

Public Document Pack



RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

*at the Council Offices, Farnborough on
Thursday, 13th June, 2024 at 7.00 pm*

To:

Cllr Halleh Koohestani (Chairman)

Cllr Leola Card
Cllr A.H. Crawford
Cllr P.J. Cullum
Cllr Thomas Day
Cllr C.P. Grattan
Cllr G.B. Lyon
Cllr Nadia Martin
Cllr Bill O'Donovan
Cllr M.J. Tennant
Cllr S. Trussler

Standing Deputy

Cllr C.W. Card
Cllr T.W. Mitchell
Cllr M.D. Smith
Cllr Sarah Spall
Cllr Jacqui Vosper
Cllr Ivan Whitmee

Enquiries regarding this agenda should be referred to the Administrator, Adele Taylor, Democratic Services, Tel. (01252) 398831, Email. adele.taylor@rushmoor.gov.uk.

A G E N D A

1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN/CHAIRMEN –

To appoint a Vice-Chairman/Chairmen of the Committee for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th March 2024 (copy attached).

3. REGISTERED PROVIDERS TASK AND FINISH GROUP - ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 – (Pages 7 - 12)

To receive the Registered Providers Task and Finish Group Annual Report 2023/24. Report No. PG2418 is attached on the work of the Task and Finish Group during the 2023/24 Municipal Year. The Committee is asked to consider the recommendations.

4. HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION STRATEGY – (Pages 13 - 18)

The Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy Report No. PG2417 will provide an initial update to the Committee following the publication of the Strategy in October 2023 (copy attached). A steer from the Committee, has been requested, on the preferred format of future reports.

5. APPOINTMENTS 2024/25 –

(1) Progress Group

To appoint the Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Progress Group. The appointments are to be made on the basis of six/seven cross party Members including the Chairman (Cllr Halleh Koohestani), the Vice-Chairman/men, two further Labour Group Members and one each from the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Group Members.

(2) Council Tax Support

To appoint the Membership of the Council Tax Support Task and Finish Group for 2024/25. Nominations received are as follows:

Cllr C.P. Grattan
Cllr Lisa Greenway
Cllr M.J. Roberts

Cllr P.J. Cullum
Cllr P.G. Taylor

This Group requires that the Membership includes either the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Committee.

(3) Registered Providers

To appoint the Membership of the Registered Providers Task and Finish Group for 2024/25. Nominations received are as follows:

Cllr Gaynor Austin	Cllr S.J. Masterson
Cllr Bill O'Donovan	Cllr M.D. Smith
Cllr Halleh Koohestani (Chairman)	

(4) Farnborough Airport

To appoint the Membership of the Farnborough Airport Task and Finish Group for 2024/25. Nominations received are as follows:

Cllr Jules Crossley (Cabinet Member)	Cllr P.J. Cullum	Cllr C. Card
Cllr Thomas Day	Cllr G.B. Lyon	
Cllr Halleh Koohestani (Chairman)		

6. WORK PLAN – (Pages 19 - 24)

To consider the Work Plan for the 2024/25 Municipal Year (copy attached).

MEETING REPRESENTATION

Members of the public may ask to speak at the meeting on any of the items on the agenda by writing to the Committee Administrator at the Council Offices, Farnborough by 5.00 pm two working days prior to the meeting.

Applications for items to be considered for the next meeting must be received in writing to the Committee Administrator fifteen working days prior to the meeting.

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Wednesday, 27th March, 2024 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr M.D. Smith (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr K. Dibble (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr D.E. Clifford
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr S.J. Masterson

Apologies for absence were submitted in behalf of Cllrs Jules Crossley and Sophie Porter.

30. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meetings held on 8th February, 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

31. PUBLIC HEALTH - HEALTH PROTECTION ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

The Committee welcomed Hampshire County Council's Director for Public Health, Simon Bryant and Associate Director for Public Health, Johanna Jefferies, who attended the meeting virtually to provide a presentation on Public Health.

The Committee noted that upper tier local authorities had a statutory duty to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities by reducing the need for people to access health and social care. These duties were delivered by working closely with partners and were funded through a ring fenced grant. Part of the duty included commissioning mandated services including sexual and reproductive health, drug and alcohol treatment, school nursing, health visiting, the National Childhood Measurement Programme and NHS health checks.

The vision of the Hampshire Public Health Strategy was to improve the health of everyone living in Hampshire and to create a healthier Hampshire. This was achieved by increasing the number of years residents could expect to live in good health and by reducing the unfair gap in healthy life years between the most and least healthy. The Strategy was in place to create conditions that enabled residents to maintain healthy behaviours that help to prevent illness with a focus on reducing conditions that contributed most to poor health (smoking, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, poor mental health etc.). The activities within the Strategy were achieved through working with a wide range of partners, such as the local NHS, district and borough councils, local businesses and the voluntary and community sector. To

make an impact, and reduce the gaps in health, local government were uniquely placed to act on the building blocks of health, these included, money and resources, surroundings, work, education and skills, housing, family, friends and community, food and transport. The Strategy links with other key population level strategies including the Economic Strategy, Climate Change Strategy and the Local Transport Plan and aligned its objectives with the Children and Young People's Plan, the Adult Health and Care Strategy, the Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and contributed to the delivery of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight and Frimley Integrated Care System Strategic Vision.

It was advised that the Strategy had three main themes:

- Healthy Places, Settings and Communities – rooted in the work with communities undertaken primarily by local authorities with Hampshire County Council acting as the anchor institution.
- Healthy People – to provide health protection, respond to Public Health emergencies, provide health intelligence and deliver programmes that help to reduce the impacts of violence within the criminal justice system.
- Healthy Lives – enabling residents to live longer by encouraging physical activity and activities on stopping smoking and substance abuse

It was advised that a high level Action Plan had been drawn up to set key actions and identify contributors and a liaison officer had been appointed to work directly with Rushmoor. The Committee also noted current work areas in Rushmoor which included, a focus on smoking services, a whole system approach to healthy weights and health walks, Balance, Glide and Ride and Energise Me activities.

Following a discussion, it was advised that the Public Health team were heavily engaged with the Frimley Health Partnership and Mr Bryant chaired a number of the groups active within the partnership. It was noted that health needs within communities were identified and services/interventions targeted accordingly. For example, it was advised that in Rushmoor, over the last 20 years, work had been undertaken to drive down the rate of HIV infection (1.92 per 1,000 population), which were higher than in other areas of the county (Hampshire (as a whole) 1.18 per 1,000 population).

In response to how Elected Members could raise issues affecting their communities, it was advised that first contact should be made with the Community and Partnerships Team.

Other issues discussed were:

- Emerging threats – there was an element of uncertainty in this area and the Public Health team had to take all preventions to tackle threats that could emerge, through targeted vaccinations and monitoring the national picture
- Antimicrobial Resistance – due to increased usage of antibiotics, their effectiveness has decreased over time, resulting in health practitioners not being able to protect the population. This was identified as a huge issue and national leadership was required address the matter

- Links with Planning/Environmental Health – It was advised that the Public Health team responded to planning applications despite not being a statutory consultee and worked closely with both the planning and environmental health teams.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
The potential to hold a workshop session to explain the dashboard data available via the public health website and to provide information on data available at a district level.	Simon Bryant, Director of Public Health	2024/25

The Chairman thanked Mr Bryant and Ms Jefferies for their presentation and contribution to the meeting.

32. CABINET CHAMPIONS

The Committee welcomed Cabinet Champion for Equalities and Diversity, Cllr Jib Belbase, and Cabinet Champion for Armed Forces, Cllr Nem Thapa, who were in attendance to give their annual reports for the 2023/24 Municipal Year. The Cabinet Member for Democracy, Strategy and Partnerships, Cllr Sue Carter was also in attendance to support the item.

(1) Cabinet Champion for Equalities and Diversity

Cllr Belbase reported that he had invested significant time establishing and strengthening links with community leaders from a number of underrepresented and hard to reach groups. These included leaders from Asian communities including, Afghan and Keralan, and European communities including, Bulgarian and Ukrainian. On 13 March, 2024, a Cultural Awareness Event was held which give community leaders access to key partners to raise awareness about UK culture and offered advice about accessing benefits, help reporting crime, fire safety at home, mental health and cost of living support, and volunteering.

It was also noted that arrangements had been made to host Gender Identity training for both officers and Elected Members in summer 2024 and Neurodiversity training had been undertaken with officers with further session planned for Elected Members. Cllr Belbase encouraged all Members to attend the sessions.

Cllr Belbase advised that all activities undertaken had been in line with the Council's Equality and Diversity Action Plan and recommended that the Council continued to review the Action Plan taking into consideration revised working arrangements around the independence of the Rushmoor Accessibility Access Group (RAAG). Cllr Belbase also acknowledged the contribution and continued work of former Champion, Cllr Makunura, in relation to the RAAG.

The Committee discussed the report and raised a number of issues:

- Ease of engagement – it was noted that most were hesitant in the first instance, but once connections had been made most were happy to engage
- Asylum Seekers – – it was advised that a dedicated officer was now in post to support the Council’s broader resettlement work
- Briefings with the Cabinet – It was noted that frequent briefing were held with the Leader/Cabinet and it was suggested that Members could contact the Champions should an issue arise in their ward that could benefit from Champion input

The Chairman thanked Cllr Belbase for his report.

(2) Armed Forces Champion

Cllr Thapa reported on his achievements and activities during 2024, these included addressing cost of living pressures for veterans, continued attendance and development of connections with veterans’ hubs in both Aldershot and Farnborough and work to update the Council’s webpages with links, organisations and information to aid signposting. Work has also been underway to achieve the Gold Employee Recognition Award and since attending a workshop in January the Council had taken a number of steps to close the gap by meeting some of the criteria required. It was advised that there was still some work to be completed to achieve gold around understanding current staff connections to the armed forces, internal promotion and understanding of forces friendly policies, support for cadets and advocacy for the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant to the Council’s networks. It was hoped that an evidence based submission would be made in 2024/25.

The Committee discussed the report and the difficulty in engaging veterans from different nationalities and the need for a single venue in the Borough to bring veterans together. It was suggested that consideration could be given to a space in Union Yard, Aldershot or The Meads, Farnborough.

In response to achieving the Gold Award, it was noted that a policy on Reservists was due to be presented to the Cabinet at its next meeting for approval.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Thapa for his report.

33. WORK PLAN

The Committee noted the Work Plan.

Consideration was given to the draft annual report and a number of suggestions made, these included an update on the work of the Farnborough Airport Task and Finish Group and involvement of the Cabinet Members at meetings.

In addition, a couple of suggestions were made for future meetings, these included:

- Union Yard, Aldershot - lettings
- SERCO

The Committee extended thanks to the Chairman, Cllr Mike Smith, for his leadership during the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

The meeting closed at 9.11 pm.

CLLR M.D. SMITH (CHAIRMAN)

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REVIEW OF REGISTERED PROVIDERS 2023/24**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report is to inform Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the outcome of the 2023/24 Registered Providers (RP) Review. The purpose of the review meetings is to build good working relationships with our RP partners, to monitor the performance and work together to resolve any problems. It also provides an opportunity to explore how RPs can support the council in the delivery of its corporate themes set out in the Business Plan.
- 1.2 The report gives an overview of the scrutiny process for each of the RP's reviewed and identifies; what is working well, causes for concern and any issues to follow up.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny RP Review sub-group for 2023/24

Members	Officers
Councillor Diane Bedford Councillor Mike Smith Councillor Keith Dibble Councillor Sophie Porter Councillor Stephen Masterson	Zoë Paine Sarah Clark

- 2.2 Registered Providers: Meetings held 2023/24

Registered Provider	Meeting date
A2 Dominion	18 th October 2023
Vivid Homes	22 nd November 2023
Riverside Group	20 th March 2024

3. THE SCRUTINY PROCESS:

3.1 Each RP provides financial and performance information, its policies, and strategies in advance of the meeting giving the group the opportunity to consider the information in advance.

4. KEY DISCUSSIONS IN THE REVIEW PROCESS:

- Housing management for all tenures
- Maintenance of property and neighbourhoods
- Customer service and compliance with the Housing Regulators Customer Standards
- Risk management: fire, gas, and electrical safety
- Financial and performance information
- Assisting residents with welfare issues including cost of living pressures and damp and mould awareness
- Development opportunities
- Working together on climate change
- Tackling deprivation and housing/ health inequality
- Ward Members experience of working with RPs

5. SUMMARY OF REVIEW GROUP FINDINGS

A2 Dominion
<p>Total homes in Rushmoor 368</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 183 Affordable Rent• 80 Freehold• 31 Leasehold• 74 Shared ownership
<p>Members questioned the representative on volume of complaints reported to the Housing Ombudsman, the reasons for this and the plans in place to decrease this volume.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that there has been an increase in the number of complaints coming through the Ombudsman, some will historic due to the backlog at the Housing Ombudsman.</p> <p>Increases in the number of complaints are due to increased awareness, especially with issues such as damp and mould and damp. Members asked about A2's policy on the management of damp and mould. All maintenance enquiries from the past three years that mention damp and</p>

mould have been reviewed with residents contacted (phone, text, letter) to see if the problem still exists, what type of damp/mould is visible and if the household has any respiratory issues to allow prioritisation. Case Managers deal with complex causes. Decants will be arranged if necessary while the repairs are being carried out.

Overcrowding can be a cause of damp and mould issues and housing supply can mean this is not an easily resolved cause, however A2 work with residents to find a solution. There is a dedicated damp and mould team that can be contacted via dampandmould@a2dominion.co.uk and there have been videos and leaflets made available to residents.

A complaints task team has been set up to assess performance and a new responsive repairs contract started 01/10/23 with more robust performance indicators than had previously been in place. A2 acknowledge that record keeping and keeping residents updated are areas for improvement.

Members raised issues at Concept House. A site visit was arranged after the meeting.

Vivid Homes

Total homes in Rushmoor 5608

- 4308 General needs rented
- 325 Housing for older people
- 20 Intermediate rent
- 295 Shared ownership
- 563 100% Social Leased
- 66 Non-Social Leased Housing
- 31 Supported Housing

Members asked how support for residents is communicated. Vivid issue an E- Newsletter to residents monthly with links to further information on their website. The work of the Neighbourhood and Income Officers assists in identifying where tenants may need additional support. The presence of Neighbourhood Managers has been increased.

Members reported that contact with Neighbourhood Managers can often be piecemeal with examples given. This was acknowledged, Vivid is aiming to introduce internal cultural change, so staff take ownership of issue resolution and have a greater degree of accountability to residents.

Reassurance was given that the councillor email inbox would be retained.

In 2024/25 Vivid will take on 18 affordable section 106 units at Union Yard and commence work on the final phase of North Town. They are keen to develop land led rather than section 106 schemes in the borough going forward.

Vivid secured funding from the Decarbonisation Fund. Properties in Fernhill Ward will have £10m invested in a retro fit programme to improve energy efficiency. Vivid aim to have all properties at EPC C by 2030, and Carbon Neutral by 2050.

Riverside Group

In Rushmoor Riverside manage Mike Jackson House Supported Accommodation for Armed Forces Veterans which accommodates 25 people.

Members raised issues related to some complaints that Cllr Nadia Martin had been dealing with in respect of the management and support provided to residents. This was acknowledged, steps have already been taken to improve the service which includes more stable staffing levels. Additional funding has been secured from OpFortitude which will allow more personalised support to be provided; from dealing with anti-social behaviour between residents to preparing the residents for moving onto independent accommodation and securing work.

The council does not have an exclusive Nomination Agreement for Mike Jackson House; referrals can come from RBC but also through Veteran pathways and self-referral. There are sometimes referrals made for veterans from other areas of the country, although a local connection is taken into consideration.

Riverside are keen to develop a better working relationship with the council and requested details for the Cabinet Champion for Military.

Vivo/Pinnacle who manage army accommodation in the borough did not respond to invitations to take part in the review. This has been escalated to senior managers at the Aldershot Barracks for response.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The RP Review process continues to play an important role in developing good working relationships with housing providers operating in the borough. The meetings enable members and officers to improve their

understanding of the condition and management of affordable homes in the borough and provides an appropriate platform to address any concerns.

6.2 Conversations have been largely operational in nature, however, can be used as the forum to hold a strategic dialogue with RPs.

6.3 It is proposed that a further programme of review is carried out in 2024/2025.

7. RECOMMENDATION

7.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:

1. Endorse the programme of work carried out in 2023/24.
2. Authorise the Review Group to prepare a programme of reviews for 2024/25
3. Seek the wider views of OSC on the opportunity to develop the RP Review Group to develop a more strategic relationship with RP partners taking into account the views of Cabinet.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

- Minutes of the review meetings
- Supporting documents supplied by RPs.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Report Author – Sarah Clark: Strategic Housing Officer
sarah.clark@rushmoor.gov.uk

Head of Service – Tim Mills: Executive Head of Property and Growth
tim.mills@rushmoor.gov.uk

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**HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION STRATEGY
MEMBER UPDATE 2024**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The aim of this strategy is to set out the council's approach to ensure all residents can access good quality housing, whatever stage of life they are at and can access a range of appropriate support and advice to deal with housing related issues, including preventing homelessness and maintaining housing standards.
- 1.2 The strategy assists partnership working with other agencies, giving clarity on the council's approach.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress related to the implementation of the Housing & Homelessness Prevention Strategy published in October 2023.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Housing & Homelessness Prevention Strategy was published in October 2023. It is a statutory requirement to have a homelessness strategy in place and good practice to have a wider housing strategy to support the delivery of new homes. The strategy underpins the operational framework for officers and partner agencies responsible for delivering housing and housing related services to residents.
- 2.2 The published strategy sets out the council's strategic approach in three themes:

Theme 1- Increasing the supply of good quality homes for residents, and prospective residents, for every stage of life.

Theme 2- Support residents to access affordable, well managed and maintained housing in the private and social sectors.

Theme 3- Work proactively to improve the condition and energy efficiency of housing in the borough.

- 2.3 The document provides an overview of the council's position for each theme and sets out objectives and deliverable action points to form a Delivery Plan.
- 2.4 Future update reports will include data analysis to show the impact these actions are having. Officers would like members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to advise on how they would like the information presented to them which can be discussed in the meeting.

PROGRESS TO DATE

3.

- 3.1 Service and Technical Managers have included action points into their service plans to ensure progress is tracked and reported on appropriately. A project management approach is being applied to delivering actions with appropriate input from teams outside of the housing specialisms (Communications, IT, Policy, and Planning). This approach ensures all likely resourcing implications for delivering specific actions are considered.
- 3.2 The table below shows the objectives and actions set out for the three strategic themes.

Theme 1- Increasing the supply of good quality homes for residents, and prospective residents, for every stage of life.

Objective 1 – Ensure up to date housing needs information to inform housing priorities in the Borough
Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">1) Utilise the council's housing allocation pool data to monitor the need for social rented and temporary accommodation.2) Source quarterly market information via Rushmoor Homes Ltd on need and demand for private rented and home ownership in the borough3) Access information from Registered Providers (RPs), Homes England and Hampshire Enabler's Network on need and demand for shared ownership and outright sale housing in the borough4) Engage with younger people (18–24-year-olds) on housing need and aspirations via colleges and other groups.
Progress To date: <p>The Strategic Housing team have access to housing allocation pool system and work with housing options on qualitative demand information. Rushmoor Homes information is shared</p>

with the council on demand for private rented homes. Information is also shared with Neighbouring RPs and Homes England on wider housing demand and delivery.

Hampshire County Council has commissioned a consultant to work on Extra Care demand in the borough. This council's officers have arranged a workshop with Nepali community leaders to ensure the future housing needs of this group appropriately represented in this work. Evidence from Frimley Integrated Care system demonstrates that this population demographic experiences greater health inequalities than others due to a combination of being an immigrant community, a partially veteran community, and an older community. Appropriate Housing and healthcare combined will help reduce this.

A consultation with younger people is scheduled for the end of this year.

Objective 2 – Implement plans and policies which encourage the delivery of a diverse range of housing types and tenures, and which supports the local housing market.

Actions:

- 1) Through the existing Local Plan policies and Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document
- 2) Through the emerging Local Plan policies

Progress to date:

Local Plan making process is not yet started. The council's affordable housing supplementary planning document does need to be updated. This will require a formal consultation; the planning policy team are considering appropriate timing for the work this municipal year.

Objective 3 – Work collaboratively with developers in the private and social sectors and other partner agencies to maximise a sustainable housing supply and overcome challenges

Actions:

- 1) The Council's housing enabling and planning functions will support developers to submit policy compliant applications through informal discussions and the pre application planning advice

Progress to date:

In 2023/24 the council was not able to deliver its target of 150 affordable homes. Over the last 3-year period 428 new affordable homes have been built. Housing delivery has been hit by the economic conditions over the last couple of years particularly the rapid increase in interest rates. As much of Rushmoor's affordable housing comes as a result of s106 the delays in starts and completions of schemes has substantially impacted delivery of affordable housing. Registered Providers have in the past compensated to some degree when there have been market slowdowns however the increases in interest rates and the pressures from investment required into existing stock, including building safety, and the impact on their income of previous imposed rent reductions has limited their investment capacity. This combination of factors has caused the underperformance.

In the last year nine of the homes delivered were as a result of direct provision by the council and Rushmoor Homes Limited delivering refugee and temporary accommodation using Department of Levelling Up Housing and Community (DLUHC) Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) rounds 1 & 2. Announcement on Round 3 funding application is awaited.

Theme 2- Support residents to access affordable, well managed and maintained housing in the private and social sectors.

Objective 1 – Continue to focus resources on preventing homelessness
Actions: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) to be prioritised to resource specialist, homelessness prevention roles.2) Working with statutory and voluntary partners to support people at risk of homelessness.3) Plan for the changes to the Rough Sleeping Initiative Grant which ends in 2025.
Progress to date: <p>Work on budgeting has been carried out at senior level to ensure HPG is preserved for specialist roles. Intensive prevention work is being carried out with partner organisations, including placing people into temporary accommodation. Housing Options Manager is working through the impact of RSIG and alternative grant funding options. Hampshire County Council's proposals for changes to supported housing funding are on hold until after the general election.</p> <p>Work continues to seek a solution to find an alternative site for Clayton Court Managed by Mears, now available to the council for placements until the end of 2026. Airport Lodge, managed by The Society of St James (SSJ), has replaced North Lane Lodge as stage 1 homeless accommodation. SSJ are taking Oak Tree House through planning and have submitted a bid for capital funding to Homes England to convert into stage 2 move on accommodation from Airport Lodge, next door. Low level support to independent living will be provided by Airport Lodge staff to residents at the proposed accommodation in Oak Tree House at no additional cost to the council.</p>
Objective 2 – Re imagine the housing advice front line to increase accessibility by proactively communicating information and advice to residents to prevent them getting into crisis situations
Actions: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Prepare a social media communications plan for specific groups at risk of homelessness, for example young people.2) Further develop and promote the council's digital systems to increase the council's self-service provision, whilst continuing to support more vulnerable residents to access support services in more traditional ways
Progress to date: <p>The council's communications team have scheduled in a programme of work. Housing options are reviewing reasons why households are contacting them, including reasons people are becoming homeless, and will be prioritising updated information/guidance, based on greatest demand. Additional work is being carried out to improve the digital self-serve offer.</p>
Objective 3 – Work collaboratively with partners in the private and social sector to ensure homes are accessible and well managed.
Actions: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Ensuring households are aware of and able to access adaptations to support them to remain in their own home through the day-to-day work of the Private Sector Housing Team2) Continue to run the Registered Provider Review Process of RP scrutiny

Progress to date:

Work on aids and adaptations continues and the RP Review process is completed for 2023/24 with a report to OSC. It is expected that a further round of reviews will be approved for 2024/25.

Theme 3- Work proactively to improve the condition and energy efficiency of housing in the borough.

Objective 1 – Focus staff resource on enforcing standard and housing conditions in the knowledge that good housing conditions usually means good thermal efficiency

Actions:

- 1) Continue the regulatory and enforcement work of the Private Sector Housing Team
- 2) Scrutinise our RP partners through the work of the Annual Registered Providers Review Group

Progress to date:

Regulatory & enforcement work continues and the RP's attending the Review meetings are appropriately challenged by members where the level of service to residents is unsatisfactory. Members continue to work with officers on overcoming problematic complaints. It is proposed that the RP Reviews take a more strategic approach with RP partners.

Objective 2 – Communicate effectively, including via digital platforms to residents and landlords about the support, advice, and funding available to them to install energy efficiency measures in the existing, older stock

Actions:

- 1) Seek to ensure funding is focussed on the properties and households most in need.
- 2) Implement an annual communications plan so that landlords and residents are aware of their rights and responsibilities, how to get help accessing grants and loans available to assist them to improve housing conditions.
- 3) Ensure website information is up to date and linking to appropriate energy efficiency information and schemes

Progress to date:

Vivid are investing £10million to retrofit 800 homes in Fernhill ward. The council is supporting Vivid to encourage the take up of retrofitting measures to the most vulnerable households.

The council is part of the Warmer Homes Consortium, led by Portsmouth City Council to deliver energy efficiency measures in private domestic properties, this is published on the council's website. The consortium targets off gas properties with an Energy Performance Certificate rating of D or below. Data for Rushmoor shows to date:

- Applications Received: 18
- Properties Partially Completed: 0
- Properties Completed: 1
- Active Measures: 7
- Measures Completed: 1
- Funding spent: £7275.00.

The Communications team have scheduled further communications work into their Service Plan to encourage residents to take up the opportunities available to them.

Objective 3 – Work with partner organisations to improve energy efficiency, reduce fuel poverty and seek innovative to achieve retrofitting (for example working with businesses to carbon offsetting through carbon credits to RPs for retrofitting) to improve residents health and wellbeing and reduce carbon emissions.

Actions:

- 1) Ensuring that the communications plan promotes the services and funding packages available to partner organisations.
- 2) Explore the development of the Carbon Offsetting Scheme currently being piloted by RP partners and HACT

Progress to date:

The Communications team have scheduled work into their Service Plan. HACT have been invited to re-engage with the council and discuss options to link businesses with RPs in the borough.

6. CONCLUSION

The teams involved with implementing the new strategy have made a good start with most of the objectives now being progressed. Cross team collaboration and a project management approach to delivery ensures the actions are appropriately planned for and resourced across the organisation and ensures appropriate oversight by Executive Heads of Services and greater transparency of monitoring and reporting.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the progress made so far.

Members are asked to give direction on the way data is presented in the next update report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Housing & Homelessness Prevention Strategy [Rushmoor Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2023 - 2027](#)

CONTACT DETAILS:

Report Author –Zoë Paine - Housing Strategy & Enabling Manager
zoe.paine@rushmoor.gov.uk

Head of Service – Tim Mills - Executive Head of Property and Growth
tim.mills@rushmoor.gov.uk

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

The purpose of the work plan is to plan, manage and co-ordinate the ongoing activity and progress of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It will be updated regularly and presented to each meeting of the Committee. It will include issues that are currently being actioned as well as those that will be subject to future work.

The Committees Terms of Reference are as follows:

- to perform all overview and scrutiny functions on behalf of the Council;
- to appoint such formal sub-committees and informal task and finish groups as it considers necessary to assist it in discharging its functions;
- to prepare and approve the overview and scrutiny work programme so as to ensure that the Committee's time is effectively and efficiently utilised;
- to undertake investigations into such matters relating to the Council's functions and powers as:
 - (1) may be referred by the Council, Committees, the Cabinet, or the Leader; or
 - (2) the Committee may consider appropriate; or
 - (3) have been referred to the Committee pursuant to the "call-in" procedure set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution. (These can be decisions taken by the Cabinet, a Cabinet Member, key decisions taken by an officer or under joint arrangements).
- to monitor and review the performance of the Council and services against relevant performance indicators and adopted plans;

- to review and/or scrutinise decisions proposed to be made (pre-decision scrutiny) or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
- to review existing policy and strategy with a view to securing continuous improvement in the way in which the Council's functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- to make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council and/or the Cabinet in connection with the discharge of any functions;
- to review and/or scrutinise any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants;
- to discuss initiatives put forward for consideration by individual members of the Committee and any relevant 'call-for-action' in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution; and
- to consider petitions referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with provisions set out in the Petition Scheme set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

(A) ISSUES CURRENTLY BEING PROGRESSED BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

ISSUE (PURPOSE OF REVIEW)	TASK AND FINISH GROUP (MEMBERSHIP 2024/25)	CURRENT WORK
To monitor the performance and activities of Registered Providers working in the Borough.		
To review the Council Tax Support Scheme		
To consider further the economical and environmental impacts		

ISSUE (PURPOSE OF REVIEW)	TASK AND FINISH GROUP (MEMBERSHIP 2024/25)	CURRENT WORK
of Farnborough Airport on the Borough.		

(B) OTHER ISSUES CURRENTLY BEING PROGRESSED BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

ISSUE	CURRENT WORK
Arts and Culture	At its November meeting the Committee were apprised of the work being undertaken in conjunction with the Hampshire Cultural Trust and Arts Council England on arts and cultural activity on the Borough. A further meeting would be held on this item in 6-12 months.
Asset Management	At its meeting in January 2024, the Committee received a presentation detailing progress on the Asset Management Strategy and future delivery, and a review of the portfolio and principles of disposal in light of the budget. A watching briefing would be maintained on progress during the 2024/25 Municipal Year.
Cabinet Champions	The two Cabinet Champions attended the meeting in March to provide a report on their work and activities during 2023/24. The work of both Champions was noted and the recommended priorities for 2024/25 endorsed.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WORKFLOW – June 2024- March 2025

DATE	ITEMS
13th June 2024	Registered Providers T&F Annual Report Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy
25th July 2024	
19th September 2024	
24th October 2024	
12th December 2024	
30th January 2025	
27th March 2025	
Potential Future Items for the Committee in 2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finance• Police and Community Safety (September)• SERCO – (July or October)• Union Yard – Lettings• Ward Grant & Charitable Support• Waste and Recycling

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Progress Meetings 2024/25

Membership: TBC

DATE	ITEM	NOTES