

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

Date and Time:- Tuesday 4 June 2024 at 1.30 p.m.

Venue:- Rotherham Town Hall, The Crofts, Moorgate Street, Rotherham. S60 2TH

Membership:- Councillors McKiernan (Chair), Tinsley (Vice-Chair), Adair, Ahmed, Baggaley, Beresford, C. Carter, Castledine-Dack, Cowen, Havard, Jackson, Jones, Mault, Rashid, Stables, Beck, Thorp and Williams.

Co-opted Members:- Mrs. K. Bacon and Mrs. M. Jacques.

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view [via the Council's website](#). The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

Rotherham Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair or Governance Advisor of their intentions prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 March 2024 (Pages 3 - 12)

To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 March 2024 as a true and correct record of the proceedings and to be signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of items listed on the agenda.

4. Questions from members of the public and the press

To receive questions relating to items of business on the agenda from members of the public or press who are present at the meeting.

5. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any part of the agenda.

6. Housing Strategy 2022-25 Progress Report Year 2 (2023-24) (Pages 13 - 50)

To consider the report which provides an update on progress for year 2, from March 2023 to April 2024.

7. Nominate representative to the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel (Pages 51 - 57)

To seek a representative from the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) to sit as a member on the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel.

Meeting dates for 2024-2025:

- Thursday 11 July 2024
- Thursday 17 October 2024
- Thursday 30 January 2025
- Thursday 24 April 2025

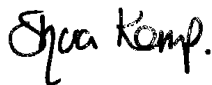
8. Improving Places Select Commission - Work Programme 2024 - 2025 (Pages 59 - 60)

To consider and endorse the outline schedule of scrutiny work for the 2024-2025 municipal year.

9. Urgent Business

To consider any item which the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

**The next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission
will be held on Tuesday 9 July 2024
commencing at 1.30 p.m.
in Rotherham Town Hall.**



SHARON KEMP,
Chief Executive.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION
Tuesday 19 March 2024

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair); Councillors Andrews, Bennett-Sylvester, C Carter, T. Collingham, Cowen, Ellis, Khan, McNeely and Tinsley (Vice Chair) and co-opted members Mrs. M. Jacques, and Mrs. K. Bacon, representing Rotherham Federation of Communities.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Atkin, Aveyard, Havard and Taylor.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-
<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

58. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2024

Resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 February 2024 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

59. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

60. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

The Chair advised that there were no members of the public or representatives of media organisations present at the meeting and there were no questions in respect of matters on the agenda.

61. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair advised that there were no items of business on the agenda that would require the exclusion of the press or public from the meeting.

62. TENANTS SCRUTINY PANEL REVIEW - VOIDS LETTABLE STANDARD

The Chair explained this item was to highlight the work that the Tenant Scrutiny Panel had carried out on Voids and the lettable standards of those Voids. This was work that the Tenant Scrutiny Panel felt they could add value to, and he expressed his thanks to the work of the Panel. He then welcomed Lynsey Stephenson, Head of Housing Property Service to the meeting.

The Head of Housing Property Service echoed her thanks to the Tenant Scrutiny Panel for the comprehensive review which focused on the lettable standards involved with the termination and re-letting process.

The Panel looked at benchmarking with other housing providers to assess their lettable standards. They conducted property inspections before and after work to evaluate the conditions left by outgoing tenants and the state of properties upon completion. Consultations were held with various staff members, including voids supervisors and cleaning staff. Additionally, communications with tenants were also reviewed during the review, including termination letters, and termination forms. Feedback from tenants, both outgoing and incoming, was gathered to inform the formulation of eleven recommendations.

The Housing Property Service had considered each recommendation carefully, and an action plan was developed detailing how to progress them. While some recommendations had not been pursued due to contractual limitations or existing practices, efforts had been made to align with legislative changes and ensure properties met necessary standards, including the installation of carbon monoxide and smoke alarms.

It was highlighted that certain examples, such as those concerning gas testing turnaround times, were discussed. It was noted that reducing such turnaround times might require additional resources, such as more appointment slots and standby staff, which could potentially impact other aspects of the service and further investigation was needed in those areas. Furthermore, observations were made regarding items not currently included in the lettable standard, such as surfacing curtain battens, clothes posts, and fencing, which are practiced by other housing providers. While acknowledging these observations, it was emphasised that the tenancy agreement clearly outlines tenant responsibilities for such items. It was clarified that while these considerations are not discounted, implementing them may incur additional costs that could affect other service elements. Each recommendation was addressed with various actions, some already completed and closed, others yet to be progressed, and some currently under investigation.

The Chair expressed gratitude for the service work and raised concerns about costs, emphasising that any extensions would impact the housing revenue account, also he sought clarification regarding smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms.

The Head of Housing Property Service explained that legislation mandates carbon monoxide alarms and highlighted access issues, such as with fire doors, affecting existing tenants. She described efforts to replace fire doors and emphasised the importance of maintaining proper fire protection levels, also she mentioned that in December they successfully took someone to court because they had been persistently not allowing access to replace the fire door. She also mentioned conducting fixed wire tests and installing carbon monoxide and smoke detectors during void processes to ensure compliance. The Head of Housing Property Service acknowledged slight variations from the void's standard but stressed agreement with contractors on these practices. Additionally, she discussed the need to address loft insulation to meet

energy efficiency targets, aiming to minimise disruption for tenants during property turnover. Additionally, she highlighted the adherence to recommendations from the Scrutiny Panel, suggesting the potential for expediting property turnover. They considered delaying kitchen renovations and replacing only if necessary, prioritising minimal disruption for tenants. As a result, they aim to carry out such renovations during void periods.

The Chair expressed concerns regarding decorating allowances, noting that it is not often highlighted. He recalled a time when decorating allowances were more common, acknowledging that times have changed. However, he suggested that there's still room for discretion in certain circumstances, especially with the assistance of housing managers. Also, he pointed out that such allowances would incur costs with each letting, potentially affecting overall expenses.

Councillor McNeely highlighted a few important things. Firstly, when visiting somebody who was going to vacate you usually witnessed a fully furnished house and you found some of the faults once the furniture had been removed so she suggested getting a double check procedure. Secondly, she acknowledged that some properties may remain void for longer periods depending on the amount of work that needed to be done. She also recognised that certain properties were being kept vacant for emergency purposes. However, she expressed concern about residents' perceptions when they saw properties unoccupied for extended periods. She suggested establishing a system to inform surrounding residents of the reason for a property's vacancy, particularly when kept empty for emergency purposes.

The Head of Housing Property Service responded that we do not conduct pre-tenant termination inspections for all types of properties. She pointed out that they aimed to do so, but they had faced challenges in doing it consistently due to resource constraints. However, she agreed that these inspections were crucial, especially when tenants were transferring to another council property and their current residence required significant repairs. She said that ideally, the Council would stop their transfer until the damages were rectified, but unfortunately, resource limitations hindered the service's ability to conduct pre-termination inspections universally. Instead, properties got inspected when they become void, identifying any damages caused by the tenant and levying charges accordingly.

Regarding long-term vacant properties the Head of Housing Property Service noted that, ideally, the Council should not have any, as it maintained a temporary accommodation portfolio. It was pointed out that these properties should only remain vacant for a short period, typically days or weeks, before accommodating homeless applicants. However, she highlighted that, sometimes properties could remain empty for extended periods due to legal processes, such as when tenants entered residential care or when there were court arrangements confirming

permanent residency in such care. During those periods, neighbours and residents may perceive the property as abandoned, leading to enquiries or concerns. However, she noted that such communications must be handled sensitively, adhering to GDPR regulations and maintaining privacy regarding tenants' situations.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester highlighted a common issue where properties remain vacant for extended periods due to safety concerns or other community requirements. He cited an example in Dalton where a property remained empty for 12 months under similar circumstances. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester emphasised the importance of communication with residents, noting that enquiries often arose when properties remain empty for extended periods. He suggested using estate agent-type boards to inform residents when a property would become available for letting, thus improving communication and transparency. He stressed the need for simple and clear communication to address concerns about vacant properties.

He also highlighted some common issues found through casework, such as neglected gardens and missing bins upon moving into new properties. These issues seem to arise particularly in rapid rehousing scenarios, prompting the need for follow-up and system improvements. Additionally, he mentioned concerns about the effectiveness of decorating vouchers and their potential impact on certain neighbourhoods. He questioned whether specific properties facing difficulty in being let could receive additional assistance such as a decorating voucher, as part of the overall letting policy. These thoughts raised further considerations for policy adjustments and support measures.

The Head of Housing Property Service explained that sometimes properties required immediate attention, so overgrown gardens and missing bins were addressed to ensure the premises was presentable for new tenants. However, she noted that if the property remained vacant for more than 30 days, especially during the summer when grass grew quickly it was hard to maintain that standard. She also highlighted that occasionally, neighbours may take advantage of the situation and remove bins, although this did not happen frequently. Those issues usually got discovered during inspections with incoming tenants, prompting them to order replacements as needed. Regarding decorating vouchers and hard-to-let properties, the Head of Housing Property Service pointed out that the Council took specific measures for exceptionally challenging properties. After exhausting the shortlist without success and deeming them unsuitable, the Council may furnish and decorate the properties to make them more appealing to potential tenants. However, those actions were taken on a case-by-case basis to avoid setting unfair precedents or leaving properties vacant for extended periods.

Councillor Collingham highlighted the issue with decoration and pointed out a case in his ward where a resident had recently fitted new curtains and carpets, but unfortunately passed away soon after. He questioned

whether it was part of the housing policy that newly fitted carpets or curtains were removed, when a property changed tenants, expressing concern about the potential waste.

The Head of Housing Property Service responded, explaining that removing carpets and curtains were indeed part of their standard policy outlined in the lettable standard. However, she acknowledged the need to consider exceptional circumstances, suggesting that they could speak to the incoming tenant in such cases. She noted past challenges where leaving the carpet led to complications if the new tenant declined it, resulting in additional costs. She explained the pricing structure with contractors and the necessity to remove carpets even if they are in good condition to avoid such issues. She also mentioned concerns about pests in the carpet, stating that while they do not typically fumigate as part of the removal process, they ensured proper disposal.

The Chair responded, acknowledging the complexities involved in the removal of items like curtains and carpets, considering both environmental impact and potential hygiene issues. He expressed appreciation for bringing forward the recommendations from the tenant scrutiny panel, noting that no additional recommendations were identified. He confirmed agreement with the proposed actions and highlighted the standard procedure of reviewing progress in 12 months' time. The Chair concluded by expressing gratitude and readiness to proceed with the next steps.

Resolved:

1. That Improving Places Select Commission noted the outcome of the Tenant Scrutiny Review, the actions proposed to deal with each recommendation and progress made to date.
2. Agreed that a further report detailing progress be presented to Improving Places Select Commission in 12 months.

63. UPDATE: TENANTS SCRUTINY PANEL REVIEW - IMPROVING COMMUNICATION WITH TENANTS

The Chair welcomed James Smith, Tenant Engagement Manager to present a progress update on delivery of the action plan that was developed in response to the Tenant Scrutiny Panel investigation into how the Council could improve communications with tenants. It was a wide-ranging review that spanned many services because communication affected everyone.

He explained that communicating with tenants was intertwined with the consumer regulations and the action plan was a good starting point with more work to be conducted.

The Tenant Engagement Manager recaptured that the initial improving communications report was heard by this Commission on March 2023, the report detailed nine recommendations A - I and a further four suggestions

made by the Scrutiny Panel, and the report so set out a 12-month review period.

He highlighted that all nine actions and the four further suggestions had been achieved, the Tenant Scrutiny Panel was happy with the progress, and they signed off the plan earlier this year. He pointed out three key outcomes that have helped them to achieve the vast majority of recommendations and further suggestions within the report.

The Website improvements were made as a result of the communication review and included making plans to introduce a housing section to the Council's existing complaints web pages also full review of the tenant engagement website was undertaken. The tenant engagement webpages underwent significant improvements, featuring enhanced interactivity and content co-designed with the dedicated screen team, comprising of tenants who collaborated on various projects. Additionally, he highlighted that tailored communications training had been developed, which was implemented for housing managers and their teams through a train-the-trainer approach. Over the past year, the screen team had played an instrumental role in refining communications, from webpage and web form design to enhancing letters and influencing the Council's Home Matters magazine which was sent to all tenants. Their broad involvement contributed to achieving key outcomes and implementing recommendations.

The Tenant Engagement Manager highlighted that website improvements had directly contributed to meeting recommendations C and D, particularly in terms of website accessibility for tenants.

He noted that staff training had played a significant role in achieving one recommendation. Despite being singular in number, this co-designed training was crucial as it equipped teams with the communication skills vital for interacting effectively with tenants for years to come. The training featured interactive content and customer videos illustrating the impact of good communication on tenants.

The final key outcome in blue on the right-hand side related to our Screen Team, which facilitated the achievement of three recommendations and three further suggestions. Over the initial 12 months, the screen team contributed not only to improving communication effectiveness but also to enhancing accessibility and communication strategy. Their success integrated them into our regular business operations, and they continued to influence communication design and strategy moving forward.

He went on to explain that some of the recommendations fell outside of those three main outcomes, which were detailed below:

Recommendation B was achieved not by one overarching strategy but by a mixture of strategic documents and interventions. The tenant engagement framework and customer access strategy covered how we

communicated and engaged with tenants and how tenants could access information in a digital format. The consultation and engagement framework set out guidelines for how the Council would consult with tenants, and the introduced training ensured our communications with tenants were effective across housing services.

Recommendation F was achieved through various actions, including robustly monitoring performance and call answering times, supported by a Customer Experience Board chaired by the Chief Executive. This was further underpinned by customer service standards now embedded within Council teams, with extensive work done to roll out these standards.

Recommendation G concerning complaints and compliments was accomplished through our continued focus within past editions of the Home Matters magazine. Articles explained to tenants how they could complain, with further articles being developed for the next edition, emphasising the importance of tenants informing us of any issues they may be experiencing.

Recommendation four was instrumental in shaping the Council's approach to the procurement of a company called Quest Research, which was currently conducting our tenant satisfaction measures survey. Currently, Quest employs a combination of telephone and digital surveys. In line with this recommendation, several online forms to enable tenants to express their opinions via our website had been developed, along with a tenant engagement satisfaction survey.

The Tenant Engagement Manager introduced a video displaying the new website to the panel. The video highlighted three key takeaways: firstly, the previous site felt crowded; secondly, users struggled to access the information they wanted; and thirdly, they felt bombarded with information as a result. The new site addressed these issues by providing easy-to-access tabs across the page.

The improvement of the action plan template was highlighted for the panel. He informed that the previous action plan contained only one recommendation, a couple of dates, and some updates, making it difficult to ascertain who was responsible for each task. The updated template had been tweaked to address those issues.

The Chair enquired about the completion date for Quest Research's work and the resulting report, as well as seeking clarification on the Tpas logo seen in a video. James explained that Quest Research's two-year contract was nearing its end, with data consolidation underway for submission to the regulator before April. Regarding Tpas reaccreditation, all actions were completed, and the next assessment was scheduled for September.

Councillor Carter sought clarification on the scope of the training and its recipients, particularly enquiring about its extension to repair personnel

interacting with council tenants.

The Tenant Engagement Manager explained that the training encompassed various sections, including fostering positive first interactions with tenants, effective communication methods, active listening techniques, and empathy building. Initially planned for a few hours, the training evolved into a full-day session. It was rolled out to all housing managers across departments, with at least two managers from each department participating. The training adopted a train-the-trainer approach, with managers tasked to train their staff. Discussions also arose about extending the training to contractors involved in property repairs.

Councillor McNeely emphasised the importance of transparency in communications, suggesting that alongside "you asked, we did," there should also be acknowledgement of instances where requests were not fulfilled, along with the reasons why. The Tenant Engagement Manager acknowledged this point, stating that he was currently discussing this aspect with housing teams, particularly regarding tenant scrutiny. He emphasised the need to communicate both completed actions and reasons for unfulfilled requests.

Resolved:

1. That the Improving Places Select Commission noted the progress made in delivering the scrutiny review action plan.
2. That information be provided to the Improving Places Select Commission on the completion date for Quest's work.

64. SCRUTINY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS – NATURE RECOVERY

The Chair proceeded with the Scrutiny Review Recommendation conducted on Nature Recovery. The Commission considered a range of activity including response to climate change, and the aligned causes of the nature crisis. This extensive piece of work began in March last year and concluded towards the end of the previous calendar year. It involved various external organisations and individual experts, all of whom contributed significantly to the review and the Chair expressed his thanks to all of the individuals and partner agencies who contributed to the review. The Chair expressed gratitude to Katherine Harclerode and Caroline Webb, acknowledging their valuable input.

Twelve recommendations were made as a result of the motion to the Council, detailed in the report and appendices. Whilst unusual this review had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board first, this was to ensure it was expedited within this municipal year. The recommendations would now move to the Cabinet for further consideration, with the hope that they provided a solid foundation for future action, supported by external expert organisations.

Resolved: That the Improving Places Select Commission noted the report from the Head of Democratic Services outlining the findings and recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of Nature Recovery undertaking by Members from Improving Places Select Commission which was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 13 March 2024.

65. IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION - WORK PROGRAMME 2023-2024

Consideration was given to the Work Programme circulated with the agenda.

The work program was discussed, highlighting various topics to be covered and recurring items. Additionally, a member of the public suggested considering developments in Herringthorpe for scrutiny, although it's uncertain how it would fit in given the committee's scope as it related to a planning matter.

Councillor Tinsley raised a time-critical issue regarding the government's public consultation on permitted development rights. The consultation includes proposals for enlarging homes, upward extensions, demolition and rebuilding, electric charging points, and air source heat pumps. These changes could potentially allow significant developments without the need for planning permission. He noted that the closing date for consultation was 9 April 2024.

Councillor Tinsley highlighted the importance of addressing these proposals promptly, as they could impact planning regulations in the future. He noted examples where permitted development led to significant changes without planning permission, emphasising the need for careful consideration and potential feedback to the Planning Board.

The Chair emphasised the importance of ensuring a response from officers in Planning to the consultation on changing permitted development rights to avoid potential negative impacts on constituents in the future. They suggested forwarding the matter to planning officers to discuss what response they may submit in consultation with the Planning Board members.

Regarding the work programme, the Cllr expressed a desire to see what the next council year brings for the Commission and noted that items listed for the next Commission will be considered for discussion in the new municipal year.

Resolved: That the Improving Places Select Commission recommended that officers in Planning feed into the Government's consultation on permitted development rights.

66. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair advised that there were no urgent items of business requiring the Commission's consideration.

67. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved: That the next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission will take place on 4 June 2024 commencing at 1:30pm.

Public Report
Improving Places Select Commission

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 04 June 2024

Report Title

Housing Strategy 2022-25 Progress Report Year 2 (2023-24)

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)

James Clark, Assistant Director of Housing

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The Housing Strategy 2022-25 was approved by Cabinet in June 2022 and published in July 2022.

The Strategy recognises the key issues affecting housing in Rotherham and the impact these have on residents and sets out how the Council will work in partnership to address the issues identified.

The report is presented for information and provides an update on progress for year 2, from March 2023 to April 2024.

Recommendations

1. That progress against the Housing Strategy priorities is noted.
2. Improving Places Select Commission will receive a final progress report at the end of the strategy period, as part of the consultation for the new Housing Strategy, which should be complete during Spring 2025.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Housing Strategy Action Plan

Background Papers

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Housing Strategy 2022-25 Progress Report Year 2 (2023-24)

1. Background

- 1.1 Rotherham's 30-year vision for housing was established in 2013, and the Housing Strategy is refreshed every three years to ensure priorities reflect current views.
- 1.2 The aim of the 30-year strategy is to see;
- People living in high quality homes, whether in the social rented, private rented or home ownership sector
 - Rotherham Council playing its part by being the best housing provider in the country, delivering high quality services and support, and peaceful and well-managed neighbourhoods
 - A smaller gap between the most and least disadvantaged neighbourhoods, so that all of Rotherham's people can live in safe, healthy and vibrant communities
 - No households living in homes that are poor in terms of energy efficiency
- And the fifth aim was introduced in 2015 following consultation;
- to create a revitalised town centre with a new urban community.
- 1.3 The Housing Strategy 2022-25 is the fourth instalment of the 30-year strategy. It was approved by Cabinet in June 2022 and published in July 2022.
- 1.4 The current Strategy recognises the key issues affecting housing in Rotherham and the impact these have on residents and sets out how the Council will work in partnership to address the issues identified.

The six priorities for 2022-2025 are:

- High quality new homes
- Affordable homes to meet local need
- Investment in existing homes
- Bringing empty homes back into use
- Supporting people to live independently
- Strengthening communities

2. Key Issues

2.1 Housing Strategy Year 2 Commitments (2023-24)

An update report was presented to IPSC March 2023, which included the following commitments.

- All three town centre developments complete, handed over and occupied.
- Complete outcomes report and customer satisfaction surveys for Town Centre developments.
- Support partners to complete the final phase of the Chesterhill /Whinney Hill Development.

- Continue to work with Homes England and the MCA to access funding to deliver more homes.
- Responding to and implementing the requirements of the Social Housing White Paper.
- Continuing to address the needs of homeless households.
- Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy refresh complete.
- A review of the Aids and Adaptations Policy.
- Empty Home Plan refresh.
- Mid-point review of the selective licensing scheme.
- Hold the annual Developer Summit.
- Zero-carbon prototype project at Thrybergh.
- Continue our programme of tenant engagement and support.

2.2 Housing Strategy Year 2 Progress (2023-24)

Progress on each of the commitments is reported against the six priorities of the Housing Strategy.

2.2.1 High quality new homes

| Commitment | Progress |
|---|--|
| All three town centre developments complete, handed over and occupied. | All three sites in the town centre are now complete and in Council ownership. All Council rented homes have been let, and only 4 properties remain unreserved. |
| Complete outcomes report and customer satisfaction surveys for Town Centre developments | The outcome reporting process has been reviewed and regular internal challenge sessions are in place. The Town Centre development review will be completed in year 3. |
| Continue to work with Homes England and the MCA to access funding to deliver more homes | Work has been undertaken with HE/MCA to develop a pipeline of development sites. |
| Zero-carbon prototype project at Thrybergh. | Planning permission has been granted for the project, but increased costs have impacted viability. The project remains on hold, but other efficiency measures are being explored across housing investment and development programmes. At the same time, a separate project at East Herringthorpe has developed ten zero carbon ready Council homes. |

Other achievements

- The 500th new Council home milestone was achieved.
- A total of 217 high quality new homes built across the borough, including.
 - 56 new council homes for rent, including 42 s106 acquisitions.

- 161 new homes enabled through local providers and developers.

2.2.2 Affordable homes to meet local need

| Commitment | Progress |
|--|--|
| Support partners to complete the final phase of the Chesterhill / Whinney Hill Development | The development is complete and fully let, including nominations from the councils housing register. |
| Hold the annual Developer Summit. | Engagement with the developer / provider sector to continue throughout year 3. |

Other achievements

- New Market Acquisition Policy was agreed, and Cabinet approved the acquisition of 100 homes from the open market to support the development programme and address local housing pressures.
- Completed the first market acquisition.
- 24 new rented homes added to the council portfolio.
- Continued promotion of the Councils shared ownership offer, to assist first time buyers and people downsizing, plus a further 18 new shared ownership homes acquired.
- Planning applications submitted for a further 110 new council homes.
- 4 SME Home Building Initiative networking events
- Secured external funding to provide 14 supported accommodation units for 18–25-year-olds with complex needs.

2.2.3 Investment in existing homes

| Commitment | Progress |
|--|---|
| Responding to and implementing the requirements of the Social Housing White Paper. | The whole service is involved in preparing for inspection, in response to the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. |

Other achievements

- A new Damp and Mould Policy has been published, which led to 28% of inspections undertaken within 10 working days in April to 94% in October.
- £27.3m of capital investment into the Council's existing housing stock during 2023/24 including;
 - 1,400 A-rated boiler installations
 - 350 re-roofs
 - 127 kitchen refurbishments
 - 400 replacement fire doors
 - 10 environmental improvement schemes
 - 431 void property upgrades
- Plus, the completion of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Pilot, has improved the thermal efficiency of 130 council homes in Maltby, 125 of which are now EPC C.

2.2.4 Bringing empty homes back into use

| Commitment | Progress |
|---|--|
| Empty Home Plan refresh. | To be refreshed 2024/25 (Q2). |
| Mid-point review of the selective licensing scheme. | The scrutiny review is complete and was presented to Cabinet Nov 2023. |

Other achievements

- A permanent Empty Homes Officer is now in place.
- 33 empty properties were brought back into use with Council intervention.
- Council void properties brought back into use faster, moving from an average of 40 days to 25 days during this period.

2.2.5 Supporting people to live independently

| Commitment | Progress |
|---|---|
| Continuing to address the needs of homeless households. | An improvement plan in place to increase homelessness interventions and accelerate access to a broader range of housing options |
| Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy refresh complete. | Strategy published in April 2023. |
| A review of the Aids and Adaptations Policy. | Consultation took place Q2 & Q3, and the new policy was approved by Cabinet in Dec 2023. |

Other achievements

- 1,381 properties have been let to applicants on the housing register.
- 7 new council bungalows have been built to support tenants as they age.
- The Aids and Adaptations Team have facilitated 810 major adaptations, and 4,973 minor adaptations, fixings, and key safes.
- The Council have supported 1,111 new homeless applicants and where homeless cannot be avoided, provided temporary accommodation to 716 households.

2.2.6 Strengthening communities

| Commitment | Progress |
|---|--|
| Continue our programme of tenant engagement and support | Various ongoing programmes around tenancy support. |

- Over £380K spent via the Ward Housing Hubs, which includes estate improvements, security upgrades, planting, and lighting, to uplifting shared spaces and improve community safety.
- Around 4,000 tenancy health checks have been carried out

- 2,147 energy crisis support payments have been made, with a total value of £536,750 paid in 23/24.
- 956 referrals have been taken by the Employment Solutions Team, resulting in 199 people getting back into work and a further 165 into training for 2023/24.
- The social value return for the Town Centre housing developments exceeded £10m.
- A further £10m in social value was achieved by Mears and Equans as part of the repairs and maintenance contract.

2.3 Housing Strategy Year 3 Commitments (2024-25)

- Continue to deliver the Council's commitment to 1,000 new homes through the Housing Delivery Programme. Including completion of specialist homes at East Herringthorpe and Canklow.
- Complete an outcomes report for all new developments, to help shape future homes.
- Continue to work in partnership with Homes England and SYMCA.
- Undertake a programme of targeted engagement with private developers and housing associations.
- Ensure the Council is well prepared for inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing.
- Commission a programme of stock condition surveys to help understand how the council will meet decency standards.
- Begin to develop an investment strategy to retrofit existing homes.
- Strengthen assurance that the Council is compliant with property compliance requirements.
- Review of Allocations Policy.
- Implement the next phase of the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy, including a review of temporary accommodation options.
- Deliver a plan for long-term empty homes.
- Refresh Rotherham's Housing Strategy
- Develop a Temporary Accommodation Policy

2.4 The Housing Strategy 2022-25 will end in March 2025. Consultation for the new Housing Strategy will commence towards the end of the year.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 The report is presented for information.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 The report is presented for information.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The report is presented for information

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations detailed in the report. The HRA Business Plan provides a financial assessment over 30 years, taking into account planned actions as part of the Housing Strategy, and its impact on the management and financing of the Council's housing stock.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no substantive legal issues arising from the content of this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no human resource implications specific to this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The Children and Young Peoples Service, and Adult Care and Public Health have been consulted and have had an input into the Housing Strategy. By ensuring a range of affordable homes are delivered to meet a wide range of different needs, the Housing Strategy will help to provide safe, high-quality homes for children and young people, and vulnerable adults, allowing them to live safely and independently.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Having access to good quality and affordable homes is important for all of the borough's diverse communities, and the Housing Strategy seeks to remove barriers people can face in accessing a home to meet their needs. Data and consultation are used to understand Rotherham's communities, and through all the priorities within the Housing Strategy will deliver homes that meet the needs of older people, people with disabilities, larger families, single people and couples. The Council will continue to engage with communities and make sure the homes provided and enabled, meet their changing needs.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 Climate change poses a significant threat to environments, individuals, communities, and economies on local, national, and international scales. In recognition of this the Council has aimed to be net carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030, and for Rotherham as a whole to achieve the same position by 2040.
- 11.2 Through its own delivery programme, the Council has the ability to ensure that the new homes are high quality and energy efficient, which will contribute to reducing domestic carbon emissions.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 The aims set out in this Strategy will only be achieved by working in partnership with a range of local and regional stakeholders. The Council works strategically with partners through the Rotherham Strategic Housing Forum and with preferred Housing Association partners to help meet the wide range of housing need across the borough. Working with Homes England and the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to access funding opportunities is vital to make housing delivery schemes viable.
- 12.2 The Housing Strategy has been developed in collaboration with, and will be monitored by, Rotherham's Strategic Housing Forum, which includes representation at a senior level from voluntary sector organisations, social housing providers, landlords and developers.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The risk of failing to deliver the commitments set out in the Housing Strategy and action plan will be mitigated by ensuring the correct staff resources and processes are in place, and through regular and robust progress monitoring including an annual report to the Improving Places Select Commission.
- 13.2 The risk of the Housing Strategy becoming out of date due to policy and context changes at the national and local level, is mitigated by refreshing the Housing Strategy every three years

Accountable Officer(s)

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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

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| Rotherham Housing Strategy Action Plan 2022 – 2025 | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| PRIORITY 1 – HIGH QUALITY NEW HOMES | | | | |
| Commitment | Actions | Progress 22-23 | Progress 23-24 | Progress 24-25 |
| We will deliver our current Housing Development Programme ensuring quality and sustainability | <p>Annual delivery target (council plan): 22/23 = 225 23/24 = 200 24/25 = 200</p> <p>Development of new pipeline and acquisitions workstreams</p> <p>Energy efficiency of new homes</p> <p>All homes built meeting space standards / SY residential design guide</p> | <p>Annual target: 225 Complete: 373 Of which 163 Council delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centre (126) • S106 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aston Fairfields (11) - Beaumont Grange (3) - Laughton Gate (12) - Millstone Park, Swallownest (6) • Strategic acquisitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarence St, Dinnington (5) <p>210 enabled homes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gleesons – Dalton (43) • Whinney Hill/Chesterhill Avenue (137) • RSAP (10) • Kilnhurst Road – Great Places (20) | <p>Annual target: 200 Complete: 217 Of which 56 Council delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centre (14) • S106 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eldertree Court (2) - Laughton Gate (3) - Millstone Park (4) - North Farm Close (1) - Poppy Fields (2) - Strategic Acquisition (1) - The Paddocks (12) - Welling View (1) - Wentworth View (16) <p>161 enabled homes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gleesons – Dalton (11) • Whinney Hill/Chesterhill Avenue (100) • RSAP (3) • Eldertree Court (10) • Swinton Town Centre (4) • Empty homes brought back into use (33) | <p>Annual target: 200 (Acquisitions and enabled delivery)</p> |

Appendix 1

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| We will listen to what residents tell us and continue to engage with local communities and stakeholders on all Council-led developments. | <p>Pre-development consultation</p> <p>Customers satisfaction surveys</p> <p>Place and quality assessments used to shape future pipeline</p> | Outcomes reporting under development. | <p>Pre-development consultation process embedded within SHAD (including consultation with members).</p> <p>Place and Quality Panel launched.</p> | <p>Customer satisfaction surveys to be completed for Town Centre sites.</p> <p>Customer survey to be agreed June 24.</p> |
| We will promote the benefits of high quality homes through our annual Developer Summit, and the Council's website. | <p>Annual developer summit</p> <p>Work with developers, landowners and housing providers to ensure housing is delivered by the planning system.</p> <p>Regular communications / events to celebrate key development milestones</p> <p>Information on Council website / review of Rother Living web pages</p> | <p>Ongoing engagement with providers and developers.</p> <p>The Council continue to celebrate and promote good new stories as part of the Council's ambition to deliver hundreds of new homes by March 2026.</p> | <p>Ongoing engagement with providers and developers, including SME Home Builder Initiative engagement events.</p> <p>A key milestone was reached in November 2023 when the 500th property was formally handed over to the Council since 2018.</p> <p>Various celebration events for new homes have taken place, with increased press coverage.</p> <p>Attended Tenants Open Day 31st Oct 2023 to promote new homes investment.</p> <p>Rotherham Show Sept 2023 promoted new homes.</p> | Further targeted engagement with private developers and housing associations to explore investment and delivery opportunities. |
| Broader service activity contributing to Priority 1 | Development workshops to engage wider housing service / directorate leads in shaping | | Place and Quality Panel launched to capture feedback and views from frontline | Further work with Homes England and SYMCA to unlock opportunities and |

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| | <p>design</p> <p>Strategic Housing Forum and engagement with local providers to deliver more new homes</p> | | <p>housing service professionals. Projects such as Canklow and Eastwood have been shaped through these sessions.</p> <p>Work undertaken with Homes England and South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to develop a pipeline of land for housing development and investment.</p> | <p>access investment to increase further housing delivery.</p> |
| PRIORITY 2 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING TO MEET LOCAL NEED | | | | |
| Commitment | Actions | Progress 22-23 | Progress 23-24 | Progress 24-25 |
| <p>We will continue to deliver our ambitious, Housing Revenue Account funded new build programme, to add hundreds of additional affordable homes to the 333 already completed by the Council since 2018.</p> | <p>Progress against 1000 new homes target</p> <p>1000 new council homes by 2026</p> <p>Reflect on types of need being met</p> | <p>143 Council delivery rent and shared ownership in year, (plus 20 open market sale) taking the total rent and shared ownership since 2018 to 476</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centre (106) • S106 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aston Fairfields (11) - Beaumont Grange (3) - Laughton Gate (12) - Millstone Park, Swallownest (6) • Strategic acquisitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarence St, Dinnington (5) | <p>Further 24 homes for Council rent and 18 for shared ownership acquired through S106 planning obligations and strategic acquisition of former Council home.</p> <p>Total new council rent and shared ownership homes now 518 since Jan 2018.</p> <p>Schemes submitted for planning with a combined total of 110 new homes to be delivered by March 2026.</p> <p>Housing Acquisitions Policy approved to allow 100 acquisitions of homes through</p> | <p>Delivery and acquisitions programme continues.</p> <p>The first 'off gas' homes will be officially completed at East Herringthorpe.</p> |

Appendix 1

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| | | | Right of First Refusal and on the open market. | |
| 171 Council built homes are in progress in Rotherham town centre, and we will go over and above Planning requirements to ensure that 75% of these are affordable tenures. | Complete Town Centre Development Programme (Phase 1) | Completed 157 homes across three sites in the Town Centre – March 2023 | <p>Final 14 open market sale at Millfold Rise completed May 2023, total 171.</p> <p>Affordable rent – 109 (64%) (Millfold Rise 31, Wellgate Place 34, Westgate Riverside 44)</p> <p>Shared Ownership – 20 (12%) (Wellgate Place 12, Westgate Riverside 8)</p> <p>Open Market Sale – 42 (25%) (Millfold Rise 14, Wellgate Place 8, Westgate Riverside 20)</p> | Town Centre developments complete – 76% affordable homes achieved (64% affordable rent and 12% shared ownership) – above policy position. |
| We will continue to support other organisations to deliver affordable homes. | Strategic Housing Forum | <p>Total enabled homes - 210</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gleesons – Dalton (43) • Whinney Hill/Chesterhill Avenue (137) • RSAP (10) • Kilnhurst Road – Great Places (20) | <p>Total enabled homes – 161</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whinney Hill and Chesterhill Avenue (100) • Gleesons – Dalton (11) • RSAP (3) • Empty homes brought back into use (33) • Swinton Town Centre (4) • Eldertree Lodge (10) | <p>Further work to take place around relationships with housing providers.</p> <p>Strategic Housing Forum membership and terms of reference refreshed.</p> |
| We will continue to promote Shared Ownership homes and provide general | Regular communications on S/O (via web site and partners) | Delivery of 16 shared ownership homes. | Delivery of a further 18 shared ownership homes through S106 acquisitions. 10 three-bedroomed houses and 8 two- | Work to understand the Councils affordable home ownership strategy, as part of the new Housing |

Appendix 1

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| advice and information to residents about other affordable home ownership opportunities. | | | bedroomed houses. 3 in Dinnington, 6 in Wickersley and 9 in Thorpe Hesley | Strategy. |
| We will work with developers, landowners and funders to accelerate the delivery of key housing sites, which will lead to the creation of affordable homes through planning policy requirements. | <p>Launch SME initiative</p> <p>Regular engagement with Homes England</p> <p>Submit funding bids</p> | <p>The Council have continued to work with developers, landowners and funders to accelerate the delivery of key housing sites.</p> <p>The Small Sites Homebuilding Initiative was launched in February 2023. The Homebuilding Initiative supports SME developers by committing to forward purchase newly constructed homes off-plan, for an agreed price and on land already within the developer's ownership or easily acquired.</p> | <p>A number of information sessions have been held across the borough to promote the initiative to developers and the plan is to link in with landowners to promote the Home Builder initiative as a way of bringing sites forward.</p> <p>The first scheme is due to be in contract May 2024 with homes handed over by Autumn.</p> <p>Held 4 information sessions to promote the new build procurement opportunities and to soft market test the potential routes to market.</p> <p>Secured external funding (SHAP) to provide 14 supported accommodation units for 18–25-year-olds with complex needs.</p> | <p>First contract signed and delivery on site – SME Home Builder Initiative(May 24).</p> <p>Engage with Housing Associations to explore future development opportunities.</p> <p>LAHF funding secured towards the acquisition of 16 units of temporary accommodation.</p> |
| Broader service activity contributing | Explore affordable housing options for under 35's and other | | Ward Housing Profiles updated. | Housing Allocations Policy review. |

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| to Priority 2 | housing need groups. | | Work with ASC and CYPS colleagues to understand accommodation pressures. | Built the councils first 1-bed houses at East Herringthorpe. |
| PRIORITY 3 – INVESTING IN EXISTING HOMES | | | | |
| Commitment | Actions | Progress 22-23 | Progress 23-24 | Progress 24-25 |
| We will deliver energy efficiency improvements to more than 140 Council homes in Maltby, with support from the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. | Complete SHCF at Maltby Understand how the pilot will shape future programme | £1.4m funding secured from the SHDF. | Improvements made to 130 homes at Maltby, including brining 125 of the homes up to EPC C rating. | Monitoring activity at Maltby scheme to inform future investment decisions around decarbonisation of council stock. Stock Condition Survey for council stock to begin (3-year period). |
| We will maintain decency standards in Council stock and implement the findings of the ongoing Decency Review resulting from the Social Housing White Paper. | Investment into existing stock Environmental programme Damp and Mould response Peer review undertaken | Insert figures on overall investment and damp and mould surveys carried out | £27.3m investment in existing stock, including; -Maltby decarbonisation project -1,400 A rated boilers -350 re-roofs 400 new fire doors -10 environmental projects -431 void property upgrades Damp and Mould Policy published for all tenures. | Pending Government progress on new Decency Standards. £25m stock investment programme. Development of a retrofit Investment Strategy to move stock to EPC C rating by 2030. |
| We will provide information to | Refresh private sector web pages | Updated web pages. | Existing pages cover all aspects of the Council's role in | To refresh existing pages, which will provide, amongst |

Appendix 1

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| homeowners about the support available to help them improve their homes. | Increased ECO4 take up | ECO4 promoted to residents. | supporting residents living in private housing. ECO4 funding continues to be targeted towards predominantly private sector areas where there are low EPC rated properties and fuel poor households. | other things, revised information related to selective licensing and empty homes. Continue with targeted ECO4 approach but also consider alternative client groups who could benefit from offer. |
| We will make use of Banning Orders to tackle poor housing conditions and protect vulnerable people in privately rented homes. | Issuing of banning orders where appropriate Process to manage banning orders where appropriate, to force improvements in private rented homes. | Three banning orders in progress via Community Protection Unit. | Two banning orders at tribunal and progressing towards a hearing. The third case was withdrawn due to an appeal. Additional cases will be progressed, following an identified process, towards a banning order outcome. | Progress outstanding cases and identify additional ones that meet the recognised process. |
| Broader service activity contributing to Priority 3 | Support landlords and PRS activity through selective licensing and engagement with landlords | | In association with the NRLA, provided two landlord forum's this year. Landlord newsletter was distributed to selective licensing landlords. Selective Licensing reviewed by Scrutiny, and findings | The Landlord Forum and landlord newsletters will continue to be offered. Further work will be done to identify alternative approaches towards engaging with private landlords and tenants. |

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| | | | presented to Cabinet Nov 2023. | Commission an options appraisal to consider opportunities to improve several private sector housing areas. |
| PRIORITY 4 – BRINGING EMPTY HOMES BACK INTO USE | | | | |
| Commitment | Actions | Progress 22-23 | Progress 23-24 | Progress 24-25 |
| We will continue to deliver against the Empty Homes Plan. | Increase the number of empty homes brought back into use Refresh Empty Homes Plan | Empty Homes Officer appointed as a pilot to reduce empty homes. | Annual increase in properties BBIU: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2021/22 – 12 2022/23 – 17 2023/24 – 33 | Annual target set – 25 properties Empty Homes Plan to be refreshed mid-year. |
| We will help owners understand how they can help meet local housing need, for example by promoting success stories | Communications / case studies to demonstrate empty homes work | Public communications during Empty Homes Week March 2023. | Public communications during Empty Homes Week March 2024. Webpages updated and inline customer interface improved. | Empty Homes week 2025. Communications targeted towards wards with high levels of empties (case studies, ward newsletters) |
| We will explore options to transform empty homes into new affordable homes | Explore opportunities to bring homes back to use to address council housing pressures | Supported Action Housing to explore acquisition of a long-term empty property. | Property acquired by Action Housing to meet urgent need. | Supported Action to secure AHP funding to improve long term empty property. Use of the empty homes list to target ex-RtB properties for potential Council acquisition. |
| We will make use of the enforcement tools available. | Case work escalated to CPU as appropriate | | Two Enforced Sales cases being progressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17-25 Laudsedale Road | Continue to make use of enforced sale powers, where necessary |

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| | | | 27 Fir Tree Drive | |
| We will consider how other empty spaces (such as derelict buildings and spaces above shops) could be repurposed to provide new homes | | Progressing discussions with property owners around the Borough. | Progressing discussions with property owners around the Borough. | Progressing discussions with property owners as appropriate. |
| Broader service activity contributing to Priority 4 | Linking empty properties into current housing pressures i.e. to support homelessness. | Average Council void 40 days. | Council void properties brought back into use faster, moving from an average of 40 days to 25 days during this period. | Using data to inform empty homes plan and to target suitable properties for acquisition where they meet a strategic need. |
| PRIORITY 5 – SUPPORTING PEOPLE TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY | | | | |
| Commitment | Actions | Progress 22-23 | Progress 23-24 | Progress 24-25 |
| We will build more bungalows on small Council-owned sites, and purchase more bungalows from private developers, in order to increase housing that is suitable for people with accessibility needs | Increase number of bungalows delivered / enabled in line with Housing Need Profiles. | <p>No. of bungalows delivered / enabled 22-23</p> <p>Acquisitions: 11 x 2 bed bungalows at Fairfields, Aston 4 x 2 bed bungalows at Millstone Park, Swallownest</p> | <p>No. of bungalows delivered / enabled 23-24</p> <p>S106 acquisitions (7) Welling Way 1 x 3 bed DPU 2 x 2 bed bungalows at Eldertree Court, Thorpe Hesley 4 x 2 bed bungalows at Millstone Park, Swallownest</p> <p>Enabled (20): Great Places - Thrybergh 20 x 1 bed apartments – mix of older people (3 blocks for age 40+) and 2 blocks younger people moving on from supported housing or</p> | <p>Continue delivery and acquisition programme;</p> <p>2 x 2bed bungalows at East Herringthorpe and 1 x 4 bed DPU due to complete in April 24.</p> <p>Including first off gas properties and incorporating use of assistive technology to assist tenants with specific housing needs.</p> <p>S106 forecast acquisitions - 5 bungalows due at Thorpe</p> |

Appendix 1

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| | | | homelessness – included at least one care leaver | Hesley and 1 at Brecks Lane. |
| We will develop apartments for older people in Rotherham Town Centre. | | Elizabeth House complete (advertised to applicants over 40) | No further town centre apartments scheduled for older people. Learning from Town Centre developments to shape Canklow project. | Canklow development will bring forward apartments suitable for people as they age or become less mobile. Improved specification to meet these types of needs. |
| We will maximise the use of aids, adaptations, and assistive technology to support independence in the home. | | Review of Aids and Adaptations Policy and processes. | Aids and Adaptations Policy refresh complete. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisted 810 households with major adaptations • 4,973 minor adaptations (e.g. grab rails and key safes). | Low level assisted technology 'switchee' and automated worktops installed at East Herringthorpe (due to complete April 24) Piloting use of assisted technology for the 4 bed Accessible property planned for Canklow. Regularly review and monitor assistive technology. |
| Accessibility and adaptability will be designed into the fabric of new Council housing developments to | Work with other directorates to understand different types of housing need and feed into development programme as appropriate. | Work undertaken with Adult Social Care learning disability service to understand the needs of the cohort to feed into future programme. | Accessible homes underway at Welling Way and East Herringthorpe to meet local identified need. | Planned apartments at Canklow next to the new adult day care centre. Canklow delivery includes a fully wheelchair accessible |

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| ensure we can meet the needs of a range of people and support the creation of mixed communities. | Work with the private sector to share knowledge and encourage inclusive design | | | family home, accessible apartments and supported living homes in response to local need. |
| Broader service activity contributing to Priority 5 | Health inequality outcomes Homelessness and rough sleepers | Successful RSAP bid to secure accommodation and support for rough sleepers and homelessness | Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy published (Apr 23). | Review of temporary accommodation needs. Temporary Accommodation Policy is being refreshed. Project groups set up to address temporary accommodation and move on pressures, with potential to link to current development and acquisitions programme. |
| PRIORITY 6 – STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES | | | | |
| Commitment | Actions | Progress 22-23 | Progress 23-24 | Progress 24-25 |
| We will continue to ensure social value is embedded in all housing development contracts – all projects will be challenged to ensure they positively contribute to the local economy, provide jobs and | Monitor social value commitments. Support contractors to identify local priorities and work with local communities to deliver social value. | Town Centre sites delivered various social value projects (estimated over £10m by the end of the project). | £10.5m in social value return on completion of the three sites in the Town Centre (various projects). £10m in social value return delivered by Mears and Equans, from the Repairs and Maintenance contract (various projects). | East Herringthorpe social value outputs include recruiting local trades people and utilise supply chain partners from the Rotherham area in order to ensure that the Rotherham pound is spent back in the borough. MMC meant reduction in |

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| training opportunities and maximise the use of local supply chains | | | | time spent on site, so less impact on local neighbourhood. (completion due April 24) |
| We will review the current community-led housing scheme and explore opportunities for further community-led housing development in Rotherham. | Review of current Community Led Housing offer. Support bid for further funding if available. | | CLP continue to engage with Eastwood steering group activities No further funding available for CLH. | |
| We will produce surveys to measure the impact and outcomes of our housing developments on local communities. | Outcome report carried out on all developments at completion, 6 month and 3 years. Use lessons learnt in development of future programme. | | Place and Quality Panel introduced to assist with assessing project outputs and learning from officers / customers, to shape future programme. | Town Centre outcome report to commence mid-year. |
| Broader service activity contributing to Priority 6 | Community safety Financial inclusion / employment support | Community safety and street scene improvements - £117,837.04 Employment Solutions Pathways Jan-Dec 2022: 811 referrals into the project, 421 Starts, 206 Results = 142 Work, 64 Training | Community safety and street scene improvements - £381,229.13 Employment Solutions 956 referrals into the employment solutions team, resulting in 199 people into work and a further 165 into training for 2023/24 2,147 energy crisis support payments with a total value of | New Ward Housing Hubs – 3-year programme. |

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| | | <p>Inspire Jan-Dec 2022: 808 referrals into the projects, 456 Starts, 365 Results = 129 Work, 236 Training</p> | <p>£536,750 in 23/24.</p> <p>Rotherfed awarded the contract for tenant federation.</p> <p>4,000 tenancy health checks complete.</p> <p>£380K spent via Ward Housing Hubs (including projects to improve street scene, community facilities, safety and environmental projects).</p> | |
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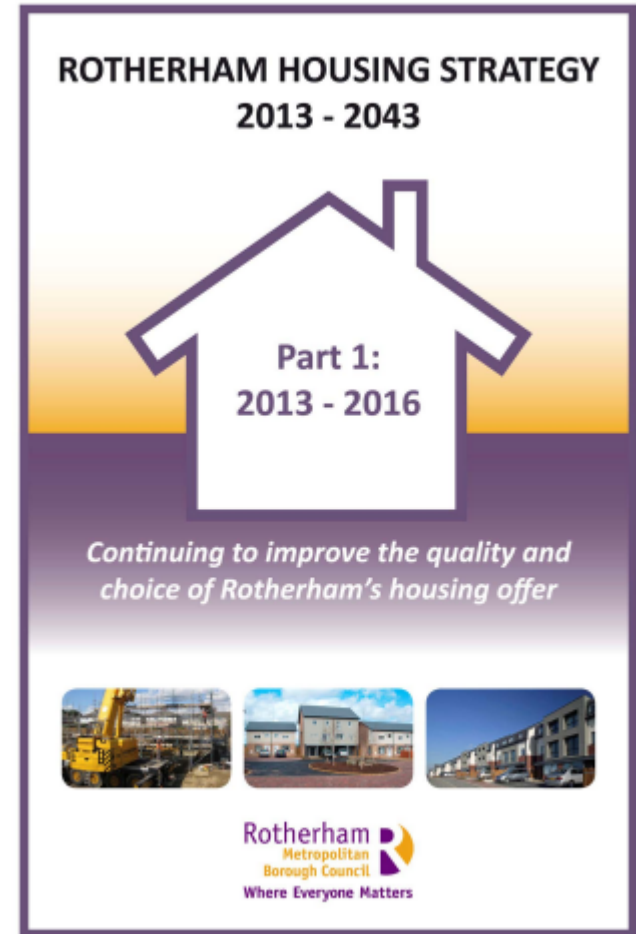
HOUSING STRATEGY - UPDATE

2022-2025



The 30-year vision

- People living in high quality homes
- Rotherham council being the best housing provider in the country
- Reducing the gap between the most and least deprived neighbourhoods so that everyone can live in safe, healthy and vibrant communities
- Households living in energy efficient homes
- A revitalised town centre with an urban community



Current Housing Strategy

- 4th chapter
- Approved by Cabinet April 2022
- IPSC annual progress updates



The six key priorities for the 2022-25 period are:

HIGH QUALITY NEW HOMES

AFFORDABLE HOMES TO MEET LOCAL NEED

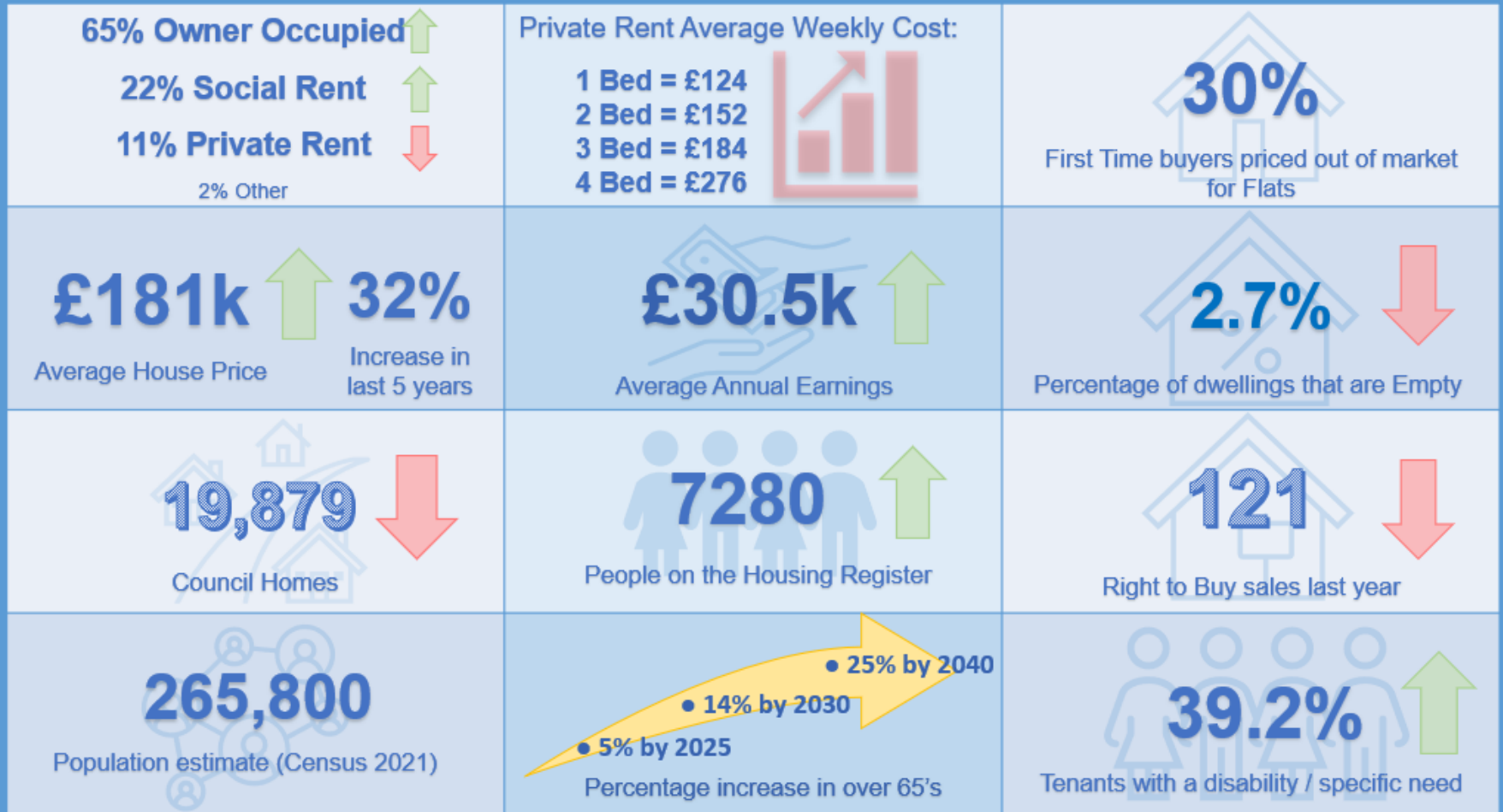
INVESTMENT IN EXISTING HOMES

BRINGING EMPTY HOMES BACK INTO USE

SUPPORTING PEOPLE TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

Local Data



Sources: Rotherham Data hub, ONS, Census 2021, Hometrack, SQL

HIGH QUALITY NEW HOMES

2023/24 Commitments

- Completion and occupation new homes in the Town Centre
- Learning from Town Centre development
- Continue to work with Homes England and the MCA to access funding to deliver more homes
- Zero-carbon prototype project at Thrybergh

Other Achievements

- 500th new council home
- 217 new homes



"I came and had a look around Millfold Rise, which was in my price range. When the Forge Island development is finished and opened later this year, it will be a fantastic reason for so many people to visit the town centre. I can't wait to see it finished." Mr Tingle, Millfold Rise Resident

AFFORDABLE HOMES TO MEET LOCAL NEED

2023/24 Commitments

- Support the delivery of 237 Homes at Chesterhill
- Hold the annual Developer Summit

Other Achievements

- New Market Acquisitions Policy
- First market acquisition complete
- SME Home Builder Initiative
- 14 homes funded via SHAP



Image: The bungalows and apartments under development at Chesterhill.

INVESTMENT IN EXISTING HOMES

2023/24 Commitments

- Responding to and implementing the requirements of the Social Housing White Paper

Other Achievements

- New Damp and Mould Policy
- £27.3m investment in existing stock including;
- 130 homes at Maltby (Eco Scheme)
- 1,400 A-rated boilers
- 350 re-roofs
- 10 environmental projects



Image: Home in Maltby has received energy improvements work.

BRINGING EMPTY HOMES BACK INTO USE

2023/24 Commitments

- Empty Home Plan refresh
- Mid-point review of the selective licensing scheme

Other Achievements

- permanent empty homes officer
- 33 empty homes brought back into use
- Council void relet reduced from 40 days to 25 days



Image: The Leader and the Empty Homes Officer, Tania visiting a property as part of empty homes week.

2023/24 Commitments

- Continuing to address the needs of homeless households
- Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy refresh complete
- A review of the Aids and Adaptations Policy

Other Achievements

- 7 new accessible homes
- 1,381 lettings
- 810 major and 4,973 minor adaptations complete
- 1,111 homeless applicants supported



Image: The handover of newly acquired bungalows, from local contractor Cadam, at Thorpe Hesley.

2023/24 Commitments

- Continue our programme of tenant engagement and support

Other Achievements

- £380k investment via Ward Housing Hubs
- 4,000 tenancy health checks
- over 2,100 Energy crisis support payments
- 956 referrals to Employment Solutions Team
- £20m in social value activity



A group enjoying the outdoor space at Peregrine Way Neighbourhood Centre.

Year 3 Commitments (2024/25)

- Continue to deliver the Council's commitment to 1,000 new homes through the Housing Delivery Programme. Including completion of specialist homes at East Herringthorpe and Canklow.
- Complete an outcomes report for all new developments, to help shape future homes.
- Continue to work in partnership with Homes England and SYMCA.
- Undertake a programme of targeted engagement with private developers and housing associations
- Ensure the Council is well prepared for inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing.
- Commission a programme of stock condition surveys to help understand how the council will meet decency standards.

Year 3 Commitments (2024/25)

- Begin to develop an investment strategy to retrofit existing homes.
- Strengthen assurance that the Council is compliant with property compliance requirements.
- Review of Allocations Policy.
- Implement the next phase of the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy, including a review of temporary accommodation options.
- Deliver a plan for long-term empty homes.
- Refresh Rotherham's Housing Strategy
- Develop a Temporary Accommodation Policy

Housing Strategy Next Steps

- Consultation to commence 2024
- 5th chapter 2025-28





**CONSTITUTION OF THE
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SAFETY
AND
WELFARE PANEL**

2.

1. Name of the Panel

- 1.1 The Panel (a joint committee) shall be called the “Health Welfare and Safety Panel” hereafter called “the Panel”

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Panel provides a regular forum for the Council and its employees to consider matters relating to health and safety and provide advice, guidance and recommendations to appropriate Committees or other Council bodies. The Panel has a remit to oversee the management of health welfare and safety across the Council. The Council's health, welfare and safety performance is reported to this Panel and to the Emergency and Safety Management Team. The Panel is not a part of the Council's executive decision-making structure.

3. Objectives

- 3.1. To promote a healthy and safe working environment for all members of staff employed by the Council and to protect the public from any risk of danger that may arise as a result of the Council's activities.
- 3.2. To monitor the welfare arrangements (facilities for eating, drinking, first aid, and toilets etc) provided for employees.
- 3.3. To provide a forum for consultation and as necessary, negotiation on proposals put forward by management and the trade unions.
- 3.4. To change the way in which work is performed by the introduction of safe systems of work, procedures and arrangements, including those for the training of staff.
- 3.5 To monitor statistics on accidents, incidents and illness and to recommend action to address key issues which may arise from that information.
- 3.6 To promote greater awareness of health, welfare and safety policies to assist in facilitating improvement in Council performance.

4. The Panel will make recommendations to the Council on:

- 3.1 Policies, procedures and correcting non-conformances of the above and statutory requirements in relation to the Council's operations, service delivery and assets.

5. Representation

- 4.1 The Panel will cover all employees in the employment of the Council of Rotherham MBC (“the Employers”). Trade Unions will represent its membership and non-trades union employees for the purpose of consultation as specified by the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations 1997 and the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996.

6. Administration of the Panel

- 6.1** The Panel will be chaired by the Cabinet Member responsible for health, welfare and safety; the Vice-Chair will be nominated by the Trades Unions.
- 6.2** RMBC Democratic Services shall provide a Clerk to the Panel. The Clerk will be responsible for securing the agreement of agenda items between the Panel members and the distribution of agenda and drafting of minutes.

7. Delegated Powers

- 7.1** The Chair of the Panel (as a member of the Council's Cabinet) and Corporate Health and Safety Team have the delegated powers, by virtue of their office, to act on behalf of the Council to ensure compliances with statutory requirements (authority exercised through the Council's Standing Orders, scheme of delegation and obligations arising from the Health and Safety at Work Act).

8. Membership

- 8.1** The Panel shall comprise of the following appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Panel:

8.2 Employees

The representation of the Trade Unions shall be drawn from those Health, Welfare and Safety Representatives who are appointed by recognised Trades Unions. Trades Union Safety Representatives are entitled to time off for trade union duties under the terms of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (as amended), Health, and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 (as amended) and relevant approved codes of practice and guidance.

- 8.3** To obtain the involvement of the whole workforce, other employee representatives may attend the Panel. Full time officials of appropriate trades unions may attend on an ex officio basis.
- 8.4** The composition of the Trades Union Side shall be notified to the Clerk to the Panel at the beginning of each Municipal Year.
- 8.5** The number of representatives of the Trade Union Side of the Panel shall be a maximum ten at any one meeting.
- 8.6** The representatives who may be available to serve at any time during the year shall be appointed by the appropriate trade union branches.
- 8.7** The normal distribution of seats will as closely as possible be proportionate to the number of Safety Representatives.
- 8.8** Employee Side representatives of the Local Authority are to be appointed annually, but in any event to include:
- At least three teacher representatives, NUT, NASUWT and ATL.
 - A maximum of seven representatives from all other areas of Council work e.g. UNISON, UNITE the Union, GMB.
 - No individual Trade Union shall have more than three seats.

8.8 The Clerk to the Panel shall maintain an up to date record of recognised Safety Representatives and unions eligible for participation of the Committee. The Trade Unions will be responsible for updating Panel's records as necessary.

8.9 Employers

8.10 The Panel shall comprise six Elected Members of the Council to be appointed annually, including Member(s) from:

- Cabinet Member with responsibility for Health Welfare and Safety
- Members from Select Commissions (scrutiny)
- Members Training and Development Panel

8.11 Council Officers shall also be represented by Strategic Director with responsibility for Health Welfare and Safety or their nominated Operational Assistant Director. The Council's Health Welfare and Safety Officers shall also attend meetings of the Panel.

8.12 The Strategic Director or their representative shall attend meetings when a report appertaining to that Directorate (or Service Area) is before the Panel.

8.13 In addition to the members appointed to each side of the Panel, substitute members for the Employer's Side and the Employees' Side shall be appointed. In the event of any member of the Panel being unable to attend a meeting, they shall notify the Clerk to the Panel before the meeting begins and the substitute member shall then be entitled to attend the meeting. Trades Unions' substitute members will be current Safety Representatives or officers of the Trade Union.

9. Cessation of Membership:

9.1 If a member of the Panel ceases to be an Elected Member or ceases to be a Member of a recognised trade union, or is no longer the nominated person from the Trade Union, they shall cease to be a member of the Panel. Otherwise, members of the Panel shall remain in office until their successors are appointed and shall, if qualified, be eligible for reappointment.

10. Vacancies

10.1 Any vacancy on the Panel shall be filled by a representative nominated by the relevant group within a reasonable period and the appointment notified in writing to Committee Services.

11. Advisors:

11.1 Any member shall have the right to be accompanied by a person, or persons, in an advisory capacity subject to the agreement of the Chair or Vice-Chair. The attendance of the person or persons shall be only for the period during which the particular matter is before the Panel.

12. Attendees:

12.1 The members of the Panel may require the attendance of any Officer of the Council. Requests for attendance of an Officer shall be made no later than five working days before the meeting. Officers unable to attend should send a substitute.

13. Meetings:

- 13.1** The Panel shall normally meet four times per year. Additional meetings may be held if the business to be discussed is sufficiently urgent.

14. Quorum:

- 14.1** The Quorum of the Panel shall be three members. There must be present at least one Elected Member representing the Council and one Safety Representative from at least two of the Trades Unions. Either the Chair or the Vice-Chair must be present.
- 14.2** If when a meeting is due to begin and is not quorate, the start of the meeting may be delayed by up to 15 (fifteen) minutes. If the meeting is still not quorate at the end of this period, and those present have not received information otherwise, the members present may, at their discretion, discuss the matters on the agenda informally and notes of their discussions and their recommendations will be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel for verification.

15. Record of Attendance:

- 15.1** The names of members of the Panel attending meetings shall be recorded in the minutes and every member of the Panel attending shall sign an attendance sheet.

16. Submission of Meeting Agenda Items:

- 16.1** All potential items for consideration by the Panel shall be submitted to the Corporate Health and Safety Team no later than five days before the publication of the agenda for the meeting.

17. Distribution of Agenda:

- 17.1** The agenda and supporting documents for each Panel meeting shall be circulated to all members of the Panel at least five working days before the meeting.

18. Urgent Business Brought Forward at the Discretion of the Chair:

- 18.1** An item of "Any Other Business" shall not be included on the agenda. Members of the Panel may raise items of an urgent nature at meetings (which are not included on the agenda) provided that the prior agreement of the Chair has been obtained.

19. Approval of the Minutes:

- 19.1** The draft minutes of a Panel meeting shall be circulated to the Chair and Vice-Chair before being reported to the next following Panel meeting for comment. All members of the Panel shall be provided with copies of the minutes of a meeting as part of the agenda for the next following meeting.

20. Procedure

Meetings of the Panel shall be held at least quarterly, provided that the Chair and the Vice-Chair may authorise the postponement and re-arrangement of any meeting.

- 20.1.** An extraordinary meeting of the Panel shall be held within ten working days of a written request being received by the Clerk to the Panel from the Chair or the Vice-Chair.

Such written request shall indicate the precise nature of the business to be discussed and the reason for urgency.

- 20.2.** Items for consideration at any meeting of the Panel may be submitted by either side and should be received by the Clerk to the Panel at least ten working days before the meeting, except in the case of an extraordinary meeting.
- 20.3.** The agenda of business shall be circulated by the Clerk to the Panel to each member of the Committee at least five working days before a meeting. Extraordinary meetings may be called at shorter than five working days' notice, provided that the Chair of the Panel is satisfied with the reasons for urgency.
- 20.4.** No business other than that appearing on the agenda shall be transacted at any meeting unless the Chair to its introduction. Reasonable facilities shall be provided for individual (separate) meetings of both sides.
- 20.5.** The administrative expenses of the Panel shall be paid by Council. Minutes of meetings of the Panel and the preparation of official agendas shall be the responsibility of the Clerk.
- 20.6.** Copies of the minutes of the Panel shall be circulated to the Cabinet of the Council, the Corporate Emergency and Safety Management Team meeting and to the appropriate Directorate Senior Leadership Team meeting.
- 20.7.** Decisions shall be arrived at by agreement between the two sides of the Panel (ie: the Employer's and the Employees' Side), by members being present and voting at Panel meetings. Proxy voting is not permitted. In the event of the Panel being unable to reach agreement on a matter before it, then any such matter may be referred to the Chair of the Panel, who may make such recommendation to the Council as she/he considers to be appropriate. The Chair shall refer the matter back to a subsequent Panel meeting and shall report the views or recommendations of the Council. The minutes of that subsequent Panel meeting will record any decision reached. In the event that the two sides of the Panel remain unable to reach agreement on any individual matter before it and after consideration of the views of the Council, the minutes of the Panel meeting shall record that failure to reach agreement.

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference

Health Welfare and Safety Panel

This is a broad outline of the terms of reference of this group but is not intended to be exhaustive.

The Panel should operate in a positive way - reinforcing safety culture and employee participation in solving health and safety problems. The Panel should actively invite feedback, listen to employee views, and consider these views.

The Panel shall consider the following and make appropriate recommendations:

- (a). Assist in the development of and procurement of compliance with the Councils health and safety policy and guidance.
- (b). Assist in ensuring that policies / guidance give due consideration to the health safety and welfare of employees, young people and others affected by the activities of the Council so far as is reasonably practicable.
- (c). Assist in the monitoring and review of policy and guidance and consider/evaluate its effectiveness.
- (d). Consider / evaluate the effectiveness of health and safety training, communications, and publicity in the workplace.
- (e). Assist with, contribute to, and monitor the Councils Annual Health & Safety Action Plan.
- (f). Consider reports and statistics relating to significant accidents / incidents and dangerous occurrences.
- (g). Consider reports and information (incl. new legislation) provided by inspectors of the enforcing authority appointed under the Health & Safety at Work Act.
- (h). Consider reports (including inspections and audits) submitted by Trade Union appointed representatives, other Council officers and workplace health and safety representatives.
- (i). Make representations about resource and policy implications for consideration by the Council as appropriate.
- (j). Where appropriate, establish working groups to investigate problems or aspects of health welfare and safety and report their findings to the Panel.

Where practicable **ALL** issues raised should have been brought to the attention of managers of operational units prior to the Panel meeting.

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Improving Places Select Commission – Work Programme 2024-25 – presented in June 2024

Chair: Cllr Cameron McKiernan
Governance Manager: Barbel Gale

Vice-Chair: Cllr Adam Tinsley
Link Officer: Andrew Bramidge

The following principles were endorsed by OSMB at its meeting of 5 July 2023 as criteria to long/short list each of the commission's respective priorities:

Establish as a starting point:

- What are the key issues?
- What is the desired outcome?

Agree principles for longlisting:

- Can scrutiny add value or influence?
- Is this being looked at elsewhere?
- Is this a priority for the council or community?

Developing a consistent shortlisting criteria, e.g.

- T: Time: is it the tight time, enough resources?
- O: Others: is this duplicating the work of another body?
- P: Performance: can scrutiny make a difference
- I: Interest: what is the interest to the public?
- C: Contribution to the corporate plan

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item |
|--------------|---|
| 04-Jun-24 | Housing Strategy Update Nominate representative to the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel |
| 09-Jul-24 | Overview of the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Housing Overview of the portfolio of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion & Neighbourhood Working |
| 03-Sep-24 | Flooding Alleviation Update Overview of the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy |
| 22-Oct-24 | |
| 10-Dec-24 | Thriving Neighbourhoods Annual Report |

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| 11-Feb-25 | |
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| 18-Mar-25 | |
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**Items for
Scheduling**

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|---|--|
| TBC - to be suggested as a topic for the new municipal year | School Road Safety |
| TBC - to be suggested as a topic for the new municipal year | Anti-social behaviour workshop |
| TBC | Allotments Annual Update - Will be brought back as and when an update is required. |