



Telford & Wrekin  
C O U N C I L

Addenbrooke House Ironmasters Way Telford TF3 4NT

## COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date **Wednesday, 11 November 2020** Time **6.00 pm**  
Venue **Remote Meeting**

### Enquiries Regarding this Agenda

Democratic Services Kieran Robinson 01952 382061  
Media Enquiries Corporate Communications 01952 382406

Committee Membership: Councillors E J Carter, G H Cook, T L B Janke, R T Kiernan, R Mehta, B J Thompson and C R Turley (Chair), Co-optees D Johnson

## AGENDA

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|---|-------------|
| 1. <b>Apologies for Absence</b>   |             |
| 2. <b>Declarations of Interest</b>  |             |
| 3. <b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b>   | 3 - 6       |
| 4. <b>Terms of Reference</b><br>To approve the Committee's Terms of Reference for the municipal year 2020 to 2021.  | 7 - 14      |
| 5. <b>Scrutiny Review of the Local Plan</b><br>To receive a presentation from Katherine Kynaston (Director: Housing, Employment & Infrastructure) and Gavin Ashford (Strategic Planning Team Leader).<br><br>David Wright (Cabinet Member for Economy, Housing, Transport and Infrastructure) will also attend for this item. |             |
| 6. <b>Work Programme Review</b><br>To review the work programme of the Committee.   | 15 - 18     |
| 7. <b>Chair's Update</b>  |             |

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## COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### Minutes of a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 3 February 2020 at 6.00 pm in Meeting Room G3/4, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford, TF3 4NT

**Present:** Councillors E J Carter, T L B Janke, D Johnson, J E Lavery, K S Sahota and C R Turley (Chair)

**Also Present:** Councillor D Wright (Cabinet Member: Housing, Transport and Infrastructure)

**In Attendance:** A Astley (Executive Director: Housing, Communities & Customer Services), K Callis (Housing Investment Programme Service Delivery Manager), T Guest (Housing, NuPlace & Commercial Projects Service Delivery Manager) and Paula Meyrick (Project Manager - Specialist Accommodation)

**Apologies:** Councillor C Cassar

#### **1 Declarations of Interest**

None.

#### **2 Scrutiny Review of Housing and Homelessness**

The Cabinet Member: Housing, Transport and Infrastructure welcomed this opportunity to explore the issues set out in the report and develop policy in conjunction with Scrutiny. Some positive work was taking place in this area: the new Housing Strategy would be presented to Cabinet and Council in the next few months and there were options set out to develop policies collaboratively.

The Housing, NuPlace & Commercial Projects Service Delivery Manager provided an overview of the current service and offer provided in relation to young people and housing, as detailed in the report.

*How does the Council become aware that an individual is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless?*

The Service became aware that an individual would be likely to become homeless when either there was a direct approach from the individual or if another organisation/body passed the information.

Certain public bodies had a duty to refer users of their service who they had reason to believe were homeless or threatened with becoming homeless within 56 days, to the local authority. If the individual was over 18, permission was needed to make the referral but not if they were under 18.

*What data was available on the success of prevention and relief?*

It was agreed that data on the prevention and relief duty would be provided in writing.

*It was noted that different choices and opportunities were presented to young people and that this might mean some young people did not come into contact with the Council.*

It was important that the Council made it easy for young people to interact with the Council at whatever stage in their housing journey they were at and also as they moved in and out of need.

*When a family including young people was made homeless, was the young person considered a family member or a young person?*

This depended on the outcome of interview with the family about what they wanted, ie to stay together as family unit or if the young person wanted to move on.

*How were messages being conveyed through appropriate media in a userfriendly format (eg targeting advertisements through snapchat etc)?*

The Council's Corporate Communications Team were leading on raising the profile of the work that was being done. It could be that there were information routes not yet being accessed that could form part of the future communications plan.

*Whilst digital methods of communication were import, it was important to have alternative approaches, eg through libraries.*

Best practice in this area might be something the Committee would like to focus on.

*Was there a pathway for released prisoners?*

There was a specific process for those leaving prison; the Council worked closely with a number of partners to provide supported accommodation for prisoners to be discharged to.

*What schemes were on offer for people with poor financial records who could not meet housing association deposit/tenancy requirements (eg, the Xroads scheme)?*

The Welfare Team worked closely with the Crisis Support Team to provide support that made the best use of discretionary housing funding – for example paying a deposit up front – and Tenancy Sustainability Officers provided further support. There were also accommodation options provided partners such as Maninplace, Stay and the Kip Project.

*There was a natural tendency for private landlords to provide tenancies to “safe” tenants only. Could a database of Licensed HMOs offer any solutions?*

The Council was working closely with private sector landlords to increase trust. For instance, there was an understanding among landlords that the Council acted quickly to process the deployment of universal credit to limit any impact.

The Service Delivery Specialist: Housing Investment Programme provided an overview of housing for older people and people with disabilities as set out in the report.

*Noting the difficulties faced by older people wishing to downsize from their large family homes to bungalows in the communities they have lived in for a long time, what plans or standards were in place to support building to accommodate changing demographics?*

The Local Planning Authority were working to see an increase in the delivery of bungalows but needed the support of the local plan review to facilitate this. A change in developers’ views was also being noted – with the provision of specialist housing being seen as a lucrative opportunity, this was more on the agenda than ever before. The provision of specialist housing is also now a key component of Housing Association’s business plans.

*What powers did the Council have to make developers build accommodation for this demographic?*

Planning Policy was not currently robust enough to achieve this. There was reference to accessibility but without a strong evidence base, developers could not be forced to build. The proposed Specialist & Supported Housing Strategy, coming forward to Cabinet in March would provide this evidence base for the first time.

Members may also wish to talk to developers about Lifetime Homes Standards, a series of design criteria intended to make homes more easily adaptable for lifetime use at minimal cost.

Concluding discussion on this item, Officers and the Cabinet Member: Housing, Transport and Infrastructure welcomed the opportunity to work with Scrutiny on these issues.

Members **AGREED** to progress the eight potential areas of work for Scrutiny set out in the report.

It was noted that the Council was seeking appointment to the position of Director: but whilst such appointment was awaited, the Committee **AGREED** to progress the following areas of work:

Young People and Housing

- Look at what other authorities were doing to address youth homelessness and identify best practice examples.
- Review what other authorities are doing to intervene early and provide advice to young people who are not homeless but would like housing advice.

#### Housing for People with a Physical Disability and Older People

- Review the Housing Assistance Policy and suggest any amendments to ensure it meets need.
- Look at what other authorities were doing to secure delivery of housing for older people and people with a physical disability.

The Committee agreed to meet informally in six weeks to feedback on the above elements of the review, consider the scope of this review and next steps.

### **3 Work Programme 2019-20 to 2020-21**

Members noted the suggestions set out in the report on the Work Programme and **AGREED** to prioritise work on the housing and homelessness review.

With regard to the remaining items on the work programme it was **AGREED** that the Democratic & Scrutiny Services Team would redraft the work programme to amalgamate linked suggestions and provide more detail to enable scoping and effective prioritisation.

### **4 Chair's Update**

The Chair requested the Democratic & Scrutiny Services Team identify a date for the next meeting and circulate to the Committee.

The meeting ended at 7.33pm

**Chairman:** .....

**Date:** Wednesday, 11 November 2020

**TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 11 NOVEMBER 2020**

**REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**REPORT OF ANTHEA LOWE – ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR: POLICY & GOVERNANCE**

**PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT**

**1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS**

For the Communities Scrutiny Committee to review its Terms of Reference attached at Appendix 1.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 That the Committee review and agree the amended Terms of Reference set out at Appendix 1.**

**3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

<b>COMMUNITY IMPACT</b>	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	The Committee is part of the Council's decision making framework and therefore contributes to all of the Council's priorities.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	
<b>TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE</b>	If the Committee recommends any changes to the Terms of Reference; they will proceed to Council Constitution Committee and then, if approved, onto full Council at the earliest opportunity.	
<b>FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT</b>	Yes	Scrutiny has a role in ensuring that local government is effective and accountable. This includes undertaking reviews and challenging and monitoring performance. Support for the committee and the work programme are managed within existing resources. The financial implications of any recommendations made by Scrutiny should be considered as part of reports as relevant.  AEM 02/11/2020
<b>LEGAL ISSUES</b>	Yes	The Constitution requires that the Terms of Reference be reviewed on an annual

		<p>basis. The Council is required to comply with the Constitution. This report demonstrates compliance with this requirement.</p> <p>IR 02.11/2020</p>
<b>OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b>	Yes	There are no other specific impacts arising from this report.
<b>IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS</b>	Yes	Borough-wide impact

## **PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **4. INFORMATION**

- 4.1 The Constitution requires that Full Council should agree at its Annual Meeting the Terms of Reference for each of its Committees to enable the Council to efficiently conduct its business.
- 4.2 At the Annual Meeting on 21 May 2020, Full Council delegated authority to each Committee to review its own Terms of Reference.
- 4.3 The Terms of Reference forms part of the Constitution and was approved by Full Council in that context on 14 July 2016.
- 4.4 There is one minor change suggested to the Terms of Reference (shown in red on Appendix 1) to provide clarity around the process for appointment of a Chair for the Committee.

### **5. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- 5.1 Council – 14 July 2016 and 21 May 2020

### **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Constitution – [www.telford.gov.uk/constitution](http://www.telford.gov.uk/constitution)

**Report prepared by Kieran Robinson, Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer, [kieran.robinson@telford.gov.uk](mailto:kieran.robinson@telford.gov.uk), 01952 382061**

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## COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Membership

1. The Committee will be made up of elected members from the Scrutiny Assembly, appointed at Annual Council in line with the political balance of the Council, and co-opted scrutiny members.
2. The number of co-opted members must not exceed 50% of the number of elected members.
3. In addition to standing co-optees, the Committee may appoint additional co-optees for one-off reviews to supplement the skills, knowledge and experience of members of the Committee on that particular issue (subject to the rule on total number of co-optees above)..
4. **The Chair is appointed at the Annual General Meeting of full Council. A Vice-Chair may be appointed by majority decision of the Committee.**
5. The quorum for a meeting is 3 elected members.

### Functions

6. The Committee will be the main mechanism by which Scrutiny members will scrutinise and monitor issues relating to the following key areas:
  - Customer Experience
  - Voluntary sector and community groups
  - Community engagement and development
  - Community hubs and centres
  - Library services and archives
  - Heritage Services
  - Preventing and reducing crime
  - Tackling domestic abuse
  - Reducing anti-social behaviour
  - Fire and rescue and emergency response
  - Public Protection
  - Enforcement
  - Civil resilience and emergency planning
  - Road safety
  - Registration, celebratory and coroner's services
  - Benefits and welfare reform
  - Sport, leisure, entertainment and culture facilities
  - Diversity and Equality
  - Armed Services and Veterans
  - Interfaith Issues
  - Housing – including affordable housing, HMOs, homelessness and housing needs
  -

## Appendix 1

7. The Community Scrutiny Committee will be the designated body for scrutiny of the Safer, Stronger Communities Partnership as set out in section 19 of the Police & Justice Act (2006). The work programme will make provision for scrutiny of this item.
8. The Committee will consider matters referred by the Scrutiny Management Board, and will exercise discretion as to whether a suggestion falls within the remit of the Committee to scrutinise.
9. The Committee will set its own work programme in accordance with the areas set out above and may look at any issue deemed by the Committee to fall within its remit.

### **Meeting Administration and Proceedings**

10. The Committee procedure rules as set out in the Council's Constitution apply to this Committee.
11. The meetings will follow the principles of scrutiny ie no party whip will be applied and a constructive, evidence based approach will be used.
12. If the Chair or Vice-Chair (if appointed) are unable to attend a meeting the Members present will elect a Chair for the meeting.
13. All Scrutiny Committee meetings will be held in public, unless exempt information is being considered or discussed. Scrutiny Committees may appoint sub-groups to carry out investigative work as part of a review and these sub-groups may hold informal meetings but will report back their findings to the Scrutiny Committee.
14. The meetings will be administered by Scrutiny Services and Democratic Services. Frequency of meetings will be agreed by the Committee as necessary to carry out the work programme.
15. Relevant Cabinet Members, Executive Directors, Directors and Service Delivery Managers will attend the Committee at the request of the Chair. Representatives from other organisations may be invited to attend.

### **Sensitive and Confidential Information**

16. From time to time members may become privy to information of a confidential nature. If this happens, members must maintain this confidence. Members are unable to request personal/confidential information from Officers about an individual or family.

### **Reporting Arrangements**

17. The Chair will provide regular updates to meetings of the Scrutiny Management Board to inform the other Scrutiny Chairs of performance and budget issues relating to the remit of their Committees.

## Appendix 1

The Chair of the Committee, or his/her representative, will provide and present reports and recommendations of the Committee to the Council's Cabinet, Fully Council or other relevant organisations when necessary.

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**Community Scrutiny Committee – 2020/21 Work Programme**

\* New Suggestions Received and Shared with Scrutiny Assembly on 24 October 2019

\*\* New Suggestions Received Since Scrutiny Assembly on 24 October 2019

	<b>Issue / Topic</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Status / Source if New</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>SMT Feedback (if any)</b>	<b>Proposed Date</b>
**	Housing Strategies	Formerly - Homelessness and Housing	New	Housing & Communities	Housing Strategy recommended to come to scrutiny post-December Cabinet meeting	December 2020 – January 2021
**	Social and Private Rented Housing	To understand the rules that govern social housing provision and private landlords, to understand the needs of residents and problems faced by the borough in delivery of housing and how these can be addressed.	New – Scrutiny Chair	Housing & Communities	Recommended for October/November meeting.	October 2020 – November 2020

	Issue / Topic	Purpose	Status / Source if New	Service Area	SMT Feedback (if any)	Proposed Date
*	Council Communications	<i>(NB Scrutiny considered third party engagement in 2018/19)</i>  <i>Was three separate items – Council Communications with Residents and Town and Parish Councils; Community Hubs; and Stronger Community</i>	New – Scrutiny Chairs	Cooperative Council Delivery Team /  Neighbourhood & Enforcement Service	*	Following implementation of Comms structure
*	Transport (SMB suggest a spotlight review)	To examine subsidised routes, gaps in service provision, and the internal fleet offer	New – from Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	It may be more productive to work to influence the emerging Integrated Transport Strategy and take a wider view of transport needs and not just focus on bus subsidy. Work on the strategy will commence in the Autumn.	December 2020 – with consideration being given to a focus session following that.

	<b>Issue / Topic</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Status / Source if New</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>SMT Feedback (if any)</b>	<b>Proposed Date</b>
*	Planning and Development	Ensuring that properties have adequate allocated parking spaces. Planning applications must be accurate and include definitive plans and accurate application forms. HMOs need monitoring and enforcement where necessary – parking is an issue wherever there is an HMO. House and property design and specifications must be taking carbon reduction into account through the planning stages.	New – from Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council	Business, Development & Employment	To be considered as part of Local Plan review	Following review of regime that applies to housing sector.
	Civil Parking Enforcement	Monitoring	Monitoring	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	This has been recommended as an item to come to scrutiny in the new year (2021) as activities had been halted during the pandemic and resumed in late Summer 2020.	February – March 2021

	<b>Issue / Topic</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Status / Source if New</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>SMT Feedback (if any)</b>	<b>Proposed Date</b>
	Community Safety Partnership (Violence Reduction Partnership scrutiny)	Reviewed 2017-2019 strategy in July 2018.	Statutory responsibility	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services  Housing & Communities	Scrutiny of this item has been suggested for March 2021 as a strategy review is ongoing as of September 2020.	March 2021