

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, ROTHERHAM.
S60 2TH

Date: Wednesday, 26th March, 2014

Time: 1.30 p.m.

A G E N D A

1. To determine whether the following items should be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended March 2006) of the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To determine any item(s) the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered later in the agenda as a matter of urgency.
3. Apologies for absence
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Questions from members of the public and the press
6. Communications
7. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th February 2014 (Pages 1 - 5)
8. Private Rented Sector
- *presentation at the meeting*
9. Scrutiny Work Programme 2013/14 - update and forward planning (Pages 6 - 8)
10. Early Findings from Scrutiny Reviews (Pages 9 - 15)
11. Date, time and venue for the next meeting - Wednesday 23 April 2014 at 1.30 pm

Improving Places Select Commission: membership: -

Councillors Andrews, Astbury, Atkin, Dodson, Ellis, Falvey (Chairman), Foden, Gilding, Godfrey, Gosling, N. Hamilton, Jepson, Johnston, Pickering, Read, Roche, P. A. Russell, Sims (Vice-Chairman), Swift, Vines, Wallis and Whysall.

Co-opted members:- Miss P. Copnell, Mr. T. Roche and Mr. B. Walker.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION
19th February, 2014

Present:- Councillor Falvey (in the Chair); The Mayor (Councillor Foden); Councillors Andrews, Astbury, Atkin, Dodson, Ellis, Gilding, Godfrey, Gosling, N. Hamilton, Pickering, Read, Roche, P. A. Russell, Sims, Swift, Vines and Whysall; together with co-opted members Miss P. Copnell and Mr. B. Walker.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jepson, Johnston and Wallis.

43. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

44. COMMUNICATIONS

(1) Further to Minute No. 183 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5th February 2014, reference was made to this Council's response to the coalition Government's consultation on the proposed High Speed Two (HS2) railway. Members noted that this Council's response to the consultation had been submitted on 16th January, 2014, in accordance with the timetable. The response will be distributed to all Members of the Improving Places Select Commission.

(2) The future work programme of the Improving Places Select Commission will be considered at the next meeting, to be held on Wednesday, 26th March 2014.

45. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 15TH JANUARY, 2014

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission, held on 15th January, 2014, be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

46. LOCAL PLAN - CONSULTATION ON MAIN MODIFICATIONS TO THE CORE STRATEGY

Further to Minute No. 182 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5th February, 2014, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Planning Policy Manager, outlining the modifications to the Local Plan Core Strategy to accommodate the changes required by the Planning Inspector. The report stated that these modifications are necessary to make the document sound and enable the Council to adopt the document, by following due process.

Details of the Inspector's initial conclusions and the key recommended changes to the Core Strategy were included in the submitted report. Consultation on the Inspector's main modifications to the Core Strategy

will take place during March and April 2014.

It was noted that the eventual adoption of the Core Strategy remains a decision to be taken by Elected Members (via Cabinet and full Council meetings), after receipt of the Inspector's final report.

During discussion, the Select Commission raised the following salient issues:-

: the view of the Inspector on the target of the number of new houses to be built in the Rotherham Borough area (including the shortfall from previous years); national planning policy on the use of brownfield and greenfield sites for development; regional targets for new housing and co-operation with neighbouring local authorities;

: the proposed Bassingthorpe Farm development (which may ultimately be allocated as a principal settlement in the Local Plan Core Strategy, rather than as a 'broad location for growth');

: the new development at Waverley and the provision of school places;

: implications for the Local Plan Sites and Policies document (upon which, there will be public consultation during the Summer 2014);

: the usefulness of the public consultation process; Members noted the role of the Government-appointed Planning Inspector in considering the representations received during the public consultation;

: the impact of the housing market assessments, affecting both the Rotherham and Sheffield local authority areas;

: the overall target, for the Rotherham Borough area, of 25% of new housing being affordable housing;

: Rotherham's "town centre first" policy – Members suggested that this policy ought to be reviewed;

: sites which are suitable for commuters, often located near to motorway junctions;

: reference to specific areas and sites within the Rotherham Borough area (eg: Wath-Manvers; Bramley-Wickersley; Eastwood trading estate);

: the 'phasing' of new development during the life of the Local Plan.

The Select Commission noted that there will be a further Examination in Public of the Local Plan Core Strategy, during the Summer 2014, after the public consultation has concluded.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the review group examining the support for Rotherham's local economy be asked to consider the need for a review of the "town centre first" policy.

47. PROPOSED RESPONSE TO THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY CONSULTATION ON MAXIMUM MANDATORY SPEED LIMIT - M1 JUNCTIONS 28 TO 35A

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Transportation and Traffic Manager, containing this Council's proposed response to the Highways Agency's consultation on a maximum mandatory speed limit for the M1 motorway between junction 28 (Mansfield) junction 35a (Chapelton).

The report stated that the Highways Agency, on behalf of the Department for Transport, is currently progressing proposals for the implementation of the Smart Motorways Project (previously known as the Managed Motorways Project), which if implemented, will see the hard shoulder of the M1 Motorway between Junctions 28 and 31, and Junctions 32 and 35a converted to a live running lane for all traffic.

An environmental assessment has been carried out which indicates that the scheme, which has all-lane running at all times could have a significant adverse effect on local air quality at sensitive receptors and at Air Quality Management Areas, particularly in the Sheffield and Rotherham areas, when operating at the national speed limit and the predicted levels of traffic growth.

In order to mitigate the adverse impacts on air quality which arise from operation at the national speed limit, the Highways Agency is proposing to implement a maximum mandatory 60mph speed limit on the section of the M1 Motorway between Junctions 28 and 35a.

The Select Commission discussed the following salient issues:-

: the emergency services have concerns about 24-hours all-lane running of vehicles on motorways; in addition, there may be difficulties of access for emergency vehicles to accident sites, should there be all-lane running of vehicles on the motorway;

: a previous scrutiny review, undertaken by this Council, had suggested the introduction of a reduced vehicle speed limit on the M1 motorway in the Brinsworth and Tinsley areas, principally to try and improve air quality;

: a reduced speed limit might increase vehicle congestion and tailbacks on the motorway at Tinsley; Members questioned the supposed air quality benefits of reducing vehicle speeds;

: it is already common practice to regulate traffic flows by the use of

variable speed limits on the whole motorway network;

: comparisons were made with similar schemes on other motorways (eg: M42 in the Midlands);

: other European countries (eg: Germany) operate higher vehicle speed limits, without an excessively detrimental effect upon air quality (although speed limits reduce near to large conurbations);

: it was noted that there is an optimum speed for motor vehicles (at approximately 55mph to 60mph) in terms of fuel-efficiency and minimising the impact upon air quality;

: modern motor vehicle engines have improved fuel efficiency, which is less damaging to the environment.

It was noted that individuals are able to submit representations to the Highways Agency during the consultation process about the speed limit on the M1 motorway.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That this Council's response to the Highways Agency's consultation on a maximum mandatory speed limit for the M1 motorway between junction 28 (Mansfield) junction 35a (Chapelton) be approved insofar as this Select Commission is concerned.

48. LAND REGISTRY, WIDER POWERS AND LOCAL LAND CHARGES

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Planning Manager, concerning the consultation by the Land Registry, entitled "Land Registry, Wider Powers and Local Land Charges", affecting the Local Land Charges service.

The report stated that the Land Registry is proposing to take over the Local Land Charges Register and provide search information (a statutory duty of the local authority), whilst leaving local authorities with responsibility for completing enquiries of the local authority (via form CON29), effectively splitting the interdependent service currently provided by Local Land Charges. Such a proposal would reduce the income to local authorities from the operation of these services.

This Council's proposed response to the consultation was appended to the submitted report.

Members discussed the following salient issues:-

: standardisation of fees for local land charges;

: the proposed centralisation of statutory powers, currently exercised at a

local level;

: questioning the overall rationale of the proposals.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the proposed response to the Land Registry consultation, as now amended, be approved insofar as this Select Commission is concerned.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Improving Places Select Commission
2.	Date:	Wednesday 26th March 2014
3.	Title:	Work Programme 2013/14 – update and forward planning
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive's

5. Summary

This report provides The Improving Places Select Commission with an update progress on the delivery to date, summarising achievements and changes that have taken place. It also reports on future agenda items and potential themes going forward into 2014/15.

6. Recommendation

That Members:

- **Note achievements so far.**
- **Consider the implications for the rest of this year's work programme**
- **Consider the approach it would like to adopt for 2014/15 work programme**

7. Proposals and Details

The work programme for 2013/14 was agreed at the OSMB meeting on the 28th June 2014. It is attached at appendix A, including a column on progress. This report provides members with an update on the progress made to date.

In summary the results so far include:

- 2 out of the 7 items on the work programme have been completed.
- 3 out of the 7 items are underway and almost completed, making the Commission on track for completion of over 70% of its work programme by the end of April 14.
- 2 out of the 7 items have not commenced (although one of these has been commenced by the Self Regulation Select Commission)
- The Select Commission is on track to complete 2 full reviews this year, in line with its target set by OSMB at the beginning of the year.

Forward Planning : Items still to be considered:

Final Scrutiny review reports on:

- Homelessness
- Supporting the Local Economy

Update reports on:

- Roads maintenance
- Off road motorbikes
- Housing repairs

Future work programme items suggested to date:

- Selective Licensing proposals
- Parking enforcement
- Green energy/The Big Switch
- Tram-train and electrification
- Apprenticeships

The Scrutiny review final reports and update reports can all be scheduled before the Summer recess. Members should consider which other future items from the list above they wish to be prioritised in this years programme and which ones could be considered as part of the work programme for 2014/15.

By way of an update, the other Select Commissions are also looking at their forward planning for 2014/15. The Health Select Commission are focusing predominantly on one theme for the year – Mental Health and Wellbeing, and the Improving Lives Select Commission programme is likely to be focused around the theme of Safeguarding. It has also been suggested that the theme of DWP work and other programmes will be the focus for OSMB. Improving Places may well therefore wish to consider whether its work programme could be focused around such a theme and whether that theme may emerge from the current review on Supporting the Local Economy.

8. Finance

No direct financial implications.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The development of a clear work programme maximises the potential for Scrutiny to have an impact and mitigates against the risk of using resources with little impact or outcome. It does, however, need to maintain flexibility to allow for uncertainties to be accommodated within the planning process.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Scrutiny work programme aims to add value to corporate priorities by addressing key policy and performance priorities. These are taken into consideration when defining the work programme on an annual basis.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Contact Name:

Deborah Fellowes, Scrutiny Manager ext 22769

Appendix A

Improving Places Select Commission: Chair Cllr Falvey, Vice Chair Cllr Sims

Subject	Source	Work category	Scope
Local Plan - Sites and Allocations Policy	Scrutiny	Progress reports	Report due February 2014
Community assets/Community Right to Buy	Scrutiny	Potential report – later on in programme	Not required as yet.
Housing repairs	Scrutiny	Progress reports	First report received December 2013
Council Housing rents and supplementary charges for community rooms and laundry charges	Scrutiny	Report	With Self Regulation – who have received initial Council Housing rents report – Jan 2014 Awaiting outcome of Neighbourhood Centres review.
Customer Service Centre and Libraries	Scrutiny	Report.	Completed during meeting January 2014
Homelessness Strategy	Cabinet Member	New item added in - Review/consultation	Review which included consultation on new Strategy almost completed.
Local procurement policies/support to business	Officer	Initial report	Support to Local Economy full review underway.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Improving Places Select Commission
2.	Date:	Wednesday 26th March 2014
3.	Title:	Early Findings from Scrutiny Reviews
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive's

5. Summary

This report provides The Improving Places Select Commission with an update on its two main scrutiny reviews for the year 2013/14.

6. Recommendation

That Members:

- **Note progress to date**
- **Discuss the emerging themes from both reviews.**

7. Proposals and Details

The work programme for 2013/14 was agreed at the OSMB meeting on the 28th June 2014. Each Select Commission was tasked with completing at least 2 reviews during the year. For Improving Places Select Commission these two reviews were:

Homelessness

Supporting/Improving the Local Economy.

A summary of each of the reviews is contained within the report and the detailed scopes are attached as appendices. The Chairs of the reviews will provide a summary of the key emerging issues and early findings at the meeting.

Homelessness:

This review was requested as part of the consultation process on the refreshed housing strategy. Early stages of the review were spent reviewing the existing strategy, its key achievements and outstanding actions. This then fed into discussions about a draft refreshed strategy and some detailed comments and amendments were made. The review then also focused on the homelessness service looking at issues relating to gaps in services, opportunities for sub regional funding and working, crash pads, plans for re-population of the town centre (s) and work with the private rented sector as a mechanism for tackling homelessness. The review was Chaired by Councillor Jacquie Falvey and has completed the evidence gathering stage. The final report should be available for consideration by the Commission at its April meeting.

Supporting/Improving the Local Economy:

This review was requested by a number of members and linked very strongly with the new Council priorities. An important focus of the review from early on was the recent changes to council finances, predominantly the increasing importance of business rates retention as a source of income. The review group therefore received an early presentation on this model and the implications of it for the Council in the future. They then focused on a whole council approach to supporting the local economy and looked in depth at Asset Management, Housing strategy, transportation and planning as well as the functions contained within Rotherham Investment and Development Office (RIDO). The review group also heard from the Chief Executive of Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce, and is still going to hear from some private sector witnesses. This is the last evidence session prior to concluding the review. Councillor Emma Wallis has chaired the review.

8. Finance

Financial implications will be set out in detail in the final reports.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Not all of the recommendations contained within the reviews will be accepted and implemented. The findings presented at the meeting are still at draft stage and may be subject to further changes.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Scrutiny work programme aims to add value to corporate priorities by addressing key policy and performance priorities. These are taken into consideration when defining the work programme on an annual basis.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Contact Name:

Deborah Fellowes, Scrutiny Manager ext 22769

Appendix A
Homelessness – Improving Places Panel.

Subject of the review	Homelessness
Type of review	Full Review
Chair	Cllr Jackie Falvey,
Review group members	Cllr Swift, Cllr Neil Hamilton, Cllr Gosling, Cllr Chris Read and Ms Copnell – co-opted member.
Officer contacts	Deborah Fellowes, Scrutiny Manager ext: 22769
Purpose of the review	<p>Areas for consideration</p> <p>1 Improving information – Short term focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information is there for customers who are faced with homelessness (leaflets, website, self-help other agencies) • Where can customers get advice and information to prevent homelessness • Do customers understand the information provided – especially verbal when referring to being homeless earlier than the 28 day legislative rule on taking cases. <p>2 Sub Regional Collaboration – long term focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bed spaces/direct hostels. • Out of hours emergency phone <p>3 Temporary accommodation – short term focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability and quality of temporary accommodation/direct access hostels – how does a customer in Rotherham access a bed space and what is their experience when they get there • Crash pads, locations, standards and information available to the customer when they arrive.
Key questions and areas to focus on – based on previous member discussions	Jill to complete.
Anticipated outcome(s)	<p>1. Improving information - Better understanding of what information is available to customers and any make any necessary improvements including ease of accessibility and understand – plain English.</p> <p>Appropriate and accurate support and advice regarding referrals between partner organisations.</p> <p>Include information into Team Plans.</p>

	<p>Earlier intervention with people facing homelessness to give support and advice. Long term aim is to reduce the number of people requiring temporary accommodation</p> <p>2. Sub Regional Collaboration</p> <p>Working more effectively with sub regional partners in obtaining funding to assist customers.</p> <p>3. Temporary accommodation Provide adequate accommodation, information and support around resettlement.</p> <p>Overall aim is to reduce number of people using the service.</p>
<p>What is the potential impact of the review on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Equality issues eg access to services, vulnerable groups • Health inequalities • Adding value to the organisation • Partners • Any other key groups? 	<p>Is the information provided in different formats – languages, for partially sighted, for hard of hearing.</p> <p>Potential health problems – stress, physical illness from no or poor accommodation</p> <p>Crash pads – are they DDA compliant?</p> <p>Ex service personnel</p> <p>Ex offenders</p> <p>Location of provision.</p>
<p>Links to the council’s corporate plan</p>	<p>○ Priority 2 “Protecting our most vulnerable people and families and enabling them to maintain their independence.”</p>
<p>Methodology</p>	<p>Questionnaire – Rotherham Show Consultation Programme – Jill to provide. Feedback from customers Pier Group feedback. Meetings with support providers – Rush House, Action Housing, Moving on panel (young people) Benchmarking with other local authorities.</p> <p>Report to Improving Places Panel.</p>
<p>Press & publicity</p>	<p>Involve once the review is complete.</p>
<p>Key background papers (to be considered in advance of evidence gathering meeting)</p>	<p>Localism Act RMBC Housing Strategy 2013 onwards RMBC Allocation Strategy</p>

Written evidence to be provided by	Jill Jones Housing Manager
Oral evidence to be provided by	
Potential partners	Rush House, Action Housing and Moving On panel. Probation Service and MCV
Resources required	Existing staff time from RMBC Housing & Scrutiny Services, Members, support organisation and the Housing Forum.
Timetable	Housing Strategy to be completed by ??????
Reporting mechanism	Improving Places to OSMB to Cabinet

Appendix B

Improving the Local Economy – scoping paper

Background

This review was identified and agreed as part of the work programme for the Improving Places Select Commission for 2013/14. Due to the changes to Local Government Finance and in particular the business rates, it was agreed that the Council needed to focus on ways to support the local economy to generate an increase in business rates. These efforts also need to focus on generating employment and training opportunities for local residents and stimulating the multiplier effect, retaining as much private sector investment in the local economy as possible. This review will complement the Commissioning review being done by Self Regulation Select Commission which is focusing, amongst other things, on the potential for the public sector to stimulate the local economy via its procurement function.

Subject of the review	Improving the Local Economy
Type of review	Full
Chair	Cllr Emma Wallis
Review group members	Cllrs Dominic Beck, Clive Jepson, Cllr Alan Atkin
Officer contacts	Deborah Fellowes, Scrutiny Manager ext: 22769 Simeon Leach, Regeneration Manager ext 23828
Purpose of the review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To analyse the impact of changes to local government finance – particularly business rates • To analyse how the Council can create the right conditions for growth in the private sector • To influence the development of the growth plan for Rotherham, which in turn feeds into the City Region growth plan. • To develop a whole council approach to increase business rates in Rotherham
Key questions and areas to focus on – based on previous member discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the impact of an increase/decrease in business rates on the Council finances? • What is the impact of this on the local economy? • How can the Council support economic development and what should be in the growth plan? What different models can be adopted? • How are supply chains supported? • What incentives can be offered to local businesses? • How do we evaluate success? How have others achieved it? • Impact of funding • What are Rotherham's growth areas? • What specifically is the approach to Tourism? • How can the following services be used to generate business investment? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Asset Management ○ Transport ○ Planning ○ Housing • How do we impact on the most deprived areas of Rotherham?

Anticipated outcome(s)	Recommendations to cabinet and SLT on measures to be implemented to ensure a whole council approach to supporting the local economy An effective growth plan for Rotherham
What is the potential impact of the review on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Equality issues eg access to services, vulnerable groups • Health inequalities • Adding value to the organisation • Partners • Any other key groups? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased employability/employment for local residents • Potential to impact on most deprived communities and therefore long term unemployed and vulnerable groups – the review will specifically look at this • Potential to generate income for the Council via business rates
Links to the council's corporate plan	○ <i>Supporting the local economy</i>
Methodology	<p>The review will take place over 4 or 5 meetings, please see timetable below. This will involve presentations of information from key officers and partners, followed by question and answer and discussion.</p> <p>It will look at emerging strategies including the Corporate Land and Property Asset Strategy, Rotherham Growth Plan including housing growth, transportation and spatial planning.</p> <p>Desktop research for performance measurement and benchmarking purposes.</p>
Press & publicity	
Key background papers (to be considered in advance of evidence gathering meeting)	- Report to Improving Places Select Commission
Written evidence to be provided by	Asset Management, Regeneration, Housing, transport
Oral evidence to be provided by	Financial Services Asset Management Planning Transportation Housing Economic Development
Potential partners	Private Sector / Chamber of Commerce
Resources required	Time from Scrutiny and other officers
Timetable	<p>15/10/13 – Initial discussion</p> <p>20/11/13 – meeting to understand finance model and scope review</p> <p>08/01/14 – update for members and re-scope review</p> <p>17/01/14 – meeting with CX Chamber of Commerce and Paul Smith, Asset Management</p> <p>Still to be scheduled – RIDO, Planning, Transport, Housing, Economic Growth Plan</p>
Reporting mechanism	OSMB – Cabinet