



Report to Communities and Neighbourhoods Transitional Committee

Tuesday 15th February 2022

Report of: Policy & Improvement Officer

Subject: Report from January's workshop

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During January, when Covid infections were high, the Committee opted to hold its scheduled meeting as an informal on line workshop. They considered the reports that were previously planned for the December meeting in 2021. This was postponed, also due to the high rate of Covid infections.

The appendix attached to this report outlines the nature of the presentations and discussions from the informal workshop.

The Committee is being asked to:

- Note the content of the workshop held in January 2022
 - Consider making a recommendation that the further work referred to on Selective Licensing is taken forward under the new Committee System in 2022/23
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Appendix: Communities and Neighbourhoods Transitional Committee

Informal Workshop

Wednesday 19 January, 9.30am, via Teams

Present: Councillor Peter Garbutt, Councillor Sioned-Mair Richards, Councillor Joe Otten, Councillor Andrew Sangar, Councillor Sophie Thornton, Councillor Ben Curran, Deborah Glen, Jill Hurst, Catherine Hughes, Philippa Burdett

Apologies: Councillor Karen McGowan, Councillor Abtisam Mohamed, Councillor Alison Teal, Councillor Paul Wood

Notes from meeting:

1. Cladding and Fire Safety

Jill Hurst shared a presentation on Improving Fire Safety Council Owned High Rise with members, which included a legislative update and key changes, and the key themes of working: Council Housing Fire Safety Board, continuous improvement and culture, and engagement and outreach.

- Mobility scooters were discussed, including issues relating to their safe storage in terms of charging, fire safety and evacuation plans. This could be highlighted with Cabinet Member (Paul Wood/George Lindars-Hammond)
- Jill answered questions relating to the information she had shared
- Jill happy to accept any supplementary questions after the meeting by email.
- Thanks to Jill for an informative presentation

2. Regulation in the Residential Sector

Catherine Hughes shared a presentation on Robust Regulation in the Residential Sector which outlined the work carried out by the Private Housing Standards team.

- Discussion about the 'Snug' scheme – could it now be transferred over to the universities, or increase the fee, or reduce the sign-up period from two years to one year.
- Catherine - scheme was due for renewal and she could come back and discuss ideas in more detail with members.
- Concern noted about the cost of Waking Watch
- Members noted the hard work of the team
- Query about reaching people that were more vulnerable and didn't currently engage. And a selective licensing scheme that that created this opportunity. Could new schemes be worked up whilst others were in progress

- Catherine – grounds needed to look at selective licensing. Gathering of evidence required resources and money. Then explore evidence to see if the threshold had been met. Needs to be looked at in more detail. Could be a detailed session for the committee. Come back after refreshing the cost information.
- Useful to see lessons learned from Page Hall and London Road
- Noted that more work could be done to promote the team and what they do
- Benefits of having a licencing scheme versus targeting where you're going. Benefits either way?
- Catherine:
 - Licensing scheme - can charge a fee for licensing scheme, but depends on how you administer that scheme. Not inspecting all the properties so problem properties may be missed
 - Targeting work – quicker and cheaper than evidence gathering. But doesn't have legal standing. Costs of putting in a scheme are unseen
- Useful for Members to be notified of issues in their local area – whether it be concerns or reassurances
- Catherine – members would be notified of proactive work. The targeting work carried out in 2017 involved ward members, local communities and charities in meetings
- Deborah – a brief report pulling all comments together could be brought to the next Committee
- Thanks to Catherine for an informative presentation

3. Update on working groups

Sophie (housing repairs):

- Initial meeting in December with presentations from service managers, including a local govt officer from Hackney, who is a Sheffield resident and now an SCC employee
- Talked about what issues to focus on
- Co-ordination between housing and repairs and how they could liaise better
- Recommendations before MER 516
- Happy to send through further detail to the group if helpful
- Needs to arrange a date for the next working group with Deborah.

Sioned (post Christmas debt):

- Reps from the Credit Union and from loan shark action had attended a meeting in her ward. She would like them to talk to this group with figures for Sheffield at the next meeting

Karen (youth - info provided by Peter):

- Community visits with Chelsea Renehan soon to see first-hand what the problems are. Dates are 26 and 27 January – all welcome.

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