

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

HOMES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 22 JUNE 2023 AT 14:00 HOURS
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 6, COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA SQUARE,
BIRMINGHAM, B1 1BB

A G E N D A

1 NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chair to advise/meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Public-I microsite ([please click this link](#)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members are reminded they must declare all relevant pecuniary and other registerable interests arising from any business to be discussed at this meeting.

If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared a Member must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless they have been granted a dispensation.

If other registerable interests are declared a Member may speak on the matter only if members of the public are allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless they have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', Members do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that they have an interest.

Information on the Local Government Association's Model Councillor Code of Conduct is set out via <http://bit.ly/3WtGQnN>. This includes, at Appendix 1, an interests flowchart which provides a simple guide to declaring interests at meetings.

4 **MEMBERSHIP OF THE HOMES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

To note the resolution of the City Council meeting appointing the Committee, Chair and Members to service on the Committee to the period ending with the Annual Meeting of City Council 2024.

Labour (5):-

Councillors Mohammed Idrees (Chair), Ziaul Islam, Saqib Khan, Lauren Rainbow and Rinkal Shergill.

Conservative (2):-

Councillors Ron Storer and Ken Wood.

Liberal Democrat (1):

Councillor Penny Wagg.

5 **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR (14.05 – 14.15)**

To elect a Deputy Chair, for the purposes of substitution for the Chair, if absent, for the period ending with the Annual Meeting of the City Council in 2024.

5 - 6

6 **HOMES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE (14.15 - 14.20)**

To note the Terms of Reference for the Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7 - 16

7 **MINUTES (14.20 - 14.25)**

To confirm the minutes of the Housing and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 17 May 2023.

17 - 18

8 **ACTION TRACKER (14.25 - 14.30)**

To review and note the actions from the previous Housing and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

19 - 24

9 **DELIVERING EFFECTIVE AND FLEXIBLE SCRUTINY (14.30 - 15.00)**

To consider how the Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee will develop a flexible and effective work programme for 2023/24.

25 - 46

10 **HOMES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24 (15.00 - 15.45)**

To consider the issues for the 2023/24 work programme, including Cabinet Member Priorities and Forthcoming Decisions, issues recommended to be

carried forward from 2022/23, information from the City Observatory, Programmes, Performance and Improvement Division, to agree potential issues for the Scrutiny Work Programme and Scrutiny methods.

11 **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any items of business by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) that in the opinion of the Chair are matters of urgency.

12 **SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES FOR COMMITTEE MEETING AND SCRUTINY WORK**

To note the scheduled dates for 2023/24:

<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
20 July 2023	25 January 2024
21 September 2023	22 February 2024
19 October 2023	14 March 2024
23 November 2023	18 April 2024
21 December 2023	

13 **REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

To consider any request for call in/councillor call for action/petitions (if received).

14 **AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS**

Chair to move:-

'In an urgent situation between meetings, the Chair jointly with the relevant Chief Officer has authority to act on behalf of the Committee'.

Birmingham City Council

Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee

22 June 2023



Subject: Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Terms of Reference

Report of: Christian Scade, Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services

Report author: Amelia Wiltshire, Overview and Scrutiny Manager

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To consider the Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Terms of Reference.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the Terms of Reference for the Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out in 3.2 below.

3 The Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Terms of Reference

- 3.1 The Terms of Reference below were approved at the Annual City Council meeting on 23rd May 2023. This sets out the remit of the work for this committee.
- 3.2 To fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning:
- Council Housing management services, repairs and maintenance programmes.
 - Best use of housing stock across all housing providers.
 - Neighbourhood management initiatives and the housing growth agenda (Birmingham Social Housing Partnership).
 - Private rented sector, licensing and regulation.
 - Tenancy engagement in the management and development of social housing and Housing Liaison Boards.
 - Exempt accommodation.
 - Housing Options for vulnerable adults, children, young people and offenders.
 - Temporary accommodation provision.
 - Homelessness and rough sleeping.
 - Supply of homes to meet housing need.

4 Any Finance Implications

4.1 No direct financial implications resulting from this report.

5 Any Legal Implications

5.1 No direct legal implications resulting from this report.

6 Any Equalities Implications

6.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

6.2 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them during work programme development, the scoping of work, evidence gathering and making recommendations. This should include considering: how policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Birmingham; whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.

7 Appendices

7.1 None.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

**HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS O&S COMMITTEE –
PUBLIC MEETING**

1230 hours on Wednesday 17 May 2023

Committee Room 6, Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BB

Present:

Councillor Mohammed Idrees (Chair)

Councillors: Marje Bridle, Ray Goodwin, Roger Harmer, Saqib Khan, Lauren Rainbow and Ken Wood

Also Present:

Councillor Sharon Thompson, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness

Councillor David Barker

Councillor Lisa Trickett

Colette McCann, Head of Housing Development

Sushil Thobhani, Head of Law – Property, Planning and Regeneration

Jayne Bowles, Scrutiny Officer

Amelia Wiltshire, Overview and Scrutiny Manager

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chair advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Public-I microsite and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Kerry Brewer.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

4. REQUEST FOR CALL-IN: DEVELOPMENT OF HOUSING AT DAWBERRY FIELDS ROAD

(See documents 1 to 5)

Cllr Sharon Thompson, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness, Cllr David Barker, Cllr Lisa Trickett, Colette McCann, Head of Housing Development, and Sushil Thobhani, Head of Law – Property, Planning and Regeneration, were in attendance for this item.

The Chair invited Cllrs Barker and Trickett to explain the reasons for their request for this decision to be called in and Cllr Trickett made the following points:

- In the current context of crisis, complexity and uncertainty there has to be a change in the way we invest and sustain our city and communities. There cannot be a one-dimensional approach, eg housing in isolation from understanding a child's life cycle, the needs of older people and the needs of air quality.
- Any policy needs to take account of people, place and planet.
- This development takes no account of the needs and requirements of local people, what is distinct about the place and puts at risk our ability to transition to Route to Zero, and has not got public consent.
- With reference to the criteria for the Request for Call-In, there are three main themes – contradicting existing policies, failing to take matters into account and failure to engage with residents.
- The Green Living Spaces Plan, which was the forerunner to the City of Nature, was about delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits to secure the betterment of communities.
- The report does not reference those frameworks or understand that previous plans have failed because of badger setts and there has been no engagement with Natural England regarding the protected species (slow worms), having previously told residents things cannot be done due to the nature of the area.
- Dawberry Fields neighbourhood park was the first pilot about connecting children to the nature around them and this proposal will take away public open space so the potential to enhance the environment has been lost.
- In terms of health inequalities, Marmot referred to the importance of integrating planning, transport and housing in the environmental system and this report the Equality Impact Assessment makes no reference to inequalities by this proposal going forward.
- The report also failed to take account of developing mixed communities and connecting people to their neighbourhoods. Allens Croft neighbourhood initiative was probably one of the most successful initiatives the City undertook as it worked with communities and brought through a whole range of provision, including a nursery and a children's centre and was part of a broader regeneration programme.
- The report also does not take account of the 2013 proposals. which suggested 30 new allotments to meet local need; there is no proposal for

allotments in this report. However, planning guidance states that if there is a deficit in allotments, which there is in this area, other open space that could be brought back into use for this purpose should be looked at.

- In putting forward a proposal for a 100% social housing development that does not connect to the existing community, the Council fails on the objectives of the Birmingham Development Plan to develop Birmingham as a city of sustainable neighbourhoods that are safe, diverse and inclusive, with locally distinctive character.
- The Corporate Plan includes three key missions – support, enable and encourage our citizens to fulfil their true potential, to have a voice and be heard, to support our communities to improve the areas in which they live and shape the world around them. The Council has failed on this by not talking to the local community.
- At Cabinet, the suggestion was that the community would be spoken to through the planning process. This is not consultation and engagement, and wider matters are not being taken into account in the planning consideration.
- At a recent Neighbourhood Forum meeting attended by 40 residents, two parent groups with children with SEND were deeply concerned there was not enough support for the existing children in local schools if more need comes into the area. The area has a high concentration of children with SEND because of the past work of the Allens Croft project.
- It was stressed that both Cllrs Trickett and Barker are not anti-development or anti-social housing and have offered to work with the Council to secure the same number of social housing units but in a way that takes account of the voices of the community to ensure the project can be managed and sustained going forward.
- The Council also fails on its mission to level up, as this is the part of the ward below minimum standards regarding access to green space, with two parks having already been lost through development.
- The report refers to community and neighbourhood, but this proposal is about putting 55 Passivhaus units on a piece of land as someone has decided that is what should happen. If we want to build communities and neighbourhoods, we need to engage with people and the failure to engage with ward residents means the development fails before it is started.
- Both Cllr Trickett and Cllr Barker were clear it was a bad idea going straight into a development like this and not looking at a local lettings plan and the needs of Druids Heath, which is an adjacent neighbourhood. This needs to be done in a coherent way.
- There is anger and despair from residents who have already lost choice through the cost of living crisis and the green space they have left, with three goal posts when they used to have three playing fields, is the only provision for young people.
- The local councillors have worked with Neighbourhood Action officers and the grant programme to invest in the skate park left abandoned in Dawberry Fields and have put forward local investment to support the development of better resources and wildlife within Dawberry Fields for local residents and to work with young people as part of this project, drawing on the Dawberry Fields initiative, and indeed have been the first to celebrate the fact that the

Council has said this will be one of the Covid Memorial Parks. This Cabinet report is silent on all of that.

- There is no options appraisal being taken forward and no consideration as to whether Passivhaus is the best option for this site. The nature of Passivhaus requires it to be positioned in a certain way which takes up more of the park than is needed.
- It is also built on mechanical ventilation, which means windows cannot be opened. This shows a lack of understanding within the Council of what Route to Zero means. Additional cost will be incurred to build to Passivhaus standard but then asking tenants to operate it in a way that doesn't give them the benefits.
- In summary, if this development goes ahead, the confidence of the neighbourhood that this is a Council willing to serve, level up and take the public with us, will be lost.
- It was acknowledged housing is needed across the city but it needs to be done in a way that is empathetic and connected to people and the place it is being located in.

Cllr Barker added the following points:

- From the outset, they have been clear they support developing the land but that needs to best serve the community and there are plenty of ways it could be designed to incorporate more green space. The proper process wasn't followed which led to bad design. This has been admitted by officers in separate meetings and the report probably should not have gone to Cabinet in first place.
- They had been told that there had been a bio-diversity study but there was no reference to that in the report.
- Passivhaus is brilliant in certain circumstances but not where there is a park and people will want to open windows.
- This was former allotment land so not considered as green space or parkland but it is not thought anyone local will see that difference.

Following a request from members of the Committee for clarity on a couple of points, the following additional comments were made:

- The key objection is the failure to consult and engage with residents and to understand how the development connects to the existing neighbourhood.
- The fact that there had been no consideration of the transport plan was also an objection.
- Before the local elections, the two councillors had met with an officer, the Future Parks Programme people and a couple of local residents. The parkland is surrounded by social housing, which is being badly managed by the Council at this point in time and residents have very little faith in the management process. They had talked about some kind of co-operative type model and had also discussed keeping residents in the neighbourhood who had been displaced due to tower blocks in Druids Heath coming down. The response from the officer had been that they don't do local lettings plans and that BMHT does not have a model for co-ops.
- There needs to be a new policy for new sustainable communities.

The Cabinet Member was invited to respond and in doing so the following were among the main points raised:

- Referring to the strategic context, one of the key priorities is to increase affordable, safe, green housing across the city.
- Delivery of affordable housing has been low and in the new housing strategy it has been made clear there is a need to increase social housing, with families in temporary accommodation.
- Approximately 600-700 social rent homes are also being lost every year through Right to Buy.
- There is a need for delivery of affordable homes to meet targets. This also stretches across not just housing but other policies as well across the city, and some of that is around the green agenda.
- Passivhaus was included and signed off in the Route to Zero plan.
- With regard to design changes and ward consultation, before the report was due to go to Cabinet, having read the comments from ward councillors, there had been a meeting with officers and a private conversation and all concerns had been noted, including the concerns around housing management. However, those concerns should not be a reason not to build the council properties for people that need them.
- In terms of the development, there have been ongoing conversations over the last 18 months. One concern raised was regarding density and that more people should be living on this particular site. This was looked at and the provision of two apartment blocks was included in the scheme.
- 55 units in comparison with some of the larger sites across the city is considered to be a small site and so 100% council properties didn't seem like the wrong thing to do in that context and there is a need to increase the number of council properties due to losing so many and the number of people on the waiting list with housing need.
- There had been a request to review the mixed tenure and to look at a local lettings plan to include allocation of tenants from Druids Heath and advice had been sought from the City Housing Team.
- With regard to public consultation, governance arrangements in place mean that consultation with residents cannot take place without first seeking approval that funding is available and a plan can be put together. In this case, governance procedures were followed correctly.
- In terms of the key principles of Passivhaus, it is a quality assured standard for low energy construction and with the cost of living crisis that is key in looking at future building.
- This would be the first Passivhaus scheme for BMHT and every attempt is being made within the funding envelope to make developments as green as possible.
- It was taken on board that this is seen as a community space, but it had been signed off as surplus, having previously been allotments, which was why it had been looked at for development.

Colette McCann, Head of Housing Development, made the following additional comments:

- It was important to note that City of Nature colleagues had been involved in the scheme from the outset and have been instrumental in the proposed layout and design and dealing with drainage, ecology and biodiversity proposals. No concerns had been raised by City of Nature in bringing the area forward for development.
- With reference to Birmingham's Transport Strategy, the scheme is compliant with the parking supplementary planning document and in response to the ward members' ask around car parking provision that has been lowered slightly and is still compliant with planning policy.
- The access road is required and there had been discussions with colleagues around parking provision, emergency services, refuse collection, etc about what flexibility there was in terms of design but the advice was that to achieve planning consent that access road was required.
- The site has been earmarked for many years for development and it is important to reference the appropriations report in 2020 where the site was identified and appropriated into the HRA for development purpose.
- Reference was made to the Allens Croft contribution which was made as part of that appropriation. When the site was appropriated, having formerly been an allotment site, a contribution of £412,000 was made to the Flo Pickering Memorial Fund, which re-distributes the money back into allotments across the city. Similarly, just under £0.25m was made available to the former Allens Croft initiative for improvements to the local area and currently the Landscape Practice Group within Park Services are undertaking some work with City of Nature to provide improvements and further enhancements to the neighbourhood park.
- The intention to bring forward a site for Passivhaus development was identified within the Route to Zero Cabinet report and there is no reason why a Passivhaus development would not be suited to a green space or why, because it is Passivhaus, it would be suited to any better location.
- It is important to note that it is not a method of construction but a sustainability standard that guarantees low energy usage. They are not putting green technology in but are developing properties to a standard where energy usage is minimised and there is a significant cost saving to residents, essentially looking at between £700-800 saving per year.
- The site is very well suited to Passivhaus design due to potential heat gains from a southerly orientation.
- Specific architects were engaged who are well known in designing and providing Passivhaus schemes to assist and support in the design of the scheme.
- In terms of the biodiversity, all the necessary ecological assessments and engagement and consultation have been undertaken and specialist consultants, Middlemarch, have been engaged to assess the biodiversity.
- This was done at an early stage and helped inform the design response to dealing with protected species identified on the site.
- Any mitigations needing to be undertaken, including translocation of any protected species, will be undertaken as part of the overall strategy and design of the scheme.

- In terms of climate impact, the development will provide the highest performance homes in the city, with secondary benefits around acoustic performance and mechanical ventilation. The primary function of the design is to reduce energy usage and another secondary benefit that would work well on this site is the pollen filters.

During the discussion, and in response to Members' questions, the following were among the main points raised:

- Members noted that based on what they had heard, the request for call-in is not about not wanting social housing, but about wanting it in a different format and with community consultation at an earlier stage in the process.
- The view was the response had not adequately addressed the issue of lack of consultation with the community and had focussed more on consultation with technical people.
- It was suggested that there should have been earlier localised engagement with the community to discuss the development, which by its nature was bound to raise local controversy and the importance of giving residents the opportunity to have their say was stressed.
- Members were told that the intention was to go out to more formalised consultation with local residents following Cabinet approval, once there is a scheme to consult on.
- The appropriations report stated that consultation would be done through the planning process.
- Members queried what would happen if the consultation feedback was that people wanted a more mixed development, eg 50% BMHT and 50% affordable.
- The response given was that as a result of early engagement with ward councillors and a request to look at the tenure mix, the team did go away and look at that but it was not financially viable to look at a sales model.
- There were concerns about there not being a mixed tenure approach. It was suggested that other sites across the city being developed as affordable housing which are quite similar in size to Dawberry Fields could be married up to provide half and half in terms of tenure.
- It was agreed that in principle that could be explored, but that was not the direction taken with this particular scheme. One of the key drivers to have the site in its entirety retained within the HRA is to understand how those properties perform.
- Value for money is important to get the best outcome and the density could perhaps be increased to allow for better provision of more affordable homes.
- The scope to have mixed schemes with some social housing and some shared ownership was raised and Members were told that currently a shared ownership product is not offered through BMHT, but work is underway to develop and deliver other tenure types. It was also confirmed that financial modelling does show this breaks even over 30 years, which was important to note for affordable housing.
- It was confirmed that the concerns were not about the location but about the lack of an options appraisal. The report recognises this is a site of significant interest with regard to nature and conservation and planning had been

refused in 2013 due to the natural environment. There is a need to look at total place and how it relates to the community.

- In terms of good energy efficiency, there are options to secure that through insulation and the example of Swansea was given as an alternative of equal standard to Passivhaus.
- The request is for the Council to consider different ways of developing and integrating people, place and planet.
- The current development programme looks at a range of different technologies, for example there is some funding through the ERDF to trial some new technology on a site in Glebe Farm and Tile Cross and another scheme using some infra-red technology. A broader approach is being taken by the development team, not just solely focussed on delivering Passivhaus.
- Cllr Trickett stated that the Request for Call-In had highlighted that BCC policy is not to consult in advance of taking a decision and this puts the Council at risk of a judicial review. It is also important to note that local people, including tenants who pay into the HRA, have not been consulted. She also clarified that there were concerns about whether local services can pick up additional demand.

The Cabinet Member and other non-Committee members left the meeting.

During the Committee discussion, the following points were made:

- The Council should have been open and transparent in its consultation with local residents before taking the decision.
- There were concerns that the consultation that had taken place was with technical departments and that consultation with residents would be delivered through Planning. It was highlighted that the Council should be working in co-production, especially as this was controversial.
- There were further concerns that the scheme was for 100% social housing properties and the understanding was that we had moved away from this to missed housing developments, which are the best models.
- The view was that this was an experiment on this community and when asked why it had not been done in a different way, they had just chosen to do it this way and there had been no discussion with tenants.

Following the discussion, the Chair moved to a vote and the Committee agreed unanimously to call in the decision.

RESOLVED: -

- That the decision was called in.

5. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)

None.

6. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

7. AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS

RESOLVED:

That in an urgent situation between meetings the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer, has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 1405 hours.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS O&S COMMITTEE
ACTION TRACKER 2022/23 (ACTIONS RELEVANT TO THE HOMES O&S COMMITTEE)

Date	Agenda Item	Action	Notes
16-Feb-23	Work Programme	Tenant Engagement to be deferred until the next municipal year.	Included on Work Programme Mapping Table for Homes OSC.
12-Jan-23	Work Programme	Voids – Draft Work Outline to be brought to the February meeting.	Complete.
15-Dec-22	Work Programme	The February City Housing Performance Report to include the number of Ombudsman decisions against the Council, the amounts paid and comment from Housing Officers on what the cause is.	Complete.
29-Nov-22	Request for Call-In: Housing Repairs, Maintenance and Investment 2024	A letter setting out the Committee's concerns to be sent to the relevant Cabinet Members.	Complete. Letter sent on 7 th December.
		A report on tenant and leaseholder involvement to be brought to a future committee meeting.	Complete. Update on tenant and leaseholder involvement emailed to members on 8 th February.
10-Nov-22	Performance Monitoring	Right to Buy rules, including the qualifying period for accessing Right to Buy, to be shared with Members.	Complete. Emailed to members on 8 th December.
13-Oct-22	Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness: Priorities 2022/23	Tenant Engagement Delivery Plan and Action Plan to be brought to committee before being finally ratified.	Deferred to next municipal year.
	City Wide Housing Strategy 2022-2027 Consultation	Timeline to be provided for the repairs contracts extension arrangements and re-tendering for the South.	Complete. Emailed to members on 14 th November.
		Affordable Housing Plan to be brought to future committee meeting.	Deferred to next municipal year.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS O&S COMMITTEE
ACTION TRACKER 2022/23 (ACTIONS RELEVANT TO THE HOMES O&S COMMITTEE)

Date	Agenda Item	Action	Notes
26-Sep-22	Action Notes and Action Tracker	<p>Updated list of HMOs by Ward to be requested (raised by Cllr Harmer).</p> <p>Voids – deep dive piece of work still to be programmed (raised by Cllr Wood).</p>	<p>Complete. Emailed to members on 23rd November.</p> <p>Programmed for March & April 2023. March session took place. April session deferred to new municipal year.</p>

Birmingham City Council
Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 22 June 2023



Subject: Delivering Effective and Flexible Scrutiny
Report of: Christian Scade, Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services
Report author: Amelia Wiltshire, Overview and Scrutiny Manager

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To consider how the Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee will develop a flexible and effective work programme for 2023/24.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the development of a flexible and effective work programme for 2023/24 as developed by members of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the last Municipal year 2022/23 (ref: Appendix 1).

3 Any Finance Implications

- 3.1 No direct financial implications resulting from this report.

4 Any Legal Implications

- 4.1 No direct legal implications resulting from this report.

5 Any Equalities Implications

- 5.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 5.2 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them during work programme development, the scoping of work, evidence gathering and making recommendations. This should include considering: how policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Birmingham; whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.

6 Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1 – A More Flexible, Effective Scrutiny Function for 2023/24.

APPENDIX 1: A MORE FLEXIBLE, EFFECTIVE SCRUTINY FUNCTION FOR 2023-24

In April 2021, the City Council adopted an Overview & Scrutiny Framework document that set out a vision for Overview & Scrutiny in Birmingham.

“To ensure effective democratic accountability and oversight of the Council’s executive. This will be achieved by a Member-led Scrutiny function which is held in high regard by its many stakeholders and which adds value for the people of Birmingham.”

“To achieve this, Scrutiny will follow the nationally agreed ‘Four Principles of Good Scrutiny’:

- **Amplify public voice and concerns;**
- **Drive improvement in public services;**
- **Provide constructive ‘critical friend’ challenge; and**
- **Be led by ‘independent minded people’ who take responsibility for their role.”**

“Scrutiny must add value and not duplicate the other forms of performance management, review or inspection. that Scrutiny is involved in a timely manner, at a point where the outcome can be influenced, to ensure involvement is meaningful.”

The framework document recognised that:

“Creating a strong organisational culture that recognises the critical role of an independent Scrutiny in the governance process is essential to adding value and creating efficient and effective services.”

“Scrutiny should be well planned and timely.”

Unfortunately, Scrutiny has not always delivered on these goals and in its relationship with the Council’s executive (i.e., Cabinet) and the Chief Executive’s Senior Leadership Team – Scrutiny has not always been held in equal respect. For some years, Overview & Scrutiny has pursued very few issues that have contributed significantly to the thinking and actions of the Council’s Cabinet and the Chief Executives senior management team. We have not always been enabled to deliver on the aspirations set out in the O & S Framework document.

As we move into the 2023–24 municipal year, the roles and responsibilities must be clear:

“Overview & Scrutiny Chairs are responsible for leading and co-ordinating the work the Scrutiny Committee so that Scrutiny functions in a positive, constructive and non-partisan manner. Overview and Scrutiny members must contribute time and effort to both the development and the carrying out the Scrutiny work programme

So, in adopting their responsibility, the present Co-ordinating O & S members are putting forward a number of suggestions that will improve the way in which Scrutiny Committees function, learning from their own experiences in 2022-23.

1. Remit of Overview & Scrutiny Committees

The remit and workload of committees is uneven. Particularly, the remit of the Housing & Neighbourhoods and Health & Social Care Committees is much larger than that of other committees.

In a separate document, Scrutiny Planning 2023/24, the present Co-ordinating O & S members have reviewed the terms of reference of Scrutiny Committees and are recommending arrangements for 2023-24 that will ensure that the workloads of the committees are more evenly balanced and, in part, better aligned with the remits of Cabinet Members. Co-ordinating O & S will consult further over the next 6 months on further changes to the structure and operation of Scrutiny.

2. Engagement with Cabinet Members

In the current Scrutiny structure, most Cabinet Members attend multiple committees to report on their activities and policies – with some Cabinet Members being asked to attend three or four separate Scrutiny committees. This takes up a considerable portion of the time allocated to committee meetings and requires an equally considerable time commitment by Cabinet Members and the officers that support them. Moreover, many of these reports do not lead to Scrutiny added value or impact as the reports are presented for information and noting.

A Cabinet Members should only be in formal attendance when deemed necessary by the relevant Scrutiny Chair.

There will be occasions when an Overview & Scrutiny Committee will wish to receive an update report on a specific policy or initiative at a scheduled meeting of the committee, to allow members to publicly consider the appropriateness of that policy or initiative to the Council's Corporate Plan and the challenges faced by the Council – a recognised part of the role of Scrutiny. Also, these update reports could be scheduled at the request of the Cabinet Member so that Scrutiny is involved in a timely manner.

These opportunities should arise from regular dialogue between a Cabinet Member and the relevant Scrutiny Chair; and always with the intention that the Scrutiny committee should be adding value through its engagement with the Cabinet Member.

A Cabinet Member may wish to issue directly to members of an Overview & Scrutiny Committee a briefing note to provide members with background information, especially important at the start of the municipal year as some committee members may not have knowledge of plans and strategies being pursued by the Cabinet/Council.

Furthermore, it should be incumbent on a Cabinet Member to advise a Scrutiny Chair, in a timely manner, of a report being taken to Cabinet when the Scrutiny Chair is listed as the relevant Scrutiny Chair, or of a report being placed on the Forward Plan.

3. Meeting arrangements

For years, Scrutiny committees have met in formal, structured public meetings, mostly monthly. Some flexibility in meeting arrangements could bring advantages, particularly if Scrutiny members are being engaged in the other work of the committee – such as a Task & Finish Group.

Initially at the start of the municipal year, through informal meetings or workshops, members could identify a ‘menu’ of issues (including policy development, policy review, issues of accountability, statutory functions, voice of the public,) as the potential work programme of that committee – meeting with the Cabinet Member(s) to ensure the list of issues would be welcomed by them. The list would be a ‘menu’ from which topics could be selected for consideration by the committee or a Task & Finish Group. The committee would regularly review the ‘menu’ and decide which issues need to be examined further and how that work would be undertaken. Scrutiny activities should be thorough and undertaken in a timely manner.

At the June meetings, each Committee will consider information including key data from the City Observatory, information from Corporate Performance reports, Cabinet Member and directorate priorities and issues recommended or carried forwards from the previous scrutiny work programmes to inform the initial menu of topics for the work programme for the year.

Aspects of the work programme would be assigned¹ to scheduled (public) meetings of the committee or a more limited number of members that might take evidence from a number of witnesses, whilst other issues could be assigned to Task & Finish Groups set up by the committee - with these groups meeting in public or private sessions as required, enabling the committee to focus on specific matters throughout the year as appropriate and without unnecessary delay.

Whilst scheduled meetings of the committee would rely primarily on resources available through the Scrutiny Office, other Scrutiny activities could be supported by resources from elsewhere in the Council – as successfully achieved this year by the Customer Services Programme and Homes for Ukraine Task & Finish Groups set up by the Co-ordinating O & S Committee.

A Task & Finish Group or other sub-committee arrangements would include members from different political groups – but not necessarily politically balanced, and would have Terms of Reference, setting out aims, methodology and timescale, agreed by the sponsoring committee and would have to report back to that committee with a final report. The sponsoring committee could also determine whether a Task & Finish Group could include non-executive members from beyond the committee to draw on other members’ interest and experience, but there would be a limit on the number of co-options to prevent a Task & Finish Group from becoming ineffective.

It may be appropriate for a Scrutiny report of significant importance to be reported directly to Council rather than via the Scrutiny Business Report to Council three times a year. Such requests would need to be directed to the Council Business Management Committee.

¹ <https://cfigs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Work-Programming-FINAL.pdf>

Birmingham City Council
Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee
22 June 2023



Subject: **Developing the Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme**

Report of: Christian Scade, Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services

Report author: Amelia Wiltshire, Overview and Scrutiny Manager
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07825 979253

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides information for the Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider in developing their work programme for 2023-24. It identifies potential issues for the Committee to explore and sets out the range of scrutiny methods which could be adopted.
- 1.2 The report refers to the relevant Cabinet Member Priorities and forthcoming decisions; issues recommended to be carried forward from the 2022-23 Overview and Scrutiny work programme, which are specific to this Committee's remit; and tailored high level summary from the City Observatory and Programmes, Performance and Improvement Division.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee:
 - Notes the information set out in Appendices 1-3 and identifies a menu of topics for the Committee to explore over the coming year.
 - Confirms, subject to further input from the Chair and Deputy Chair outside of the meeting, items for the Committee meeting in July.
 - Agrees the issues that the Committee will consider during September – October 2023, the proposed aims and objectives and the preferred method of scrutiny.
 - Notes that a draft work programme will be presented to the Committee meeting in July for consideration and approval.

- Notes, subject to further input from the Chair and Deputy Chair outside of the meeting, its proposed work programme will be submitted to Co-ordinating O&S to enable work to be planned and co-ordinated throughout the year.

3 Background

- 3.1 The [statutory guidance for local government overview and scrutiny](#) sets out the role it can play in holding an authority's decision makers to account. This makes it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy.
- 3.2 Effective Overview and Scrutiny should:
- Provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge.
 - Amplify the voices and concerns of the public.
 - Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role.
 - Drive improvements in public services.
- 3.3 The role and functions of Overview and Scrutiny Committees are outlined in [The City Council's Constitution | Birmingham City Council](#) They will:
- Make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council, the Executive and/or other organisations in connection with the discharge of the functions specified in their terms of reference.
 - Consider any matter covered in their terms of reference that may affect or be likely to have an effect on the citizens of Birmingham; relevant to the Council's strategic objectives; relevant to major issues faced by officers in managing a function of the Council; and likely to make contribution to moving the Council forward and achieving key performance targets.
- 3.4 Effective scrutiny needs to add value. A well planned and timely work programme enables Overview and Scrutiny Committees to be involved at the right time and in the right way, and ensure their involvement is meaningful and can influence the outcome.

4 Developing the Work Programme 2023-24

- 4.1 The document on developing flexible and effective scrutiny, that is considered as a separate agenda item at this meeting, describes a revised approach to work programme development. It proposes that the Committees identifies a 'menu' of issues (including policy development, policy review, issues of accountability and statutory functions) at the start of the year. The Committee should then regularly review the 'menu' and decide which issues need to be examined further, and how that work would be undertaken. Scrutiny activities should be thorough and undertaken in a timely manner.
- 4.2 There are a range of ways to undertake scrutiny. This new approach will enable flexible scrutiny and outlines a shift from monthly formal meetings to a combination

of approaches. The Committee will choose the most effective scrutiny method to achieve the desired aims and objectives.

4.3 Based on Statutory Guidance published in 2019, different scrutiny methods include (but are not limited to):

- A single item, or items, on a committee agenda – this fits more closely the “overview” aspect of the Scrutiny function and has limited opportunity for effective scrutiny. It is most appropriate for specific issues where the committee wants to maintain a watching brief.
- A single item meeting, either as the committee or a more limited number of Members. It has the capacity to enhance the previous option by taking evidence from a number of witnesses.
- A task and finish day - provided that these are properly focused, they ensure Councillors can swiftly reach conclusions and make recommendations and are effective even for complex topics.
- A task and finish review – this is an enhancement of the previous option being held over four or six meetings spread over a limited number of months.

4.4 Appendix 1 outlines the outstanding items from the Overview and Scrutiny work programmes 2022-23, which relate to the remit of this Committee.

4.5 Appendix 2 sets out the current Cabinet Member priorities and forthcoming decisions, which relate to the remit of this Committee.

4.6 Appendix 3 provides a high-level summary of:

- The strategic and organisational context, including the Corporate Plan 2022-26, city and citizen outcome indicators and a summary of external factors impacting on the remit of the committee.
- A summary of key performance indicators and delivery milestones against Corporate Plan priorities, and directorate priorities for 2023/24 relevant to the remit of this Committee
- Transformation and improvement activity relevant to the remit of this committee.

4.7 Altogether this information suggests potential topics for the Committee to consider when determining a work programme for 2023-24. The Committee is advised to consider where it can best add value through scrutiny.

4.8 Members often have a number of topics suggested to them and are therefore required to **prioritise** matters for consideration. The Scrutiny Framework sets out the following factors could be considered:

- Public interest: concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen.
- Ability to change: priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence.

- Performance: priority should be given to areas in which the Council and Partners are not performing well.
- Extent: priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or a large part of the city.
- Replication: work programme must take account of what else is happening to avoid duplication.

4.9 Overview and Scrutiny Chairs are advised to maintain regular engagement with Cabinet Members to enable flexibility to be built into the Overview and Scrutiny work programme, so as to respond to the Council's policy priorities in a timely way.

5 Any Finance Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

6 Any Legal Implications

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

7 Any Equalities Implications

7.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 The protected characteristics and groups outlined in the Equality Act are: Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion and Belief; Sex, and Sexual Orientation.

7.3 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them during work programme development, the scoping of work, evidence gathering and making recommendations. This should include considering: how policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Birmingham; whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.

7.4 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments, and any recommendations, are based on evidence. This should include demographic and

service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1: Work Programme Mapping

Appendix 2: Cabinet Member Priorities and Forthcoming Decisions

Appendix 3: Corporate Priorities, Performance and City Outcomes

9 Background Papers

9.1 [Birmingham City Council Constitution](#)

9.2 Birmingham City Council Overview and Scrutiny Framework April 2021

Appendix 1: Work Programme Mapping

O&S Committee 2022-23	O&S Committee 2023-24	Item/Topic	Aims and Objectives (if outlined)	Why carried forward?	Any other information (e.g. scrutiny method/ Council motion/ asked to come back in 6 months etc)
Housing and Neighbourhoods	Homes	Voids – Improving Standards	To undertake a deep-dive into Voids with a focus on improving the standard of properties.	First session held in March 2023. Agreed next session would be arranged for new municipal year.	Initially identified in 2021-22 as a potential area of work for 22-23. A Terms of Reference for this work was agreed by the Committee in February 2023. The first session took place in March and focused on Birmingham City Council. The next session for this work will focus on learning from other housing providers/LAs, to include visits. This will also help to inform Council Resolution: 10 January 2023 also refers: Work with tenants, partners and scrutiny to develop and apply a clear standard of what an excellent repairs and maintenance service looks like.
Housing and Neighbourhoods	Homes	Decent Homes Standard	To monitor progress towards achieving Decent Homes Standard, to include damp and mould issues and impact.	Item suggested by Cllrs Harmer and Wood.	City Council Resolution 10 January 2023: Executive to work with tenants, partners and scrutiny to develop and apply a clear standard of what an excellent repairs and maintenance service looks like.

Housing and Neighbourhoods	Homes	Tenant Engagement	<p>To provide an outline of the new engagement strategy to inform its future development and delivery.</p> <p>To provide an overview of how tenant engagement will inform and shape Housing Repairs, Maintenance and Investment 2024.</p>	Scheduled for April 22 Committee but had to be deferred	Part of this item follows on from the Housing and Neighbourhoods OSC on November 29. This Committee considered a Request to Call-In of the Cabinet Decision (8 November) Housing Repairs, Maintenance and Investment 2024. The decision was not Called-In but a letter to the Cabinet Member has been sent. One of the key points raised by the OSC relates to tenant engagement.
Housing and Neighbourhoods	Homes	Affordable Housing Plan	To scrutinise plan for achieving Affordable Housing target.	On the list of items "To be Scheduled" in 2022-23.	
Housing and Neighbourhoods	Homes	Performance Monitoring	Quarterly report outlining performance for Housing and more detailed commentary on areas of improvement or for concern.	This was a regular item on the 2022-23 work programme.	Previously reports have been scheduled for July/October/January/April.
Co-ordinating	Homes	Exempt Accommodation	Monitoring Impact of Inquiry Recommendations: Assessment of impact at the neighbourhood level of the Exempt Accommodation Pilot and implementation of recommendations from the Scrutiny Inquiry. 5 outstanding recommendations R01d, R02b, R03a, R04c, R06	Monitoring implementation of scrutiny recommendations	<p>Relevant Council Motions: 07.12.21 and 01.11.22</p> <p>This was last discussed in Co-ordinating O&S Committee in March.</p>
CWG, Culture & Physical Activity	Homes	CWG Legacy	Consider relevant CWG legacy	New for 2023-24 as previously undertaken by CWG, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee (no longer in place)	Neighbourhoods O&S will take the lead around CWG legacy in general, however legacy will also be integrated across all O&S Committees as relevant to their remit

Health & Social Care	Homes	Domestic Abuse	Co-ordinating O&S Resolution 17 February 2023: To ask scrutiny chairs to take back to their own committees how Domestic Abuse (DA) is relevant to their own Overview and Scrutiny Committees, consider how they can have an involvement and feed back to Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	This had not been picked up in 2022-23	This also follows on from Council Resolution: 6 Dec 2022
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Appendix 2: Cabinet Member Priorities and Forthcoming Decisions

Homes OSC

Cabinet Member	Priorities	Associated Dates
Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerate the delivery of affordable housing in Birmingham, including working with partners and Homes England to shape the new West Midlands Strategic Place Partnership and the new additional affordable housing funding opportunity via the devolution deal, through the development of a robust 5-year affordable homes delivery programme/pipeline 	<p>05.09.23 Cabinet Report Bromford Housing Development, Open Space Improvement, Procurement Strategy and revised Full Business Case</p> <p>05.09.23 Cabinet Report Procurement Routes for Affordable Housing Delivery</p> <p>05.09.23 Cabinet Report Stockfield Road Housing Development</p> <p>10.10.23 Cabinet Report Boleyn Road BMHT Development</p>
Cabinet Member for Housing & Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver on the objectives set out in the temporary accommodation strategy, specifically aiming to reduce the number of families in Bed & Breakfast for longer than 6 weeks. Deliver the whole house retrofit pilot, including evaluation and lessons learned. Launch a robust 30-year investment plan for the Housing Revenue Account, and supplementary Asset Management Strategy setting out investment priorities across the stock portfolio. Achieve compliance against the Social Housing Regulation Bill, including preparation for inspection from the 	<p>27.06.23 Cabinet Report City Housing Investment Proposal to Supply Accommodation for Homeless Families</p> <p>27.06.23 Cabinet Report Three Cities Whole House Retrofit Pilot - Interim Progress</p> <p>05.09.23 Cabinet Report Housing Revenue Account Business Plan</p>

	<p>Regulator of Social Housing in April 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver on the recommendations of the Housing Ombudsman Paragraph 49 report. • Re-commission the Repairs and Maintenance contract, to ensure new contracts are ready to be launched in April 2024. • Implement the new Selective and Additional Licensing schemes, driving up quality in the Private Rented Sector. 	<p>05.09.23 Cabinet Report Asset Management Strategy - 5 Year Strategy</p> <p>05.09.23 Emergency Accommodation secured through Regulation 10.1(a) of the Procurement Contract Regulations 2015</p> <p>01.10.23 Continue to improve the quality of private rented sector accommodation through: 1) A selective licensing scheme to help improve standards and tackle crime 2) A private tenancy team to provide advice on private sector renting and intervene to prevent unlawful evictions</p>
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Performance and Improvement Summary

Homes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

This document provides a high-level summary of:

- The strategic and organisational context, including the Corporate Plan 2022-26, city and citizen outcome indicators, and a summary of external factors impacting on the remit of this Committee.
- A summary of key delivery milestones and performance indicators against Corporate Plan priorities, and directorate priorities for 2023/24 relevant to the remit of this Committee.
- Transformation and improvement activity relevant to the remit of this committee.

Programmes, Performance, and Improvement Division

June 2023



1. STRATEGIC AND ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

1A. CORPORATE PLAN 2022-26

An overview of the Corporate Plan 2022-26.

In October 2022, the City Council approved the Corporate Plan 2022-2026 that sets out the organisation's vision and strategic priorities. These priorities are aligned to six themes: Prosperous, Inclusive, Safe, Healthy, Green, and being a Best-in-Class Council. The Plan provides the context for improvement and transformation activity and a framework for the organisation's business planning.

The Corporate Performance and Delivery Plan (CPDP), updated each year, provides a summary of the key delivery milestones and performance measures that are used to demonstrate delivery and performance against the Corporate Plan priorities. The CPDP provides the basis for quarterly reporting to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and Cabinet. The CPDP does not include the totality of the Council's delivery activity but summarises key activity from Directorate Business Plans, delivery strategies, and transformation agendas.

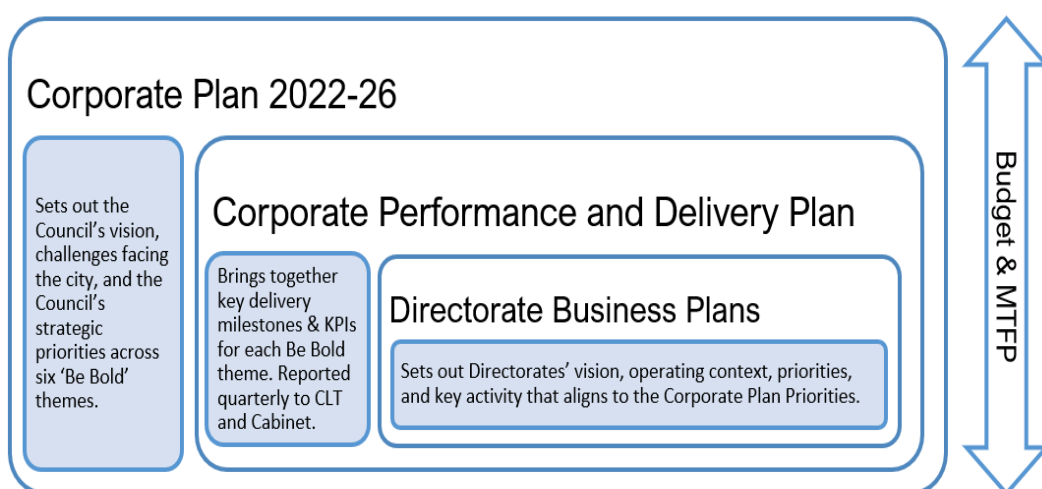


Diagram showing an overview of the Corporate Plan 2022-26:

GRAND CHALLENGES		OUR RESPONSE: BE BOLD OUTCOMES	PRIORITIES
Equality and Inclusion	Unemployment, skills and the local economy	A BOLD PROSPEROUS BIRMINGHAM	1. Support inclusive economic growth 2. Tackle unemployment 3. Attract inward investment and infrastructure 4. Maximise the benefits of the Commonwealth Games
	Opportunities for children and young people	A BOLD INCLUSIVE BIRMINGHAM	5. Tackle poverty and inequalities 6. Empower citizens and enable the citizen voice 7. Promote and champion diversity, civic pride and culture 8. Support and enable all children and young people to thrive
	Community resilience, cohesion and living standards	A BOLD SAFE BIRMINGHAM	9. Make the city safer 10. Protect and safeguard vulnerable citizens 11. Increase affordable, safe, green housing 12. Tackle homelessness
	Health and wellbeing	A BOLD HEALTHY BIRMINGHAM	13. Tackle health inequalities 14. Encourage and enable physical activity and healthy living 15. Champion mental health 16. Improve outcomes for adults with disabilities & older people
	Climate Emergency	A BOLD GREEN BIRMINGHAM	17. Improve street cleanliness 18. Improve air quality 19. Continue on the Route to Net Zero 20. Be a City of Nature
		A BOLD BEST IN CLASS COUNCIL	21. Delivering a Bold Best in Class Council

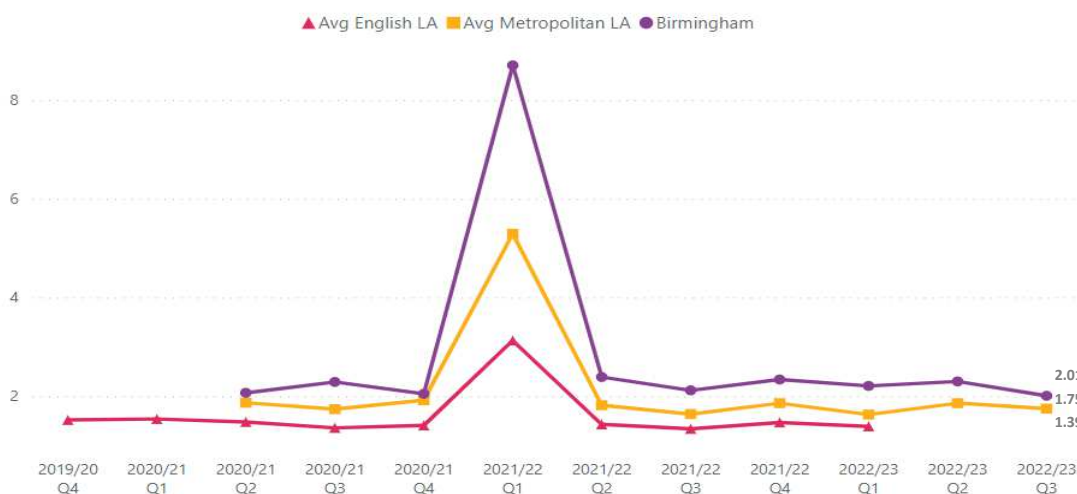
1B. CITY OBSERVATORY SNAPSHOT

A snapshot of key city and citizen outcome data from the City Observatory that is relevant to the remit of this Committee (data extracted May 2023). Other measures are available:

www.cityobservatory.birmingham.gov.uk.

Households assessed as homeless per thousand

Preferred direction of travel	Direction of travel (last 12 months)	Rank among Met Boroughs (1-36 with 1 being the top ranking)	Birmingham result	Met average
↓	Improving ↓	11/36	2.01	1.75

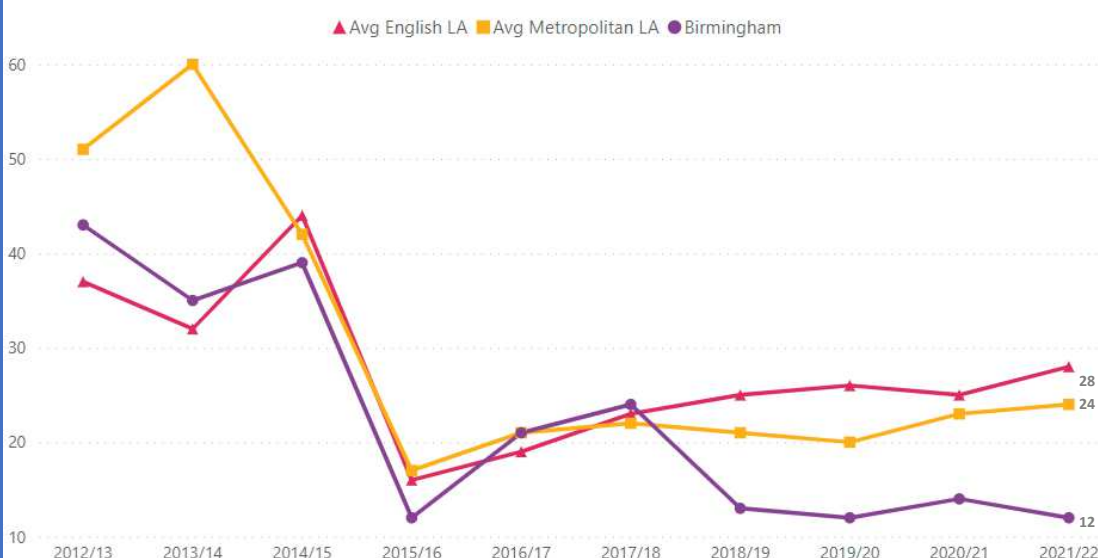


Definition: Households assessed as homeless within 56 days are owed help from the local authority to prevent homelessness and the authority must work to relieve homelessness for those who are actually homeless. Source: Statutory Homelessness live tables, Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities.

The households assessed as homeless per thousand in Birmingham (AVB) have always been greater than the Average of all Metropolitan Boroughs (AMB), and the Average of all English Local Authorities (AVL). In 2021/22 Q1 the AVB households assessed as homeless reached the value of 8.7-the highest estimate reported in the period studied.

Additional affordable homes provided as a percentage of all net additional homes

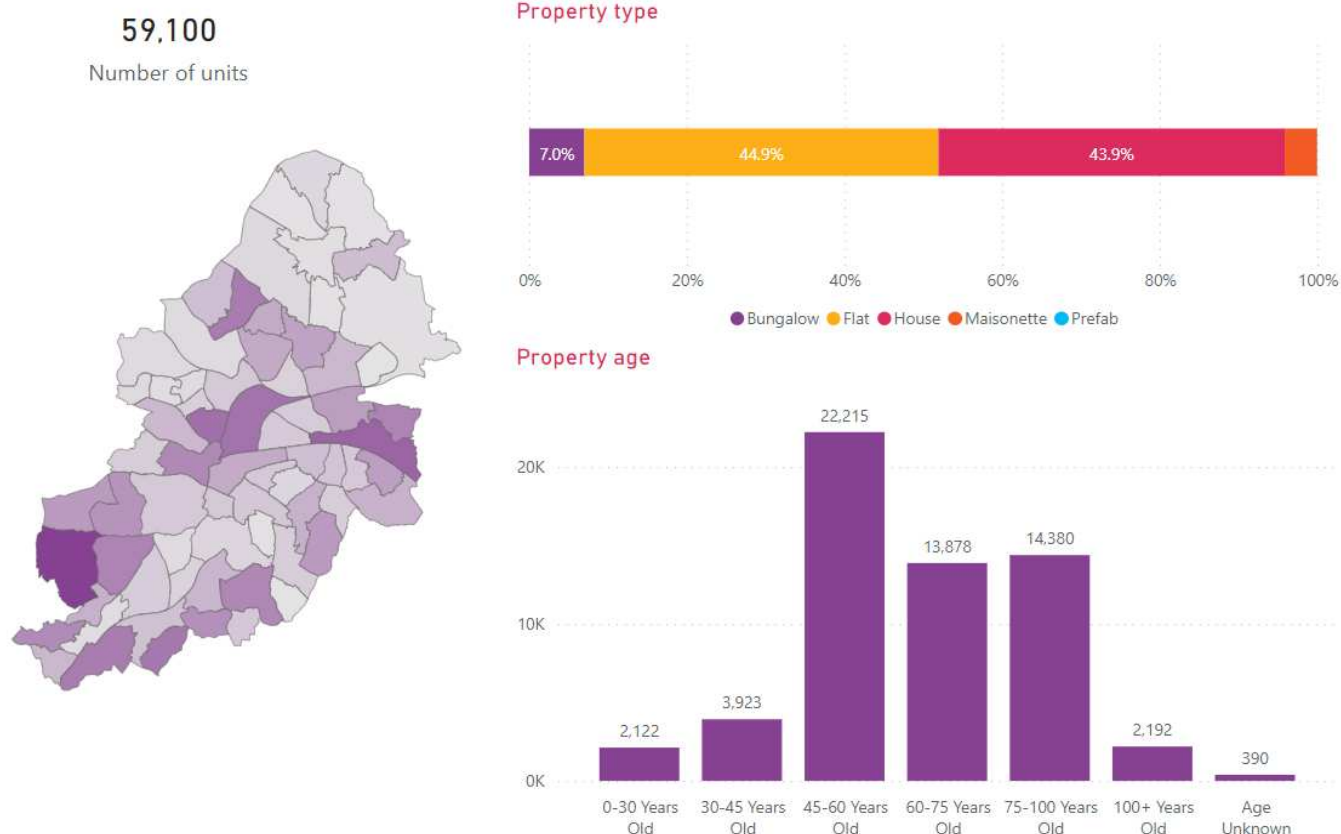
Preferred direction of travel	Direction of travel (last 12 months)	Rank among Met Boroughs (1-36 with 1 being the top ranking)	Birmingham result	Met average
↑	Worsening ↓	29/36	12	24



Definition: This has been derived based on net additional homes provided and the number of affordable homes delivered. This expresses a simple count of affordable housing units provided - newly built, including gains from conversions such as subdivision, or acquired, as a percentage of the net increase in overall dwelling stock over one year, calculated as the sum of new build completions, minus demolitions, plus any gains or losses through change of use and conversions. Source: Department of Levelling up, Housing & Communities.

The Average percentage of Additional affordable homes provided as a percentage of all net additional homes in Birmingham (AVB) has been lower than the Average of all Metropolitan Boroughs (AMB), except for the period of 2017/18 (24). The AVB decreased sharply between the periods of 2012/2013 (43) to 2015/16 (12) slightly increased between the periods of 2016/17 (21) to 2017/2018 (24) and decreased between the period of 2018/19 (13) to 2021/22 (12).

Council housing stock – total housing stock and housing stock by age



Source: Internal Housing data held within Northgate.

Key Takeaways: the portfolio consists of 59,100 properties. Most properties are flats (45%) or houses (44%). 3.5% of the housing stock in Birmingham is 0-30 years old; 44% is 30-60 years old; and, 51% is 60-100+ years old.

The ward with the highest number of properties is Bartley Green (3,073) while Castle Vale (37) has the lowest. Most properties are classified as flats (26,542), while none are Prefab. As for the age groups, 45 to 60 years old is the most represented (22,215 properties).

1C. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

A summary of key events and changes to the external operating environment that is relevant to the remit of this Committee, including changes in national policy or regulatory frameworks.

The housing landscape has been subject to significant legislative and regulatory change over the past few years which are influencing the way in which the Council provides, finances, and manages housing services.

The Climate Change Act (2008) committed the UK to an 80% reduction in carbon emissions relative to 1990 levels, to be achieved by 2050, and secondary legislation was passed in 2019. These changes require an accelerated response, actively seeking opportunities to retrofit our homes and make housing more sustainable.

The implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) fundamentally changed the legal duties on Local Authorities in relation to their offer for households facing homelessness. Since the implementation of the Act, 57% of Local Authorities have seen an increase in temporary accommodation and this is a significant issue in Birmingham.

The Grenfell tragedy led to a raft of legislative change for landlords, with a focus on fire and building safety. The Fire Safety Act (2021) and Building Safety Bill (2022) triggered a new culture of regulation, particularly in relation to high-

rise blocks. The Social Housing Regulation Bill (2022) summarises the proposed changes, focusing on giving tenants a real voice so that landlords are more transparent about their performance.

The Renters Reform Bill (2023) sets out the government's plans to fundamentally reform the private rented sector for tenants and landlords and to 'level up' housing quality. This includes abolishing Section 21 'no fault' evictions which will empower renters to challenge poor landlords without fear of losing their home; protecting landlords to make it easier for them to recover properties when they need to; and give councils stronger powers to drive criminal landlords out of the market.

Following the announcement of the Social Housing Regulation Bill, which is currently working its way through parliamentary implementation, the Regulator of Social Housing are developing a new inspection framework to be launched in April 2024. The Regulator of Social Housing will move from a reactive to a proactive inspection regime, taking a similar approach to Ofsted and CQC who have a regular inspection framework. In the meantime, the Council is engaging with the Regulator following the recent issuing of a Regulatory Notice relating to the Home Standard and Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.

2. PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY

2A. 2022-23 PERFORMANCE FOR KEY DELIVERY MILESTONES

An overview of 2022-23 performance for key delivery activity (from the CPDP) that is relevant to this Committee (as reported Cabinet on a quarterly basis). Information is accurate as of 9th June and may be subject to change.

RAG Rating	RAG Definition
	Action has been achieved (and cannot be reversed)
	Action on course to be delivered as originally planned or at revised scope/scale agreed with CLT and Cabinet Member
	Risk of action not being delivered as planned. Root causes of delivery risk have been identified and mitigating actions are in place to resolve
	Risk of action not being achieved as planned. Root causes of delivery risk are not clear and/or mitigating actions are not in place to resolve
	RAG not applicable

			2022-23 BRAG status			
Be Bold Theme	Directorate	Delivery Activity/Milestone	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Inclusive	City Housing	Implement a new Tenant Engagement Strategy, including developing consultation methods with tenants to improve customer satisfaction and engagement				
Safe	City Housing	Contribute to the Council's overarching anti-poverty agenda: commence a review and refresh of the Financial Inclusion Strategy and Financial Inclusion Partnership process to support our tenants to sustain themselves and their household.				
Safe	City Housing	Progress the delivery of oversight activity during 2022/23 within the Exempt sector in line with the nationally funded supported Housing Improvement Programme and recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny inquiry				
Safe	Place, Prosperity and Sustainability	Undertake a review of housing needs and supply in the city, including: a) Developing an Affordable Housing programme to increase the supply of affordable housing				

			2022-23 BRAG status			
Be Bold Theme	Directorate	Delivery Activity/Milestone	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	City Housing	b) Developing a Housing Strategy which sets out our approach to deliver a more flexible and wider range of housing options				
Safe	City Housing	Contribute to the Route to Zero agenda through the progression of a whole housing retrofit programme, as part of the "3 cities retrofit" across the West Midlands. First phase by December 23, with an evaluation completed by Jan 24				
Safe	City Housing	Undertake a self-assessment against Government's Social Housing White Paper and consumer regulations to ensure we are delivering services that are statutory compliant and there is a robust quality assurance process in place for monitoring				
Safe	City Housing	Implement an Asset Management approach to guide how we invest in and look after our housing stock, including implementing an Asset Management Strategy				
Safe	City Housing	Develop a comprehensive Temporary Accommodation Strategy to reduce the use of Bed and Breakfast and eliminate the use of Bed and Breakfast for families over 6 weeks				
Safe	City Housing	Implement and mobilise the Housing Solutions and Support Service re-design to support residents to remain in their own home wherever possible and prevent them from reaching a point of crisis				
Best in Class	City Housing	Deliver existing programmes aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service operating models in order to better meet customer needs and best execute the organisation's strategic priorities d) Housing Target Operating Model (TOM)				
Safe	City Operations	Improve conditions of Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs), including through:				
		a) Taking enforcement action against offenders				
		b) Introducing an additional HMO licensing scheme				
		c) Introducing an HMO rating scheme				
Safe	City Operations	Improve conditions of Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs), including through funding a street scene clearance team to tackle issues associated with exempt accommodation and high-density HMO areas				
Safe	City Operations	Continue to improve the quality of private rented sector accommodation through: • A selective licensing scheme to help improve standards and tackle crime • A private tenancy team to provide advice on private sector renting and intervene to prevent unlawful evictions				
Safe	Place, Prosperity and Sustainability	Continue to progress key housing development projects a) Ladywood Estate Regeneration (progressing to preferred developer contract execution this year)				
		b) Yardley Brook				

2B. 2022-23 PERFORMANCE FOR CORPORATE PLAN KPIS

An overview of 2022-23 performance for Corporate Plan key performance indicators (KPIs) that are relevant to the remit of this Committee (as reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis). Information is accurate as of 9th June and may be subject to change.

RAG Rating	RAG Definition
Green	Performance is equal to or better than target
Yellow	Performance is lower than target but better or equal to tolerance
Red	Performance is below tolerance
Grey	RAG not applicable

			2022-23 RAG status			
Be Bold Theme	Directorate	KPI	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Safe	City Housing	Total numbers of families in Bed and Breakfast over 6 weeks	Green	Red	Red	Red
Safe	City Housing	Households where homelessness is prevented	Green	Green	Green	Red
Safe	City Housing	Households where homelessness is relieved	Red	Red	Red	Red
Safe	City Housing	Percentage of Council housing routine repairs completed within 30 days	Green	Green	Green	Green
Safe	Place, Prosperity and Sustainability	Number of new homes completed in the city across a range of tenures through the Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT) and InReach development programmes	Green	Green	Red	Red
Safe	Place, Prosperity and Sustainability	Number (and percentage) of homes built that are affordable against total number of homes built <i>(reported annually)</i>	Grey	Grey	Grey	Red
Prosperous	Place, Prosperity and Sustainability	Number of new homes completed in the city across a range of tenures <i>(reported annually)</i>	Grey	Grey	Grey	Green
Safe	City Operations	Number of properties improved in the Private Rented Sector as a result of Local Authority intervention	Red	Red	Red	Red
Safe	City Operations	Private sector empty properties brought back into use	Green	Red	Red	Red

2C. DIRECTORATE PRIORITIES FOR 2023-24

An overview of Directorate delivery priorities for 2023-24 that are relevant to the remit of this Committee.

CITY HOUSING

- Implement the Housing Strategy to deliver a more flexible and wider range of housing options
- Invest in our housing stock to ensure our tenants have safe and well-looked after homes that they can be proud of, including developing and delivering the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (including the Social Housing Deregulation Fund)
- Work with our partners to prevent and tackle homelessness and provide housing solutions to meet the needs of our vulnerable citizens, including through delivery of the Temporary Accommodation Strategy (including the Property Acquisition Programme)
- Continue to support customers during the cost-of-living crisis and contribute to the Council's overarching anti-poverty agenda
- Procurement activity around the Repairs and Maintenance contract

CITY OPERATIONS

- Our priorities include ensuring our neighbourhoods and streets are clean, green, and safe, working in partnership to improve Community Safety, and tackling rogue landlords and protect those who require affordable housing through the Private Rented Sector ensuring appropriate living conditions.

PLACE, PROSPERITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

- We will increase the supply of housing for all our citizens and specifically the accelerate the provision of affordable homes that are both accessible and aspirational.

2D. KEY DELIVERY ACTIVITY FOR 2023-24

An overview of 2023-24 key delivery activity (from the CPDP) that is relevant to the remit of this Committee. Information is accurate as of 9th June and may be subject to change.

Corporate Plan Theme	Lead Directorate	Delivery Activity/Milestone
Inclusive	City Housing	Contribute to the Council's overarching anti-poverty agenda and response to the Cost-of-Living response programme: integrate the current Financial Inclusion Partnership and Strategy into the Cost-of-Living Programme and deliver objectives set out in the Housing Strategy relating to financial inclusion.
Inclusive	City Housing	Re-engineer our approach to tenant engagement in line with action proposed by the Tenant Participatory Advisory Service, including activity to: a) Create a Resident Influence and Assurance Board b) Create a Resident and Community Influencing Strategy c) Create Community Influence Boards
Safe	City Housing	Implement an Asset Management approach to guide how we invest in and look after our housing stock, including implementing an Asset Management Strategy. Report will go to Cabinet in October 2023 with subsequent mobilisation together with staff engagement workshops by March 2024
Safe	City Housing	Complete the 300 home retrofit pilot in East Birmingham, take forward the SHDF round 2 programme to retrofit 2,000 homes and the Sustainable Warmth and Home Grants funding programmes
Safe	City Housing	Delivery of Housing Strategy Delivery Plan priorities including embedding governance and delivery of structures for each of the strategy priorities. Delivery plan and governance structures are in place with finalised targets for delivery plan to be completed by March 24
Safe	City Housing	Embed a compliance board to oversee delivery of a robust action plan that ensures the service is compliant against statutory requirements including regulatory health and Safety requirements and the introduction of Tenant Satisfaction Measures
Safe	City Housing	Continue to work with our partners to prevent and tackle homelessness and provide housing solutions to meet the needs of our vulnerable citizens, including: a) Implementing a comprehensive Temporary Accommodation Strategy to ensure families do not remain in B&B longer than 6 weeks , achieving reductions in line with monthly targets
		b) Ensuring our services are prevention focused , investing in keeping people in their homes, and moving away from reactive, crisis driven service delivery. Evidenced through prevention target, that by year end achieving 53% prevention rate.

Corporate Plan Theme	Lead Directorate	Delivery Activity/Milestone
		c) Addressing rough sleeping including through the pilot work with the Centre for Homelessness Impact so that rough sleeping is prevented, rare, brief, and non-recurring. Evidenced through annual count (Nov 23) and monthly snapshots.
		d) Review and update the Homelessness Prevention Strategy and Rough Sleeping Addendum .
		e) A continued focus on supported Exempt Accommodation (unregulated supported provision managed by private landlords) and specifically delivering the recommendations and actions from the Overview & Scrutiny report over the next 12 months.
Inclusive	City Operations	Introduction of private rented sector licensing schemes that seek to tackle deprivation and crime in 25 wards to commence in Jun 23
Safe	City Operations	Work with partner agencies and utilise appropriate powers as necessary to ensure the risk from unsafe cladding on private high rise residential buildings is removed
Safe	City Operations	Utilise appropriate powers to ensure that tenants are protected from illegal eviction and harassment
Safe	Place, Prosperity and Sustainability	Accelerate the delivery of affordable housing in Birmingham, including working with partners and Homes England to shape the new West Midlands Strategic Place Partnership and the new additional affordable housing funding opportunity via the devolution deal, through the development of a robust 5-year affordable homes delivery programme/pipeline

3. IMPROVEMENT AND CHANGE

3A. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMMES

An overview of major change and transformation programmes that are relevant to the remit of this Committee.

CITY HOUSING

Housing Baseline and Target Operating Model

- Implement a new Target Operating Model (TOM) that will deliver a 'best in class' service and put the interests of Birmingham's citizens at the heart of everything we do. Ensuring our services are prevention focused, investing in keeping people in their homes, and moving away from reactive, crisis driven service delivery.

300 Home Retrofit Pilot

- The project will implement an innovative Whole House Retrofit Pilot to help to deliver carbon reduction for the city, economic growth, supply chain development, reduced energy costs, and health and wellbeing benefits to residents.

Reduction in Bed and Breakfast

- This work will enhance homeless prevention and temporary accommodation move-on activities, including securing additional temporary accommodation supply to reduce Bed and Breakfast usage costs.

Housing Repair and Maintenance Contract Re-Let

- The project will develop and implement the procurement strategy for the Housing Repairs and Maintenance contracts and subsequent contractor(s) mobilisation.

PLACE, PROSPERITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Affordable Housing

- This programme will drive housing growth in the city and ensure the provision of new homes matches the needs of the city's growth agenda, complementing the city's other strategic priorities of jobs and skills, health and well-being and transportation and connectivity.

3B. DIRECTORATE IMPROVEMENT PLANS AND ACTIVITIES

An overview of improvement plans and activity that are relevant to the remit of this Committee.

CITY HOUSING

Review the process for assessing housing applications

- Review the process for assessing housing applications to identify improvements and mitigate the unprecedented increase in the number of applications to the Housing Register.

Review the voids process

- Review the process with regards to voids turnaround, voids standard, and the overall customer journey to improve customer experience, improve performance metrics, and void loss.

Deliver IT improvements

- Deliver IT improvements to enhance systems and introduce innovations, applications and opportunities to improve service operation.

Improving customer service across Housing Repairs

- Housing Repairs are taking forward recommendations to improve customer service and satisfaction, including through the Customer Service Programme and recommendations arising from the Task and Finish Review led by Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Refresh the Performance Framework

- Improve the Directorate's performance framework to enable more robust performance management.

3C. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary of recent Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendations that are relevant to the remit of this Committee.

Exempt Accommodation Inquiry

Recommendations from the Exempt Accommodation Inquiry were approved at City Council in December 2021. In December 2020, the Co-ordinating O&S Committee commenced the review following concerns raised by residents through their local councillors, and in response to a request from the then Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods. The Committee explored citizens' experiences of exempt accommodation with a view to developing recommendations around what the Council needs to be doing, and what it should be talking to Government about.

The implementation of the recommendations has been monitored by Co-ordinating OSC, with the most recent report in March 2023. From June, the outstanding recommendations will be monitored by the Homes O&S Committee.