

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

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**Thursday 6 April 2017 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**

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Councillors Tony Damms (Chair), Nasima Akther, Sue Auckland, Michelle Cook, Richard Crowther, Dawn Dale, Keith Davis, Tony Downing, Adam Hanrahan, Mark Jones, George Lindars-Hammond, Magid Magid, Anne Murphy, Richard Shaw (Deputy Chair) and Zoe Sykes

## **Substitute Members**

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

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## **PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING**

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

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at [www.sheffield.gov.uk](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk). You can also see the reports to be discussed at the meeting if you call at the First Point Reception, Town Hall, Pinstone Street entrance. The Reception is open between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Thursday and between 9.00 am and 4.45 pm. on Friday. 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](mailto:diane.owens@sheffield.gov.uk)

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## **FACILITIES**

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

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

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**SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY AND POLICY  
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA  
6 APRIL 2017**

**Order of Business**

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- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Public and Press**  
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public
- 4. Declarations of Interest**  
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Minutes of Previous Meeting**  
To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 February 2017.
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**  
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 7. Housing + Update**  
Report of the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services
- 8. Challenge for Change: Vacants Property Service**  
Report of the Challenge for Change Tenant Scrutiny Group

**The Following Item Will Commence at 6.00pm**

- 9. Call-In of Cabinet Member Decision: Approval of New Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) Licensing Standards**  
Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer

**For Information Only**

- 10. The Work of the Police and Crime Panel**  
Report of the Executive Director, Place
- 11. Hate Crime and Hate Incidents 1 March 2015 - 28 February 2017**  
Report of the Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Safety Team
- 12. Scrutiny Annual Report 2016-17 Draft Content and Work Programme 2017-18**  
Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer

**13. Written Responses to Public Questions**

Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer

**14. Date of Next Meeting**

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

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## ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

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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 Audit and 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](mailto:gillian.duckworth@sheffield.gov.uk).

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

**Meeting held 16 February 2017**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Tony Damms (Chair), Nasima Akther, Sue Auckland, Michelle Cook, Richard Crowther, Dawn Dale, Tony Downing, Adam Hanrahan, Mark Jones, Magid Magid and Richard Shaw (Deputy Chair)

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Keith Davis, Anne Murphy and Zoe Sykes.

**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 In relation to Agenda Item 8 (Neighbourhood Working: A New Approach for Sheffield), Councillor Richard Crowther declared a Personal Interest as Chair of a Local Area Partnership.

**4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016, were approved as a correct record.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

5.1 In response to questions from Alan Kewley, relating to public engagement with the Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership and Neighbourhood Working, the Chair, Councillor Tony Damms, indicated that a written response would be provided.

**6. WORK PROGRAMME**

6.1 The Committee received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer which set out the Committee's Work Programme for 2016/17.

6.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the Work Programme 2016/17 as set out in the report; and
- (b) agrees that a number of Committee Members shadow Neighbourhood Officers in preparation for the consideration of the item on the Housing+

Model at the Committee's April meeting and requests that the Policy and Improvement Officer contacts Committee Members to arrange these visits.

## **7. SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY HATE CRIME TASK GROUP**

7.1 The Committee received the draft report of the Hate Crime Task Group which outlined its findings and recommendations. In presenting the report, the Policy and Improvement Officer referred to the set of recommendations which aim to, raise awareness of hate crime, increase reporting, support partnership working, and improve the data available in the city. The report included specific recommendations including the possibility of introducing a 24/7 helpline for those victims who did not want to contact the Police directly, improved communication materials and targeted awareness raising campaigns. The report requested an initial response from Cabinet to the recommendations by July 2017, so this should be available for the Committee's first meeting of the next municipal year. A more detailed update can then be requested later in the year.

7.2 Members thanked the Policy and Improvement Officer and other contributing officers for their work with the Task Group and felt that the cross party working group had worked well together on what the local authority wanted to achieve in tackling hate crime.

7.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the information contained in the report; and
- (b) notes that the report of the Hate Crime Task Group would be submitted to Cabinet in March/April, 2017 and subsequently to the Sheffield Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership Board.

## **8. SAFER AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP**

8.1 The Committee received a presentation which gave an annual update on the work of the Sheffield Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership. The presentation described the priorities and key issues which had been faced by the Partnership over the last year and looked ahead to 2017/18. Copies of the presentation had been circulated prior to the meeting, together with the Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership Plan 2014-17.

8.2 In attendance for this item was Maxine Stavrianakos (Head of Neighbourhood Intervention and Tenant Support).

8.3 In giving the presentation, Maxine Stavrianakos stated that there was a statutory requirement to have a local strategy tackling community safety issues and that members of the Partnership were from South Yorkshire Police, the Local Authority, the Fire and Rescue Service, the Probation Service, the Health Commissioning Group and the Voluntary Sector. She outlined the priorities and key issues which had been faced by the Partnership during the past 12 months and looked ahead to 2017/18. She went on to refer to the current budget and

decreasing budget for 2017/18 and the need for effective partnership working to tackle issues with little or no additional resource. Reference was also made to performance, the changing performance landscape, the new multi-agency team, communities and restorative justice.

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

- Improvements within communities could be seen in the Abbeydale Road area following incidents of anti-social behaviour on 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2015, and this was an excellent example of how local communities, working with the Police and other agencies, had achieved this. Community engagement and community cohesion was also seen to be working in other areas such as Exeter Drive.
- Recent news reports had shown that Sheffield was still the safest large city in the country.
- With regard to the Prevent Strategy, the City received a total of £150,000 funding from the Home Office. Part of this funding was to be used in the recruitment of a Prevent Co-ordinator.
- A Working Group, looking at ways to deliver the Prevent Strategy in Sheffield had been set up.
- Portfolios across the Council were working together, along with South Yorkshire Trading Standards and the Licensing Service, to tackle safeguarding issues. Work and training was also being undertaken with local groups to come up with innovative ways of working.

8.5 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Maxine Stavrianakos for her contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the presentation and the responses provided; and
- (c) requests that an information session be arranged, to which all Councillors were to be invited, to provide an update on the operation and work of the Sheffield Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership.

## **9. NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING: A NEW APPROACH FOR SHEFFIELD**

9.1 The Committee received a presentation outlining the initial thinking on a new approach to neighbourhood level working in Sheffield which would enhance the existing Local Area Partnership (LAPs) and bring greater focus on developing community resilience across the City.

9.2 In attendance for this item were Councillor Jack Scott (Cabinet Member for Community Services and Libraries) and Laurie Brennan (Policy and Improvement Manager).

- 9.3 Councillor Jack Scott introduced the presentation and stated that the LAP Chairs had been given the presentation the previous day and following feedback, it was his intention to present the model for a new approach to Neighbourhood Working to all Members of the City Council. He said a useful focus for the session would be three areas, if the analysis was correct in terms of current challenges with LAP system, whether the principles were right (and anything people don't agree with) and suggestions about how to move forward.
- 9.4 Laurie Brennan outlined the two main strands to effective Neighbourhood Working, the first being community leadership, empowerment and engagement, and secondly, public service delivery. He stated that that the current model was working well but there was a need to build on it by strengthening community leadership and community resilience. He outlined the challenges faced by Councillors and communities with LAPs and stated that due to the reduction in funding, there was a need for a community framework to ensure co-ordinated local service provision from the City Council, its partners and the voluntary sector. He went on to suggest that the way forward was to consider a number of options on how to deliver an enhanced approach to neighbourhood working, to submit a proposal to Cabinet in the next few months and then review the new model after one year.
- 9.5 Councillor Jack Scott summed up by stating that there were approximately 50 different models that you could choose from and the Council needed to develop the model that was right for Sheffield and there was an expectation for everyone to get involved to make it happen.
- 9.6 Members made various comments and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided as follows:-
- 9.7
- Meetings could be held jointly with housing providers and local Area Housing Fora.
  - Not everything was about where funding was used, but rather the way things were done.
  - Perhaps the LAPs were too big and communities might struggle to identify with them.
  - There was a need to get communities more involved, not only by attending local meetings but by being more flexible across Ward boundaries.
  - It was felt that austerity over the past few years had been designed to set people against each other and this was something that needed to be addressed.
  - Officers had looked at best practice and worst practice in other cities regarding what worked and what didn't.
  - The budget for LAPs was £600,000, half of which was put into Ward "pots".

It was felt that there was a need to maintain individual Ward pots, with a separate pot of money being set aside for Sheffield-wide initiatives, which could be used in agreement with LAP Chairs and the Cabinet Member.

- Councillor Scott was preparing five or six bullet points on how being a Member in this new system would feel and what it would look like and this would be circulated to the Committee .
- The model would be reviewed after 12 months.

9.8 RESOLVED: That this Committee:-

- (a) thanks Councillor Jack Scott and Laurie Brennan for their contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the presentation and the responses to questions;
- (c) notes that a report on the new approach to Neighbourhood Working in Sheffield was to be submitted to Cabinet in the near future;
- (d) notes that there would be at least one session for all Councillors on the new approach to Neighbourhood Working in Sheffield; and
- (e) agrees that an update at around 3-6 months into implementation be given and this would be added to the draft Work Programme for 2017-18.

**10. HATE CRIME AND HATE INCIDENTS 1ST FEBRUARY 2015 - 30TH JANUARY 2016**

10.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the contents of the Hate Crime and Hate Incidents 2015/16 report.

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

11.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> April, at 4.00 pm, in the Town Hall.

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## Report to Safer & Stronger Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017

**Report of:** Janet Sharpe, Director, Housing and Neighbourhoods

**Subject:** Housing+ Update

**Author of Report:** Vicky Kennedy, Operations Manager, Future of Council Housing Team (tel. 29 30241)

**Summary:**

This paper gives an update on the progress of the implementation of the new Housing+ approach to council-housing management. An update was requested by the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel, to coincide with their recent visits to / work-shadowing of staff in the Neighbourhoods Teams.

**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	<b>x</b>
Other	

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

- Note the update information given in the paper, and provide their feedback on their observations of how Housing+ is working so far.

**Additional Documents:**

- Housing+ Update - Appendix A
- Housing + Presentation - Appendix B

**Category of Report:** OPEN

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## Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel: Housing+ Update, March 2017

### 1. Implementing Housing+

- 1.1. Housing+, and the associated restructure of the Housing & Neighbourhoods Service (H&NS), was launched on **3rd October 2016**. This MER was one of the biggest, if not the biggest, restructure the Council has undertaken. Around 970 staff were in scope of the MER - approx. 220 of which were 'slotted' into the new structure as their roles were not changing.
- 1.2. The remaining 750 went through a selection process and moved onto a new JD and into a new role. The degree of change this meant for individuals varied, but for a huge number of staff this meant a significantly different - in many cases completely new role.
- 1.3. Training programmes have been developed and are being delivered, and the new service is 'up and running'. However, it does need to be acknowledged that such a massive change will take time to 'bed in' properly, and many teams are still in a transitional period and learning their new roles and functions.

### 2. The journey so far ....

- 2.1. Since October last year, the service has so far completed around 2000 home visits to tenants. In addition there are around 850 cases that are currently being managed by Neighbourhood Officers (NOs) – these have varying degrees of complexity, with the majority of cases having being open for a number of months due to the support needs identified.
- 2.2. During this first 6-month period staff have been keen to undertake the full breadth of the NO role and have embraced the Housing+ approach. We expect to see the numbers of visits increase significantly as staff vacancies are filled (currently 177 Neighbourhood Officers in post within Neighbourhood Teams across the city) and staff are becoming trained and more confident in their role.
- 2.3. The following 'real life' case studies from the last few months are examples of what can be achieved through Housing+:

#### Case study 1 - Hoarding & infestations

**Issue:** The NO visited a tenant's property to carry out an annual visit. There was a rat infestation and the tenant was clearly hoarding and he had a dog and the property was infested with fleas.

**Actions taken:** The NO arranged for a clean and clear, and supported the tenant through the process. The kitchen had been severely damaged by rats and so he liaised with the Repairs and Maintenance Service to have the kitchen replaced.

The NO also arranged for SOAR (a social enterprise / community regeneration charity in Parson Cross) to support the tenant with looking after his property, and

contacted Shelter to help organise his finances for him. He also arranged for his rent to be paid via a direct debit.

The NO is continuing to make regular visits to the tenant to ensure sure everything is ok.

## Case study 2 - Rent arrears

**Issue:** A tenant with no history of not paying her rent suddenly fell into arrears, so the NO arranged to visit her at home. The NO discovered that the tenant's relationship had broken down and her husband had moved out with the children. She was feeling unable to cope on her own.

**Actions taken:** The tenant was affected by bedroom tax, so the NO arranged for her to be given a priority to move to a smaller property. This saved the tenant money and freed up her larger accommodation for another tenant who needed it.

The tenant viewed a Housing Association (HA) property but was not offered a tenancy due to the level of her arrears, the NO contacted the HA and explained on behalf of the tenant the reason for the arrears, and that arrears had never been an issue for this tenant before. As a result the HA were willing to offer her a tenancy and she was able to move into a more affordable home.

The NO also successfully applied for Discretionary Housing Payments on behalf of the tenant to help her with the rent arrears.

## 3. Next steps

- 3.1. In April / early May we will be undertaking a 6-month review of the restructure. Each team are to hold a review session (with the Trade Unions also invited to each one), led by the relevant Head of Service. These sessions will look at how well the new approach is working so far, and what else remains to be done to further improve service delivery and outcomes for our tenants. The outcomes of the review will be shared with the TUs and staff during May, and any resulting changes (eg. to processes, handover points, etc) implemented over the subsequent weeks / months (dependent on what those changes are).
- 3.2. The journey towards full implementation of Housing+ will continue over the coming months. As staff become more comfortable with the 'core' housing-related elements of their roles we will begin to broaden their remit in a planned way, and with support and training in place where needed.
- 3.3. We are also working in partnership with the University of Sheffield to understand the Health & Wellbeing impact of Housing+. We have secured external funding for a 2 year study which is being delivered by the School of Health & Related Research. Initial feedback from tenants is currently being analysed by the University and we should have some baseline data during April. The study will then continue until March 2018, to understand if the health and wellbeing of those tenants has changed, and if so if there is any link between this change and the Housing+ service they have been receiving.

#### 4. Feedback from Scrutiny Panel Members

- 4.1. We are keen to learn from the feedback which Members have from their recent 'shadowing' of / visits to Neighbourhood Teams. What did you see which is working well? What did you see which you think we could have done better? We can then use this information as part of the 6-month review.
- 4.2. We are also keen to understand how we can better promote Housing+ in our Neighbourhoods - with both Members and local service partners / organisations. So any input from Scrutiny Panel on how we could approach that would also be very welcome.

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Appendix B

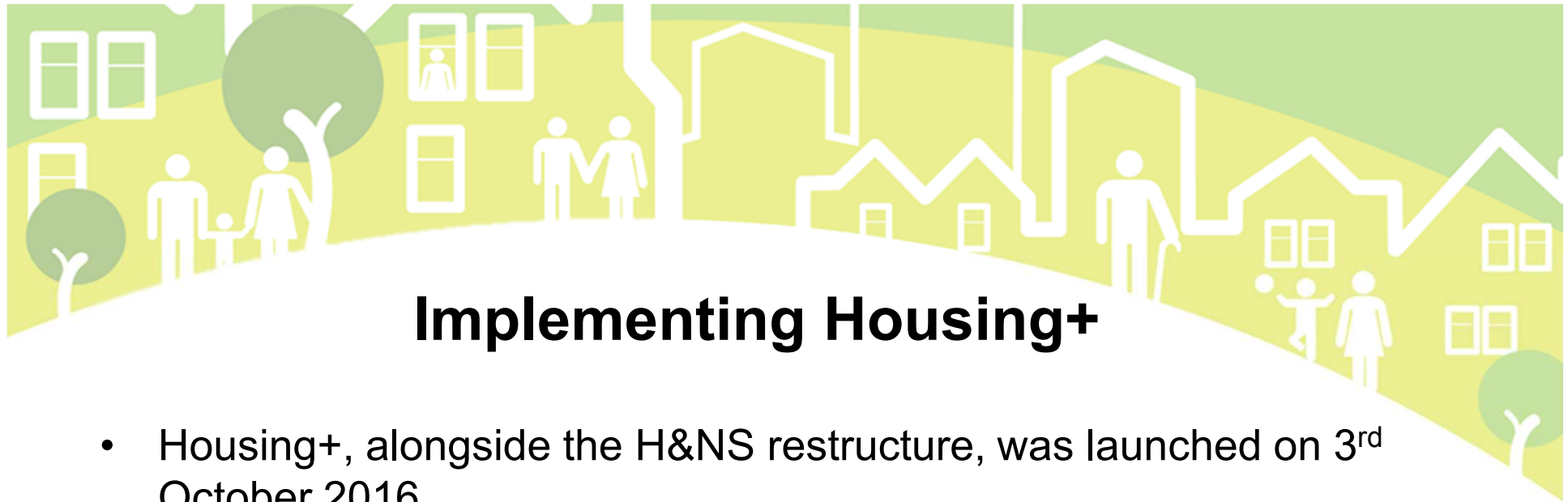
# Housing and Neighbourhoods Service

## Housing+ Update

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel

March 2017





## Implementing Housing+

- Housing+, alongside the H&NS restructure, was launched on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016.
- One of the biggest restructures SCC has ever undertaken, with 970 in scope and over 750 moving into new roles.
- So a huge amount of change across the service – and to varying degrees for individuals.
- Training programme developed to support staff in their new roles, teams still embedding the new ways of working.
- This is a journey, not an overnight change!



# Supporting the Council's Ways of Working



... engaging with our customers early to discuss their requirements, talking to our communities to better understand their needs ....



... offering flexible and practical solutions tailored to local needs, taking a fresh approach to service delivery to achieve better outcomes for our most vulnerable tenants



... working with other Council teams, partners, external agencies and other landlords , developing cross-council approaches to neighbourhood management





## The journey so far

- Patches determined and allocated across the city and Officers made responsible for their 'patch'
- Since October around 2000 home visits completed, and a further 850 live Housing+ cases are currently being managed.
- Staff have embraced the Housing+ approach, and as more training is delivered they are becoming more confident in their roles.
- Case studies outlined in the report we've provided today illustrate how Housing+ has improved outcomes for tenants





## Feedback from Scrutiny Panel

- Keen to learn from your feedback from recent visits to our Neighbourhood Teams.
- What did you see working well, anything not so well?
- How can we promote Housing+, and stronger partnership working, with Members and local service partners?



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**Report to Safer and Stronger  
Communities Scrutiny & Policy  
Development Committee  
6th April 2017**

**Report of:** Challenge for Change Tenant Scrutiny Group

**Subject:** Challenge for Change: *Vacants Property Service*  
**Progress Update**

**Author of Report:** Jason Siddall and Lindsey Hill - Repairs & Maintenance Team  
Rosie Sheldon – Rehousing Team

**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 Vacants to scrutiny in July 2015. This report provides a progress update on the recommendations made by the panel.

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

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

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

Note the contents of this progress update on the recommendations made by the panel.

**Background Papers:**

Challenge for Change: Scrutiny Report Vacants Report  
Challenge for Change: Outcomes and Recommendations Vacants

**Category of Report:** OPEN

**Challenge for Change – Vacant Property Services Report  
Progress Update February 2017**

An update on the progress of the recommendations made by C4C has been requested and these are presented below:

	Recommendation	Update
1.	<p>Look into the costs of cutting grass/clean net curtains/washing windows/painting neutral colours and then target Hard to Let – areas or properties.</p>	<p><b>Cost of grass cutting</b> We now have 5 dedicated gardeners working on vacant gardens. The gardens that have this work are identified by their state and prioritised.</p> <p><b>Clean Net Curtains</b> We have a contract with Orbis who provide net curtains, when requested, in vacant properties; the net curtains used are left in the property for the incoming tenant. We have reminded Orbis to ensure that the net curtains used fully fit the windows to prevent people looking into the property. If the previous tenant has left net curtains that are in a clean state and fit for purpose they are left in the property.</p> <p><b>Painting neutral colours</b> We now have 5 dedicated painters working on vacant properties. The properties to be painted are identified by the state of decoration or for particularly hard to let properties. We also have the facility to paint properties after they have been let for vulnerable new tenants. Neighbourhood Teams can also request a B&amp;Q voucher or an increase to the amount awarded at the accompanied view if they feel it is needed due to the decoration or need of the new tenant. We also have a Handyperson Service that is available free of charge for elderly or vulnerable tenants to use for decoration, painting and odd jobs around their home.</p>
2.	<p>Review the lettable standard in consultation with service users</p>	<p>The minimum lettable standard (MLS) is primarily budget driven, adheres to health &amp; safety and has to be sustainable. Some minor changes were made to the minimum lettable standard in 2014/15. We are now carrying out a full review of the minimum lettable standard, looking at the approach and considering tailoring the standard, for example, to property type, area of city and the condition of stock.</p>

3.	Introduce a more thorough inspection process both pre and post repair	<p>All properties having repair work over £3k has a joint pre inspection by us and Kier, to jointly identify and agree the repair work to be carried out. The repairs and maintenance team now post inspect 100% of properties returned by Kier following repair work before the property is made fit to let. The inspections ensure that the property meets the standard, identifies any quality issues and these are recorded as major or minor defects returning to Kier to rectify and ensure there are no issues with the property that would prevent it being let. The post inspections have reduced the number of quality issues, identified trends or clarification points with the standard, reduced the number of after tenancy repairs and reduced the number of enquiries/complaints of new tenants. We have also developed a joint 'property check off' sheet with Kier to ensure they check properties before handing them back to us. 'Repairs after tenancy' jobs moved over into the vacants side of Repairs and Maintenance Team, this has helped reduce the number of repairs and has saved money. Quality assurance is scrutinised at the Action Planning Group meeting held each month, with both officers and customers attending.</p>
	Agree a minimum garden as part of a lettable standard	<p><i>See recommendation 1, on grass cutting/gardens point.</i></p>
5.	Learn more from what the best landlords do	<p>We have previously attended Efficiency North and Housemark benchmarking groups with other organisations. More recently we have attended the Housemark Voids Improvement Club, Service Manager's from Repairs and Maintenance and Rehousing regularly attend groups on vacant property and rehousing issues. This also involves networking with other social housing providers to understand comparators within this area of work and understand which good practices could work within SCC stock. However, the challenges experienced by different landlords and housing providers vary significantly and from area to area. This means that even though we can use these networking opportunities to our advantage, it is not always possible to implement the same systems and procedures as others.</p> <p>We have taken the opportunity of a recent restructure to review our performance monitoring framework and have changed this to ensure that it is more meaningful and can be analysed to identified where we have particular difficulties, so as to target resources appropriately and improve relet times.</p>

6.	<p>In Touch and The Bridge could be utilised to advertise hard to let vacants and promote areas and better use could be made of Area Housing Offices to advertise properties locally</p>	<p>The lead in times for these publications may mean that this is not the best way of increasing the advertisement opportunities of difficult to let properties- they may well have been let by the time they are advertised! We are considering a range of actions to target specific properties which are difficult to let including changed advice on housing options for customers who need to be rehoused quickly. However, one of the fundamental issues is that difficult to let properties are often age designated we will continue to consider alternatives and ensure the sustainability of groups of properties or recommend change where this is appropriate. We also use first come first served to advert properties that are difficult to let. We can also write articles to promote areas, featuring a new tenant's positive story about an area, as we have done previously.</p>
7. Page 28	<p>Adverts need more tailoring rather than stock advert – with more detailed and better information on local facilities. More use of positive / happy images</p>	<p>We now have a new website for advertising our properties and have changed the way we advertise them. The adverts now include live internet links to local services/information regarding the area, such as, doctors, schools, police, NHS, etc.</p>
8.	<p>Promote good things about an area to counter negative publicity, promote activities within the area that are appropriate for the age profile – lunch club, toddler groups. Use all Council services in a multiagency approach</p>	<p>See recommendation 6. Neighbourhood Teams provide information to customers in a variety of formats. This information needs reviewing on a regular basis.</p>



9.	Explore idea of using “estate champions” and TARA produced information leaflets. Encourage better press and PR to promote areas	As Housing plus is embedded into the way we deliver the service, Patch Officers will become “champions” on their patch/estates. We are not quite there yet, but Neighbourhood Teams are progressing this and clearly there is a link to point 8 above.
10.	Use both external and internal photos and video tours / You Tube to show prospective tenants an idea of the style of the property	See recommendation 7, the new website enables to advertise properties by uploading multiple photographs. This is difficult as the advert cycle runs alongside the repairs work which means that at the time the photo is taken is before the repair work, making them look less appealing. We are currently looking at uploading more photos for properties where they have to be readvertised or are particularly hard to let.
Page 29 11.	Use clearer names to describe the area where properties are and more localised advertising	We actually advertise the street name and estate on property adverts we don't put the actual number of the property as there are often tenant still in residence at the point of advertising. However we feel that there is sufficient information for customers to understand the location of the property we are advertising.
12.	Provide more information on the property and garden e.g. room sizes / steps	See also recommendation 10. We currently advertise using an external photo and mention the type of parking outside the property, garden space and note in the advert if the room sizes in the property are particularly small.
13.	The website could be more attractive with better use of photos	We have recently updated our website which is now a more user friendly and offers a fresher and clearer service.  Many of our properties are advertised by Housing associations and while we do not control the content they place in their adverts we are also taking steps to encourage them to include photos in every advert.

14.	Ask for refusal reasons a week after refusal as some customers may have provided an “on the spot” answer that is not genuine. Make better use/ analysis of refusal data	We now analyse the refusal reasons given when a customer declines a property, this has helped us to understand any issues with the property or improvements that could help to make the property more appealing.
15.	Talk to multiple bidders about their needs to help them bid more appropriately and make it clearer that you don't have to bid for 3 properties per week	The current policy allows applicants to place up to 3 bids each week. However in April 2016, the Council's Allocations Policy was implemented which introduced sanctions for applicants who bid and refused an offer of accommodation. These sanctions can lead to reduced preference on or exclusion from the housing register for those who refuse reasonable offers.
16.	Manage tenancies in a way that limits damage caused in properties including the use of annual tenancy visits	This is something again that Neighbourhoods Teams are working on. Annual visits are taking place but too early to measure any impact on vacant's at the moment.
17.	Ensure that information about flexibility and discretion about bedroom sizes is made available to applicants	A copy of the Council's allocation Policy is available to download from the Sheffield Property Shop website. The details of when discretion may be considered is contained in the Allocations Policy. Officers are also alert to when it may be appropriate to consider discretion. All applicants are advised of which size properties they are eligible for when they join the housing register and there are further details on the website. .
18.	Retain furnished accommodation as an option	We are continuing to deliver furnished accommodation to vulnerable people who meet the criteria. We hold a stock of furnished properties and will furnish properties on demand if necessary. The impact of Welfare Reform changes is likely to impact on our customers so we are ensuring that it is affordable for customers and taking this into consideration in managing the stock of furnished vacants. We are building links with the Neighbourhood Teams and Housing Plus model to achieve this.

19.	Look at how private landlords are letting properties in Hard to Let areas and think and act more like a letting agent	<p><i>See recommendation 5.</i></p> <p>We network with other social housing providers to understand comparators within this area of work. Public sector housing has different challenges and more restraints than successful private landlords. We also work alongside our private rented team who work with private landlords on the City as they are able to access stock in different, often high demand, areas.</p>
20.	Training of frontline staff could be enhanced to give them more property knowledge and FAQs should be produced for Them	<p>We have recently undertaken a full training programme for all front line and neighbourhood staff to ensure that they fully able to respond to queries and offer advice on housing options. Our website also contains frequently asked questions (FAQ's) to help both customers and support staff and we are further exploring how we can use the news facility and improve information on our website.</p>

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## Report to the Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017

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**Subject:** Call in of Cabinet Member decision: Approval of New HMO Licensing Standards

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**Author of Report:** Diane Owens, Policy & Improvement Officer  
0114 2735065, [diane.owens@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:diane.owens@sheffield.gov.uk)

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**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 Member decision	X
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	

**Category of Report:** OPEN

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### 1.0 Background

1.1 On the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2017 the Cabinet Member for Housing took the following decision:

**Purpose:**

To adopt new HMO Licensing standards which are used to set HMO Licensing conditions, Overcrowding standards for non-licensable HMOs and insulation standards

**Decision:**

*(i) To approve the revised HMO Licensing Standards as set out in Appendix A of the report, to come into effect on 6 April 2017; and*

*(ii) the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service be authorised to approve amendments to the HMO Licensing Standards.*

1.2 The original documents relating to this decision are attached.

- Individual Cabinet Member Key Executive Decision Report – *Appendix A*
- Individual Cabinet Member Decision Record – *Appendix B*
- HMO Licensing Standards - *Appendix C*
- Equality Impact Assessment – *Appendix D*
- Call in notice – *Appendix E*

Officers have also prepared a short briefing note which is also attached– *Appendix F*

1.3 As per Part 4, section 16 of Sheffield City Council’s Constitution, this decision has been called in, preventing implementation of the decision until it has been considered by this Scrutiny Committee.

1.4 The Call-In notice is attached (Appendix E), stating that the reason for the call-in is: *“To determine whether it is clear enough for tenants and landlords and robust enough to be enforced, and that there are sufficient council resources to do so”*

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

As per the Scrutiny Procedure rules, scrutinise the decision and take one of the following courses of action:

- (a) refer the decision back to the decision making body or individual for reconsideration in the light of recommendations from the Committee;
- (b) request that the decision be deferred until the Scrutiny Committee has considered relevant issues and made recommendations to the Executive;
- (c) take no action in relation to the called-in decision but consider whether issues arising from the call-in need to be fed back to the decision maker or added to the work programme of an existing Scrutiny Committee;
- (d) if, but only if (having taken the advice of the Monitoring Officer and/or the Chief Finance Officer), the Committee determines that the decision is wholly or partly outside the Budget and Policy Framework, refer the matter, with any recommendations, to the Council after following the procedures in the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules

(If a Scrutiny Committee decides on (a), (b) or (d) as its course of action, there is a continuing bar on implementing the decision).

2.2 The Scrutiny Procedure rules state that if a decision is referred back, it is referred back to the individual or body that made the decision. In this case the decision maker is the Cabinet Member for Housing.



# Individual Cabinet Member Key Executive Decision Report

**Author/Lead Officer of Report:** Paul Rotherham,  
Legal and Policy Officer

**Tel:** 34460

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**Report to:** *Councillor Jayne Dunn*

**Date of Decision:** *20 February 2017*

**Subject:** *Approval of new HMO Licensing standards*

Which Cabinet Member Portfolio does this relate to? *Housing*

Which Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee does this relate to? *Housing*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? Yes  No

If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? *959*

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes  No

If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-

*"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."*

## **Purpose of Report:**

To seek approval of revised House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing standards.

To seek authorisation for the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service to approve future amendments to licensing standards

**Recommendations:**

To approve the revised HMO Licensing Standards as set out in Appendix A to this report, to come into effect on 6 April 2017.

That the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service to authorised to approve amendments to the HMO Licensing Standards

**Background Papers:**

Existing HMO Standards set out on the Councils website at <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/dms/scc/management/corporate-communications/documents/housing/renting-hmo-landlords/hmo/HMO-Standards--approved-July-2009--Pdf--4424kb-.pdf>

Existing Selective Licensing standards set out on the Councils website at <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/dms/scc/management/corporate-communications/documents/housing/renting-hmo-landlords/selective-licensing/Selective-Licensing-Property-Standards--15-4-2014-/Selective%20Licensing%20Property%20Standards%20%2815-4-2014%29.doc>

Residential Property Tribunal decision

<http://www.residential-property.judiciary.gov.uk/Files/2008/June/00001FLR.htm>

Landlords Guild guidance on the upper tier tribunal decision in Clarke V Manchester at <http://www.landlordsguild.com/council-hmo-guidance-is-not-the-law-warns-tribunal/> (the full case can be downloaded from this link but the principles are well explained in the article)

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: <i>Karen Jones</i>
	Legal: <i>Brendan Twomey</i>
	Equalities: <i>Liz Took</i>
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> <i>Paul Rotherham</i>
	<b>Job Title:</b> <i>Legal and Policy Officer</i>
<b>Date:</b> 11 January 2017	



## 1. PROPOSAL

*(Explain the proposal, current position and need for change, including any evidence considered, and indicate whether this is something the Council is legally required to do, or whether it is something it is choosing to do)*

- 1.1 Under the Housing Act 2004, houses in multiple occupation (HMO) falling within the statutory definition, must be licensed. The Act further provides that local authorities are required to administer the mandatory licensing scheme within their district. The Council is therefore required to administer the mandatory HMO licensing scheme in respect of Sheffield. This duty includes the grant of HMO licences to successful applicants, including imposing conditions on the licence. In addition, when deciding whether to grant a licence the Council must be satisfied that the HMO is reasonably suitable for occupation by the maximum permitted number of households or persons. When deciding these issues, the Council has regard to the Council approved HMO Licensing Standards (the Standards).
- 1.2 The Standards were approved in 2005 and varied in 2009. The Standards comprise the national mandatory minimum standards, and additional standards, designed by the Council to meet identified local housing needs. Largely these standards have stood the test of time. However, to ensure that the Standards remain relevant and continue to meet local need, the Council has carried out a review of the Standards. That review identified a number of ways the Standards could be improved for example by the addition of flexibility in the application of standards; inclusion of handrails for staircases and steps; inclusion of CO Detectors for all areas with gas appliances, rewording areas for clarity; and a revision of the heating section to bring it in-line with other standards and advice issued after the original standards were devised. The proposed amended Standards, which are set out in appendix A, to this report and for which this report seek approval, reflect the findings of the review.
- 1.3 Within the Page Hall area of the city, the Council in 2014 designated an area for selective licensing, the Page Hall Selective Licensing area, including an approved set of standards, to which the Council has regard, when imposing conditions on licenses. An additional purpose of the review, was to consider, where appropriate, the Standards should be revised to bring it in line with the Selective Licensing standards, increasing conformity between the two standards.
- 1.4 It was noted, as part of the review, the impact poor insulation has on fuel poverty and the health and wellbeing of the occupants, with wider impacts on care and health services, society and the wider economy. Therefore, a proposed amendment to the Standards is the inclusion of an insulation standard. Its inclusion is of information purposes, not to be imposed as a licence condition. It is important that licence holders are aware of the standard in respect of insulation they are expected to meet. This has particular importance, given that if the standard is not met, the Council may take enforcement action under the Housing Act 2004. In addition, the Council will have regard to the insulation standard, when deciding whether a licensed HMO meets the standard and whether to

take enforcement action.

- 1.5. An outcome of the review, was that it would be helpful , when the Council assesses whether a non-licensable HMO is overcrowded, requiring the service of an Overcrowding Notice, under the Housing Act 2004,there are a set of standards, that it may have regard to. It is considered that the Space Standards for Rooms section of the Standards, could appropriately carry out that role. It is therefore proposed that when the Council carries out that function, regard is had to this part of the Standards
- 1.6 The intention is to keep the Standards under review, to ensure that it remains relevant, properly reflects local need and changes in the law. To enable amendments to be made to the Standards, arising from a review, it is proposed that the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service, be authorised to amend the Standards.

## **2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?**

*(Explain how this proposal will contribute to the ambitions within the Corporate Plan and what it will mean for people who live, work, learn in or visit the City. For example, does it increase or reduce inequalities and is the decision inclusive?; does it have an impact on climate change?; does it improve the customer experience?; is there an economic impact?)*

- 2.1 The revised Standards, which will be implemented through licence conditions, will improve housing condition, will improve the health and safety of the occupants of HMOs. For example the revised Standards include, new standards requiring handrails in appropriate locations, and Carbon Monoxide detection to all rooms containing a gas or solid fuel appliance. This is in keeping with the Council Corporate plan to improve the health of people living in Sheffield.

## **3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?**

- 3.1 There is no statutory duty to consult on the proposed revision of the Standards. However, it was considered that to ensure that the Standards remain effective, it was essential to consult with those most affected by the proposed revisions to the Standards. Given the purpose of the Standards, we consulted with local landlord organisations, including Sheffield Student Landlord Association, Sheffield and District Landlords Association and the local representative of the National Landlords Association. We also consulted with other relevant organisations, including with G4S and Live Management Group, who manage accommodation for asylum seekers
- 3.2 Throughout the consultation process, we endeavoured to engage with landlords on the proposed Standards as they developed, providing details of the proposed changes and attending a meeting with landlord organisations, where the proposals were discussed. Through this process, we were able to explain the proposed changes and listen to responses and suggestions. A consequence of this process of engagement is that some comments have informed the proposed revisions to the Standards. For example, the frequency of landlords checks to CO detectors were reduced, and the wording around the provision of handrails and balustrades to staircases was revised for clarity. Therefore, although landlords may not be in complete agreement

with the proposed revised Standards, they have a good understanding of the proposals and know that proper regard was given to their comments. Feedback from landlords, is that they generally accept the proposed standards

- 3.3 In addition, the Council received a petition from South Yorkshire Migration and Asylum Action Group SYMAAG, raising concerns about forced sharing of rooms by asylum seekers. The Council had regard to the issues raised, when developing the revised Standards. To address the issue, a proposed revision to the standards is that all single persons sharing rooms have to agree to share in writing. In addition, the floor space standards for these rooms have been increased to double size of a single bedroom
- 3.4 We also consulted with South Yorkshire Fire on the standards, with particular reference to those parts of the standards that deal with fire standards.

#### **4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

##### **4.1 Equality of Opportunity Implications**

- 4.1.1 As a Public Authority, we have legal requirements under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. These are often collectively referred to as the 'general duties to promote equality'. To help us meet the general equality duties, we also have specific duties, as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011. We have considered our obligations under this Duty in this report and the proposed revisions to the Standards and consider that there are no specific equality impacts in line with these duties. The proposals are equality neutral, affecting all relevant landlords and most tenants, equally regardless of age, sex, race, faith, disability, sexuality, etc. However it is noted that the practice of singles sharing a room mainly occurs in asylum seeker accommodation and amongst the Chinese student community. Therefore the proposed amendments to the standards that increase the floor space standard for singles sharing a room and require that singles must agree to share, will have a bigger impact on these groups. However these changes only take effect when the existing occupation ends and therefore will not lead to eviction. Further, these changes will have a positive impact, improving the living conditions experienced by tenants.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and approved. The Sharepoint reference number for the Assessment is 959 . A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment can be provided to the public on request.

##### **4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications**

- 4.2.1 The proposed revision to the Standards should have little effect upon finances. Landlords will continue to be required to pay the licence fee in respect of the licensing of their properties, which is calculated to take account of all licensing costs. These proposals do not deal with amendments to the licence fees, which are set for a 5 year licensing period.
- 4.2.2 However, the proposed revisions to the Standards, include for the first time handrails and insulation standards, ensuring landlords are fully aware of their obligations in respect of these areas , which it is hoped will

reduce the need for the Council to take costly enforcement action.

#### 4.3 **Legal Implications**

- 4.3.1 Under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004, the Council is required to administer the mandatory HMO licensing scheme in respect of Sheffield. This duty includes the grant of HMO licences to successful applicants. The Council is empowered to include in the licence conditions relating to housing and management standards. Further, when deciding whether to grant a licence the Council must be satisfied that the HMO is reasonably suitable for occupation by the maximum permitted number of households or persons. The Standards, which this report seeks approval to amend, sets out the housing and management standards, which the Council has regard, when determining these issues, in respect of individual licences. Generally the conditions will be imposed, by reference to the Standards. A number of standards relate to conditions, that under the Act must be imposed as licence conditions. However most are at the discretion of the Council. Each decision will be decided on the individual circumstances of the case, and the Standards will only be applied where it is considered appropriate. However where a standard relates to a mandatory condition, these will be applied. Therefore, in line with the statutory duties referred to above, the Council is empowered to maintain and revise the Standards.
- 4.3.2 Under part 1 of the Housing Act 2004, the Council has a duty to review housing standards within Sheffield. It also provides a system for assessing housing conditions, through the reference to category 1 and category 2 hazards. Where the property is assessed as having a category 1 hazard, the Council has a duty to take enforcement action and in respect of a category 2 hazards, the power. The Act indicates that in general, category 1 and 2 hazards should be tackled by use of part 1 powers and not by imposing licensing conditions. It is therefore not appropriate, that the standard relating to insulation, be imposed as a license condition. The purpose of its inclusion in the Standards, is to inform license holders of the insulation standard the Council expects properties to meet, to which the Council will have regard, when deciding, in an individual case, whether a hazard exists and whether to take enforcement action. In line with these statutory powers, the Council is empowered to include and have regard to the insulation standard, in the Standards.
- 4.3.3 Under Part 4 of the Housing Act 2004 , where it considers that an excessive number of persons are or are likely to be accommodated in a non-licensable HMO, resulting in overcrowding, the Council is empowered to serve an Overcrowding Notice. The Council intends to have regard to the room space standards in the Standards, when determining whether a particular property is overcrowded. Each decision will be made on the individual circumstances of the case, and the Standards applied, where to Council considers it appropriate. In line with the statutory power, the Council is empowered to have regard to the Standards, for the purpose of determining whether a property is overcrowded, necessitating the service of an Overcrowding Notice.

## **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

### **5.1 Option 1 – Do Nothing**

- 5.1.1 Given the findings of the review, which identified that amendments are required to the Standards, to ensure that they remain relevant and reflects local need, this option is not considered appropriate. The concern is, with the passage of time, the Standards will increasingly become out dated and not be fit for purpose, impacting on the housing and management standards in licensable HMOs.

### **5.2 Option 2 – Revoke Standards**

- 5.2.1 The Standards enable a transparent, consistence approach, to including conditions on licenses. It is an essential tool to officers, enabling sensible, informed decision making, relating to licensing conditions. They also enable Landlords to understand the standards they are expected to meet, aiding any licensing application. This is therefore not considered to be an appropriate option.

### **5.3 Option 3 – Revise the Standards ( the Proposal)**

- 5.3.1 The proposed revisions to the Standards, which reflect to review findings, with regard to the consultation responses, will ensure they remain relevant and meet local need. This will ensure that the Standards remain an effective tool to maintain good housing and management standards in HMO licensed accommodation. In addition, the inclusion of the insulation standard, informs licence holders of the standard they are expected to meet, and against which their property will be assessed, when the Council considers whether there are insulation related hazards and what enforcement action to take. Further, regard will be given to the Standards when deciding whether there is overcrowding, in none licensed HMOs. For these reasons, this is the preferred option.

## **6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The proposed revisions to the Standards, which reflect the review findings, ensure that they remain relevant and reflect need. They will ensure that the Standards, which deal with management and housing issues, will continue to ensure that licensed HMO accommodation meets good management and housing standards. In addition, The Standard will assist in the making overcrowding decisions in respect of none licensable HMOs and inform licence holders of the standards expected in respect of insulation.
- 6.2 To enable the Standards to be revised, to reflect the findings of future reviews, ensuring they remain relevant and reflect local need, it is proposed that the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service, be authorised to approve amendments to the Scheme.

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## SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

### INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION RECORD

The following decision was taken on 23 February 2017 by the Cabinet Member for Housing.

Date notified to all members: Friday 24 February 2017

The end of the call-in period is 4:00 pm on Thursday 2 March 2017

Unless called-in, the decision can be implemented from Friday 3 March 2017

1. **TITLE**

Approval of New HMO Licensing Standards

2. **DECISION TAKEN**

(i) To approve the revised HMO Licensing Standards as set out in Appendix A of the report, to come into effect on 6 April 2017; and

(ii) the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service be authorised to approve amendments to the HMO Licensing Standards.

3. **Reasons For Decision**

The proposed revisions to the Standards, which reflect the review findings, ensure that they remain relevant and reflect need. They will ensure that the Standards, which deal with management and housing issues, will continue to ensure that licensed HMO accommodation meets good management and housing standards. In addition, The Standard will assist in the making overcrowding decisions in respect of none licensable HMOs and inform licence holders of the standards expected in respect of insulation.

To enable the Standards to be revised, to reflect the findings of future reviews, ensuring they remain relevant and reflect local need, it is proposed that the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service, be authorised to approve amendments to the Scheme.

4. **Alternatives Considered And Rejected**

**Option 1 – Do Nothing**

Given the findings of the review, which identified that amendments are required to the Standards, to ensure that they remain relevant and reflects local need, this option is not considered appropriate. The concern is, with the passage of time, the Standards will increasingly become out dated and not be fit for purpose, impacting on the housing and management standards in licensable HMOs.

## **Option 2 – Revoke Standards**

The Standards enable a transparent, consistency approach, to including conditions on licenses. It is an essential tool to officers, enabling sensible, informed decision making, relating to licensing conditions. They also enable Landlords to understand the standards they are expected to meet, aiding any licensing application. This is therefore not considered to be an appropriate option.

## **Option 3 – Revise the Standards (the Proposal)**

The proposed revisions to the Standards, which reflect to review findings, with regard to the consultation responses, will ensure they remain relevant and meet local need. This will ensure that the Standards remain an effective tool to maintain good housing and management standards in HMO licensed accommodation. In addition, the inclusion of the insulation standard, informs licence holders of the standard they are expected to meet, and against which their property will be assessed, when the Council considers whether there are insulation related hazards and what enforcement action to take. Further, regard will be given to the Standards when deciding whether there is overcrowding, in none licensed HMOs. For these reasons, this is the preferred option.

### **5. Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted**

None

### **6. Respective Director Responsible for Implementation**

Executive Director, Communities

### **7. Relevant Scrutiny Committee If Decision Called In**

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee



# HMO Licensing Standards

These HMO Licensing Standards (the Standards) comprising amenity, space and fire standards, will apply to HMO Licensing. The standards will also be used when assessments for overcrowding are made in non-licensable HMOs. The insulation standard is advisory and the Council may have regard to it when assessing whether a licensable HMO contains insulation related hazards and whether to take enforcement action.

The Council, under the Housing Act 2004, is required to administer the mandatory HMO licensing scheme in respect of Sheffield. This duty includes the grant of HMO licences to successful applicants. The Council is required to include on licenses mandatory conditions. In addition, the Council may include further licence conditions relating to housing and management standards. Also when deciding whether to grant a licence the Council must be satisfied that the HMO is reasonably suitable for occupation by the maximum permitted number of households or persons. When deciding these issues, (with the exception of the Insulation Standards under paragraphs 1.7 to 1.11) the Council will have regard to the Standards. Each decision on these issues will be decided on the individual circumstances of the case. However, where a standard relates to mandatory condition that must be included in HMO Licenses, those standards will be included in all licenses. Where the Council decides not to impose a standard as a condition on a licence, this will be clearly stated on the licence. This will not be binding upon future licences.

The Council will have regard to the space standard at section 10 of the Standards, when determining whether or not to serve an Overcrowding Notice under the Housing Act 2004, on a non-licensable HMO that is or is likely to become overcrowded. Each decision will be made on the individual circumstances of the case, and the standard applied where the Council considers it appropriate.

The Council will have regard to the insulation standard at paragraphs 1.7 to 1.11 of the Standards, when determining whether a licensable HMO contains any insulation related hazards and whether to take enforcement action under the Housing Act 2004. Details of any insulation standards will be included on the licence for information but not as a licence condition. Any enforcement of the insulation standard will be taken following an inspection and a risk assessment.

## The Specifications

### Section 1 The Amenity and Space Standards

#### 1.0 Heating and Insulation

1.1 A form of fixed space heating is required to all habitable rooms which can be controllable by the tenants incorporating a timer and suitably positioned thermostat(s). Heating must be capable of providing the following temperatures in each room:

- Bedrooms only 18 °C
- Living room/ dining room 21 °C
- Study bedroom 21 °C
- Bathroom with WC 21 °C
- Kitchens and separate WCs 18 °C
- Dining kitchens 21 °C
- Circulation areas 18 °C

- 1.2 Temperatures must be achievable when the external temperature is  $-1.0^{\circ}\text{C}$  and be capable of reaching this temperature within 1 hour when the heating is in regular use. This standard will be usually be met through the provision of gas fired central heating or Night Storage Radiators. Acceptable alternatives would be connection to a district heating scheme or an oil fired boiler where a gas supply is not readily available. Where any other system of heating is proposed it must be economical and will also be environmentally friendly and permission should be obtained prior to installation. Permission for suitable alternatives will not be unreasonably withheld.

### Heating

- 1.3. Subject to item 1.4 below such heating provision must be capable of being used at any time.
- 1.4. Where the landlord includes heating costs in the rent the heating controls shall be set to achieve the above temperatures for a minimum of 8 hours per day. Where the heating is restricted and there is no provision for the tenant(s) to over-ride this they shall be provided with means of supplementary heating. This may be by:
- Gas heaters connected to a suitable flue and terminal outlet, or
  - Electric heaters connected to a dedicated fixed spur outlet. The electric heaters shall be convector or radiant heating, except for temporary heaters provided short-term in the case of boiler break-down
  - Wherever practicable, heaters shall be fixed to an existing chimneybreast or otherwise be fixed so as to direct heat towards the centre of the room.
- 1.5. Where storage radiators are provided there must be suitable meter(s) to charge separately for off-peak electrical use. In addition, to provide for times when the energy stored by the heater has been exhausted there shall be supplementary heating either incorporated into the storage radiator or additional heating provision as detailed in paragraph 1.4 above.
- 1.6. The use of portable paraffin or individual oil fired heaters and liquefied petroleum gas heaters (LPG) (Bottled Gas heaters) and halogen heaters shall not be acceptable under any circumstances, whether provided by or on behalf of the landlord or the tenant. Any new tenancy agreement must incorporate this standard

### Insulation

- 1.7. An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is required for shared houses. Mid terraced properties must have a certificate with a D rating or higher. End terrace properties and semi-detached properties must also aim for a Band D but have a minimum of the top half of Band E. The exact works to improve these house types to a reasonable standard will be the subject of an individual assessment.
- 1.8. Roof/loft spaces must be insulated where they are accessible from the house. A minimum of 270mm glass fibre or mineral fibre loft insulation, or equivalent insulating value(U-value), including any upright stud walls in attic loft spaces, where accessible. Cheeks and ceilings of dormer windows and roof slopes can be over-boarded with insulated plasterboard to obtain greater energy efficiency if no insulation is evident
- 1.9. Loft hatches must be insulated and draught proofed.
- 1.10. Hot water tanks must be insulated and exposed hot water supply pipes must be insulated if passing through unheated areas. (Sub-floor spaces excepted)

- 1.11. Where houses are single glazed or poorly provided as regards wall insulation if cellar ceilings have been removed or the ceiling is in poor repair exposing floor joists there must be 150mm mineral fibre insulation fixed in place with chicken wire. It is important to maintain ventilation to cellars otherwise insulation and plasterwork will become wet with condensation. Where other insulation exists an individual assessment will be made to check its suitability.

## 2.0 Washing and sanitary facilities

- 2.1 There must be an adequate number of bathrooms, toilets and wash-hand basins suitable for personal washing for the number of persons sharing those facilities; and where reasonably practicable there must be a wash hand basin with appropriate splash back in each unit other than a unit in which a sink has been provided, having regard to the age and character of the HMO, the size and layout of each flat and its existing provision for wash hand basins, toilets and bathrooms
- 2.2 If bedrooms don't have wash hand basins, a normal sized wash hand basin is required to be available for every 5 persons. This should be in a suitably located bathroom or toilet compartment not more than two floors distant in relation to the sleeping accommodation
- 2.3 All baths, showers and wash hand basins in an HMO must be equipped with taps providing an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water each with a tiled, or equivalent, splash back area and:
- Any shower must have a waterproof surround and a shower screen/curtain.
  - If a shower is situated in a bath, tiles or equivalent must extend 1.5m from the shower head down the length of the bath, 150mm over the top of the shower head and 150mm past the side of a shower curtain to prevent damage to plasterwork
- 2.4 Bathrooms and toilet compartments must have adequate space to ensure their safe use. Any alterations to the bathroom and water closet need to comply with Building Regulation standards.
- 2.5 All bathrooms must be suitably and adequately heated and ventilated.
- 2.6 All toilets compartments should be fitted with a wash hand basin and the toilet and the wash hand basin must be fit for the purpose.
- 2.7 All bathrooms and toilets must be suitably located in or in relation to the living accommodation in the HMO.
- 2.8 "Suitably located bathrooms" means that they are not more than two floors distant in relation to the sleeping accommodation in shared accommodation and in houses converted into bedsitting rooms this is not more than one floor distant. (Going up and down a floor to access facilities on the same level as a bedroom would count as two storeys)
- 2.9 "Suitably located water-closet facilities" shall be not more than one floor distant from living and sleeping accommodation (Going up and down a floor to access facilities on the same level as a bedroom would count as two storeys).
- 2.10 Hot water may be provided by any of the following methods:
- Piped from storage or boiler e.g. combi and multipoint boilers.
  - Immersion Heater (including small immersion units with a minimum 10 litre storage reservoir).

- Existing 6kw instantaneous heaters are allowed to wash hand basins, subject to the electrical capacity of the house.
- Electric showers with a minimum rating of 8KW.

2.11 Any room provided with its own bathroom or toilet facilities shall be provided in a separate, ventilated compartment not more than 1 floor distant from the room.

2.12 Bathroom facilities shall be provided in accordance with the table below

Proposed Facilities per person sharing	WHB & WC (May be contained within the shower or bathroom)	Shower or Bath	Separate WC with WHB
1-4 Persons	1	1	-
5 Persons	-	1	1
6-8 Persons	2	2	-
9 Persons	1	2	1
10 Persons	2	2	1
11-12 Persons	3	3	-
13 Persons	2	3	1

### 3.0 Kitchens

- 3.1 There must be a kitchen, suitably located in relation to the living accommodation, having a suitable layout and size and equipped with adequate facilities so as to allow those sharing the facilities to store, prepare and cook food in a safe and hygienic manner. In particular, the design of the kitchen should allow for cookers to have 300mm of work surface either side of the cooker and where two cookers are next to each other 300mm between cookers. Cookers shall be positioned so that there is 900mm free space in front of cooker without door swings entering into that space (Door swings of kitchen cupboards are acceptable)
- 3.2 The kitchen must be equipped with the following equipment, which must be fit for the purpose and supplied in a sufficient quantity for the number of those sharing the facilities.
- 3.3 Cookers with a minimum of 4 rings, a standard sized oven and a grill-Cookers having 4 rings, an oven and a grill shall normally be provided at a ratio of one per 5 persons sharing the kitchen. Where an HMO is occupied by up to 7 persons the standard may be met by providing a microwave, or a cooker with more than 4 rings and more than one oven, in addition. For 8 persons two fully equipped cookers are required
- 3.4 Sinks with draining boards - Sinks shall normally be at the ratio of one sink for 6 persons. Where 7 persons occupy a house, the provision of a double-bowled sink & single drainer, or a dishwasher (in addition to a sink) may be treated as meeting this standard. Where there are either a combination of these additional facilities or other additional facilities e.g. the provision of a utility room available close by consideration may be given to allow 8 persons. Permission should be obtained prior to installation. Permission for suitable alternatives will not be unreasonably withheld. Each sink

supplied must have an adequate constant supply of cold and hot water to which can be provided by any of the following methods:

- Piped from storage or boiler
- Immersion heater
- 3KW heater with a 10-litre storage reservoir

- 3.5 Worktops for the preparation of food for up to 6 persons in shared kitchens shall normally be a minimum of 500mm depth with 2.0m length of worktop free of appliances (i.e. sinks, drainers, cookers, hobs and any microwave oven required above). For every 1 person over 6 persons there shall be a further 0.25m length of worktop
- 3.6 Food cupboards shall be the equivalent of a minimum of one 500mm wide base unit or wall cupboard per person. The space in a sink unit below the sink will not be acceptable. Refrigerators with an adequate freezer compartment or adequate separate freezers
- 3.7 Fridge space shall be a minimum 1 cubic foot (28 litres) of space per person in addition to the freezer compartment
- 3.8 There must be appropriate refuse disposal facilities;
- 3.9 There must be a fire blanket positioned close to the exit of the kitchen.
- 3.10 Kitchens shall be fitted with an appropriate electrically operated extractor fan. This shall be capable of achieving 6 air changes per hour this may be achieved by:
- A humidity controlled extractor fan extracting direct to the external air, fitted with a manual over-ride (recommended)
  - A humidity controlled centrifugal extractor fan extracting through ducting to the external air, fitted with a manual over-ride (recommended)
  - A humidity controlled fan incorporating heat recovery systems installed in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
  - An existing fan operated by a pull switch extracting direct to the external air (Any replacement fan to be one of the three types recommended above)
  - An existing Centrifugal fan operated by a pull switch extracting through ducting to the external air. (Any replacement fan to be one of the three types recommended above).
  - An existing built in cooker hood that extracts to the external air.
- 3.11 There must be dedicated sockets for appliances e.g. fridges or microwave ovens. In addition, the following sockets are required, to be located in a safe position above worktop height

	Double Sockets Above Worktop
1-5 Persons	2
6-8 Persons	3
9-12 persons	4

3.12 Where the landlord provides a catering service the facilities must comply with The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006. In addition, some self-catering facilities will need to be provided and the level of facilities required will be determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the level of provision by the landlord. We will provide advice on request.

## 4.0 Bedsits with kitchens

4.1 In bedsits with kitchen areas, adequate kitchen facilities must be provided to allow the storage, preparation and cooking of food in a safe and hygienic manner to the following minimum standard:

4.2 Two rings/hot plates together with a minimum of 1 cu. ft. (28 litres) oven and a grill. For occupancies of two persons, the minimum requirement is three rings/hot plates together with a full sized oven and grill. For occupancies of three or more persons a full size cooker is required. Cookers shall be positioned at a location and height to allow safe use

4.3 A sink with an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water;

4.4 A suitable work surface a minimum 0.5m deep and a length of 0.5m plus 0.5m per person using the facility shall be provided. A table in the kitchen area of suitable size and type may be considered an acceptable alternative for half of the requirement

4.5 Sufficient electrical sockets. A minimum of 3 single socket outlets shall be located above the work surface for the use of portable appliances in addition to any sockets for appliances required by these standards, situated in convenient positions for the user

4.6 Cupboards for the storage of kitchen utensils, crockery and food shall be required a minimum of one 500mm wide base unit or wall cupboard per person. The space located below the sink should not be treated as a food cupboard for the purpose of this standard

4.7 A refrigerator. (Fridge space shall be a minimum 1 cu. ft. (28 litres) of space per person plus a freezer compartment.) The fridge shall be capable of maintaining an internal temperature of 5°C

4.8 The standards referred to in this section regarding appliances do not apply where:

- the landlord is not contractually bound to provide such appliances or equipment;
- the occupier of accommodation is entitled to remove such appliances or equipment from the HMO; or
- the appliances or equipment are otherwise outside the control of the landlord

## 5.0 Refuse, Storage and Disposal

5.1 There must be refuse and recycling bins or containers in sufficient numbers and type for the needs of the house and compatible with the requirements of the refuse collection service.

5.2 All refuse containers must be located on hard-standings with suitable access for cleansing the area and removing the containers. They must be located away from habitable rooms and where reasonably practicable at the rear of the house unless a proper housing is provided at the front. Where reasonably practicable such containers shall be positioned so that bins do not obscure natural light from windows below bin height.

## 6.0 Electricity supply

6.1 Electrical socket outlets shall be provided to individual rooms or lettings to a minimum standard as follows:

	Single sockets ( Either)	Double sockets (Or)
Living rooms	4	2
Bedrooms/Studies	4	2
Bedrooms within multiple room lettings	4	2
Bedsits containing cooking facilities	3 in kitchen area 3 elsewhere in room	

6.2  
In separate kitchens at least 2 socket outlets

or one double socket must be located above the work surface for the use of portable appliances.

6.3 Electric cookers must be provided with a dedicated cooker point outlet suitable for the rating of the cooker and fixed electric space or water heating appliances shall be provided with a separate dedicated electric point.

## 7.0 Natural lighting

- 7.1 All habitable rooms should be provided with a window to provide sufficient natural light to allow normal daytime activity without the need for artificial lighting. The window should be of a size not less than 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the floor area of the room
- 7.2 All kitchens, bathrooms and toilet compartments shall ideally comply with the above requirement and the glazing in bathrooms and toilet compartments must be obscure. Where it is not practicable to provide natural light, adequate artificial lighting alone will be acceptable within kitchens, bathroom and WC compartments

## 8.0 Artificial lighting

- 8.1 All rooms, passageways, staircases and cellars in use shall be adequately lit with suitable switching, including two-way switching to stairs and passageways etc, as necessary

## 9.0 Ventilation

- 9.1 For habitable rooms with a window to external air - the openable area should be of a size not less than 1/20<sup>th</sup> of the floor area of the room. Alternatively, a suitable ventilation system may be provided in accommodation where non opening windows are required.
- 9.2 All bathrooms and water-closet compartments shall ideally comply with the paragraphs above, but where this is not practicable, mechanical ventilation with an overrun device providing a minimum of 6 air changes an hour shall be provided. This may be achieved by:
- A humidity controlled extractor fan extracting direct to the external air, fitted with a manual over-ride (recommended)
  - A humidity controlled centrifugal extractor fan extracting through ducting to the external air, fitted with a manual over-ride (recommended)
  - A humidity controlled fan incorporating heat recovery systems installed in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
  - An existing fan operated by a pull switch extracting direct to the external air (Any replacement fan to be one of the three types recommended above)
  - An existing Centrifugal fan operated by a pull switch extracting through ducting to the external air. (Any replacement fan to be one of the three types recommended above).
- 9.3 Where there are existing extraction arrangements that do not fit within examples 1 to 5 above but there are good reasons for the type of extraction fitted these will need to be individually approved and approval of such systems will not be unreasonably withheld.
- 9.4 Louvre windows are not acceptable in any circumstances
- 9.5 Windows opening onto walkways and across yards need to be fitted with restrictor stays to prevent them opening onto the thoroughfares

## 10.0 Space Standards for Rooms

- 10.1 Room sizes should comply with the standards set out below. All standards for floor space apply whatever the age of the occupants. The standards detail three types of premises,
- Bed sitting rooms, and flats with cooking facilities.



- Shared accommodation
- Hostel type accommodation with catering provided by the management

10.2 The calculation of room size only takes into consideration that part of the room where the ceiling height is greater than 1.5m, and assumes the majority of the room to be of a reasonable height and free of potentially injurious obstructions.

10.3 For the purpose of these floor space standards the space taken by any bathroom facilities will be disregarded.

10.4 Various room sizes are as follows:

Two or more room units with cooking, living and sleeping facilities	
Each single bedroom	6.52m <sup>2</sup> (70 sq. ft)
Each double bedroom	10.23m <sup>2</sup> (110 sq. ft)
Each living room single person units	9.0m <sup>2</sup> (97sq. ft)
Each living room, two persons units	10.0m <sup>2</sup> (108sq ft)
Each living/ kitchen, or living/bedroom single person unit	11m <sup>2</sup> (120 sq. ft)
Each living/ kitchen, or living/bedroom two person unit	13.9m <sup>2</sup> (150 sq. ft)
One room unit of accommodation with cooking, living and sleeping facilities	
One room for one person	13.0m <sup>2</sup> (140 sq. ft)
One room for 2 persons	18.6m <sup>2</sup> (200 sq. ft)

Bedroom/studies	
Bedroom/study for one person where there is no separate living room or living area in a kitchen/living room	10.2m <sup>2</sup> (110 sq. ft)
Bedroom/study for two persons living together as a couple where there is no separate living room or living area in a kitchen/living room	14.9m <sup>2</sup> (160 sq. ft)
Bedroom for one person where a separate living area is provided	6.52m <sup>2</sup> (70 sq. ft)

Bedroom for two persons living together as a couple where a separate living area is provided	10.23m <sup>2</sup> (110 sq. ft)
Bedroom for two persons <b>not</b> living together as a couple where a separate living area is provided * (see below)	13.0m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Rooms used as a living room only</b>	
Up to 6 occupants	11.5m <sup>2</sup>
7 occupants	14m <sup>2</sup>
8 occupants and above	16m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Rooms used as a living/dining/kitchen</b>	
Up to 5 occupants	12.5m <sup>2</sup>
6 occupants	15m <sup>2</sup>
7 occupants	17m <sup>2</sup>
Additional area for each occupant above 7	2m <sup>2</sup>

\* All persons sharing rooms on a non-couple basis will have to agree in writing.

<b>Minimum Floor Area for Bedrooms in Hostels</b>	
(Bedrooms that accommodate up to 4 members of the same household may be permitted, but in all other cases there shall be a maximum of two persons of the same-sex in a room. The bedrooms to have minimum floor area as follows:)	
1 person	6.52m <sup>2</sup> (70 sq. ft)
2 persons	10.23m <sup>2</sup> (110 sq. ft)
3 persons	16.3m <sup>2</sup> (175 sq. ft)
4 persons	20.9m <sup>2</sup> (225 sq. ft)

## 11.0 Other standards

- 11.1 Houses let to groups on a shared basis do not need to have locks to bedroom doors. Where a group is gathered together by the landlord, the university or anyone else other than the group themselves then locks will be required to bedroom doors. Any such locks shall open from the inside of the room without the use of a key. Where a bedroom also comprises a means of escape a special lock will be required detailed in paragraph 19.4 below.
- 11.2 Management Regulations apply to the property made under Section 234 of the housing Act 2004. It will be a licensing requirement that houses shall also comply with the requirements of the management regulations.
- 11.3 A Carbon Monoxide (CO) detector is required for any property with a gas or solid fuel fire, boiler or gas oven/hob. This must be to BS EN 50291:2001. The CO detector must be fitted in a suitable location, following the manufacturer's specific fitting instructions. Where there are multiple gas appliances additional detectors must be provided and positioned in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. The CO detector must be tested 12 monthly by the landlord and at the commencement of new tenancies, using the manufacturer's instructions.
- 11.4 All accommodation above shops etc. shall have separate water, gas and electric supplies to the shops, separately metered as appropriate. Access to meters, fuse-boards and gas and water cut offs shall be readily available.

## Section 2 - The Fire Standards

### 12.0 Introduction

- 12.1 These fire standards are based on the Housing Fire Safety guidance published by the Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACoRS) for houses whose occupiers who are considered a normal risk and in some even as lower risk. Accommodation occupied by higher risk tenants such as hotels and motels, large hostels, refuges, family accommodation centres and half-way houses; will need an individual assessment, as will houses with a mix of bedsitting rooms and flats. In addition, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) may also apply. This places a burden on the responsible person to carry out a Fire Risk Assessment for the purposes of identifying general fire precautions and any other measures needed to comply with the FSO.
- 12.2 In this section, we have aimed to cover the general principles about fire safety and protection as well as showing some example house layouts to help you apply the fire precautions appropriately. We will develop further floor layouts for our website, but if you are unsure about whether your particular property is covered, please contact us, as we may need to do a separate assessment with the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

### 13.0 Achieving the standards

- 13.1 Our overall aim is to improve the standard of private rented properties in Sheffield. This includes making sure they are safe for the residents that occupy them and that they have excellent standards of fire protection. Therefore, when carrying out any initial conversion works, or refurbishing your property - you must always upgrade to the highest specification or recommendation in these standards. For existing properties, officers will look at a range of factors that will influence the level of risk – and apply the fire safety standards accordingly.
- 13.2 In the licence we send to you, we will always indicate timescales for completing any upgrading works, but we aim to be flexible where possible. However, works with high risk factors must always be prioritised. We will give advice about what is expected to achieve the required standard, but recognise that there may be other construction methods that achieve the same effect. Please contact us if you are unsure about any aspects of these standards.

### 14.0 Definitions

- 14.1 Throughout this section, we will make reference to the following terms;

**Shared house** Shared Houses are HMOs where the whole property has been rented out to an identifiable group of sharers such as students, work colleagues or friends as joint tenants. They will usually have rented out the house as one group and there will usually be one single joint tenancy agreement. In summary, although technically an HMO, the group will possess many of the characteristics of a single family household. For a full description see Lacors Fire guidance

**Storey** A storey is a complete floor level commencing at the main access at ground level.

A cellar/basement will be considered to be a storey where it is used for a washing machine or a bathroom or for recreational activities. Use for the situation of a boiler or gas/electric meters will not be considered use as a storey in considering whether a licence is or is not required.

## Escape route

This is the route that residents will have to travel along to get out of the property if there is an emergency. This could be a hallway/ corridor on all floors but could also be through another room such as a ground floor kitchen or bed/living room. The escape route should always be free of any obstructions and/or fire risks including any portable electric, gas or oil heaters, any fixed heaters using a portable heating source such as liquefied gas, any cooking facilities and any furniture or storage.

The escape route will usually be to the street. Where the primary escape route discharges into a rear enclosed area there shall be escape from the area without the use of a key or a coded lock or the area shall extend back from the external elevation of the property a distance greater than the height of the elevation.

## 15.0 General principles

- 15.1 There are some general principles that apply to all house types, and these are shown below. Again, if your property falls outside of these general principles, please contact us. Please read all the paragraphs in these sections in conjunction with each other to see the full range of fire protection expected.
- 15.2 You should always achieve 30 minutes fire separation – this includes walls, ceilings and doors except as provided in paragraph 16.3 below.
- 15.3 Smoke detectors must be hard wired and interlinked and comply with recommendations within BS 5839, Part 6. You can see more information about this below
- 15.4 All kitchens must have heat detectors that are hard wired, interlinked to the main system with a battery back up
- 15.5 Polystyrene ceiling and wall tiles are not permitted
- 15.6 External doors and any bedroom doors fitted with locks require a lock that can be operated from the inside without the use of a key (see also paragraph 19.4 for where an internal door is on a means of escape) Standard night latch locks are not recommended due the frequency of lock-outs,
- 15.7 Overall travel distances to escape must not be excessive
- 15.8 Fire blankets must be provided in all kitchens and bedsitting rooms with cooking facilities

## The Fire Specifications

### 16.0 The escape route

- 16.1 In the examples, you will see the escape route shaded yellow.
- 16.2 Other than provided in paragraph 16.3 below 30 minutes fire separation to the walls and ceilings of the escape route is required. The usual way to achieve this is by the installation of 12.5mm plasterboard and skim with 30 minute fire doors and frames. Suitable alternative methods of achieving 30 minutes construction may be accepted.
- 16.3 In existing low risk 3 storey shared houses with a direct means of escape lath and plaster construction in sound condition and doors of solid construction, close fitting, fitted with self-closers and appropriate intumescent seals will be acceptable. For the avoidance of doubt, panels in panel doors should be a minimum of 8mm depth and eggbox construction doors are not acceptable. Houses with a travel distance of over 18m do not fall into this category. Where the walls/doors of a room are below 30 minutes fire resistance we recommend that those rooms are fitted with a smoke alarm connected to the fire alarm system.

- 16.4 All escape routes require a smoke detection and alarm system as detailed below
- 16.5 All houses will require some lighting to aid escape in case of emergency as follows:
- In houses of bedsitting rooms and a mix of bedsitting rooms and flats and HMOs of 4 storeys or those with long escape routes, emergency lighting to BS 5266 will be required.
  - In smaller shared houses the fire escape route will usually need additional illumination in case of mains failure. This will be from emergency lighting fittings covering changes of direction and staircases. Alternatively, a risk assessment will need to be submitted by the landlord on our pre-prepared form showing that the premises have effective existing natural and borrowed lighting for means of escape purposes. This assessment will need to be made during the hours of least natural and artificial illumination. i.e after midnight and on a moonless night.
- 16.6 Internal staircases and the cellar steps if the cellar is in general use for the feeding of meters and operation of the consumer unit, shall have adequate handrails on any flight greater than 600mm. Balustrades are required where there is a drop to the side of a staircase or steps of 600mm or greater. Balustrades shall be constructed to prevent a sphere of 100mm passing through and balustrades should avoid having horizontal bars/planks which can be used for climbing.
- 16.7 External staircases and steps leading up to the house and to any other steps providing a means of escape shall have adequate handrails on any flight greater than 600mm. Balustrades are required where there is a drop off the side of a staircase or steps of 600mm or greater. Balustrades shall be constructed to prevent a sphere of 100mm passing through and balustrades should avoid having horizontal bars/planks which can be used for climbing.
- 16.8 Signage will be required on complex escape routes to indicate the means of escape e.g. where the routes have more than two changes of direction to get to the main staircase or if at the foot of the main staircase there is a change of direction and the onward escape route is not visible.
- 16.9 For emergency lighting to comply with BS 5266 it must be subject to routine inspections and tests. For new systems, the model certificate of completion must be provided. This model certificate can be seen in the Appendix to the British Standard.

## 17.0 Cellars and basements

- 17.1 If there is some storage and/or habitable use of the cellar, then there must be 30 minutes fire resistance to the entire cellar ceiling and cellar head. This includes when appliances are plugged into sockets in the cellar itself. (The preferred way of providing fire protection (and insulation) to the cellar ceiling is to fix 150mm of mineral fibre insulating material between the joists and held in place by chicken wire)
- 17.2 If cellars are only used for access to meters, then we require 30 minutes fire separation between the cellar and those areas of the house that form the escape route
- 17.3 Regarding the above fire resistance, suitable alternative construction may be accepted, providing it is in sound condition and there is a good range of fire protection in the property – particularly mains interlinked fire detection system
- 17.4 Storage of domestic items at the cellar head is permitted. Where ceilings under rooms not forming the escape route are insulated with exposed plastics or polystyrene or other materials the insulation must provide a low surface spread of flame

## 18.0 Fire detection and alarm system

- 18.1 In shared houses (as defined in Section 35 of Lacors fire guidance) with normal risk occupants automatic fire alarm and detection system with detectors in circulation areas forming the escape route is required to BS 5839: Part 6 (2004) Grade D LD3 plus. Smoke detectors will be required to:
- the ground floor hallway
  - First and second floor landing
  - Ground floor living room (if separated from the kitchen area)
  - Cellar compartment adjacent to the meters (and the cellar head where there are electrical appliances in use)
  - Heat detector to the kitchen if accessed directly from the common escape route.
- 18.2 In other shared accommodation (outside the Lacors shared house guidance) with higher risk occupants (and shared houses where the occupants do not form a group) automatic fire alarm and detection system with detectors in circulation areas forming the escape route is required to BS 5839: Part 6 (2004) Grade D LD1. Smoke detectors will be required to:
- the ground floor hallway
  - First and second floor landing
  - Each living room (if separated from the kitchen area)
  - Each bedroom
  - Cellar compartment adjacent to the meters (and the cellar head where there are electrical appliances in use)
  - Heat detector to the kitchen if accessed directly from the common escape route.
- An existing BS 5839: Part 6 (2004) Grade A LD2 will be accepted providing it is maintained in accordance with the risk assessment for the house.
- 18.3 Detection to houses let out as bedsitting rooms (not blocks of flats or houses comprising a mix of bedsitting rooms and flats will require individual assessment), is required to BS 5839: Part 6 (2004) Grade A LD2. This type of system requires a control panel, manual call points, located next to final exits and fire proof cabling where necessary. In bedsitting rooms with cooking facilities additional individual detectors not linked to the alarm system of the house are required to BS 5839, Part 6 (2004) Grade D. Detectors are required as follows linked to the detection system of the house unless otherwise stated:
- To the ground floor hallway
  - First and second floor landing
  - Cellar compartment adjacent to the meters (and the cellar head where there are electrical appliances in use)
  - Heat detector to the bedsitting rooms with cooking facilities if accessed directly from the common escape route
  - Individual mains powered smoke alarms not linked to the escape system of the house to bedsitting rooms with cooking facilities.
- 18.4 High risk properties, high risk tenancies and blocks of self-contained flats and houses with a mix of bedsitting rooms and flats will require a separate individual assessment.

- 18.5 The following general rules will apply to all alarm system types:
- 18.6 One detector may be sufficient for each landing, however, when positioning smoke detectors, no point within the hallway or corridor should exceed 7.5m from the nearest detector
- 18.7 If detectors are not provided in bedrooms the bedroom door should be no further than approximately 3m from the nearest smoke alarm. Where the access door to a bedroom is on the storey below, smoke detection will be required in the bedroom
- 18.8 Detectors should be suitably positioned, preferably mounted on ceilings and should be located at least 300mm horizontally from any wall or light fitting
- 18.9 Where cellars are used only for access to meters a smoke detector interlinked to the detection system within the rest of the house is required in close proximity to those meters
- 18.10 An additional smoke detector will be required at the cellar head where there is a power outlet for the operation of domestic appliances e.g. a washing machine or refrigerator/freezer in use at the head of the cellar steps. The storage of small portable electrical appliances such as vacuum cleaners etc. would not require an additional detector at the cellar head
- 18.11 In rooms or areas where there are bulkheads or projections down from the ceiling which are greater in depth than 10% of the floor to ceiling height where fire alarm and detection systems are required these areas will be classed as separate compartments each of which will require its own detector

## 19.1 Internal doors

- 19.1 All doors required to ensure 30 minutes fire resistance where there is a fire risk room other than provided for in section 16.3 above.
- 19.2 Fire doors should preferably be installed with a matching frame. Alternatively, fire doors can be fitted to existing frames where the frames are of sound construction and in good condition. Door frames and rebates should also give half hour fire resistance and the fire doors should be hung on a minimum of 3 x100mm hinges
- 19.3 Fire doors should be fitted with appropriate self-closers (to BS 476, Part 2) matched to the weight of the fire door that will close the door firmly against the rebates
- 19.4 Doors should be latched or fitted with a roller ball and keep to ensure that they cannot be opened by a draught in a fire situation. Where locks are fitted, the lock must have a thumb turn lock on the inside. Where a lock is required to a room that is on the means of escape, the lock shall be a type that can be overridden in the case of emergency. Keys in break glass boxes are not permitted.
- 19.5 Where examples show that seals are required, doors to rooms containing a smoke detector shall be fitted with intumescent strips and cold smoke seals.
- 19.6 Doors to rooms with only a heat detector or no detection should be fitted with intumescent strips only
- 19.7 From 1 October 2009 all new fire door ironmongery must be half hour fire resisting standard. Ironmongery to this standard usually carries the CE mark. Other ironmongery that is a minimum half hour fire resisting standard and complies with British Standards is acceptable
- 19.8 Where a vision panel is required in a fire door, it must be of equal fire resistance to the door



- 19.9 Sound doors of solid construction, close fitting and self-closing may be acceptable if they are improved in accordance with BS 476 and certified as such

## 20.0 Fire-fighting equipment

- 20.1 Fire blankets are required and must be situated away from the cooker but close to the exit door of every kitchen.
- 20.2 Any existing fire extinguishers can be retained only if they are serviced annually, they are covered by a risk assessment and training issued to all tenants at the commencement of the tenancy.

## 21.0 Floor coverings

- 21.1 On escape routes these should comply with BS 5287. As a general rule, for existing carpets a mix of 80% wool and 20% synthetic fibre will comply. Most vinyl and linoleum is not suitable for escape routes. Where new carpeting is provided it should be labelled to BS 5287 or the European equivalent as a low radius of fire spread (up to 35mm)













## 22.0 Escape windows

- 22.1 An escape window must have a minimum unobstructed opening area of 0.33m<sup>2</sup> and a minimum dimension of 450mm height and width. Please note that whilst the minimum dimension in either the height or width is 450mm to achieve 0.33m<sup>2</sup> opening area a minimum 735mm will be required for the other dimension. Escape windows can only serve rooms where the floor level is less than 4.5m from the outside ground which should be level and free from obstructions. The window shall open from the inside without the use of a removable key. The cill height of the opening area of the window should not be more than 1.1m from floor level. To be counted as an escape window, the occupiers of the rooms must be able bodied individuals who can be expected to exit via the window unaided

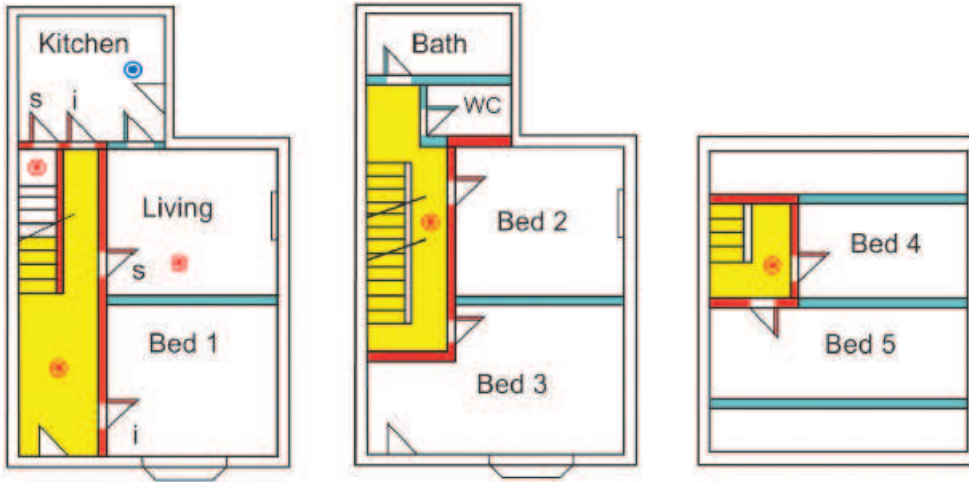
## 23.0 Examples

- 23.1 Here is a key and 3 examples of property floor plans to show how the standards apply. There are more floor plans/layouts available on our website. If your property falls outside of these plans or you cannot find a suitable example please contact us for advice.

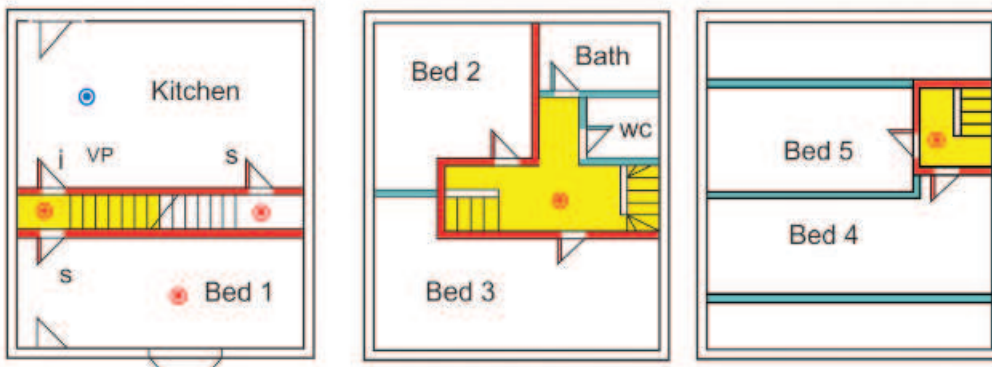
## Key

	External/Party Wall		Solid Construction Door with self closer
	Sound Construction Wall		30 Minute Fire Door with self closer
	30 Minute Fire Resistance		External Door Fitted with Thumb Turn Lock
	Escape Route		Staircase
	Interlinked Smoke Detector	i	Intumescent Strip
	Independent Smoke Detector	s	Smoke Seal
	Heat Detector	VP	Vision Panel
	N6 – Break Glass Call Point		

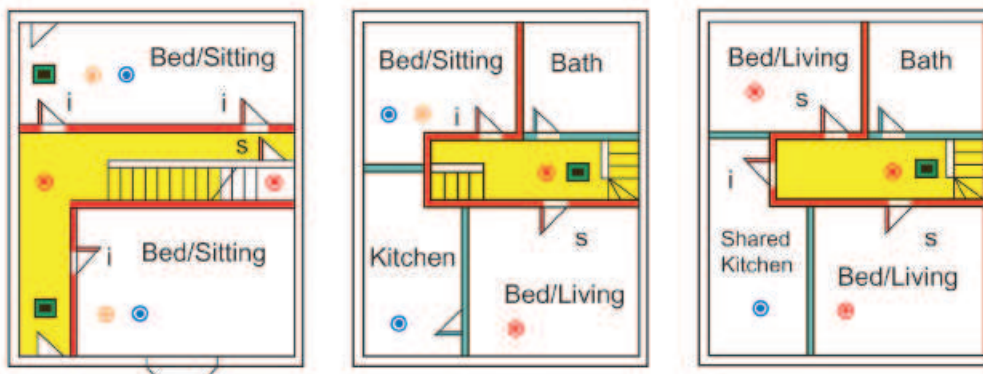
**Example 1** – This is an example of a 3 storey, 5/6 bed HMO with a Grade D LD3 fire alarm system and a direct escape route.



**Example 2** – This is an example of a 3 storey 5 bed HMO with a Grade D LD3 fire alarm system and no direct escape route.



**Example 3** – This is an example of a 3 storey bedsit HMO with a Grade A LD2 fire alarm system with a direct escape route.



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[Print this page](#)

## Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation

### Introductory Information

**Reference number**

959

**Budget/project proposal name**

Approval of new HMO Licensing standards

**Entered on Q Tier**
 Yes  No

**Budget/project proposal status**

Project

**Years**

12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**EIA date**

01/09/2016

**EIA lead**

Louise.Nunn@sheffield.gov.uk

**EIA contact**

Louise.Nunn@sheffield.gov.uk

**Lead corporate plan priority**

Thriving Neighbourhoods and Communities

### Portfolio, Service and Team

**Cross portfolio**
 Yes  No

**Communities**
 Yes  No

**Service**

Housing Services

**Team**

Private Housing Standards

**CYPF**
 Yes  No

**Place**
 Yes  No

**Resources**
 Yes  No

**PPC**

Yes  No

**Health (including Director of Public Health)**

Yes  No

**Brief aim(s) of the proposal and the outcome(s) you want to achieve**

To approve revised standards for licensable HMOs part of which will also be used as overcrowding standards for non-licensable HMOs in Sheffield. This is a local set of standards but incorporating national minimum standards.

**Specialist Provision****Proposal impacts on or relates to specialist provision**

Yes  No

**Poverty (Financial Inclusion)****Proposal has an impact on poverty or financial inclusion**

Yes  No

**Health****Proposal has significant impact on health and well-being (including effects on the wider determinants of health)**

Yes  No

**Public Health Leads has signed off the health impact(s) of this EIA**

Yes  No

**Health lead**

Select...

**Age****Staffing**

Yes  No

**Customers**

Yes  No

**Disability****Staffing**

Yes  No

**Customers**

Yes  No

**Pregnancy/maternity****Staffing**

Yes  No

#### Customers

Yes  No

#### Race

##### Staffing

Yes  No

##### Customers

Yes  No

##### Impact

Neutral

##### Level

None/Low

##### Details on impact

The standards increase floor space standards for singles sharing rooms and make it a requirement for people to agree to room share. This happens most in Asylum Seeker properties and amongst the Chinese student community. The standards will apply to new licences (and variations to existing licences) and any existing overoccupancy will be allowed to continue until the existing occupancy has come to the end of their tenancy.

##### Supporting evidence

##### Action plan

Yes  No

#### Religion/belief

##### Staffing

Yes  No

##### Customers

Yes  No

#### Sex

##### Staffing

Yes  No

##### Customers

Yes  No

#### Sexual Orientation

##### Staffing

Yes  No

##### Customers

Yes  No

#### Transgender

**Staffing**

Yes  No

**Customers**

Yes  No

**Carers**

**Staffing**

Yes  No

**Customers**

Yes  No

**Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors**

**Staffing**

Yes  No

**Customers**

Yes  No

**Cohesion**

**Customers**

Yes  No

**Partners**

**Customers**

Yes  No

**Armed Forces**

**Staffing**

Yes  No

**Customers**

Yes  No

**Other/Additional**

**Staffing**

Yes  No

**Customers**

Yes  No

**Supporting Documentation**

HMO Standards 2016 final.doc

**Summary of Impact**



**Overall summary of possible impact**

From our experience room sharing is most common by some BME communities and asylum seekers. Rooms currently used for two singles will be prevented from such occupation when the properties next require a licence if the room sizes are too small. The licence conditions would not lead to the eviction of any occupants as the new standard will only apply upon a change of room occupancy.

**Proposal has geographical impact across Sheffield**

Yes  No

**Which local partnership area will be impacted**

All Partnership Areas

**Proposal has a cumulative**

impact  Yes  No

**Summary of evidence**

Whilst rooms occupied by Chinese student communities are confined to student areas, asylum seeker properties are present across the City

**Review****Review date****Risk rating**

Low

**Decision Type****Type of decision**

Individual Cabinet Member

**Lead cabinet member**

Dunn Jayne (LAB CLLR)

**Staff****Staff who may be affected by these proposals are aware**

Yes  No

**Consultation****Consultation**

required  Yes  No

**Manager and Approval****Lead officer**

Rotherham Paul (NCC)

**EIA approved**

Yes  No

EIA escalated due to significant poverty impact and Page 60

Yes

No

Form complete

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**SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL**

**CALL-IN PROCESS FOR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

I RICHARD SHAW (Name of Member in Block Capitals)  
under the provision of Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16, wish to call-in Item No. N/A  
relating to APPROVAL OF NEW HMO LICENSING STANDARDS  
of the meeting of .....(meeting title)  
on 23/2/2017 (date) for consideration by the  
SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES Scrutiny Committee.

*The relevant Scrutiny Committee will be indicated on the Checklist within the report relating to this matter.*

**Reason for Call-In**

TO DETERMINE WHETHER IT IS CLEAR ENOUGH FOR TENANTS  
AND LANDLORDS AND ROBUST ENOUGH TO BE ENFORCED, AND  
THAT THERE SUFFICIENT COUNCIL RESOURCES TO DO SO

Signed [Signature] Date 1/3/2017

I have obtained the following signatures of the other Members who wish to call-in this item:-

Name (in Block Capitals)	Signature
1. <u>ADAM HANZAHAN</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
2. <u>PENNY BAKER</u>	<u>Penelope A. Baker</u>
3. <u>ANDREW SANGAR</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
4. <u>STEVE AYRIS</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>

(NOTE: Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16 requires five Members, including two from the appropriate Scrutiny Committee to 'call-in' an Executive decision for scrutiny. This can be done **up to 4 working days after the decision publication.**

*The five signatures required for the call-in process must be submitted by the deadline date, but need not all be on one form.*

**Completed forms to be returned to the  
Head of Democratic Services (Room G13/14, Town Hall),  
by the deadline referred to above.**

**The request will be logged and forwarded to Policy and Improvement Team  
for action.**

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## Approval of New HMO Licensing Standards Briefing Note

### 1. Background Information

- 1.1. The Council are under a legal duty to enforce property and management standards in all Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) also known as shared houses.
- 1.2. Mandatory licensing of the **larger** shared houses has been in force since 2006. This is generally houses that have 5 bedrooms or more – over 3 floors or more.
- 1.3. This means that all owners/landlords must apply to the Council for a licence to ‘operate’ the house. The licence states the standards that the house must achieve, and also contains various other licence conditions. For example; it will stipulate the type of fire detection and protection and the number of bathrooms required.
- 1.4. The existing HMO Licensing standards were largely set in 2005 in preparation for the new law coming in. They were varied in 2009. Those standards complied with the National Minimum standards and clarify what we accept in Sheffield in terms of any specifics.
- 1.5. The following issues have been incorporated into the new standards;
  - 1) The Council developed standards for the Page Hall Selective Licensing area which, in some cases were higher and more detailed than the existing HMO Standards. It is ideal to get conformity between the two sets of standards where appropriate
  - 2) Standards of insulation are included for the first time
  - 3) The requirement for Carbon Monoxide detectors is included for the first time
- 1.6. The publishing of the standards allows landlords to bring properties up to the correct standard prior to applying for licensing/letting. The majority of landlords are up to speed on technical matters relating to the business they operate in. Indeed, if they were not aware at all – it would be of great concern to us! We are very proud of our excellent working relationship with the vast majority of landlords and we constantly encourage them to seek our advice on anything they are not sure of, or disagree with. The legislation provides for technical officers to operate with discretion to ensure all works are justified and proportionate.
- 1.7. The document is not intended for a tenant audience, as it is by definition ‘technical’. However, we provide a range of advice leaflets and again encourage anyone that is concerned about their home or a potential new home to contact us for advice.
- 1.8. The standards have been in consultation for a number of months, involving landlords the fire service and officers in the team. It has been approved by our own legal services. It has also been scrutinised by the solicitor acting for the Sheffield Student Landlord Association, who was also the policy director of the Residential Landlord Association. He has worked with us to ensure that the standards are clear.

- 1.9. All licensed properties are inspected, and any shortfalls from the standards are detailed in a schedule for the landlord. Prior to issue of a licence, the proposed licence holder and manager are sent a draft of the proposed licence and condition for the purpose of them seeking clarity or making representations before the final licence is confirmed.
- 1.10. There are enough Council resources to implement and enforce HMO licensing. This is because the full costs associated the scheme is met from licence fees collected from the applicants.
- 1.11. Setting these new standards has little or no effect upon finances or the staffing required to administer the licences. We continue to have successful enforcement and prosecution cases against landlords that have failed to licence, or have breached their licence conditions.

### Summary

- The Council has a statutory duty to administer mandatory licensing of eligible HMOs.
- The standards were originally set in 2005, and were amended in 2009. It is correct that they are reviewed from time to time to ensure they incorporate any changes required by legislation or local circumstances.
- They are intended for landlords and agents, and they have been consulted throughout the review period. Less technical information and advice is available for tenants so they understand what standards their property should meet.
- The HMO licensing scheme is fully funded through the licence fees received from all applicants, so is fully resourced without being a burden on the General Fund.



Paul Rotherham, Legal & Policy Officer  
27 March 2017

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## Report to Safer and Stronger Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017

**Report of:** Executive Director, Place

**Subject:** The work of the Police and Crime Panel

**Author of Report:** Julia Cayless, Partnership and Performance Manager,  
Anti-social Behaviour and Community Safety Team,  
Sheffield City Council. Julia.cayless@sheffield.gov.uk

**Summary:** This report will provide information on the work of the Police and Crime Panel between October 2016 and February 2017

**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	<b>x</b>
Other	

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

The committee is asked to note the report.

**Background Papers:**

- Police and Crime Panel Meeting Papers - [Friday, 16 December 2016](#)
- Police and Crime Panel Meeting Papers - [Tuesday, 7 February 2017](#)
- Police and Crime Panel Meeting Papers - [Friday, 24 February 2017](#)

Meeting papers are publically available via: <http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/pcp/>

**Category of Report:** OPEN

# **Report of the Executive Director, Place**

## **The work of the Police and Crime Panel**

### **1. Introduction/Context**

- 1.1 The police and crime panel (PCP) has the power to scrutinise PCC activities, including the ability to review the police and crime plan and annual report, veto decisions such as the amount of the policing precept in council tax, request PCC papers and call the PCC and Chief Constable to public hearings. The panel can also seek a professional view from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) regarding potential dismissals of the Chief Constable.
- 1.2 The PCP includes councillors from each district of South Yorkshire (Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield) plus two co-opted independent members, making twelve in total.
- 1.3 The Police and Crime Panel also rule over any complaints made against the Police and Crime Commissioner. In 2015/16 the Police and Crime Panel received 7 complaints. 4 complaints about the current PCC and 3 complaints in relation to the former PCC.

### **2. Main body of report**

- 2.1 The PCC's governance arrangements, including the Joint Corporate Governance Framework were under review as advised at the December meeting. Included as part of this section of the meeting was an overview of the following additional arrangements.
  - *JlAC Joint Independent Audit Committee*
  - *The Independent Ethics Panel*
  - *Independent Advisory Panel for Minority Communities*
  - *Independent Policing Protests Advisory Panel*
  - *Independent Custody Visitors*
- 2.2 The Panel was advised at the December meeting of the findings of the HMIC Inspection 2016. The full report was published on 3rd November 2016.

South Yorkshire Police was assessed under three separate categories.

- *Police Effectiveness Inspection 2016 the Inspection took place on 17<sup>th</sup> October and the findings if this will be published in spring 2017.*
- *Police Efficiency Inspection 2016 the findings of this inspection will be published in spring 2017.*

- *Legitimacy & Leadership the HMIC published its annual Peel Assessments of all 43 forces in England and Wales.*
- 2.3 Included in the main reports pack were responses from Dr Billings and the Chief Constable to the reports and any subsequent recommendations.
- 2.4 Also included in the December meeting was an overview of the budget position for 2016/17, with a guidance note that the Government will announce details of the finance settlement for 2017 /18 week commencing 12<sup>th</sup> December.
- 2.5 Also discussed at the December meeting was the Home Office Guidance relating to the scrutiny of precepts in line with Schedule 5 of the Police and Social Responsibility Act 2011 which give clear guidance relating to the Police & Crime Panel's role of reviewing the proposed precept for the financial period 2017/18.
- 2.6 Also of note from the December meeting:
- *The Governance arrangements of the PCC*
  - *The financial position of South Yorkshire Police and the Office of the PCC*
  - *The implementation of the recommendations of the peer review of South Yorkshire Police*
  - *Scrutiny of the Police & Crime Plan*
- 2.6 Of particular interest from the December meeting was the request from the PCC to the Police & Crime Panel that they contribute to the Strategic Planning Process to inform the forth coming Police & Crime Plan.

### **Governance Arrangements**

- 2.7 The Police & Crime Panel specifically requested that a memorandum of understanding be prepared to manage the relationship between itself and the PCC.
- 2.8 A review of this document to take place in the period prior to the meeting of the panel in February 2017, it was envisaged that further consultation with the office of the PCC would take place in the intervening period.
- 2.9 The main agenda item from the February 2017 meeting of the Police & Crime Panel was the requirement under the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011 for the Police & Crime Commissioner to issue a new Police & Crime Plan as soon as practical after being elected to the post.

- 2.10 The plan is to be written with due consultation with the Chief Constable together with any recommendations which may have been forthcoming from the Police & Crime Panel.
- 2.11 The key points for consideration when varying or issuing an existing plan are detailed below.
- *Prepare a draft of the plan for variation*
  - *Consult the relevant Chief Constable*
  - *Forward the draft plan or amendments to the Police & Crime Panel*
  - *Give due regard to the comments or recommendations made by the Police & Crime Panel in relation to the draft plan or variation.*
  - *Provide the Police & Crime Panel a response to the protocols or amendments.*
- 2.12 Additional consultation is also carried out with a broad range of key stakeholders which has included consultation with community groups and representatives from Local Authorities. The recurrent theme that has been forth coming has been the desire to feel and to be safe.
- 2.13 The priorities that the PCC in conjunction with the Police & Crime Panel that have been agreed for the 2017-2021 are detailed below:
- Protecting Vulnerable People.
  - Tackling Crime & Anti – Social Behaviour.
  - Enabling Fair Treatment.
- 2.14 A recommendation was given to the Police & Crime Panel that they consider the plan and any comments to be passed to the Commissioner by the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March.

## **Finance**

- 2.15 The Government has advised that over the lifetime of the spending review funding to policing bodies will remain static in cash terms, with any additional monies to be met by efficiency savings and any underspend.
- 2.16 At the meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> of February 2017 the Police & Crime Panel supported the proposal of the Police & Crime Commissioner to increase the Council Tax Band D property by £5.

## **The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014**

- 2.17 The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 came into being on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August 2014.
- 2.18 The regulations allow entry to meetings of specified local government bodies for the purposes of reporting, and to allow the results of reporting to be disseminated and published.
- 2.19 The South Yorkshire Police & Crime Panel is deemed to be a joint committee of the four constituent authorities and as such is covered by the regulations.
- 2.20 It was recommended to the Panel adopt the protocol as included in the main reports pack included for the meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2017, which will ensure that meetings are compliant with the Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014.
- 2.21 Failure to adopt this protocol could result in the Police & Crime Panel having little or no control over what could or could not be recorded at meetings of the above group.

### **4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 The committee is asked to note the report.
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## Report to Safer and Stronger Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

**Subject:** Hate Crime and Hate Incidents 1<sup>st</sup> March 2015 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017

**Author of Report:** Adele Walker, Partnership Analyst,  
Julia Cayless, Partnership and Performance Manager,  
Anti-social Behaviour and Community Safety Team

**Summary:**

1. Hate crime is gaining increasing precedence in national and local crime prevention priorities.
2. Increasing awareness and responses to hate crime has resulted in an increase in reporting both nationally and locally.
3. Over the last two years, there has been an upward trend in the volume of hate crime and hate incidents reported to South Yorkshire Police, with much of the last year seeing above average volumes.
4. Recorded volumes of hate crimes and incidents have increased by 57% from 2015/6 – 2016/7.

**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	<b>x</b>
Other	

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

The Committee is asked to consider the findings.

**Background Papers:**

None

**Category of Report:** OPEN

# **Report of the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services**

## **Hate Crime and Hate Incidents**

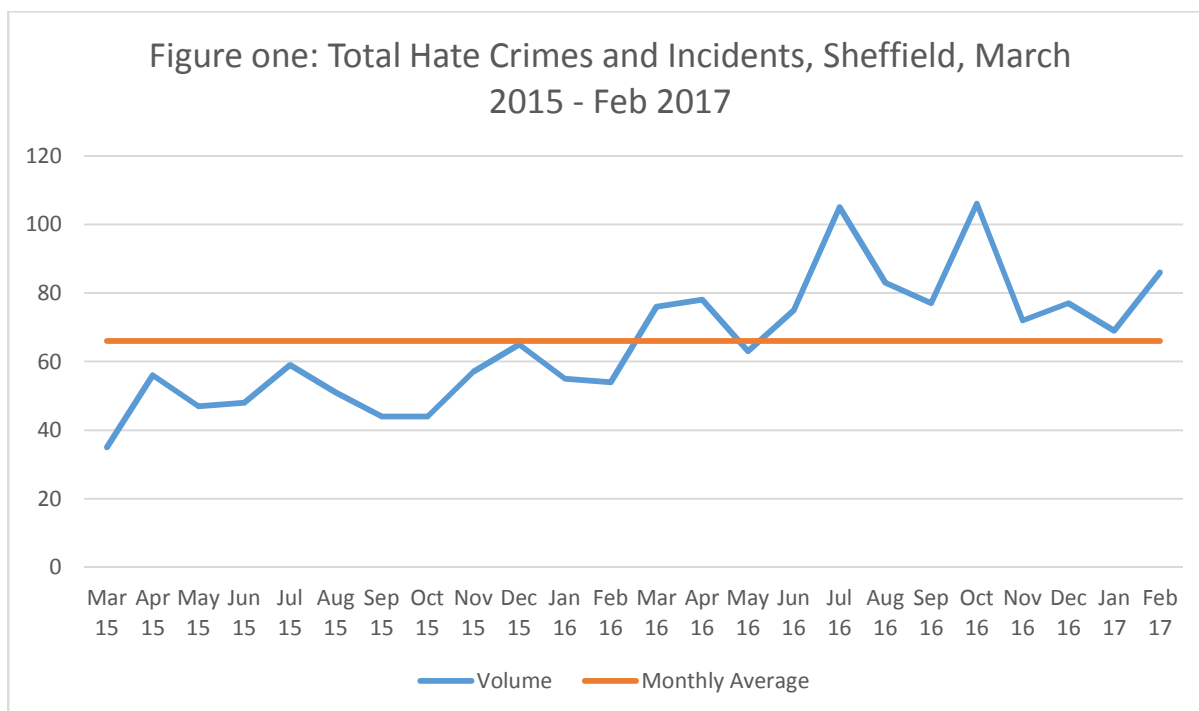
### **1. Introduction/Context**

- 1.1 This report has been requested by the Committee to provide an update on hate crime and hate incidents in Sheffield.
- 1.2 Hate Crime is taken to mean any crime where the perpetrator's prejudice against an identifiable group of people is a contributory factor in determining who is victimized. This is a broad and inclusive definition; a victim of Hate Crime does not have to be a member of a minority group, or someone who is considered to be a 'vulnerable' person. Anyone can be a victim of a Hate Crime.
- 1.3 Hate Crimes can include a range of threatening behaviour, assault, robbery, damage to property, harassment or inciting others to commit hate crimes. Hate incidents refer to any incident, which may or may not be a crime, which the victim or any other person perceives to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards any aspect of a person's identity.
- 1.4 This report includes details of Hate Crime and Incidents recorded by South Yorkshire Police between 1<sup>st</sup> March 2015 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017. As there is no single category of Hate Crime, offences are determined either by the offence itself, e.g. Racially or Religiously Aggravated Criminal Damage, or by an Aggravating Factor being recorded on the crime or incident. Hate Crime Aggravating Factors include:
  - Disability
  - Racial
  - Religion
  - Transgender / Transphobic
  - Sexual Orientation

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

- 2.1 Hate crime is gaining increasing precedence in national and local crime prevention priorities. Increasing awareness and responses to hate crime has resulted in an increase in reporting both nationally and locally.
- 2.2 Over the last two years, there has been an upward trend in the volume of hate crime and hate incidents reported to South Yorkshire Police, with much of the last year seeing above average volumes. The year on year increase is currently 12% higher than the previous report (57% when 2015/16 is compared to 2014/15). During the last 2 years (1<sup>st</sup> March 2015 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017), 1020 hate crimes and 526 hate incidents were recorded. Figure 1 illustrates the trend of recorded hate crime and hate incidents over the past 2 years. The orange line indicates the monthly average.





- 2.3 Racially aggravated hate crime is the most common type of reported hate crime and hate incidents in Sheffield (79.9% of all hate crime and incidents in the last 2 years were racially aggravated). This reflects the national trend and it is accepted that whilst underreporting exists for all hate crime and incidents, significant underreporting is most prevalent within certain groups, particularly disability and transgender hate crimes.
- 2.4 The sexual orientation aggravating factor recorded the second highest volume of hate crimes and incidents in Sheffield in the last 2 years (11.3%).

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

- 3.1 Hate Crime features in South Yorkshire Police’s (SYP) Force Strategic Assessment 2016 as a medium risk thematic area, based on the probability and impact of an event. In light of concerns around the under-reporting of Hate Crime, there has been ongoing work to increase confidence, provide more accessible reporting through online and third party reporting centres and improve crime-recording standards. Consequently, there has been an increase in hate crime reported to the force, which is a strong indicator that the actions and engagement undertaken by SYP and nationally, has increased awareness and confidence to report crimes and incidents.

**4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to consider the report.

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# Agenda Item 12

## Report to the Safer & stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017

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**Report of:** Policy and Improvement Officer

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**Subject:** Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee: Scrutiny Annual Report 2016-17 Draft Content & Work Programme 2017-18

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**Author of Report:** Diane Owens, Policy and Improvement Officer  
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**Summary:**

This report provides the Committee with a summary of its activities over the municipal year for inclusion in the Scrutiny Annual Report 2016-17. The Committee is asked to consider and comment on this document (Appendix A).

The report also includes a list of topics which it is recommended be put forward for consideration as part of the 2017-18 Work Programme for this committee.

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**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

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

- Scrutiny Annual Report 2016-17: S&SC Scrutiny Committee Draft Content: Consider and comment on the draft content – Section 1.0 and Appendix A
- Work Programme 2017-18 - Agree that the list of topics outlined in section 2.0 be put forward for consideration as part of the 2017-18 Work Programme for this committee; and provide any further comment – Section 2.0

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**Background Papers:** None  
**Category of Report:** OPEN

## Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee, Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017

### 1.0 Scrutiny Annual Report 2016-17

- Each Scrutiny Committee will produce a summary of their activity over the past municipal year for inclusion in the Scrutiny Annual Report 2016-17. A draft summary of this Committee's activity is attached - please see Appendix A.
- The Annual Report will also include an overview of the role of scrutiny within the authority and a summary of some of the activities and outcomes across the five Scrutiny Committees.
- The full list of topics considered by this Committee during 2016-17 is outlined below:

<b>2016</b>	
Challenge for Change: Community Engagement Report	July
The Role and Remit of the Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee	July
Work Programme 2016/17	July
Housing and Planning Act 2016 Update	September
Call in of Cabinet Member decision: Asset of Community Value Nomination - The University Arms,	October
Library Review 2016 – Future support arrangements for volunteer run libraries	October
Sheffield City Council's Draft Cohesion and Integration Strategy and Action Plan	October
Briefing Paper - Hate Crime and Hate Incidents 2015/16	October
Briefing Paper - The Work of the Police and Crime Panel	October
Challenge for Change: The Council Housing Service's Preparation for the Implementation of Universal Credit	December
Welfare Reform Update	December
Financial Inclusion	December
Hate Crime Task Group - verbal update	December
Briefing Paper - Hate Crime and Hate Incidents: 1 November 2014 - 31 October 2016	December
<b>2017</b>	
Safer & Sustainable Communities Partnership	February
Neighbourhood Working: a new approach for Sheffield	February
Hate Crime Task Group – Draft Report	February
Briefing Paper - Hate Crime and Hate Incidents 1st Feb 2015 – 30th Jan 2017	February
Housing + Model and Implementation	April
Challenge for Change: Vacants Property Service	April
Call-in – Approval of new Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) Licensing standards	April
Briefing Paper - Police & Crime Panel Update	April
Briefing Paper - Hate Crime and Hate Incidents	April
Briefing Paper - Scrutiny Annual Report 2016-17 Draft Content & Work Programme 2017-18	April

## **2.0 Work Programme 2017-18**

- It is recommended that the list of topics below be put forward for consideration as part of the Work Programme for the 2017-18 municipal year. This includes areas the Committee have requested a further update on:
  - Hate Crime Task Group Report - Cabinet response to the recommendations, July 2017
  - Equality Hub Network – an update on work around hate crime, July 2017
  - Neighbourhood Working - A New Approach for Sheffield, a report 3-6 months into implementation
  - Police & Crime Panel (PCP)
  - Hate Crime Task Group Report – a more detailed response to the recommendations by December 2017

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

- Scrutiny Annual Report 2016-17: S&SC Scrutiny Committee Draft Content: Consider and comment on the draft content – Section 1.0 and Appendix A
  - Work Programme 2017-18 - Agree that the list of topics outlined in section 2.0 be put forward for consideration as part of the 2017-18 Work Programme for this committee; and provide any further comment – Section 2.0
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### Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 2016-17

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**Chair:** Cllr Tony Damms

**Deputy Chair:** Cllr Richard Shaw

**Remit of the committee:** Housing, Community Safety and Crime, Community Cohesion, Social Inclusion and Locality Management

#### Highlights from the work of the committee in 2016-17 included:

##### Hate Crime

Public awareness and understanding of hate crime has increased in recent years, as have levels of reporting. However, data suggest that it is still significantly underreported. Members were aware of public concern around this issue and following a number of discussions at Full Council at its meeting in September 2016 the Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee agreed to set up a cross party Task Group to look at hate crime in more depth.

Following initial discussions around some of the issues involved, and a recognition that there was also work being led by other groups and organisations in the city, including the Equality Hub Network, the Group agreed to focus on the reporting of hate crime, specifically: *“To understand the different ways hate crime can be reported in Sheffield, identifying things that are working well and any areas where improvements could be made”*.

The Task Group used a range of approaches to gather data for their review, including desk top research, evidence gathering sessions and events and workshops. Members met with a number of individuals and organisations, including Sheffield’s Equality Hub Network, Young Advisors from Sheffield Futures, and members of Sheffield Voices, a self-advocacy group for people with a learning disability.

The [Task Group Report](#) outlines their findings and recommendations. The recommendations aim to raise awareness of hate crime, increase reporting, support partnership working, and improve the data we have available in the city. This includes introducing a 24/7 helpline for victims who don’t want to contact the Police directly, improved communication materials, and targeted awareness raising campaigns. The report was approved by the Scrutiny Committee in February 2017 and will be presented to Cabinet in April 2017. Cabinet will be asked for an initial response to their recommendations by July 2017, with a more detailed progress report to be provided by the end of 2017. As a number of the recommendations relate to the work of the Safer & Sustainable Communities Partnership Board, the Scrutiny Community will share their report with the Partnership Board in May 2017.

Linked to this work from October 2016 the Committee agreed to request regular briefing papers on hate crime and hate incidents in the city. These reports were produced by the Anti-social Behaviour and Community Safety Team and were submitted to each bi-monthly meeting. The reports gave a brief overview of the statistical data for the previous 12 months.

## APPENDIX A: Scrutiny Annual Report 2016-17 - Draft Content

### Neighbourhood Working: A New Approach for Sheffield

In February 2017, in advance of formal decisions being made, the Committee took the opportunity to look at the initial thinking on a new approach to neighbourhood level working in Sheffield. The Scrutiny session was attended by Councillor Jack Scott, Cabinet Member for Community Services and Libraries and Laurie Brennan, Policy and Improvement Manager who outlined that the approach which is designed to enhance the current Local Area Partnership (LAPs) model and bring a greater focus on developing community resilience across the city. The presentation outlined the two main strands of effective neighbourhood working, community leadership, empowerment and engagement and public service delivery. It confirmed that the developing proposals aimed to build upon the strengths of the LAP model and suggest that there is an opportunity to strengthen the support communities and Elected Members.

Scrutiny Members raised questions and discussed a range of areas including: links with housing providers and local Area Housing Forums, best practice from other areas, community engagement, and the size of the current LAP areas. The Committee heard that a Cabinet paper would be brought forward in the coming months to establish the new model, which would then be reviewed after 12 months. The Committee requested an update prior to 12 months into implementation, and has scheduled this into their Draft Work Programme for 2017-18.

### Welfare reform

Due to the scale and pace of change in relation to welfare reform in recent years the Committee have continued to receive reports regarding the changes and their impact. In December 2016 the Committee requested a further update, to include specific information on Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) and Universal Credit (UC).

The report set out the most significant current and future welfare benefit changes and provided information about how these had been addressed by the Council and its partners. The Committee heard that there were only a small number of people in Sheffield claiming Universal Credit (UC), with full roll out due to take place from July 2018. Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) had started to replace Disability Living Allowance and, at the moment, the initial impact seemed to be manageable in Sheffield. However, evidence suggested that in other regions, the introduction of PIP had led to a reduction in the awards made. In terms of the lower Benefit Cap from January 2017, it was anticipated that there would be a rise from 113 households affected, to approximately 900.

Members of the Committee discussed the impact on council tenants, debt advice and support, and support for tenants of Registered Social Landlords. The Committee asked for a further briefing note on how the recently announced Autumn Statement was affecting tenants and the financial impact of these changes on the HRA (Housing Revenue Account). The Committee also asked that Officers undertake work to understand the costs incurred by the Council when carrying out an eviction, including rehousing after the eviction, and that this be shared with the Committee once complete.

### Safer & Stronger Communities Partnership

In February 2017 the Committee received an annual update on the work of the Safer & Sustainable Communities Partnership. The presentation described the issues which had been faced by the Partnership over the last year and looked to its priorities for 2017/18. The presentation outlined membership of the Partnership Board and confirmed the statutory requirements linked to the board and the development of a strategy. The Committee

## APPENDIX A: Scrutiny Annual Report 2016-17 - Draft Content

heard that the board includes representatives from South Yorkshire Police, the Local Authority, the Fire and Rescue Service, the Probation Service, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Voluntary Sector. Budget reductions meant there was a continuing need for effective partnership working to tackle issues with little or no additional resource. Reference was also made to performance, the new multi-agency Anti-Social Behaviour Team, work with local communities, and approaches to restorative justice - including how it can be used to respond to hate crime.

The Committee questioned areas including: resources and budgets, work linked to PREVENT, relationships and joint working with local communities, and the partnership working arrangements with South Yorkshire Trading Standards and the Licensing Service to tackle safeguarding issues. In light of the level of interest from members, the Committee asked that Officers arrange an information session that is open to all Elected Members to provide an update on the work of the Sheffield Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership. The session will take place in early May 2017.

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

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

**Report of:** Policy and Improvement Officer

**Subject:** Written responses to public questions

**Author of Report:** Diane Owens, Policy and Improvement Officer  
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**Summary:**

This report provides the Committee with copies of written responses to public questions asked at the Committee's meeting on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

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	<b>X</b>

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

Note the report

**Background Papers:** None

**Category of Report:** OPEN

**Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee**  
**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017**  
**Public Questions**

Response to the public questions raised by Mr Alan Kewley from Sheffield for Democracy at the meeting held on Thursday 16th February 2017.

**Question 1: Neighbourhood Working**

**So I ask this committee to ensure this new system is vetted and implemented as soon as possible to fill the present vacuum?**

At its February meeting the scrutiny committee received an update on the proposed new approach to neighbourhood working in Sheffield. The report outlined the initial thinking and aimed to give members of scrutiny the chance to consider the proposals and provide comment on how the new approach could enhance community resilience and enable Councillors to meet the needs of their local communities.

The report stated that a Cabinet paper will be developed in the coming months to establish this new way of working and that the model will then be reviewed after 12 months.

The scrutiny committee felt that they would like to receive an earlier update, around 3-6 months into implementation. This was agreed and has been added to the draft work programme for 2017-18. The work programme will be discussed and agreed by the Committee at its first meeting of the municipal year in July.

**Responses provided by:** Cllr Tony Damms, Chair of the Safer & Stronger Communities Committee

**Question 2: Safer & Sustainable Communities Partnership Board**

**So I ask this committee to clarify how the public can engage more easily with this Partnership Board in future?**

The Partnership Board meets four times per year and is open for members of the public to attend.

- Members of the public can ask questions at Board meetings. These should be asked in advance where possible, to allow for a response to be provided. Where questions are submitted on the day of the meeting, they will be answered in the meeting at the Chair's discretion; otherwise they will receive a written response.
- Papers for meetings have previously been published on the Sheffield First (now Sheffield City Partnership) website, as soon as they are available. Whilst officers have endeavoured to ensure these are published 5 working days in advance of the meeting, this is not always possible due to the timescales involved and increasing pressures on officers.
- There is currently a freeze on all Council based websites due to a corporate upgrading of the technology, so papers for the meeting to be held on 6th February will be emailed to board members and to interested members of the public on request.
- The freeze on new website content is expected to continue until at least April 2017. Once the new Council website is running, we expect to be able to make papers for the meetings available around 5 working days before the meeting, subject to availability of officers.

**Responses provided by:** Julia Cayless, Partnership and Performance Manager

**Response sent by email on:** 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017