

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Improving Places Select Commission</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Early Findings from Scrutiny Reviews</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Chief Executive's</b>

## **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 28<sup>th</sup> 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