voluntary, Community and Faith sector

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Challenge for Change

Scrutiny Report Community Engagement





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1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Following approval from the Board of the Council Housing Service, a customer scrutiny panel was established. Recruitment was open to tenants, leaseholders and customers of the Council Housing Service. The Community Engagement team, with independent support and advice from the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS), successfully recruited a team of scrutinisers.
- 1.2 It was decided to call the group Challenge for Change. Throughout this report, the scrutiny group will be called C4C.
- 1.3 The initiation of the project during Summer 2013 was completed by four main scrutinisers; Linda Moxon, Ian Alexander, Michelle Cook and Tony Merrygold. One other, Richard Bailey, was also involved in the project in the early stages.
- 1.4 Following feedback from the City Wide Forum the C4C scrutinisers elected to focus on Community Engagement. At the forum other topic suggestions were put forward to the group for scrutiny. However, due to C4C having only five volunteers at the time, it was decided that more volunteers would be required for those particular topics and after discussion at a group meeting it was decided that Community Engagement would be the group's next project.
- 1.5 C4C considered many factors in its decision to scrutinise the Community Engagement services of Sheffield City Council's Housing Service. It had a clear remit to identify if they could develop recommendations to improve the involvement levels of Community Engagement amongst all service user groups especially those who are under-represented in groups and forums.
- 1.6 In this report, C4C have detailed the findings following its investigations. C4C have spoken to area managers, assistant managers and support staff from within Sheffield Council Housing.
- 1.7 C4C have additionally spoken to tenants and residents to gather their views and opinions on where Community Engagement could be improved.
- 1.8 C4C reviewed the Council Housing website and relevant leaflets to analyse whether the service is working well and providing good value for money for all customers.
- 1.9 C4C have made several recommendations based on its findings, which can be found at the end of this document.
- 1.10 The overall purpose of the project was to examine the Community Engagement service and ensure that tenants, residents and TARAs are receiving a quality service, delivering on its promises and providing Sheffield Council Housing with value for money.

2. Objectives

2.1 From C4C's initial research into Community Engagement, it identified the following objectives for this project.

- To understand the recruitment policy for getting involved. Are there different criteria for different types of involvement? What are the obstacles/barriers/failures?
- To understand how tenants learn/find out about getting involved
- To determine whether publicity is effective and fit for purpose
- To understand what the benefits are to individuals of becoming involved
- To understand why people do get involved
- To understand and explore the “volunteer journey”
- To understand the reasons why people stop being involved – is it clear what involvement entails?
- To understand how the performance and effectiveness of involvement is measured
- To understand if innovation and new technology is being used to enable involvement
- To understand how much involvement people actually want
- To find out if “virtual” forums are in existence/planned. Do they work? Is the ETara used?
- To understand the level of TARA involvement



3. Findings

3.1 Overview from the Community Engagement team and an Assistant Manager in an Area Team

3.1.1 What is Community Engagement?

3.1.2 We had a discussion with staff from the Community Engagement team and the North West housing area team to learn what Community Engagement is all about.

3.1.3 Community Engagement can be several different things – another phrase that is often used is “getting involved”. So what does “getting involved” mean? It is all about having your say to make a difference to services you receive and the communities you live in.

3.1.4 How you do this is up to you and what your landlord offers. Different methods of getting involved were explained which include –

- Tenant and Resident Associations (TARAs)
- Partnership Groups
- Governance
- Future of Council Housing Project’s Service Design Groups

3.1.5 Community Engagement is publicised in The Bridge, a magazine that goes out to all TARAs, as well as In Touch which goes out to all tenants.

3.1.6 We found that there are three main reasons why people get involved –

- To make a difference
- To meet new people and share experiences
- To try to improve the service

3.1.7 People can also become Tenant Inspectors.

3.1.8 North West is a typical area where there are 10 active and well supported TARAs. The TARAs meet as a group bi monthly with the Tenant Liaison Officers (TLOs). They are also involved in participatory budgeting, helping to decide how some of the areas resources are allocated.

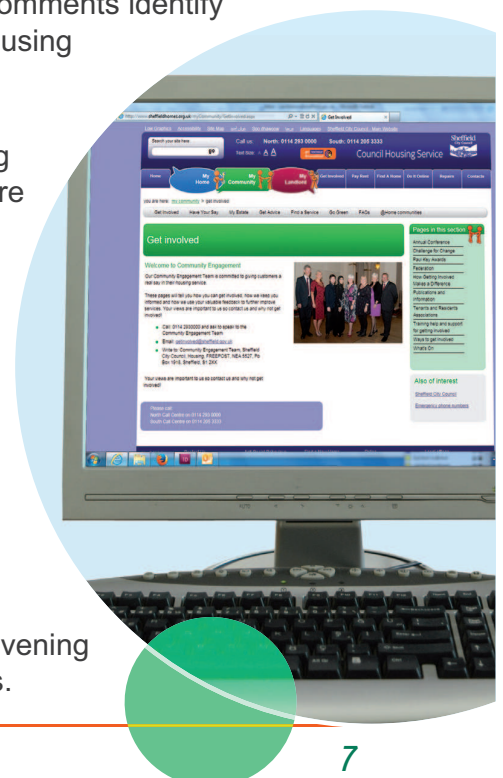
3.2 Tenant Surveys

3.2.1 As part of C4C’s investigations, a questionnaire was devised which was used to gather and collate responses from Tenants and Residents.

- 3.2.2 From the evidence gathered from the tenants it was clear that the majority were not aware of Community Engagement services within Sheffield Council Housing or the opportunities to get involved as volunteers.
- 3.2.3 20 people were interviewed in different locations of the city. From the results of the survey 83% of those interviewed stated that they had no involvement as a volunteer. The survey results additionally identified that 58% were not aware of opportunities to get involved, and 28% had some awareness.
- 3.2.4 From the responses it interestingly identified that 78% of those surveyed would not be interested in volunteering opportunities with the Council Housing Service if they were aware of them.
- 3.2.5 C4C discovered from the survey and conversations with tenant that the lack of volunteers was generally down to a feeling of apathy and a lack of communication from Community Engagement regarding the opportunities available to the wider community.
- 3.2.6 See also Appendix 4.

3.3 TARA Survey

- 3.3.1 C4C conducted a survey with all TARAs throughout the city to gather evidence of the way the Council Housing Service involves customers in Community Engagement. 14 out of 63 replied - a response rate of 22%. The majority of the replies received reported that the service level from Community Engagement was generally favourable.
- 3.3.2 Of those that responded, 57% considered that they are aware of the support the Council Housing Service provides for their TARA. The comments identify that the TLO service is a very helpful service and the housing service provides a good level of support when required.
- 3.3.3 There were a few comments to suggest that the Housing Service was offering minimal/no support and TARAs were not satisfied.
- 3.3.4 There were a range of views of how tenants and residents could become more involved in Community Engagement. These ranged from:
- Having events as well as regular meetings
 - Wider advertising of volunteering opportunities
 - TARAs promoting a friendly, welcoming and more enthusiastic approach
 - Provide a varied meeting time schedule, e.g. have evening meetings for people who work or have commitments.



3.3.5 The survey respondents suggested several approaches the Council Housing Service could consider in order to encourage more people to be involved in opportunities. Below is a summary of the comments.

- Be less obstructive and support new and inventive ways
- More advertising
- Hold roadshows around each estate and inform levy payers what people do
- Provide details of tenant's email addresses

3.3.6 The survey identified that several of the TARAs consider that they have limited impact on the Council Housing Service both within their area and city. Comments ranged from:

- We can talk all we like but the council do what they want
- None – The council do as they wish and ignore debate
- We have more of an impact within our local area as this is what concerns people

3.3.7 There were some positive comments of TARAs having an impact with Community Engagement through the Council Housing Service:

- Our TARA has a good impact with community groups like kids clubs and we have a voice that gets listened to at City Wide Forum and partnership groups
- We provide a channel for information and hope to influence policy

3.3.8 See also Appendix 3

3.4 Community Engagement Team

3.4.1 C4C interviewed the manager of Community Engagement and another member of the team to find out what the purpose of Community Engagement is, and specifically to identify what the role of their team is.

3.4.2 They described their role, which includes:

- Maintaining a database of volunteers
- Acting as a link between volunteers and TARAs
- To assist TLOs dependent on the complexity of TARA issues
- Manage the City Wide Forum, Community Engagement Partnership Group and the Annual Tenant Conference

3.4.3 They explained that information is given out to new tenants when they sign up about TARAs and volunteering. It was felt that there could be more opportunities for TARAs to become involved with new tenants.



3.4.4 They believe there is also a role for TARAs to be active in recruitment in their local areas.

3.4.5 They told us that they have had some success using volunteers in specialist subjects through Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS), who have worked with a few TARAs.

3.4.6 It was explained the Housing+ role could potentially encourage more tenants to become involved in their local community.

3.5 Assistant Director

3.5.1 C4C interviewed an Assistant Director to ask questions on how he sees the role which Sheffield Housing Service plays in engaging tenants, leaseholders and customers to being involved in Community Engagement.

The key points are summarised:

3.5.2 Community Engagement is all about information giving, scrutiny and seeking ideas. All encompassing a differing level of interaction, ranging from taking surveys (500 people every quarter), to investigating how open and transparent a group are performing, and also seeking tenant's views and ideas for future projects.

3.5.3 There seems to be too much information gathered from existing partnership groups. This is in the main due to the fact that several of the group's tend to have the same individuals attending which leads to the same views being aired.

3.5.4 A very small cross section of tenants are involved with Community Engagement. There needs to be a fairer way to ensure a better representation in all areas. The Council Housing Service should endeavour to visit or communicate with every tenant to discuss ways to get involved.

3.5.5 It appears that certain groups are not interested in actively engaging in volunteering opportunities; the Council Housing Service needs to understand what would get them involved.

- It needs to undertake more targeted advertising ie. to encourage participation
- Reaching out to under-represented groups, especially the teenagers and early 20s through social media channels eg Facebook, Twitter etc. as an alternative to attending meetings and offer an opportunity for them to get involved and engaging with their community services.
- There needs to be a higher visibility of engagement teams on the streets, speaking to the public that are missed by the TARAs.
- A more tailored approach to attracting more BME participants. Speak to BME volunteers who are already involved to gain insights as to the best approach and ideas to the best way forward for encouraging participation.

3.5.6 The Housing Service needs to improve its recruitment strategy to get more people involved. More access is required for information on all residents. The apprentices need to be on the estates where residents see them and lead by example.

3.5.7 A massive recruitment drive is needed, for new faces, Job Centres and colleges could be more involved in people doing voluntary work to enhance their job opportunities.

3.6 Tenant Liaison Officers (TLO's)

3.6.1 C4C held a meeting with TLOs to get an understanding of their role working with TARAs.

They outlined a summary of their role:

- As a link between different areas and the council to help to form new TARAs
- To help TARAs understand and implement the recognition policy
- To be the eyes & ears between the community and the Council
- We help & advise with funding, newsletters and setting up new projects.

3.6.2 The TLOs outlined that they try to attend meetings with tenants as often as possible but because of working schedules they may not be seen around as much during the normal working day. More contact is now made via phone/email.

3.6.3 The TLOs commented that they aim to ensure customers sustain long term viability, by early intervention when needed, also ensuring a quick turnaround is implemented when needed.

3.6.4 The TLOs try to involve local church groups and also work closely with schools, colleges, junior wardens etc. They endeavour to engage the public in social activities, and try to change the public's perception of Community Engagement.

3.7 Senior Manager within Communities at Sheffield Council

3.7.1 C4C asked how will the introduction of Housing+ work towards improving Community Engagement?

3.7.2 The council want to use a new language referring to service users instead of just TARAs. It would give a strong commitment to improving tenants' say on the services they receive.

3.7.3 Housing+ also holds opportunities for the future, for more individual tenants to be involved, and a stronger voice for people and neighbourhoods who are not heard. All the ideas came from the people involved within the Future of Council Housing Groups.

- 3.7.4 There is a lot of work to be done, particularly around further consultation. Historically, there is a culture of a lack of trust - a 'them and us attitude'. Community Engagement does happen in housing, however it is done in isolation concentrating on the TARAs.
- 3.7.5 Council cuts in the Housing Service will have an impact and there will be fewer services in the wider community. We will look at what people can do for themselves. All tenants are customers of other council services, all resources/ services/groups must work together better than they do now. It is a change in culture.
- 3.7.6 Some good work has been done. We are genuinely trying to improve. The success of C4C is some proof of this.
- 3.7.7 Sheffield Housing Service, needs to move away from the TARA centric view; the whole power structure may need review.
- 3.7.8 Important role for a federation could be the best change in decades if done properly with people with capacity to run it. Would like to make more use of local housing forums and for them to be more tenant led.

3.8 Area Managers

- 3.8.1 C4C conducted an interview with Area Managers within the Council.
- 3.8.2 Community Engagement is a high priority and Sheffield Housing Service has dedicated 1.5 TLOs per area. The council believe the TLOs have enough knowledge and awareness about what is happening regarding issues in the wider area.
- 3.8.3 The TLOs do not receive specialised training as outside expertise is brought in to address particular issues e.g. ASB. They support the TARAs, with intensive management i.e. chairing or minuting meetings, general admin etc. This is not ideal and the council would like to see their role further developed and for TARAs to be more independent.
- 3.8.4 The council would welcome wider engagement within the city although it varies massively from community to community, and would welcome further investigation into this.
- 3.8.5 The council would welcome a more tenant led approach although it does seem to be the same groups of people who tend to be consulted.
- 3.8.6 Since the service development groups/and It's Your Shout, in the SE and NW, and other areas they are seeing an increase in attendance and willingness to chair the meetings.

3.8.7 We welcome TARAs putting area issues or welfare benefits information in their newsletter and greater use of the Council Housing Service website and social media for local issues, this could be more flexible and user friendly.

3.9 Communication

3.9.1 C4C met with the Assistant Manager from the Communications team to find out what their role is in Community Engagement.

3.9.2 It was explained that there were two main strands to communications activity – promotion campaigns and listening to customers.

3.9.3 There is a “virtual” Communications Partnership Group, with approximately 20 people replying to each topic.

3.9.4 C4C found that although there had been improvements to the Council Housing Service website, there were aspects of the “getting involved” section that need looking at. For example, keeping the content up to date, using fewer lists and making it more engaging with greater use of visual material.

3.9.5 C4C learned that the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter is limited, and that the emphasis seems to be on providing information on activity such as evictions rather than focus on how people can get involved.

4. Budget Review for the Project

C4C were allocated a budget for the duration of the scrutiny project. The money was used to cover the costs of:

- Training
- C4C member travel expenses
- Refreshments
- Stationery and printing

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 During C4C's investigations, it consistently found that tenants and residents were unclear about what Community Engagement actually is. Most of the challengers have seen this first hand. This view is also based on the tenant surveys that we carried out.
- 5.2 C4C understands that there are difficulties in getting people involved and that there is a level of apathy amongst the community. This may be because they do not understand the difference they can make and the benefits to themselves.
- 5.3 C4C feels that improvements are needed in various aspects of communications. We feel that social media needs to be used more to encourage a wider engagement.
- 5.4 From our investigations we have found that the role of the TLO is poorly understood by both staff and TARAs and that this needs to be clarified and clearly defined.
- 5.5 C4C found that those volunteers currently involved do not represent the diversity of the community. This means that the service does not obtain views of a wider range of people.
- 5.6 C4C feels that TARAs do not operate consistently to a minimum standard. However, the new Recognition Policy will address this issue.



6. Recommendations

- R1.** Promote TARAs at New Tenancy Visit and provide TARAs with contact details of new tenants
- R2.** Consistent staff numbers committed to Community Engagement and TARA support.
- R3.** Staff competent to give training to tenants
- R4.** Time taken up during meetings by people who monopolise them – manage them
- R5.** Go to where people are – young people/ single mums
- R6.** Email adverts re recruitment activity
- R7.** Use social media to feedback on action taken and ask new tenants to use Facebook
- R8.** Monthly campaigns using social media on specialist topics
- R9.** Ask Job Centres to encourage people to get involved and provide better links
- R10.** Use tenants that are involved to promote benefits
- R11.** Recruit to specific things not general and promote the fact that volunteers can pick and choose how much involvement they would like
- R12.** Clearer role for TLOs – role in the community and for this to be communicated
- R13.** Campaign to tell people benefits of getting involved
- R14.** Use more “event driven” recruitment in “special” locations
- R15.** Revamp the communication strategy and explain/define/promote what Community Engagement actually is and possibly rename as something more meaningful
- R16.** Offer flexible involvement – home based / not dependent on attending meetings
- R17.** Use video clips on website / blogs / meet the manager web chats / good news stories / links to Facebook
- R18.** Use a wide variety of methods to recruit volunteers and involve tenants in the process
- R19.** Integrate the Council Housing Service within the main Council website
- R20.** Make the website more attractive with less text / more visuals and provide appropriate links to relevant external organisations
- R21.** Consider renaming TLO as Tenant and Community Liaison Officer - TCLO
- R22.** The new recognition policy should be reasonably and consistently applied and enforced where appropriate
- R23.** A minimum TARA communication standard should be applied across all areas e.g. at least one newsletter a year
- R24.** TARAs should be encouraged to share good practice
- R25.** Provide information to levy payers about how the levy is used
- R26.** Promote types of involvement that do not involve attending meetings and research what people are actually interested in
- R27.** Use case studies to publicise the impact of involvement and provide regular updates
- R28.** Navigation on the website needs to be made easier – especially the mobile platform. Links should be easier to find

Acknowledgements

The team would like to thank Gary Westwood and Tina Gilbert from Planning and Performance for their invaluable assistance with this project. Without their support, this project would not have got off the ground. They were also instrumental in arranging the manager interviews and other meetings we have been to as part of our investigations.

We would also like to thank the following for their co-operation with our investigations and for allowing us to attend meetings to gather information and also to them for attending our meetings to answer the many questions we raised:

Assistant Manager and Housing Coordinator - Community Engagement Team
Assistant Manager - North West Housing area
Assistant Manager - Future of Council Housing Project Team
Assistant Manager - Communications Team
Assistant Director - Council Housing Service
Assistant Director - Business Strategy
Area Managers
Tenant Liaison Officers
TARAs



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Challenge for Change

Outcomes and recommendations



	What is the C4C Judgement?	What evidence do we have to support that judgement?	What impact is this having on customers?	What is our recommendation?
1	<p>Engagement is difficult</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Even harder with underrepresented groups such as young people 	<p>Low attendance at meetings and with involvement generally – particularly young people</p>	<p>Customers are not being proportionately and fairly represented</p>	<p>R5 -Go to where people are – young people/ single Mums</p> <p>R9 - Tell Job Centres to encourage people to get involved</p> <p>R10 - Use tenants that are involved to promote benefits</p>
2	<p>There is general apathy towards involvement and volunteering</p>	<p>As above – and surveys of non-involved tenants / TARAs.</p> <p>Many groups are populated by the same volunteers</p>	<p>Widespread involvement is not happening and there is a feeling that the “same old faces” are always involved. This can lead to a sense that there is a form of “closed shop” where all potential views are not heard. It can also lead to a lack of fresh ideas and different perspectives are not obtained.</p>	<p>R10 - Use tenants that are involved to promote benefits</p> <p>R11 - Recruit to specific things not general</p> <p>R13 - Campaign to tell people benefits of getting involved</p> <p>R14 -Use more “event driven” recruitment in “special” locations</p> <p>R18 - Use a wide variety of methods to recruit volunteers and involve tenants in the process</p>
3	<p>Specialist activity has less of a problem with recruitment</p>	<p>VAS interviews showed vacancies filled easily when subject of volunteering made clear. Also “it’s Your Shout” showed targeted work is more effective</p>	<p>Disproportionate involvement / under involvement if subject area not made clear</p>	<p>R11 - Recruit to specific things not general and promote the fact that volunteers can pick and choose how much involvement they would like</p> <p>R6 - Email adverts re recruitment activity</p> <p>R16 - Offer flexible involvement – home based / not dependent on attending meetings</p>

	What is the C4C Judgement?	What evidence do we have to support that judgement?	What impact is this having on customers?	What is our recommendation?
4	People don't understand what Community Engagement actually means	C4C members themselves e.g. IA/TG. Tenant survey. TARA survey.	Potential involvement lost	<p>R1 - Promote TARA's at New Tenancy Visit – how many people get referred on and what do TARA's do with them?</p> <p>R7 - Use social media to feed back on action taken</p> <p>R15 – Revamp the communication strategy</p> <p>and explain/define/promote what Community Engagement actually is and possibly rename as something more meaningful</p>
5	Communication methods are not clear enough in explaining what involvement entails	All communications not understood well enough.	Potential involvement lost	<p>R7 - Use social media to feed back on action taken ask new tenants to use Facebook</p> <p>R15 - Revamp the communication strategy</p> <p>R20 - Make the website more attractive with less text / more visuals and provide appropriate links to relevant external organisations</p>
6	The variety of people involved is limited and does not broadly reflect the customer profile	A number of people attend multiple groups and new initiatives tend to attract those already involved, There is no evidence of a regular influx of new recruits. Where there have been new recruits e.g. It's Your shout and C4C, retention has been an issue	Potential involvement lost. Due to the limited number of people involved, many in multiple groups, the same views are repeatedly expressed. This means the service does not obtain views of a wide range of people	<p>R5 - Go to where people are – young people/ single Mums</p> <p>R9 - Tell Job Centres to encourage people to get involved</p> <p>R13 - campaign to tell people benefits of getting involved</p> <p>R14 - Use more “event driven” recruitment in “special” locations</p> <p>R26 Promote types of involvement that do not involve attending meetings and research what people are actually interested in</p>

	What is the C4C Judgement?	What evidence do we have to support that judgement?	What impact is this having on customers?	What is our recommendation?
7	The impact of involvement is not made clear to those getting involved	Recruitment materials do make clear what personal gains may be achieved through volunteer involvement. Information provided is not direct enough.	Potential involvement lost. A greater variety of involved people is missed. Skills are not developed and opportunities to do so are not taken.	R27 Use case studies to publicise the impact of involvement more widely and provide regular updates
8	Communications not effective – social media is under used	Small numbers of Facebook followers. Little response to articles in The Bridge and In Touch. Get Involved pages not in “top ten” of webpage hits	Disproportionate and not future proof as there are significantly more old people involved than other age groups	R8 - Monthly campaigns using social media on specialist topics R17 Useblogs/videoclips.vox pops -Webchats on live topics -Use Sheffield Forum -Balanced use of Facebook i.e. not all about evictions
9	The benefits of involvement are not made clear to individuals	Tenant survey – misunderstanding of the virtues of involvement. Not promoted by any managers interviewed	Potential involvement lost and “personal improvement” opportunity missed. Lack of effort to build social capital and personal skills	R9 - Ask Job Centres to encourage people to get involved
10	The “getting involved” section of the website is not inviting / warm / welcoming enough, or easy to navigate	VAS did not think it was clear or user friendly (mobile version). C4C comparison with other local providers websites	Wider access is impacted affecting potential involvement	R28 Navigation on the website needs to be made easier – especially the mobile platform. Links should be easier to find R19 - Integrate the Council Housing Service within the main Council website

	What is the C4C Judgement?	What evidence do we have to support that judgement?	What impact is this having on customers?	What is our recommendation?
11	There is a lack of understanding within the service of the role of TLOs and also by tenants and TARAs. The role could be more “community” driven	Area Managers meeting. TARA survey - understanding of TLOs role and meeting with TLOs	TLO role not fully realised – possibly losing wider involvement with tenants beyond the scope of TARAs	R12 - Clearer role for TLOs – role in the community and for this to be communicated. R21 - Consider renaming TLO to Tenant and Community Liaison Officer - TCLO
12	TARAs do not operate consistently	Not all TARAs are able to offer the same range of activities to levy payers and not all are proactive in engaging with members given their resources	Potential involvement lost and not all levy payers receive the same information about activities and opportunities for involvement	R1 - Promote TARA's at New Tenancy Visit – how many people get referred on and what do TARA's do with them? R2 - Consistent staff numbers committed to CE and TARA support. R22 - The new recognition policy should be reasonably and consistently applied and enforced where appropriate R23 - A minimum TARA communication standard should be applied across all areas e.g. at least one newsletter a year R24 - TARAs should be encouraged to share good practice R25 - Provide information to levy payers about how the levy is used

Other recommendations

R3 Staff competent to give training to tenants

R4 Time taken up during meetings by people who monopolise them - manage them



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Report to Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

March 2016

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

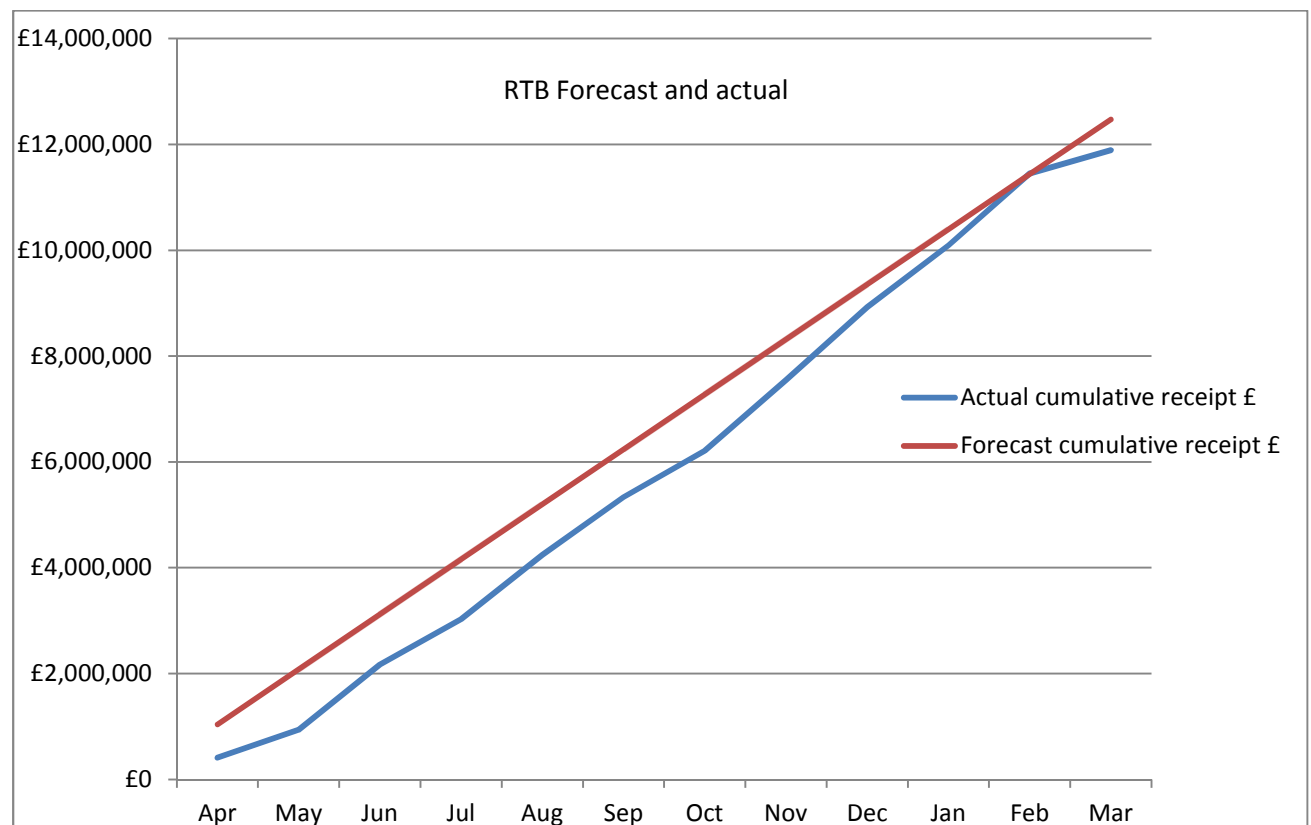
1.2 The forecast for right to buy sales for the year are:

Total sales 320

Average sale price £38,500

Total receipt £12,320,000

Average sales 26.6 per month



2. Activity

- 2.1 The final sales position for financial year 2015 / 16 = 300 sales. The monthly breakdown of sales is listed below.

April sales = 11
May sales = 15
June sales = 31
July sales = 24
August sales = 28
September sales = 25
October sales = 24
November sales = 34
December sales = 33
January sales = 27
February sales = 35
March sales = 13

- 2.2 The total number of sales is lower than forecasted (320) this is due to lower than predicted sales in April / May 2015 and March 2016
- 2.3 The average sale price is slightly higher than forecasted (£38,500) at £39,600
- 2.4 The total receipt for the year is £11,891,894 again slightly down on the forecast of £12,320,000.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to note the update.

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