

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Thursday 25 February 2021 at 5.00 pm

**To be held as an online video
conference**

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillors Ben Curran (Chair), Tim Huggan (Deputy Chair), Sue Auckland, Penny Baker, Dawn Dale, Adam Hurst, Karen McGowan, Anne Murphy, Peter Price, Peter Rippon, Kaltum Rivers, Andrew Sangar, Richard Shaw, Vacancy and Vacancy

Substitute Members

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

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

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

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk. You can also see the reports to be discussed at the meeting if you call at the First Point Reception, Town Hall, Pinstone Street entrance. The Reception is open between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Thursday and between 9.00 am and 4.45 pm. 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 Deborah Glen, Policy and Improvement Officer, on 0114 27 35065 or email deborah.glen@sheffield.gov.uk

FACILITIES

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

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

**SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY AND POLICY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA
25 FEBRUARY 2021**

Order of Business

- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Public and Press**
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public
- 4. Declarations of Interest** (Pages 5 - 8)
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Minutes of Previous Meetings** (Pages 9 - 18)
To approve the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 10th December, 2020 and 7th January, 2021.
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 7. Homelessness and Rough Sleeping** (Pages 19 - 28)
Report of the Head of City Wide Housing Services.
- 8. Work Programme** (Pages 29 - 36)
Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer.
- 9. Date of Next Meeting**
The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, 18th March, 2021 at 5.00 p.m.

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ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

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

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

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

You **must**:

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

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

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

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

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority –
 - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - which has not been fully discharged.

- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) –
 - the landlord is your council or authority; and
 - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
 - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
 - (b) either -
 - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

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

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously.

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

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

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

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Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 10 December 2020

(NOTE: This meeting was held as a remote meeting in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020).

PRESENT: Councillors Ben Curran (Chair), Tim Huggan (Deputy Chair), Sue Auckland, Penny Baker, Dawn Dale, Adam Hurst, Karen McGowan, Anne Murphy, Andrew Sangar, Richard Shaw and Douglas Johnson (Substitute Member)

Also in attendance: Councillor Tony Damms, Member of the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority.

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Kaltum Rivers, Councillor Douglas Johnson attended as her substitute.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

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

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

4.1 There were no questions raised or petitions submitted by members of the public.

5. FIRE INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

5.1 Councillor Sue Auckland queried why the Integrated Risk Management Plan for South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) had not been brought before a meeting of full Council. She asked whether an invitation to attend this Scrutiny Committee had been extended to all Councillors for their input. Councillor Auckland also stated that due to the fact that the consultation period had come to end, would any feedback from this meeting be taken on board. Councillor Tony Damms stated that the item was of great importance and felt it would not have been possible to discuss the item thoroughly at a meeting of full Council. Councillor Damms said that any feedback from this meeting would be fed back to the Fire Authority.

5.2 Councillor Ben Curran apologised and said that there were no excuses, but the

item had not been considered during the consultation period due to him being ill. He said that he had had discussions with the Fire Authority prior to the meeting and it had been agreed that any feedback given would be taken on board.

- 5.3 The Committee received a report and presentation setting out the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2021 to 2024 which was an up-to-date analysis of local risk and described how the Service would effectively coordinate its prevention and protection response, and resilience work to improve public safety and save lives.
- 5.4 Present for this item were Chris Kirby (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue) and Stuart Booth (Director of Support Services, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue).
- 5.5 Chris Kirby outlined some context around the design and development of an IRMP. Fire and Rescue Services have had to produce these plans since 2004. They should identify how a Fire and Rescue Service assesses risk within its local area and how it then delivers its services to best reduce the risks identified. He highlighted the key strategies that the Service must deliver to protect the local communities, including its prevention strategy, aimed at raising awareness of the risks people face from fire and other types of emergency, focusing on the most vulnerable. He referred to the promotion and enforcement of fire safety arrangements in buildings, to ensure that the buildings and its occupants were as safe as possible, that is delivered through the Service's protection strategy. In order to deliver an effective response strategy, Chris Kirby said that SYFR trained its staff to ensure that they were ready and able to respond to emergency situations and were equipped with the best vehicles and equipment to do their job as effectively as possible. Finally, he referred to the Service's resilience strategy in relation to how the Service deals with major emergencies that demand significant resources or require the support from other services or agencies both regionally and nationally. Mr. Kirby said that the key responsibilities were firefighting, attending road traffic collisions and ensuring fire safety, but they also attended civil emergencies such as flooding, so that services like Fire and Rescue were more prepared to respond to such incidents and that training, equipment and resilience arrangements locally, regionally and nationally support the Service's ability to do this. He stated that in England there was no legal requirement for the fire service to attend floods, but they do so as a "blue light service". He outlined how the Service assesses risk across the county and how an analysis of local and national data highlights how areas of deprivation tend to experience more fires. There has been a 50% decrease in house fires over the past 20 years, as many homes have been fitted with smoke alarms and home safety checks carried out in the homes of people believed to be most at risk of fire. Finally, Chris Kirby stated that Call Handling (or Control) Staff were able to determine the location of an incident within one to two minutes of the call being received, with the aim of getting to the emergency as quickly as possible.
- 5.6 Members of the Committee asked a number of questions, and responses were given as follows:-
- Consideration was given to emerging risks in new housing or business

developments, although new builds were much safer. The Fire Service looked at road and rail networks around new properties and how they would be able to respond to an emergency through access to the premises and the provision of an effective water supply.

- With regard to the Grenfell Tower fire, firefighters were aware of the risk and of the potential need to evacuate people from high rise buildings which were not designed for large scale evacuations in the UK. The design of such buildings was for them to contain a fire within a flat and the Grenfell Tower building had had a lot of renovation works carried out to it over many years, including the retrofitting of the cladding system that caused much of the fire spread.
- With regard to those buildings in Sheffield that still have unsuitable cladding on them, SYFR is investing in its building safety work to support those building owners in order for them to comply with their responsibilities under the relevant fire safety regulations. The initial works was only limited to certain premises over a specific height. The challenge for Fire and Rescue Services is that they have limited powers and can issue enforcement notices that require improvements to be made, and could prohibit the use or occupancy of part of or all of a building if it is deemed unsafe and individual Fire and Rescue Services have to consider that certain notices may result in residents in those blocks being made temporarily homeless until improvements were put in place.
- SYFR were always looking at new risks, for example older people becoming more at risk when their circumstances change. There had been specific challenges for the Service during Covid due to firefighters not being able to cross thresholds where vulnerable people had been identified, due to the concern about potentially spreading the virus. As such, many visits had to be delayed unless the risk of fire was so high that a physical visit had to be undertaken. This still happened in the most high risk cases.
- Other risks identified were environmental challenges, such as moorland fires, over capacity of waste at recycling centres, flooding etc. These risks were reviewed regularly, working with partners including local and national government to understand changes which could affect South Yorkshire and make sure resources were in place to reduce such risks.
- SYFR encourages green travel schemes and welcomes the installation of traffic lanes. All drivers have to “drive to arrive” as effectively as possible. Chris Kirby confirmed that cycle lanes do not cause any issues for SYFR.
- In the final draft of the Integrated Risk Management Plan, 10 priorities were identified and priority nine on that list was to improve the level of equipment to be able to deal with moorland fires.
- The welfare of firefighters was a priority and was constantly reviewed.
- There was a challenge where English was not the first language for

members of the public. Leaflets were available and advice was given about the use of google translate. On occasions when giving fire safety advice, translators were used.

5.7 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Chris Kirby, Stuart Booth and Councillor Tony Damms for their contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the report and presentation and answers to the questions raised; and
- (c) requests that reference to cycles lanes in Sheffield be removed from the final draft of the Integrated Risk Management Plan.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

6.1 The Committee received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer on the Work Programme for the Committee.

6.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee (a) approves the contents of the Work Programme for 2020/21, (b) notes that Youth Services is being covered by the Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee at its February meeting, and (c) requests that priority be given to the item on the Community Safety Partnership.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, 7th January 2021 at 5.00 p.m.

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 7 January 2021

(NOTE: This meeting was held as a remote meeting in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020).

PRESENT: Councillors Ben Curran (Chair), Tim Huggan (Deputy Chair), Sue Auckland, Penny Baker, Dawn Dale, Adam Hurst, Karen McGowan, Anne Murphy, Andrew Sangar, Richard Shaw and Angela Argenzio (Substitute Member)

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Kaltum Rivers, Councillor Angela Argenzio attended as her substitute.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

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

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26th November, 2020, were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

- 5.1 There were no questions raised or petitions submitted by members of the public.

6. HOUSING REPAIRS SERVICE

- 6.1 The Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director of Place detailing how the COVID Pandemic has significantly impacted on the Repairs and Maintenance Service throughout 2020 and was likely to continue to have a

significant impact into 2021.

- 6.2 Present for this item were Mark Freeth (Head of Repairs and Maintenance Service), David Marsden (Interim Head of Repairs and Maintenance), Nathan Rodgers (Head of Facilities Management), and Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety).
- 6.3 Nathan Rodgers stated that the pandemic had had a huge impact on the Repairs and Maintenance Service, which provided a crucial service and support to tenants. He said the Team had worked long and hard to deliver emergency and essential services under huge pressures on them.
- 6.4 Mark Freeth referred to the information contained within the report, stating that the Service had 640 staff who were employed to maintain the Council's 38,900 housing stock. He said the Service had been insourced from Kier in 2017 and was in the process of implementing a new Target Operating Model following a review of its operations. However, Covid was having a significant impact on a large workload which had a significant backlog following an increase in demand of planned work and the storms of last winter. Mark Freeth stated that throughout the pandemic, the Repairs Service had followed and continued to follow the instructions and guidance of the Council's Incident Management Group (IMG) and had operated a reduced Service responding to critical activities such as emergency repairs, gas servicing and void property work to continue to provide much needed social housing for the city. He added that there had been a significant impact on gas servicing being carried out as tenants were apprehensive about wanting operatives in their home, with only 90% of properties having a current gas safety certificate. He stated that the Service had intended to offer 45 apprenticeships in November, 2020, but this had been delayed due to Covid, but it was hoped that the scheme would be rolled out in February 2021, which would mean there was a total of 95 apprentices working within the Service. The Service put a significant emphasis on health and safety of both staff and its customers. The offices at Manor Lane were made Covid secure in line with national guidelines and relevant workplace areas reduced. Risk assessments were in place which allowed front line staff to enter properties safely, using the correct PPE equipment and clear guidance given to staff to work safely. The Service has reduced staff working in the workplace as much as possible.
- 6.5 Mark Freeth stated that the objectives of the new Target Operating model was to modernise and improve the Repairs Service for tenants by restructuring the Service to remove client contractor roles and reduce operating overheads and replace reactive repairs with more planned proactive repairs by empowering staff with the skills to deliver a first-class repairs service. Work with the Corporate Contact Centre was being carried out to improve the customer offer through self-service, improved script and priority status for vulnerable tenants, diagnostics of repairs and text confirmation of appointments, and a dedicated phonenumber and email address to be put in place for Councillors to contact the Service directly with any concerns. A new repairs system has been successfully procured and was planned to be operational by August 2021. Throughout the first and second lockdown the Service saw 40,000 repairs logged compared to 64,000 repairs, historically, over the same period, and therefore, there was a future potential

demand of 24,000 repairs that could be outstanding, which could be a significant challenge for the Repairs Service, both in terms of impact on budget and resources to achieve normal levels of performance within a reasonable timescale. A business continuity plan was currently being implemented to respond to the third lockdown and work was underway to assess the potential impact in more detail and to develop plans to respond to this challenge.

6.6 Members raised concerns with regard to the content of the report as they had only received the report two days prior to the meeting and felt that there was very little information contained in it with regard to the impact Covid had had on this essential service. The Policy and Improvement Officer stated that officers had been contacted before the Christmas break requesting a report to be submitted early in the New Year and hoped that more information would become available during the meeting.

6.7 Nathan Rodgers informed Members that he was aware of the item of business on the 23rd December, 2020 but hadn't had time to discuss with Councillors the information they required and said that a more comprehensive report would be provided at a future date.

6.8 Members of the Committee made various comments and asked a number of questions to which responses were given as follows:-

- The aim for the Repairs and Maintenance Service would be for 100% of properties to have a gas safety certificate, however this was not always possible due to premises not being accessible. Following several failed attempts to gain access to a property, obtaining access to the property then goes into a legal process and through the Courts and this had been exacerbated due to the Courts being closed for 20 weeks at the start of the pandemic.
- Customer feedback and satisfaction has remained stable, albeit tenants have waited a considerable time longer for repairs to be carried out. One thought was that perhaps the public in general have become more patient throughout the pandemic. A report outlining customer satisfaction would be prepared and submitted to a future meeting.
- Reports on repairs were taken to meetings with Tenants and Residents Associations (TARAs) and every tenant has been written to informing them of what was happening within the Repairs Service. The Service has access to 25,000 email addresses of its tenants. It was felt that there was a need to create better forums and a Performance Manager had been employed to involve tenants and their representatives in the reshaping of the Service.
- A meeting was to be arranged between the Service and Senior Managers in the Contact Centre. The pandemic has created significant challenges for the Contact Centre and both Services are working collaboratively to improve the end-to-end service. Operatives could work in the Contact Centre to redirect work to the correct area.

- In relation to apprenticeships, the Council's Lifelong Learning Team recruit young people onto traineeships. Following a successful traineeship, the trainees are then offered an Apprenticeship. Clarification is required on the recruitment of NEETS. Several care leavers, BME and female apprentices have been recruited.
- Gas servicing of properties was a legal requirement, and the Service was looking at best practice to improve performance in this area. Some local authorities cap off the gas supply, and some local authorities forcibly enter premises to carry out services using Environmental Protection powers. It had been found that those in fuel poverty who did not have the money to pay for their supply, would refuse entry into their premises. A more detailed report on this would be brought back to the Committee.
- It was planned to improve performance regarding Void premises as, at present, there were 45 days between "key to key" and this needed to be improved upon and done quicker. A project team has been established to review and improve the end-to-end Void process with Housing Services.
- There have been problems throughout the pandemic in getting stock, the supply chain had been significantly impacted upon, and the Service had not been able to procure enough equipment and supplies.
- Improvements to develop staff in all areas was underway. It was intended to hold annual personal development reviews (PDRs) and hold regular one to ones with all operatives to ensure that everyone was aware of the priorities and what the Service hopes to achieve in the way it delivers its services.
- Any complaint received regarding how an operative has carried out their job will be taken seriously and dealt with, as the behaviour and image of the Service was very important. A strong customer focus was a priority for the Service and a key service plan objective. A training framework was to be developed to empower operatives. There are some really good members of staff who have worked extremely hard and often long hours during this difficult period, but it was recognised that there was a need to modernise.
- A Working at Heights Repairs Team respond to repairs that require more comprehensive safe systems of work to be in place to complete the task. The aim of the Service was to review the safe systems of work to complete more repairs on the first visit without compromising safety.
- Throughout the first and second lockdown the Service saw 40,000 repairs logged, and potentially the demand of 24,000 repairs could be outstanding, although it was thought that some tenants, with time on their hands throughout the pandemic, may have carried out some DIY repairs themselves. Until tenants have been contacted, it was difficult to know how many repairs were still required and possibly some DIY could have created repairs.

- At present, a tenant can order a repair through the Contact Centre, the operator then diagnoses the problem using a script and then passes it to the operatives, which involves two systems. The intended new system will offer real time appointments, minimising human intervention. Performance data can then be obtained to find out if the appointment was kept, on time, and carried out satisfactorily.
- With regard to the Repairs and Maintenance Service being in a position to carry out aids and adaptation works to Council housing stock, unfortunately the pandemic had affected plans for this. It had been hoped that within two years, the Service would have been able to employ enough staff to carry out these types of works inhouse, but the lockdowns had pushed this timeline on, but it was still hoped that it would be achievable. At present, there was a need to get on top of repairs, voids, gas servicing and acquisitions, before being able to bring this work inhouse. A progress report on this would be brought back to this Committee next year.

6.9 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Mark Freeth, David Marsden, Nathan Rodgers and Councillor Paul Wood for their contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the report now submitted and the responses to the questions raised; and
- (c) requests that a report on how the Service intends to deal with the backlog of repairs be brought to a meeting to be held within the next three to four months.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

7.1 The Committee received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer, attaching the Committee's draft Work Programme for 2020/21. She informed Members that there were only two meetings left for this Municipal Year and items to be considered were the Annual Review of Sheffield Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership and Homelessness.

7.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) approves the contents of the Work Programme;
- (b) requests that the item on Homelessness be brought to the February meeting of the Committee and the Annual Review of Sheffield Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership be taken to the meeting to be held in March; and
- (c) further requests that an additional meeting be held in April, to enable it to receive an update on the Housing Repairs Service.

8. ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO THE MEETING HELD ON 26TH NOVEMBER 2020

- 8.1 The Committee received and noted a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer setting out the written responses to the public questions raised at its meeting held on 26th November, 2020.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, 25th February, 2021, at 5.00 p.m.



Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

Thursday 25th Feb 2021

Agenda Item 7

Report of: Policy and Improvement Officer

Subject: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

Author of Report: Suzanne Allen

The attached paper is an update report for the Committee on the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on homelessness and rough sleeping.

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	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	X

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

- Discuss the attached paper

Background Papers: [Sheffield Council Constitution](#)

Category of Report: OPEN

Report to Safer Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee

February 2021

Author – Zoe Young Housing Options and Advice Service Manager

Homelessness and Response to Covid 19 and Rough Sleeping Update

1. Purpose of Report

The report provides a briefing for the Safer Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee on the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic and actions that have been put in place to deal with it. The report provides information about homelessness and rough sleeping in Sheffield overall and explains the arrangements that have been made to respond to the pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns in March and November.

In summary:

- Since March 2020, there has been a significant increase in presentations from households owed a legal duty to Temporary Accommodation and there is a higher use of hotels/B+B and SCC properties.
- The increased use of TA is caused by an increased number of people who cannot stay in their current accommodation whilst we work with them to try and prevent homelessness, fewer move on options being available and reduced service capacity to pro-actively progress cases
- SCC and partners have worked collaboratively to provide emergency accommodation and wraparound support to people at risk of or found to be rough sleeping in response to the Covid19 requirement from Government
- The number of people rough sleeping has increased and to date SCC have placed 196 individuals into emergency accommodation and secured move on housing for the majority. Seventeen people remain in hotels as part of the initial COVID response. Nine of these are people with No Recourse to Public Funds.
- SCC introduced a winter plan in December 2020 which replaces the weather watch provision. We will now place anyone who is rough sleeping in an emergency bed throughout the winter regardless of the weather. Currently we have 38 people placed in hotels as part of the winter plan. They are given the same support as others who were placed under the Everyone In Initiative.
- To deal with the risks of an increase in homelessness the Homelessness Prevention Strategic Steering Group and Forum are working together to

improve prevention and target activity. This is made up of statutory, voluntary, commissioned services and housing providers.

- The Covid19 Cell Group overseeing the emergency provision for rough sleepers is plugged in to the existing partnership groups and is overseeing an Exit Strategy that builds on the collaborative working that has been undertaken to date.
- SCC are working closely with MHCLG, Homes England and housing providers to plan for and deliver suitable longer term housing options and support for rough sleepers as part of the Exit Strategy.
- SCC and partners have submitted an Expression of Interest for funding from the Changing Futures Programme that will support people with the most complex needs affected by homelessness, domestic abuse, substance abuse, mental health issues and criminal justice.

2. Homelessness Overall

- The overall number of open homelessness cases has been increasing since the Homelessness Reduction Act changes required us to work with people for longer to improve the likelihood of preventing homelessness. Since the pandemic the number of preventions has decreased.
- The projected number of homeless acceptances is 600 at the end of 2020/21 in comparison with 484 at the end of 2019/20
- Being asked to leave by friends and family is still the top reason for homelessness and in the current climate it is more difficult for people to continue to stay in these situations pending a planned move.
- The number and proportion of cases where people are homeless due to domestic abuse has increased
- The number of cases where people are homeless due to the ending of a private tenancy has decreased – this is likely to be because of the temporary ban on evictions.
- The number of people who presented as they had left an institution with no accommodation arranged increased – mainly leaving prison
- The proportion of all applications from single people has increased from 71% to 75%.
- The number of people found to be rough sleeping has increased significantly following the government announcement that all rough sleepers would be offered emergency accommodation

3. Temporary Accommodation (TA)

The majority of people who apply as homeless remain in their current accommodation. When this isn't possible, they will be offered Temporary Accommodation (TA) if they may be homeless, eligible and in priority need under statutory duties. TA is provided in Council properties on schemes and dispersed units, a commissioned scheme and hotels/B+B's.

There has been a significant increase in the demand for TA since the lockdown began and this need has mainly been met by using dispersed Council properties and hotel accommodation. A snapshot comparison between 24th March 2020 and 31st December 2020 illustrates this as follows:

Number of Households in TA

	24 th March 2020	31 st December 2020	Change
No of families with children in TA	46	75	+29 (+63%)
No of single people/couples with no children	112	233	+121 (+108%)
Total Nos of Households in TA owed statutory housing duties (including priority needs placements in B&B/hotels)	158	308	+ 150 (+95%)

The number of TA placements (excluding B&B) made between March and December 2020 compared to the same period in 2019 increased from 284 to 389 households.

As well as an increase in the number of cases where TA is needed, the capacity to undertake prevention work has been limited. This is due to the reduction in available staff and restrictions on work practices in response to the lockdown provisions in both in-house and partner organisations.

We are required to work with people for up to 56 days before homelessness occurs to prevent homelessness and 56 days after homelessness does occur under the relief duty before we decide whether to accept a fully housing duty. The number of cases

that remain open for this whole period have increased from the usual number of 700 to currently more than 1000.

To help mitigate against the increase in demand people in TA are being prioritised for moves to general needs housing and more dispersed units are being used to help reduce the number and length of stay in hotels.

4. Covid19 Response and Rough Sleepers

On the 26h March all Councils were asked to undertake several actions by Government to support rough sleepers with immediate effect and this section of the report provides an update on the Sheffield response to dealing with rough sleepers throughout the pandemic.

4.1 Local Co-ordination 'Cell'

- Government asked all Local Authorities to set up a 'cell' group to oversee the cities activities to support rough sleepers throughout the pandemic.
- The cell group is chaired by the Head of City Wide Housing and includes senior managers from Housing, Care, Health and Public Health. We also have representatives from community safety and commissioning (SYP, SCC and CCG). The group has developed an action plan to oversee the emergency arrangements and has developed an exit strategy to help people to move on to sustainable housing with wrap-around support.
- The cell has a number of sub-groups dealing specifically with Health and Community Safety and an operational group that implements the action plan.
- The Cell Group works very closely with the Homelessness Prevention Strategy Steering Group that is also chaired by the Head of Citywide Housing Service and is made up of the wider partnership across statutory, voluntary, and commissioned services and housing providers.
- It reports into the wider Covid19 response and there is a regular meeting with the MHCLG specialist advisers on Rough Sleeping and Homelessness, and the chair meets with the homelessness leads for

Doncaster, Barnsley and Rotherham. There is also contact with the other Core Cities.

4.2 Support for rough sleepers

- All day centres, soup runs and other support systems for rough sleepers have had to change the way they run during the pandemic. The day centres were totally closed to rough sleepers until they could find innovative ways of supporting people whilst keeping themselves and their service users safe.
- SCC have worked closely with our partners and these services have been offering practical help on the streets with people, have run a meals on wheels service for people who do not have access to food and basic essentials and have been working closely with SCC to support people placed in emergency accommodation with laundry services and meaningful activity.
- Community safety partners have taken the lead on dealing with any issues in relation to persistent begging and congregating on the streets through advice to individuals and enforcement when necessary. Local policing teams have been fully engaged in managing any issues in the localities where the emergency accommodation is located.

4.3 Council procurement of accommodation for people on the streets

- Councils were asked to provide accommodation immediately in March 2020 as soon as the lockdown was announced. Our existing emergency provision did not have capacity to deal with this. The accommodation was required to have single en-suite rooms with catering facilities or provide food and be accessible for people with disabilities.
- SCC block booked hotels which are managed by the providers, but SCC housing staff attend the schemes daily to provide housing support and additional security has been funded.

- The government estimated nationally the scheme would help 6000 people. In fact, over 20,000 people were placed in this type of emergency accommodation across the country. The number of people found rough sleeping on our official snapshot count in October 2020 was 24 – down from the 29 found in November 2019. However, in Sheffield, similarly to elsewhere, the number of people found to be rough sleeping overall has significantly increased and the numbers out on anyone night are reduced by the hotel provision we still have in place.
- Since enacting the 'Everyone In' and the Winter Plan the number of people found out on the streets varies from around 1 to 20 people. Some of these have been offered accommodation on numerous occasions but refuse to accept it or do not stay there consistently.
- All service users have been provided with public health advice, staff have been trained and PPE provided. In addition, we have supported hostel providers with training, PPE provision and reducing the number of occupied units in schemes to enable self-isolation where appropriate in commissioned services. We have only had one positive COVID case in the hotels since March 2020.
- Throughout the pandemic we have provided face to face support with people in hotels and continue to provide a street outreach service 7 days a week.
- Wrap around support is available at the hotels from drug and alcohol services, mental health services and medical care . All staff have been vaccinated who are working in the hotels and on the streets with rough sleepers and a vaccination clinic is being held at the Archer Project so that vulnerable rough sleepers can be vaccinated.
- Other services that are provided include practical help with shopping for essentials, and two hot meals a day. Voluntary services are also giving support and information to residents to provide meaningful activity and address social isolation.

5. Housing First

- SCC has repurposed some MCHLG Rough Sleeper Initiative funding which was originally allocated for a safe space project. Due to the communal nature of safe space, we could no longer set this up and the money has been used to set up a Housing First Service.
- Housing First is an internationally renowned model that is designed to provide firstly a home and also open-ended support to long term and recurrently homeless people who have high and complex support needs.
- Sheffield has taken a multi-agency approach which is essential to help individuals become more independent. It was clear after recent consultation with service users that individuals engage more when the support is flexible and bespoke to them.
- SCC are using our own properties to provide a new home with intensive key worker support as well as coordinating wrap-around support from agencies in the city such as drugs and alcohol, health and mental health, DWP and support so people can engage in meaningful activity. The service has a dedicated mental health nurse who visits people in their own home.
- SCC has committed to 30 units and started moving people into the properties in November 2020. The effectiveness of this will be reviewed with a view to expanding the scheme with both council and other housing providers.

6. Winter Plan

- The Winter Plan is a scheme to offer people sleeping rough safe accommodation over the winter months. The plan was put in place in December 2020 and will continue up until March 2021.
- Funded by MCGLG and replaces the usual emergency cold weather provision that operates each year. It is not possible to use the usual provision due to its communal nature and the health risks associated with COVID19. It was also felt that as day centres are not able to operate in the same way it would not be

sufficient just to provide a bed for the night for short periods of time when the temperatures hit zero.

- The plan uses existing hotel accommodation and provides each person placed with a key worker, meals and basic essentials and multi-agency wrap around support. There are currently 34 people placed as part of this provision.

7. Exit Strategy and Next Steps

- All local partners agree that hotel type accommodation is not a suitable setting for longer term housing and there is also a significant risk that as the lockdown is eased, the providers will not wish to continue with these arrangements.
- We are working with the people placed in emergency accommodation, local partners and the MHCLG on the plans for move on and an exit strategy from emergency accommodation.
- We have established a new pathway for new rough sleepers to reduce the number of accommodation moves and ensure that everyone receives a bespoke offer of accommodation and appropriate support.
- We have established a multi-agency panel to agree the housing and wrap around support plan for each person. Options agreed include general needs social housing with support, supported housing and private tenancies with support.
- The Cell Group have committed to continue overseeing the existing emergency provision and the Exit Strategy and have all agreed that this is an opportunity to make transformative changes based on our learning that will positively improve the experience and outcomes for service users.
- We have an established Homelessness Prevention Strategy Steering Group, and Homelessness Prevention Forum to ensure that all partners are linked in and involved in Sheffield's strategic vision of early intervention and the prevention of homelessness. This delivers on the 6 strategic objectives of increasing prevention, supporting the most vulnerable, tackling rough sleeping,

improving health, improving housing options and accessing employment, education and training.

- The work is being co-ordinated alongside other transformative work including a review of Housing Related Support, work looking at how we accommodate and support people Severe and Multiple Disadvantage, the review of the Housing + model of housing management and establishment of more intensive support for our own tenants who have complex circumstances. This will ensure a coherent approach and the best use of resources.

8. Conclusion

People at risk of homelessness in Sheffield face extremely challenging circumstances. There are very strong partnership arrangements in place to respond to homelessness overall and rough sleeping specifically. However, there is a significant risk that the number of cases will increase as a consequence of the pandemic and services will find it difficult to improve prevention work and outcomes because of the pressures on resources. We are continuing to work closely with our partners to ensure we can continue to improve the outcomes for people in the City affected by homelessness.



Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee Thursday 25th February 2021

Report of: Policy and Improvement Officer

Subject: Work Programme 2020/21: Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

Author of Report: Deborah Glen, Policy and Improvement Officer
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The draft work programme for 2020/21 is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration and discussion. The work programme includes 6 meetings as requested, and lists the topics discussed and agreed at the last meeting. These are yet to be scheduled to the dates.

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	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	X

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

- Discuss and agree the work programme

Background Papers: [Sheffield Council Constitution](#)

Category of Report: OPEN

Current Work Programme 2020/21: Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 7th January 2021

1.0 What is the role of Scrutiny?

1.1 Scrutiny Committees exist to hold decision makers to account, investigate issues of local concern, and make recommendations for improvement. The Centre for Public Scrutiny has identified that effective scrutiny:

- Provides 'Critical Friend' challenge to executive policy makers and decision makers
- Enables the voice and concern of the public and its communities
- Is carried out by independent minded governors who lead and own the scrutiny process
- Drives improvement in public services and finds efficiencies and new ways of delivering services

1.2 Scrutiny Committees can operate in a number of ways – through formal meetings with several agenda items, single item 'select committee' style meetings, task and finish groups, and informal visits and meetings to gather evidence to inform scrutiny work. Committees can hear from Council Officers, Cabinet Members, partner organisations, expert witnesses, members of the public. Scrutiny Committees are not decision making bodies, but can make recommendations to decision makers.

2.0 Legislative Powers relevant to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

2.1 Under the Police and Justice Act 2006, every local authority is required to have a Crime and Disorder Committee with the power to scrutinise the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership or Community Safety Partnership as they are now referred. In Sheffield the Crime and Disorder Committee is the Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee and the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) is the Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership.

2.2 The requirements of the 2006 Act were enacted by the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 which came into force for local authorities in England on 30 April 2009. Under the Act the Crime and Disorder Committee (in Sheffield the Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee) can:

- Scrutinise decisions made and actions taken in connection by the responsible authorities that make up the CDRP / Community Safety Partnership
- Request information from the responsible authorities
- Require attendance of officer or employees or responsible authorities to answer questions or to provide information.

- 2.3 The Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership is made up of all the public services in the city, with representatives from the private and voluntary sectors. The Partnership considers issues across the breadth of community safety, such as: crime, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse, community cohesion, preventing offending and reoffending, and protecting vulnerable people.
- 2.4 The bodies represented on the Partnership have a statutory duty to work together to prevent crime and disorder in their area. The Partnership is also required by statutory regulation to produce an annual assessment of the levels and patterns of crime, disorder and substance misuse, and agree an annual partnership plan. This is referred to as the Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment. The Committee usually considers an annual reporting item from the partnership, and would expect this January/March 2020. The work programme could incorporate a more present through the year scrutiny of Sheffield's community safety partnership (The Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership).
- 2.5 The Police and Crime Panel was established with the statutory function to scrutinise and hold to account the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Yorkshire. The Committee have at times received an update on the work of the Police and Crime Panel.

3.0 Determining the work programme

- 3.1 Attached to this report at Appendix 1 is a draft work programme 2020/21. This reflects the decision by OSMC to develop a programme which focuses each of the Committee's efforts scrutinising the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.
- 3.2 It is important the work programme reflects the principles of effective scrutiny, outlined above at 1.1, and so the Committee has a vital role in ensuring that the work programme is looking at issues that concern local people, and looking at issues where scrutiny can influence decision makers. The work programme remains a live document, and there will be an opportunity for the Committee to discuss it at every Committee meeting.
- 3.3 Members of the Committee can also raise any issues for the work programme via the Chair or Policy and Improvement Officer at any time.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:
- Discuss and agree the work programme

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

Last updated: 17-02-21

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

Safer & Stronger Communities		Thursday 5-7pm	
Topic	Reasons for selecting topic	Lead Officer/s	Agenda Item/ Briefing paper
Thursday 1st Oct 2020			
<i>Domestic Abuse and the impact of Covid 19</i>	<i>Members wished to investigate the impact that the lockdown associated with Covid 19 had on incidence of Domestic Abuse and the support services available</i>		Agenda Item
<i>Work Programme 2020/21</i>	<i>Consideration of a draft work programme for Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee 2020/21</i>	<i>Policy and Improvement Officer</i>	Standing Item
Thursday 26th November 5-7pm			

<i>Hanover Tower Block</i>	<i>Requested by members following the publication of a full investigation report by the Council</i>	<i>Janet Sharpe, Director</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>Work programme 2019/20</i>		<i>Policy and Improvement Officer</i>	<i>Standing Item</i>
Thursday 10th December 5-7pm			
Fire Authority consultation briefing	Requested by Members to allow input to the consultation – to include an invite to wider membership.	Chris Kirby, Stuart Booth	Agenda item
Work programme 2020/21		Policy and Improvement Officer	Standing Item
Thursday 7th January 5-7 pm			
Housing Repairs Service	Prioritised for the Covid 19 work programme	Nathan Rodgers	Agenda Item
Work programme 2020/21		Policy and Improvement Officer	Standing Item

Thursday 25th February 5-7pm			
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping	Prioritised as part of Covid 19 work programme		Agenda item
Work programme 2020/21		Policy and Improvement Officer	Standing Item
Thursday 18th March 5-7 pm			
Annual Review of Sheffield Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership Page 35	Statutory duty.	Maxine Stavrianakos Mark Seston	
Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20 Draft Content & Work Programme 2020/21	This report provides the Committee with a summary of its activities over the municipal year for inclusion in the Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21; and a list of topics which it is recommended be put forward for consideration as part of the 2021/22 Work Programme for this committee.	Policy and Improvement Officer	
Items to be scheduled 2020/21			

Social Housing			Priority
Violent crime and Anti-Social Behaviour			TBC
Youth Strategy/Youth Services	Potential review with CYPF Committee		deferred
Selective Licensing			TBC