

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 12 December 2018

**Report Title**

Scrutiny Review into Modern Methods of Construction

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

No

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

**Report Author(s)**

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**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

The aim of this report is to present the findings from the scrutiny review into modern methods of construction which are highlighted in Appendix 1.

The review was undertaken by a group of members from across the political parties in Rotherham. The justification for completing this piece of work came from evidence that the:-

- housing market is not fit for purpose with the housing market locally reflecting national information and trends.
- demand for homes outweighs provision e.g. more one bedroom and larger properties are required in Rotherham
- number of homeless people is on the increase, this number could continue to increase due to the introduction of Universal Credit.
- Insufficient affordable properties available – which includes cheaper, renewable sources of energy to heat the homes.
- private and social owned properties are not being build quick enough to meet demand

The options for providing affordable homes, in a quicker timescale to traditional build homes, which are energy efficient and where possible use renewable sources of energy to keep running cost low. Two main options were looked at these were container and modular homes.

## **Recommendations**

1. That consideration of any learning experiences identified as part of the Council's pilot projects using modern methods of construction be utilised as part of any future projects.
2. That Housing Services develop a pilot project of up to 10 pods at various locations throughout the borough.
3. That a pilot project of 5 Modern Methods of Construction homes for families be developed.
4. That the option of various energy packages be developed, for example, solar power and cavity wall insulation for residents of the borough whether in social or private rented accommodation.
5. That each property involved in the pilot schemes be allocated an individual finance code to allow for easier monitoring of associated costs.

## **List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 Scrutiny Review of Modern Methods of Construction

### **Background Papers**

None

### **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

Council – 23 January 2019

Cabinet – 19 February 2018

### **Council Approval Required**

No

### **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

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### **1. Background**

- 1.1 At the meeting of Full Council on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018, the Leader of the Opposition – The United Kingdom Independent Party put forward an amendment to the annual budget to ring fence an amount from the Housing Revenue Account to develop homes using modern methods of construction and sustainable/renewable energy sources.
- 1.2 This was as a result of a survey among younger people and young families concluded that a major cause of their inability to find suitable accommodation was the lack smaller properties coupled with the punitive spare room subsidy, the so called 'Bedroom Tax'.
- 1.3 The amendment was not carried as it was not a proposal that could not be considered and a decision reached at the meeting. (CM157)
- 1.4 However the outcome was that a cross party review into modern methods of construction was undertaken.

### **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 There are several issues identified as part of the review :-
  - 2.1.1 Overall there is a lack of affordable housing for young people and young families.
  - 2.1.2 Many Local Authorities are unable to meet the demand for social housing in their area.
  - 2.1.3 Introduction of Welfare Reform/Universal Credit and the implications for individuals and
  - 2.1.4 An increase in the number of people / families who are homeless.
  - 2.1.5 Traditional build houses take longer to complete than that of container or modular build homes.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 3.1 The report is presented for consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

### **4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 Like any scrutiny review, the enclosed report details the outcomes of meetings with officers, external organisations and experts in this field to inform the report and recommendations presented.

### **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

5.1 If the Board is minded to approve the report and recommendations, they will be forwarded to Council on 23 January 2019 for information. Following this, the Cabinet will formally respond to the report and recommendations in February 2019, in accordance with the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

## **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

6.1 These are detailed within the enclosed report. Any advice or implications arising from the Cabinet's consideration of the recommendations will be reported back to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

## **7. Legal Advice and Implications**

7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report

## **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

9.1 There are no implications for children and young people or vulnerable arising from this report

## **10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

10.1 There are no equalities or human rights implications arising from this report.

## **11. Implications for Partners**

11.1 There are no implications for partners arising from this report.

## **12. Risks and Mitigation**

12.1 There are no risks directly associated with this report.

## **13. Accountable Officers**

James McLaughlin, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

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