

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Thursday 10 September 2015 at 4.00 pm

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

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillors Tony Damms (Chair), Steve Ayriss (Deputy Chair), Penny Baker, David Barker, John Campbell, Sheila Constance, Richard Crowther, Keith Davis, Tony Downing, Denise Fox, Aodan Marken, Roy Munn, Sioned-Mair Richards, Richard Shaw and Zoe Sykes

Substitute Members

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

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

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

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk. You can also see the reports to be discussed at the meeting if you call at the First Point Reception, Town Hall, Pinstone Street entrance. The Reception is open between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Thursday and between 9.00 am and 4.45 pm. on Friday. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda.

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

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

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

FACILITIES

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

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

**SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY AND POLICY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA
10 SEPTEMBER 2015**

Order of Business

- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Public and Press**
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public
- 4. Declarations of Interest**
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Minutes of Previous Meeting**
To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 July 2015
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 7. Implications of the National "Summer Budget" for Housing**
Janet Sharpe, Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services and Sharron Dyett, Housing Services Director, South Yorkshire Housing Association, to present
- 8. Police and Crime Panel Update**
Councillor John Campbell to report
- 9. Work Programme 2015/16**
Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer

For Information Only

- 10. Written Responses to Public Questions**
Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer
- 11. Right to Buy Update**
Report of the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services
- 12. Date of Next Meeting**
The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday 8 October 2015

ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

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

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

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

You **must**:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

You have a personal interest where –

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

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

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

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

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

Further advice can be obtained from Gillian Duckworth, Director of Legal and Governance on 0114 2734018 or email gillian.duckworth@sheffield.gov.uk.

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Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 23 July 2015

PRESENT: Councillors Tony Damms (Chair), Steve Ayriss (Deputy Chair), Penny Baker, David Barker, John Campbell, Richard Crowther, Keith Davis, Denise Fox, Aodan Marken, Roy Munn, Sioned-Mair Richards, Richard Shaw and Zoe Sykes

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sheila Constance and Tony Downing.

2. EXCLUSION OF THE 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 MEETINGS

4.1 The minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 26th March and 20th May 2015, were approved as correct records.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 Alan Kewley raised the following two questions:-

- (a) Could the Committee look into the issue regarding Local Area Partnerships on the grounds that, since they were established in October 2013, they had not operated in the format as agreed at that time and on the basis that they represented a very important role as part of the Council's engagement process?

Response – The Policy and Improvement Officer stated that the future of Local Area Partnerships was to be considered as part of a wider piece of work on how the Council aimed to work with neighbourhoods. The topic had been included on the Committee's Work Programme for 2015/16, and Members would, as part of its discussions on this item later in the meeting, be looking at whether this issue should be prioritised for consideration. The Chair added that Local Area Partnerships were viewed by Members as very important in terms of the Council's engagement process.

- (b) Could the Committee include a topic on its Work Programme for 2015/16 in

terms of overseeing the role of the Sheffield First Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership, particularly how the work of the Partnership tied in with the work of this Committee?

Response – The Policy and Improvement Officer confirmed that the issue of community safety was included as a topic on the Committee’s draft Work Programme for 2015/16, and Members would decide how they would prioritise this and all other suggested topics on the Programme later in the meeting.

5.2 Andy Shallice raised the following four questions:-

- (a) Do officers consider there to have been any improvements in Page Hall since the Selective Licensing Scheme was introduced, specifically relating to tenant management, state and condition of repair, overcrowding or other aspects of the local neighbourhood?
- (b) Has there been any noticeable change, or anecdotal evidence, of the mix of the private rented tenant population since the introduction of the Page Hall Selective Licensing Scheme, such as the proportion of tenants who were ‘economic migrants’, or EU migrants or Roma?
- (c) How many voluntary registrations of landlords has there been in the wider, coterminous neighbourhoods, around the Selective Licensing Scheme designated area?
- (d) When the officers used the phrase ‘they’re not displacing – they’re still arriving’ in the presentation planned to be made at the meeting on 26th March 2015, were they referring to landlords or tenants? If the reference was to tenants, was this suggesting that an ambition of Selective Licensing was to alter the composition of the local tenant population?

Response – The Chair stated that the questions would be referred to Michelle Houston, Private Housing Standards Service, with a request that she provides responses at the earliest possible opportunity.

6. OVERVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE'S ROLE AND REMIT

- 6.1 The Policy and Improvement Officer provided an overview of the role and remit of the Committee, indicating that, under the terms of reference, the Committee was responsible for overseeing five broad areas – Housing, Community Safety and Crime, Community Cohesion, Social Inclusion and Locality Management. He stated that the Committee had legislative powers in respect of Community Safety, in that it could scrutinise the Sheffield First Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership.
- 6.2 He added that the remits of Scrutiny Committees did not strictly follow the remit of the relevant Cabinet Member, therefore, when the Committee was considering cross cutting issues, Members from other Scrutiny Committees could be invited to some meetings.

6.3 The Chair added that where the Committee wished to discuss issues of considerable interest, it may be necessary to establish a Task and Finish Group, comprising a selected number of Members, with the Group reporting back to the Committee on completion of its work.

6.4 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the information now reported.

7. CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT IN THE HOUSING REPAIRS INSOURCING PROJECT

7.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service containing further information in connection with the Housing Repairs Insourcing Project, specifically the full costings of the ballot of tenants and leaseholders, together with details of consultation meetings that have taken place to obtain the views of tenants and leaseholders. The report also contained further details of a number of general repair issues, which had been considered by the Committee, at its meeting held on 26th March, 2015, as part of the call-in of the Cabinet decision on Future Options for the Housing Repairs and Maintenance Service, and the Committee had requested the further information.

7.2 Present for this item were Janet Sharpe (Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service), Jason Siddall (Council Housing Service), John Kite (Tenants' representative) and Yulia Yushina (Leaseholders' Forum).

7.3 The report contained details on the financial implications of a full tenant and leaseholder ballot, the legal requirements for holding such a ballot, and other options for obtaining the views of tenants and leaseholders, including details of existing customer engagement and governance framework, additional repairs, specific consultation undertaken and customer engagement going forward. The report also contained a response to queries raised by the Committee with regard to various aspects of the Housing Repairs Contract and attached, as appendices, a detailed response to a question raised by a member of the public at the meeting on 26th March 2015, in terms of which tenant groups had been consulted, a chart showing the current structure of the Council's Housing Engagement/Governance structure, the Well-maintained Homes and Neighbourhoods Service Design Project Group's Vision Statement and a leaflet produced by Housing Services providing advice on how to prevent condensation in homes.

7.4 Members raised questions and the following responses were provided:-

- Whilst it was accepted that there would be major risks involved in terms of the insourcing project, including financial risks, there was an obligation on the Council to consult with all tenants and leaseholders, and the proposed ballot had been viewed as the most effective method of holding such consultation. A sub-group had been established to look at the best method of consultation. It was believed that the Council had an excellent structure in terms of consulting with its tenants and leaseholders, and that the method chosen would give everyone a better understanding of the process involved.

- The precise cost in terms of the full ballot of tenants and leaseholders would not be known until the work had been formally procured. The costs set out in the report represented an estimate.
- As part of the process, all tenants and leaseholders would be sent a ballot paper, and given the option of returning it in a number of different ways.
- The three housing areas which had chosen to have a bi-monthly Local Estates Services and Investment Forum (LESIF), in addition to the Local Area Housing Forums, were Central, East and South West. The decision to have the LESIFs had been taken by the Local Area Housing Forum.
- The suggestion to send ballot papers out with tenants' and leaseholders' annual rent demand letters would not be a possibility as these letters were sent out after the Council meeting in February, after the approval of the Housing Rent Account and rent levels, therefore there would be an issue in terms of timing and additional cost. John Kite, on behalf of the tenants, indicated that it was always difficult sending information out by letter as several people either would not receive it, read it or interpret it correctly, and this was highlighted by the low attendance at meetings of his local Tenants' and Residents' Association, despite several invitations being sent. Yulia Yushina, on behalf of the leaseholders, indicated that there were only around 2,500 leaseholders across the City, with the Leaseholders' Forum only holding meetings on a quarterly basis. Both the tenants' and leaseholders' representatives were of the opinion that tenants and leaseholders would not mind who delivered the service, as long as it was effective.

7.5 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the report now submitted, together with the information now reported and the responses to the questions raised;
- (b) thanks Janet Sharpe, Jason Siddall, John Kite and Yulia Yushina for attending the meeting and responding to the questions raised; and
- (c) requests that the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service considers the views and comments now raised by the Committee.

8. THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR IN SHEFFIELD

- 8.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service containing an update on the private rented sector in Sheffield, setting out information in terms of the percentage of private sector accommodation, the effects of the increase in the number of people living in the private rented sector for the City, and details of the legislation the Council used to deal with any issues or problems with regard to the private rented sector. The report also attached, as appendices, a map highlighting the areas of the City or groups of customers, where private rented housing was dominant and the progress in terms of the Page Hall

Selective Licensing Scheme, which commenced a year ago with the aim of tackling the issues associated with the problematic private rented housing in that area.

8.2 Members raised questions and the following responses were provided:-

- One piece of legislation the Council could use in terms of enforcement action, with regard to problematic empty homes, was the Enforced Sale Procedure. The Council only used this procedure in extreme circumstances, with only four properties being sold using the legislation. In most cases, where works were required to a property, the Council would undertake such works, then charge the homeowner.
- The Buy to Let market was expanding despite rising property prices, as people still viewed property as a good investment. The Private Housing Standards Service produced self-help leaflets to assist potential landlords, as well as producing standard letters for them to use.
- Although there was no longer a Housing Aid Section in the Council, there were still officers who provided information in connection with tenancy support, and could make referrals for benefits.
- There was an increasing number of Roma migrants moving to the Page Hall area, several of whom were being forced to live in neighbouring areas, resulting in poor condition housing, absent landlords, irresponsible letting and overcrowding dispersing to a wider area.
- The Service would welcome, and benefit from, additional resources, particularly to take into account the growth of the sector and concurrent reductions in the Team.
- The action taken and legislation used by different local authorities in terms of their respective private rented sectors was dependent on a number of factors, including the number of such properties and student population. A number of major cities did not receive additional funding to deal with enforcement work, although some did.
- The Service would support the idea of establishing cross-border teams across South Yorkshire, to share information, as a number of landlords had properties across the region.
- Whilst the Council was not able to extend the boundary in respect of the Page Hall Selective Licensing Scheme in order to deal with the dispersal issues for legal reasons, they would be able to designate a new area using the Government criteria.
- A briefing document had been supplied to all Magistrates in the City, together with an offer to visit and discuss the legislation with them. Unfortunately, this offer was not taken up. It was not clear how seriously the Magistrates were taking the issue, but this would continue to be stressed in Court.

- All letting and managing agents were required to register with one of the three Government-approved redress schemes, which provided better protection for tenants. As well as this, the Service always encouraged tenants to contact officers if they were experiencing any problems so that all issues could be formally logged and used if any subsequent action was taken against a landlord.
- The Service supported shorter-term tenancies with the shortest tenancy in law being six months. This could be deemed as a probationary period where, if there were no problems during the initial six-month period, the landlord had the option of extending the tenancy.
- The number of additional staff required to enable the Service to be pro-active, as opposed to reactive, would depend on how far the Council wished to go in this regard. Two new Environmental Health Officers had recently been appointed within the Service, which had had a very positive effect on the level of action taken.
- All landlords of larger Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) which had five or more occupied bedrooms on three or more floors were legally required to apply to the Council for a licence. If they failed to do so, this was deemed a criminal offence. The term of the mandatory licence was for five years, after which landlord would need to apply for a new one.
- Under the HMO Management Regulations, landlords are required to maintain their gardens, ensuring that they are both safe and tidy, with bushes and hedges being cut properly, and no rubbish left.
- In terms of the details of legal proceedings during the first year of the Page Hall Selective Licensing Scheme, those landlords listed as 'Anon' was due to the fact that their cases were presently going through the Court process therefore, at this time, their names were not in the public domain.

8.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the report now submitted, together with the information now reported and the responses provided to the questions raised;
- (b) thanks Michelle Houston for attending the meeting and responding to the questions raised; and
- (c) requests updates on the progress being made, every six months.

9. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE

- 9.1 Councillor John Campbell reported on the proceedings of the meeting of the Police and Crime Panel held on 29th June 2015, as follows:-

- The Panel was looking to recruit a further independent member.
- Discussions were held in connection with the enquiry into the Hillsborough Disaster.
- Professor John Drew had been commissioned to draft an independent report on the Child Sexual Exploitation issues in Rotherham.
- There was a £10m reduction from 2014/15 in the South Yorkshire policing budget, resulting in very challenging times ahead.

9.2 In response to a question from a Member of the Committee, Councillor Campbell confirmed that the total budget for policing in South Yorkshire was £240m, therefore the £10m reduction represented a cut of approximately 4%.

9.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the information now reported.

10. WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

10.1 The Policy and Improvement Officer submitted a report attaching the draft Work Programme for 2015/16. The draft Programme set out the details of a number of topics which the Committee would be requested to prioritise in terms of their consideration at future meetings. The Programme also contained details of written briefings which would be submitted to the Committee for information only.

10.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes and approves the draft Work Programme for 2015/16 now submitted, subject to the suggested changes now made by Members, and any further changes suggested by Members following this meeting, to be finalised by the Chair and Deputy Chair, in consultation with the Policy and Improvement Officer, and submitted to the next meeting.

11. WRITTEN RESPONSES TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS

11.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the contents of the report now submitted by the Policy and Improvement Officer, containing responses to questions raised by members of the public at the previous meetings of the Committee.

12. WELFARE REFORM - JULY 2015 - UPDATE

12.1 The Committee received and noted the contents of a report of the Director of Policy, Performance and Communications providing an update on Welfare Reform as at July 2015.

13. RIGHT TO BUY - UPDATE

13.1 The Committee received and noted a report of the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service containing information on the sales receipts generated from Right to Buy sales.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 14.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 10th September 2015, at 4.00 pm, in the Town Hall.

Implications of the national 'Summer Budget' for housing

*Housing and Neighbourhoods Service
perspective*

The Safer and Stronger Communities
Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

10th September 2015

The brief

- The impacts of the Summer budget on housing (the council perspective)
- Outline how the council is planning to deal with the impacts

Key items from the Summer Budget

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

*announced through the Queens Speech

1. Rent policy

Summer Budget changes:

- Welfare Reform and Work Bill introduced to the House of Commons on 9th July 2015.
- The Bill will force registered providers of social housing to reduce rents by 1% per year for four years with effect from April 2016.
- Registered providers will have a statutory obligation to implement the policy

1. Rent policy

Impact on Council Housing rents:

- All rents reduce by 1% each year for 4 years
- Vacants which are brought to target rent between July 8th 2015 and March 2016 have to be reduced back down again to the pre-increase rent minus 1% from April 2016
- Lose ability to bring vacant properties to target rent?* (still have 40% properties not at target)

*to be confirmed

1. Rent policy

Impact on HRA Business Plan:

- Incremental reductions in income
 - After year 1 (16/17) £7m less income than planned
 - After year 4 (19/20) £27m /year less than planned
- Overall reduction in income over 30 years; £800m (13%)
- Two resulting issues;
 - Business Plan viability (costs) over 30 years
 - Cash flow in early years (have only £40m borrowing capacity)

1. Rent Policy

Responding to the Summer Budget:

1. 30 year - cost reductions

- Investment programme
- Repairs
- Tenant Services
- Back office/ value for money
- Income

2. 5 year - cash flow (smoothing of costs)

- Stock Increase programme
- Photovoltaic panels
- Slippage to core investment programme
- Tenant Services and Repair

1. Rent Policy

HRA Business Plan 2016/17 update:

- The annual HRA Business Plan review process (2016/17 update due at Cabinet in January '16) to consider savings and cash-flow issues arising from the national Summer Budget
- HRA Business Plan with this committee in October
- Tenant /leaseholder consultation to include -
 - 22nd Oct - Tenant Conference
 - Oct- Nov – Local tenant and leasehold fora

2. Higher rents for higher earners

Summer Budget changes:

- Registered providers required by 2017/18 to charge market or near market rents to tenants where household income exceeds £30,000.
- Will apply to existing as well as transferring tenants
- The Housing press has reported, since Summer Budget, the policy is likely to contain a taper meaning social tenants earning just above the £30,000 threshold may not *immediately* have to pay market or near market rent.
- The government said it will publish more detail about how the scheme will work in a consultation paper 'in due course'

2. Higher rents for higher earners

Impact on Local Authorities:

- The lack of information on how this should be implemented make it difficult to quantify but it...
 - will increase the administrative burden on LAs- will need to identify households with income in excess of threshold, maintain additional records and process any changes in circumstances.
 - might make RTB more attractive, particularly with the recent increase in discounts available to tenants.
 - might increase turnover if tenants feel they will get better value for money in the private rented sector.
- Council Housing (unlike HAs), will not retain the additional income to offset the impact of the compulsory rent reductions. Additional rent receipts passed to Treasury
- More clarity expected when the new Housing Bill is published.

2. Higher rents for higher earners

Impact on tenants in Sheffield:

- In Sheffield this might typically mean an increase in rent of around £40/ week or £2,000/ year.
 - Council rents average around £75/ week (3 beds £85/ week)
 - Private rents in East, NE and Manor Arb Gleadless average around £120/ week
- The number of people affected isn't known as household income information is not collected from tenants.
- Average incomes in Sheffield across all tenure in 2014:- nearly 30% households earn more than £30k.
- In parts of the city with highest levels of social housing (Manor, Arb, Gleadless) this figure is 16% (across all tenures).

3. Extension of Right to Buy

- The Government announced through the Queens speech that that it will be extending the Right to Buy to HA tenants through a new Housing Bill
- This policy will be funded from sale of 'high value' council housing assets as they fall vacant.
- The definition of "high value" housing is yet to be defined although figures released by the Conservative Party have suggested the following

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 or more bed
Yorkshire and the Humber	£85,000	£130,000	£165,000	£265,000	£375,000

- There are considerable uncertainties as to whether the receipts from these sales would be sufficient to fund the cost of Right to Buy discounts for HA tenants and compensate HAs for the loss of their assets, let alone fund the replacement of sold properties on a one for one basis as well as providing a new Brownfield Regeneration Fund for house builders.

3. Extension of Right to Buy

Impact on Sheffield

- If thresholds alluded to by Conservatives were applied SCC would have 1,973 properties (5% stock) classed as high value
- However other estimates would indicate a more likely proportion for Sheffield might being around 10% Council stock

Impact on stock numbers

- If 10% stock were considered 'high value' then the policy would see 4,000 properties at risk and 400 vacant Council homes sold each year
- It is assumed the Council would then be invited bid to Govt for some of this money to be returned to part-fund replacement homes

Impact on business plan

- Much will depend on whether Government will allow LAs to retain the debt attributable to each sold unit.
- It is understood the Housing Bill will be published in October

4. Further welfare reforms

a. Reduction to the benefit cap

- The chancellor confirmed that the £26,000 benefit cap will be reduced to £20,000 outside the capital.
- This is likely to bring more general needs households into scope:
 - A single parent family on Job Seekers Allowance with 3 children & high rent costs may be capped,
 - 2 parent family on Job Seekers Allowance with 3 children are very likely to be capped
- The impact of this reduction on the Council's temporary accommodation, and potentially High Support services, could be significant
- A date for implementing the reduced cap is yet to be announced.

4. Further welfare reforms

b. Removal of automatic entitlement to HB for younger people

- From April 2017, those out of work aged 18 to 21 making new claims to Universal Credit will no longer be automatically entitled to the housing element.
- Parents whose children live with them, vulnerable groups, and those who were living independently and working continuously for the preceding 6 months will be exempt from this measure.

5. Review of security of tenure

- The Government will *‘review the use of lifetime tenancies in social housing to limit their use and ensure that households are offered tenancies that match their needs, and ensure the best use is made of the social housing stock’*.
- There is no further information available yet on the Government’s thinking in relation to this review

Summary risks of the summer budget

Risk	Cause
Dispersal of working tenants from social housing to other tenures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay to Stay may make private rented sector seem more competitive for higher earners • Review of security of tenure likely to make council housing less accessible (and attractive) to those without support needs
Reductions to social housing capacity and supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent reductions reduce capacity of providers to deliver services & new homes • Extension of RTB erodes social housing at higher rate both directly (HA properties for 1st time) & indirectly (high value council assets) • Right to Buy applications for Council homes may accelerate following Pay to Stay
Lower rents but a reduced capacity of tenants to pay rent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent reductions • Reduction to the benefit cap (as well as other welfare reforms)

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Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 10th September 2015

Report of: Policy & Improvement Officer

Subject: Work Programme 2015/16

Author of Report: Matthew Borland, Policy and Improvement Officer
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0114 273 5065

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

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

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

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

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

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

Last updated: 02 09 2015

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

Topic	Notes	Date
HRA Business Plan	The purpose is for the Committee to have an input prior to a Cabinet Report scheduled for January 2016. The Committee's October meeting has been suggested by officers as the best time for Scrutiny to have a meaningful input.	October 2015
Community Safety	The Committee agreed to dedicate a whole meeting to Community Safety. Specific aspects to be picked up include: - An update on the reorganisation of local policing - Partner Resource Allocation Meeting (PRAM) - 101 service	February 2016
Welfare Reform	March 2015 meeting requested "officers continue to present update reports to the Committee in their current form, so that Members could request further information on specific items either when they received the report or at the subsequent meeting." The Committee may also wish to consider hearing from external organisations, e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau.	
Housing+ Model and its Implementation	A formal report on the implementation of Housing+ is proposed, following which a Committee visit would be arranged to see how implementation is working 'on the ground.'	
Tenant Engagement Update	To provide the Committee with the opportunity to comment on proposals on the approach to community engagement. This could also pick up on the Committee's request for an update on the Challenge for Change Community Engagement report it looked at in September 2014.	
Challenge for Change: Vacant Property	The Council Housing Service's scrutiny group Challenge for Change (made up of customers) are now concluding their fourth review looking at vacant property management and would like	

Management	to present to the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee.	
Local Area Partnerships	The Committee has previously requested a report be presented to the Committee, with the Cabinet Member and Lead Officer being invited to attend the meeting.	
Housing Delivery	This has been identified by the Council as a performance challenge and was discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 30 th July 2015. The Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Committee had a Task and Finish Group on this subject in 2014/15 and an approach that involves both Committees would need to be developed.	
Committee Annual Report	A short item to comment on a draft of the Committee's section of the Scrutiny Annual Report	April 2016

Written Briefings 'For Information'

(Circulated with meeting papers, and officers do NOT attend the meeting)

Welfare Reform	- July 2013 Committee requested "a one page update on progress with Welfare Reform issues be provided to Committee Members bi-monthly" - November 2014 Committee requested "that future reports be set out to include comparative figures, so that trends could be identified."	Every meeting
Right to Buy Update	The Committee have received a bi-monthly update on Right to Buy since November 2013.	Every meeting
Private Sector Housing Update	Following on from the Committee's discussion at the July meeting a written update is scheduled to be included in the October 2015 and February 2016 meeting papers.	October 2015 and February 2016

The Committee's meeting dates are:

- 4.00pm Thursday 8th October 2015
- 4.00pm Thursday 3rd December 2015
- 4.00pm Thursday 4th February 2016
- 4.00pm Thursday 7th April 2016

Selecting Scrutiny topics

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

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

Other influencing factors

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



Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 10th September 2015

Report of: Policy and Improvement Officer

Subject: Written responses to public questions

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

Summary:

This report provides the Committee with copies of written responses to public questions asked by Andy Shallice regarding Selective Licensing at the Committee's meeting on 23rd July 2015.

The written responses provided by Michelle Houston, Service Manager, Private Housing Standards were sent to Andy Shallice on 28th July 2015.

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

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

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

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

Note the report

Background Papers: None

Category of Report: OPEN

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Response to public questions of Andy Shallice

- 1) Do officers consider there to have been any improvements in Page Hall since the SL scheme was introduced (e.g. either re tenant management; state and condition of repair; overcrowding; or other aspects of the local neighbourhood)?

Yes. The report named 'Selective Licensing One year on', was attached as an Appendix to the Scrutiny Committee report. It provides information about the many improvements that we've seen. This includes rises in the number of tenancy agreements issued, gas safety certificates, accurate information about landlords, agents and owners – including where they are not deemed to be Fit and Proper, many more repairs being done than before and much more. Over 100 landlords have attended our one day training course, and given it an 88% satisfaction rating. Many landlords accepted that they were not fully au fait with their legal responsibilities, and were looking forward to putting their knowledge into practice. Landlords that have failed to take these seriously have been successfully prosecuted to ensure they are clear that the Council takes the matter seriously.

By inspecting the property, we have also identified important issues regarding the bypassing of gas and electricity meters, Safeguarding issues and matters relating to benefit claims. The message about overcrowding is definitely out and officers have assisted in introducing landlords to tenants wishing to move so they can continue to educate about tenants' rights as well as their obligations. It is important to reiterate that Selective Licensing is a housing tool and does not regulate neighbourhood issues. However, our continuing work with landlords and tenants will be about responsible letting and tenancy management.

- 2) Has there many any noticeable change (or anecdotal evidence) of the mix of the (private rented) tenant population since the introduction of SL e.g. the proportion of tenants who are "economic migrants", or EU migrants, or Roma?

This is not something that we have measured or been recording or reporting on.

- 3) How many voluntary registrations of landlords have there been in the wider, coterminous neighbourhoods around the SL designated area?

There have been 5 applications for the Voluntary Registration scheme.

- 4) When the officers used the phrase "they're not displacing - they're still arriving" (p52) in the PowerPoint slides attached on the March 2015 agenda, did they mean landlords, or tenants? If the reference is to tenants, is this suggesting that an ambition of SL was to alter the composition of the local tenant population?

This phrase is in response to claims heard in the consultation; that introducing Selective licensing would simply 'shift' the problems into a different area. People have said that the problem has been displaced as they have noticed irresponsible lettings and an increase in Roma families in other neighbourhoods. It is therefore important to reiterate that more Roma families are choosing to come to Sheffield, and not being able to find a home in Page Hall, are choosing to live in surrounding areas. This is not caused by Selective licensing, and it was not an ambition of Selective Licensing to alter the composition of the local tenant population.

Michelle Houston
Service Manager
Private Housing Standards, 28 July 2015



Report to Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

10th September 2015

Report of: Janet Sharpe – Director of Housing Services

Subject: Right to buy update report

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

Summary:

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

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

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

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

The Committee is asked to note the update.

Background Papers: Not applicable

Category of Report: OPEN

1. Introduction

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

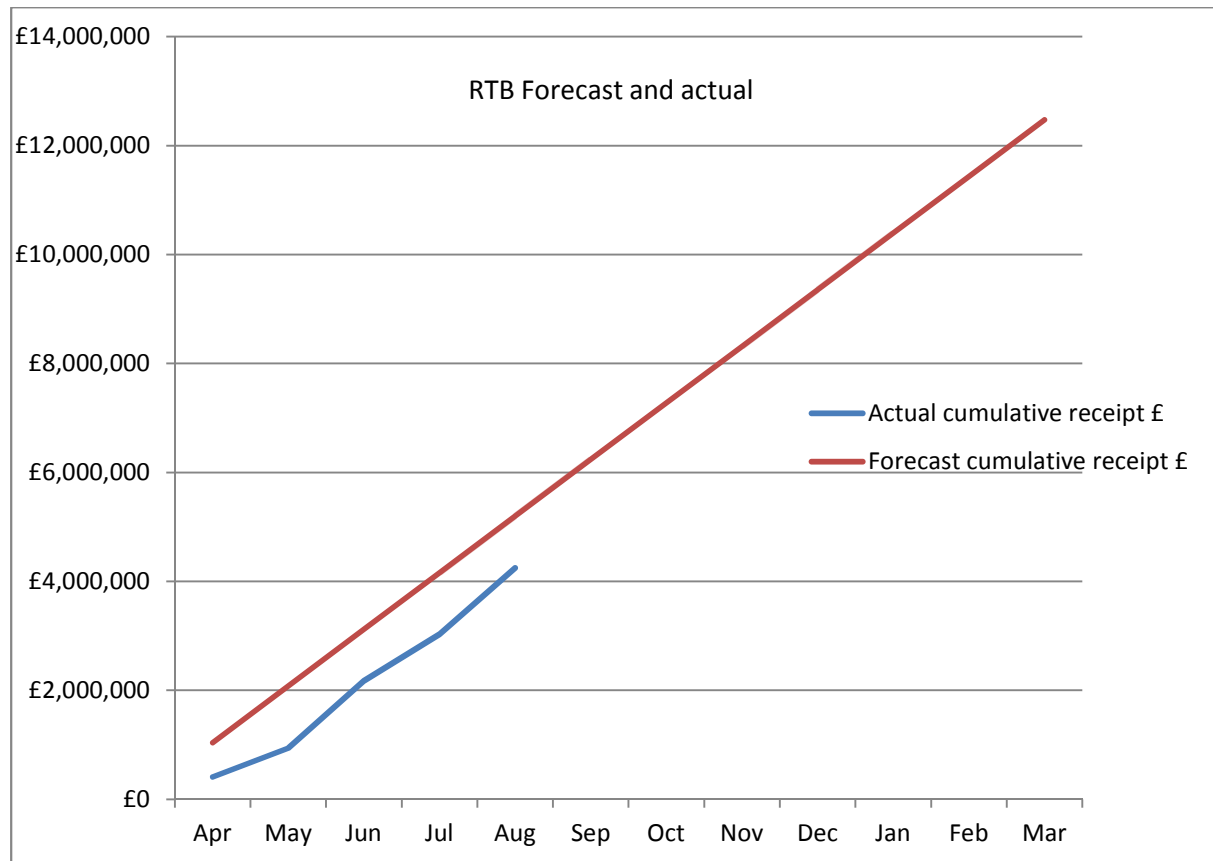
1.2 The forecast for right to buy sales for the year are:

total sales 320

Average sale price £38,500

Total receipt £12,320,000

Average sales 26.6 per month



2. Activity

2.1 To date, end of August 2015 there have been a total of 109 sales.

April sales = 11

May sales = 15

June sales = 31

July sales = 24

August sales = 28

2.2 This is down on the forecasted position by 21 sales however sales over the summer months (July & August) are historically usually below average but have remained on forecast. September, October and November generally are months with above average sales so this should bring us back in line with the forecast

2.3 The average sale price is in line with forecast (£38,500) at £38,900.

3. Recommendation

3.1 The Committee is asked to note the update.

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