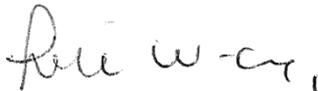


Date of issue: Monday, 7 January 2019

MEETING:	NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL (Councillors Plenty (Chair), Kelly, N Holledge, S Parmar, Rasib, Sabah, A Sandhu, Shah and Wright) <u>Non-Voting Co-Opted Members</u> Paul Fuller (Residents Panel Board) and Morris Sless (Residents Panel Board)
DATE AND TIME:	TUESDAY, 15TH JANUARY, 2019 AT 6.30 PM
VENUE:	VENUS SUITE 2, ST MARTINS PLACE, 51 BATH ROAD, SLOUGH, BERKSHIRE, SL1 3UF
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	NICHOLAS PONTONE 01753 875120

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



JOSIE WRAGG
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART 1

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>WARD</u>
------------------------	---------------------	-------------	-------------

1.	Declarations of Interest	-	-
----	--------------------------	---	---

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary or other Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Section 4 paragraph 4.6 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed.



<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>WARD</u>
CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS			
2.	Minutes of the last meeting held on 1st November 2018	1 - 6	-
3.	Action Progress Report	7 - 8	-
4.	Member Questions	-	-
	<i>(An opportunity for panel members to ask questions of the relevant Director / Assistant Director, relating to pertinent, topical issues affecting their Directorate – maximum of 10 minutes allocated.)</i>		
SCRUTINY ISSUES			
5.	Local Plan for Slough 2013-36	9 - 20	All
6.	Revised Housing Allocation Scheme 2018-2022	21 - 42	All
7.	Neighbourhoods Services Scrutiny Overview Indicators	43 - 54	All
8.	Development Initiative for Slough Housing Ltd - Cabinet Proposals	Verbal Report	All
9.	2019/20 Housing Rents and Service Charges	55 - 60	All
ITEMS FOR INFORMATION			
10.	Forward Work Programme	61 - 64	-
11.	Members' Attendance Record 2018/19	65 - 66	-
12.	Date of Next Meeting - 28th February 2019		

Press and Public

You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before the Committee considers any items in the Part II agenda. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer shown above for further details.

The Council allows the filming, recording and photographing at its meetings that are open to the public. By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings. Anyone proposing to film, record or take photographs of a meeting is requested to advise the Democratic Services Officer before the start of the meeting. Filming or recording must be overt and persons filming should not move around the meeting room whilst filming nor should they obstruct proceedings or the public from viewing the meeting. The use of flash photography, additional lighting or any non hand held devices, including tripods, will not be allowed unless this has been discussed with the Democratic Services Officer.

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Thursday, 1st November, 2018.

Present:- Councillors Plenty (Chair), Kelly (Vice-Chair), S Parmar, Rasib, Sabah, A Sandhu, Shah (from 6.42pm until 7.25pm) and Wright

Paul Fuller – Residents Panel Board

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor N Holledge

PART 1

25. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were given in relation to the meeting's agenda items.

26. Minutes of the last meeting held on 6th September 2018

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th September 2018 be approved as a correct record.

27. Action Progress Report

Resolved: That the Action Progress Report be noted.

28. Member Questions

The responses to the members' questions were circulated. Members noted the answers regarding the Local Plan; whilst they noted their comments on the national picture, they requested that the forthcoming report on the matter make reference to those issues unique to Slough.

Resolved: That the response to the members' questions be noted.

29. Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation

The proposals outlined in the report had been taken by Cabinet on 17th September 2018. They were now subject to statutory consultation, which would run for 90 days starting on 2nd November 2018. Officers had also compiled a list of landlords and agents, which would be circulated to the Panel. A page dedicated to the issue would also be on Slough Borough Council's (SBC) website until 31st January 2019. The results of the consultation would be analysed in February 2019 and were scheduled to be reported back to Cabinet on 18th March 2019.

(At this point, Councillor Shah entered the meeting)

SBC had analysed its housing stock (which had increased over the last 7 years); of this, 33% was in the Private Rented Sector (PRS). SBC also had a high proportion of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) which tended to be concentrated in specific areas (Chalvey and Central Wards). These properties also reported high levels of anti-social behaviour. Recent legislation had given SBC the ability to ensure that it could take action against landlords operating to low standards. Conditions could be set for each property, with remedies to be sought with ones which continued to experience poor behaviour. In future, all PRS properties would be subject to licensing (not just HMOs); this would also protect the physical state of SBC's housing stock.

Members were asked to encourage constituents to participate in the consultation; the process was detailed and asked over 20 questions regarding the proposals. There would also be 2 focus groups established; 1 for landlords, and 1 for residents and tenants. The central ambition was to design a scheme which improved the quality of the housing stock and the local environment in general.

The Panel raised the following points in discussion:

- The Chalvey Pilot had licensed 43 properties out of the overall local stock of over 2,000. It had encountered issues regarding enforcement, but these would be helped with the new legislation. All landlords would be given the chance to solve any issues, but SBC would have the power to levy a £30,000 fine for non-compliance.
- Sound basic standards were very much part of the proposed licensing scheme. This included electrical checks and gas safety certification.
- The proposals would lead to a culture change and also offered an online application system for landlords. The relevant team had also been expanded from 2 dedicated officers to 7; the increased level of collection would render this cost neutral.
- Mandatory licensing was proposed to be £950; additional licensing would be £750 and selective licensing £650. The mandatory scheme had been agreed, with the other 2 subject to consultation. Other options around licences would be offered to Cabinet; it was intended for licences to last 5 years, with landlords whose reputation was less sure offered 1 year.
- The picture regarding the ownership of HMOs was unclear; however SBC was aware that there were numerous portfolio landlords in Slough, who owned 2 – 4 properties in most cases.
- The correlation between HMOs and anti-social behaviour was relatively clear. Figures on this would be included in the consultation and would be on the SBC website page.
- Members would be invited to a briefing on licensing proposals.
- SBC could support landlords who did not want to go through licensing, although had to be clear on the level of commitment it could make regarding property management on their behalf.
- Licensing would be used to help ensure that landlords were regularly inspecting their properties. Ultimately, landlords had to accept that their

properties were the resources used in their business and should be managed with appropriate care.

- Initially, SBC would prioritise those areas with the highest levels of HMOs. Owners would be encouraged to come forward and then directed to a streamlined application process. Councillors representing Chalvey and Central Wards would be targeted for communications as part of this and also invited to the focus groups. Every resident in these 2 wards would receive communication on the matter.
- Refuse collection facilities would be reviewed to try and limit fly tipping by residents. However, SBC would support landlords to resolve any cases of such behaviour where they remained.
- Any fines paid would be spent within the Enforcement Service. Rogue landlords could be banned, prosecuted and convicted as appropriate; however, the costs of such procedures were high so would have to form part of any such consideration (as would the powerful disincentive impact of punitive measures on other landlords operating to low standards).
- Language issues with local residents were being discussed with the Communications Team.
- Should tenants choose to undertake work on the behalf of their landlords, they would have to follow a very prescriptive process (e.g. notify SBC, take the best offer from the service providers approached). This could then be deducted from their rent.
- A licence had to provide a 24 hour contact, the maximum number of tenants allowed in the property and other details. However, SBC was legally prevented from requesting photo ID as part of this.

(At this point, Councillor Shah left the meeting)

- The multi storey flats approved for the Octagon site would be part of this licensing regime.

Resolved: That an update on the licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation be taken by the Panel in November 2019.

30. Homelessness in Slough

Homelessness was increasingly an issue as PRS properties became unaffordable for many local residents. The number of households recorded as homeless had decreased recently but the situation remained difficult to manage. The waiting time for PRS housing was 5 years with the additional complexity of finding a property with the appropriate number of bedrooms. Whilst the team's budget allowed them to buy 40 properties in most years (and 60 this year) this only ameliorated the matter rather than resolve it outright.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 included a 56 day prevention phase and a 56 day relief period before SBC entered the statutory duty phase. In 2017 – 18, 506 households had approached SBC as homeless; in the first half of 2018 – 18 this rose to 810, demonstrating the impact of this legislation. In

addition, London Boroughs were discharging their obligations into Slough through the powers provided in the Localism Act 2011. Members were presented with a case of a family of 9 which had been sent to Slough for housing; a failure to resolve this case by SBC would cause a significant level of expenditure to be required.

The Homelessness Plan was currently being compiled, and would be circulated to members when available. The Panel would then decide how to progress with the issue.

The Panel raised the following points in discussion:

- SBC offered 2 year assured tenancies where appropriate; a high proportion of these originated from London. In cases where other local authorities discharged their responsibilities in Slough, SBC did not have the power to stop them.
- Members would be provided with a breakdown of the number of bedrooms required by the new cases reporting as homeless.
- The voluntary relocation scheme was receiving applicants.
- Approximately 25% of households registered as homeless had non-Slough addresses in the last 5 years.
- James Elliman Homes were wholly owned by SBC. Officers had requested that an element of next year's funding be brought forward to assist with the current situation.
- £260,000 had been allocated to the issue of rough sleepers, with outreach workers providing the relevant service. A bid had also been submitted for the service in 2019 – 20. A night shelter would be offering a year-round service in the near future, which would also be visited by a local GP. The service also worked on related issues (e.g. drug addiction) and providing a permanent pathway out of rough sleeping.
- Provision for rough sleeping was being mapped to ensure that SBC was making the best possible use of the voluntary sector and other partners. A partnership meeting would be held with the voluntary sector in the near future.
- There were approximately 65 rough sleepers in Slough; none of these were children recently in SBC's care. Each of these had a plan to assist with getting them out of their present situation.
- The Slough Wellbeing Board would take a report on the Rough Sleeping Task & Finish Group on 30th November 2018.
- SBC staff took part in the Annual Sleep Out which assessed the exact state of the local homelessness situation.
- Households in temporary accommodation could only enter PRS properties.

Resolved: That the Panel decide how to progress with the Homelessness Plan once it had been circulated.

31. Slough Real Time Passenger Information

Members noted the recent improvement in the service and therefore resolved to take no further action.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

32. Forward Work Programme

Resolved: That the Work Programme be noted.

33. Attendance Record 2018 - 19

Resolved: That the attendance record be noted.

34. Date of Next Meeting - 15th January 2019

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.28 pm)

This page is intentionally left blank

NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

1st November 2018

Minute:	Action:	For:	Report Back To: Date:
29	Resolved: That an update on the licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation be taken by the Panel in November 2019.	Housing	NCS Scrutiny Panel November 2019
30	Resolved: That the Panel decide how to progress with the Homelessness Plan once it had been circulated.	Housing	NCS Scrutiny Panel As appropriate

This page is intentionally left blank

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 15th January 2019

CONTACT OFFICER: Paul Stimpson, Planning Policy Lead Officer
(For all Enquiries) (01753) 875820

WARD(S): All

PART I
FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION

LOCAL PLAN FOR SLOUGH 2013-2036

1. **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information regarding progress made on the Local Plan for Slough, including an update on the Preferred Spatial Strategy.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Panel is requested to comment on the progress made in reviewing the Local Plan for Slough.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

The review of the Local Plan is directly linked to the following priorities in the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy:

- Housing

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The Local Plan will help deliver the following Five Year Plan outcomes:

- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay
- Our residents will live in good quality homes

4. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

There are no financial implications to this report.

(b) Risk Management

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications as a result of this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There are no equality impact issues.

5. **Supporting Information**

5.1 The progress on the review of the Local Plan was last reported to this Panel at its meeting on 2nd November 2017. This set out the results of the Issues and Options Consultation and focused upon the “Emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy for Slough”.

5.2 An update on the Spatial Strategy was reported to the Planning Committee meeting on 5th December 2018 and the purpose of this report is to highlight the key issues that the Local Plan is having to consider, with particular emphasis upon the need to provide more housing.

5.3 It should be noted that the development of the Spatial Strategy is just one part of the Local Plan. We will also have to develop a set of detailed policies which can help to implement the strategy in the most sustainable way and form the basis for determining planning applications. Consideration of these policies is not, however, within the scope of this report.

5.4 It should also be noted that a new “Transport Vision for the Centre of Slough” is being reported to Cabinet on 4th February for consideration. If this is agreed, it will have a significant impact upon the development of elements of the Local Plan Spatial Strategy. It has not been possible to include any details of the proposed new Transport Vision in this report and so any consideration of this would have to be the subject of a separate report to this Panel.

Background

5.5 The overall strategy for the Review of the Local Plan is to deliver balanced cohesive growth which meets local needs as far as possible given all of the constraints to development. Our ambition is for Slough to become a place where people want to “*live, work, rest, play and stay*”.

5.6 The main conclusion from the Issues and Options consultation was that there are no reasonable spatial options or combination of options that would allow Slough to meet all of its identified housing and employment needs within its boundaries.

- 5.7 As a result we have prepared the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy in accordance with the Local Plan Objective of meeting housing needs either within the Borough or as close as possible to where the need arises within a balanced housing market.
- 5.8 The Government has produced a new standard methodology for calculating what each Council's housing needs should be which has resulted in Slough having a figure of 912 a year. We have never been able to build this number in the past, although there were 846 net completions last year. Whilst we may be able to meet our current 5 Year Land supply, there is going to be a major shortfall in the longer term. Monitoring has also shown that last year 93% of residential units were built on brown field sites and 75% were flats.
- 5.9 The lack of viability in many of these brown field developments also means that it is difficult for us to obtain the amount of affordable housing that we require in our policies. 141 new affordable houses were completed last year.
- 5.10 The shortage of land in Slough means that we are having to use employment land for housing. Some of this is coming forward without the need for planning permission through the change of use of offices to flats under the Prior Approval system. We are also planning for the selective re use of employment land for housing on places like the Akzo Nobel and Horlicks sites. At the same time Data Centres are replacing tradition warehousing or industrial units on Trading Estate.
- 5.11 The decline of Slough shopping centre is well documented and will need major investment to completely regenerate it. By comparison Farnham Road and Langley centres have very few vacancies.

Emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy

- 5.12 The emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy has been developed using some basic guiding principles which include locating development in the most accessible location, regenerating previously developed land, minimising the impact upon the environment and ensuring that development is both sustainable and deliverable.
- 5.13 As a result the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy has the following five key elements:
- **Delivering** major comprehensive redevelopment within the "Centre of Slough";
 - **Selecting** other key locations for appropriate development;
 - **Protecting** the built and natural environment of Slough including the suburbs;
 - **Accommodating** the proposed third runway at Heathrow and mitigating the impact;

- **Promoting** the northern expansion of Slough in the form of a “Garden Suburb”;

5.14 The Preferred Spatial Strategy can be seen in the Key Diagram in Figure 1. An explanation of some of the key elements is set out below.

Delivering major comprehensive redevelopment within the “Centre of Slough”

5.15 We have identified Key sites for redevelopment within the Centre of Slough as shown in Figure 2.

5.16 In order to set out in detail how we intend to deliver major comprehensive redevelopment we will be producing a “Centre of Slough Development Strategy” in the new year.

5.17 One of the main issues identified at the issues and options stage was how we can revitalise the town centre as a major retail, leisure and commercial centre? One of the keys to this is the future of the Queensmere and Observatory shopping centres. Unfortunately the new owners have not been able to bring forward their proposals for the redevelopment of the shopping centres as quickly as we would like and so we will have to continue to work with them to make sure that we get the sort of transformational facilities that Slough needs. Detailed proposals for the former TVU site have also not come forward yet.

5.18 With regards to other key sites, the Horlicks site has been acquired by Berkeley Homes and the Akzo Nobel site is about to be sold to a developer. We have recently agreed the development of the Octagon site for high quality high rise residential towers and a new hotel which will begin to set the scene for the area.

5.19 The Centre of Slough Development Strategy will set out a strategy for dealing with all of these sites to ensure that they come forward in a properly planned comprehensive manner.

5.20 This will have to take account of the new Transport Vision which will set out measures for promoting public transport and determining what the future access, circulation car parking requirements will be.

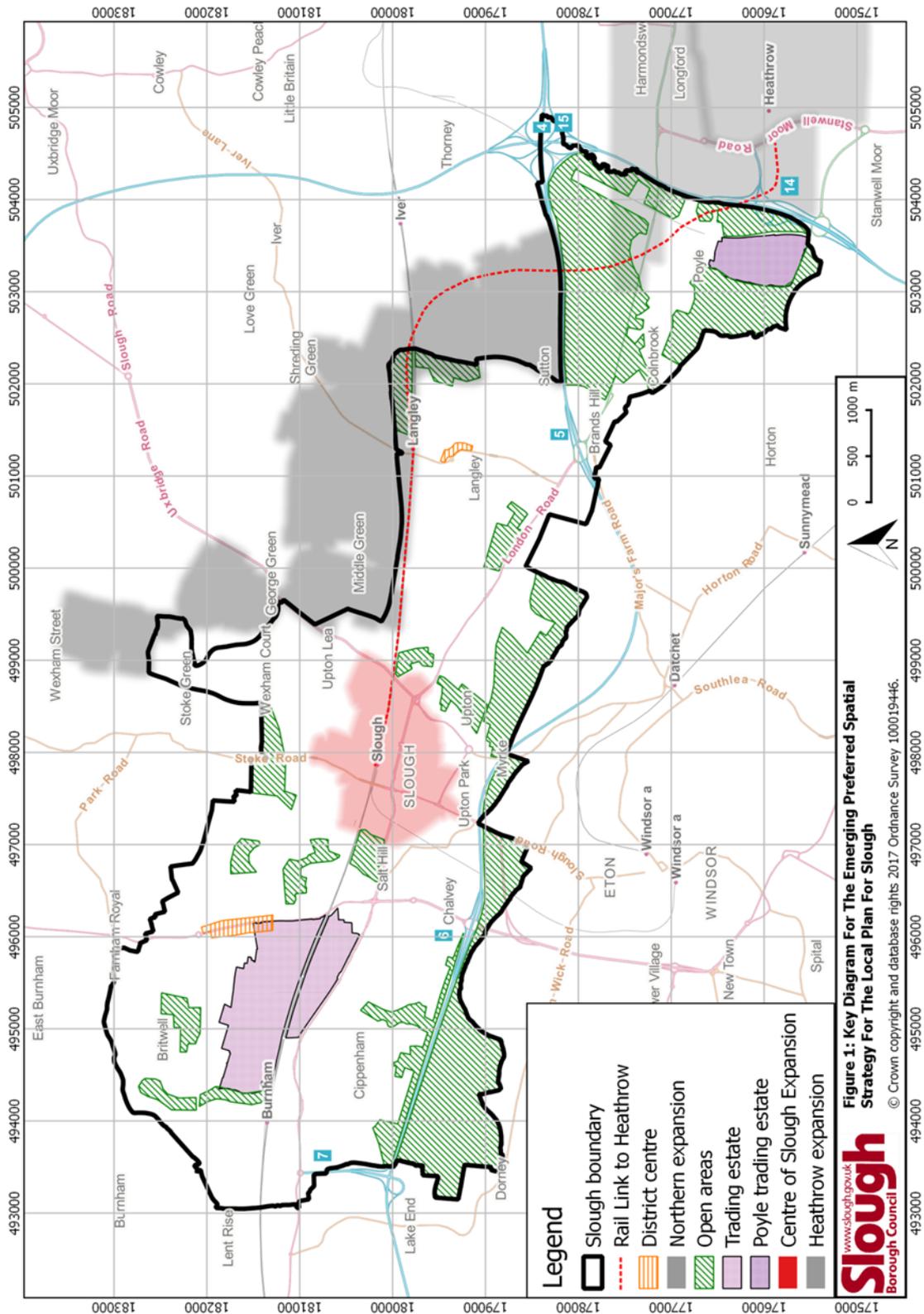


Figure 1 Spatial Strategy Key Diagram

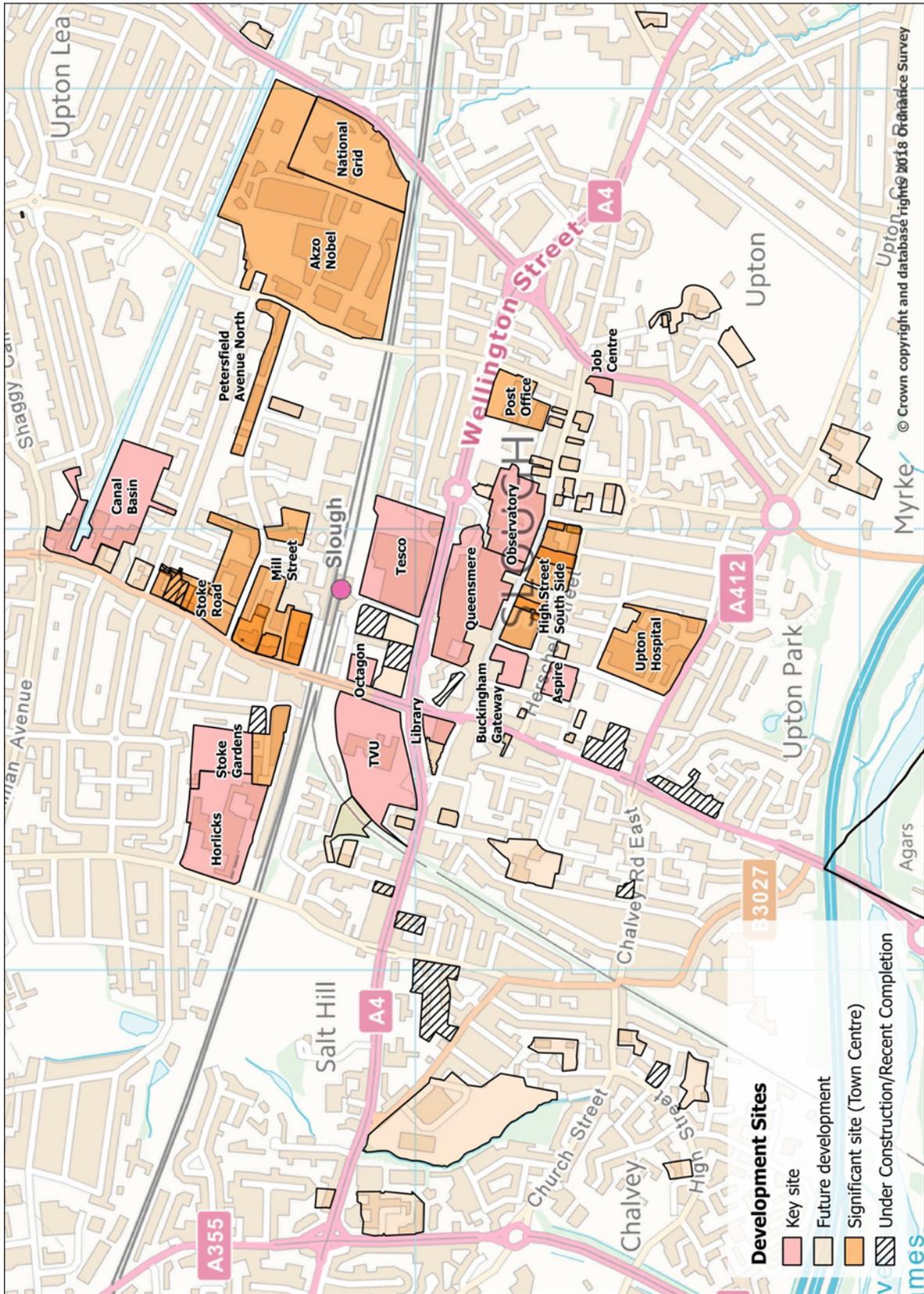


Figure 2 – Development Sites in the Centre of Slough

- 5.21 The new Development Strategy will establish the appropriate mix and scale of uses and identify character areas within the centre. It will include a building height policy and identify key linkages that need to be provided or improved. It will set out a strategy for improving public space and the public realm, including the enhancement of heritage assets. It will also identify the necessary infrastructure that will be required and the possible phasing of development.
- 5.22 The overall objective will be to promote and protect investment in the comprehensive regeneration of the centre.

Accommodating the Proposed Third Runway at Heathrow and Mitigating the Impact

- 5.23 There have been some important developments in the last year with regards to the proposed third runway at Heathrow.
- 5.24 In June 2018 the Government approved the Airports National Policy Statement. This establishes the need for the expansion of Heathrow and confirms the principle of a north-west runway and the principal planning policies that should be applied to it. This means that Heathrow can now proceed with preparing its application for the expansion of the airport through the Development Consent Order (DCO) process.
- 5.25 This will involve the Planning Inspectorate examining the application and then making a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport who will then decide whether or not the third runway should go ahead. A final decision is not expected until 2020.
- 5.26 The emerging Spatial Strategy agreed in November 2017 contained the following principles that should be applied to the expansion of Heathrow:
- Protect Colnbrook and Poyle villages in a “Green Envelope” and enhance the Conservation Area and built realm.
 - Prevent all through traffic but provide good public transport and cycle routes to the airport
 - Provide for the replacement of Grundons energy from waste plant and the rail depot north of the new runway
 - Ensure that there are good public transport links into Heathrow from Slough.
 - Enlarge the Poyle Trading Estate for airport related development but with access only from the M25.
 - Provide mitigation for the Colne Valley Park and ensure that existing connectivity is maintained through Crown Meadow.
 - Develop tangible measures to improve air quality in the Heathrow area
 - Ensure that all homes in the Borough that are eligible for noise insulation are provided for under the Quieter Homes Scheme.

- Ensure measures to address flood risk from the proposals include mitigation to reduce the risk of existing flooding for residents and businesses in Colnbrook and Poyle.

5.27 We have now developed this into an “Emerging Spatial Strategy for Accommodating Growth at Heathrow” . This sets out our planning principles for how the Colnbrook and Poyle area could be developed, if the proposed third runway at Heathrow goes ahead. The primary proposed land uses are shown in Figure 3 below.

5.28 From the work that Heathrow airport have produced so far, it appears that the most important issue that is likely to arise is whether or not the A3044, which currently runs east of the M25, should be relocated through Colnbrook and Poyle as a trough route which could act as a link between the M25 and M4. The Council’s position is that whilst a link is needed for public transport access to the airport and there needs to be a direct link from the Poyle Trading Estate into the airport, there should not be a new through route.

5.29 Another important issue is the need to create more jobs in Slough as a result of the expansion of Heathrow. As a result the Emerging Spatial Strategy proposes that the Poyle Trading Estate should be expanded and transformed into an area for more airport related development.

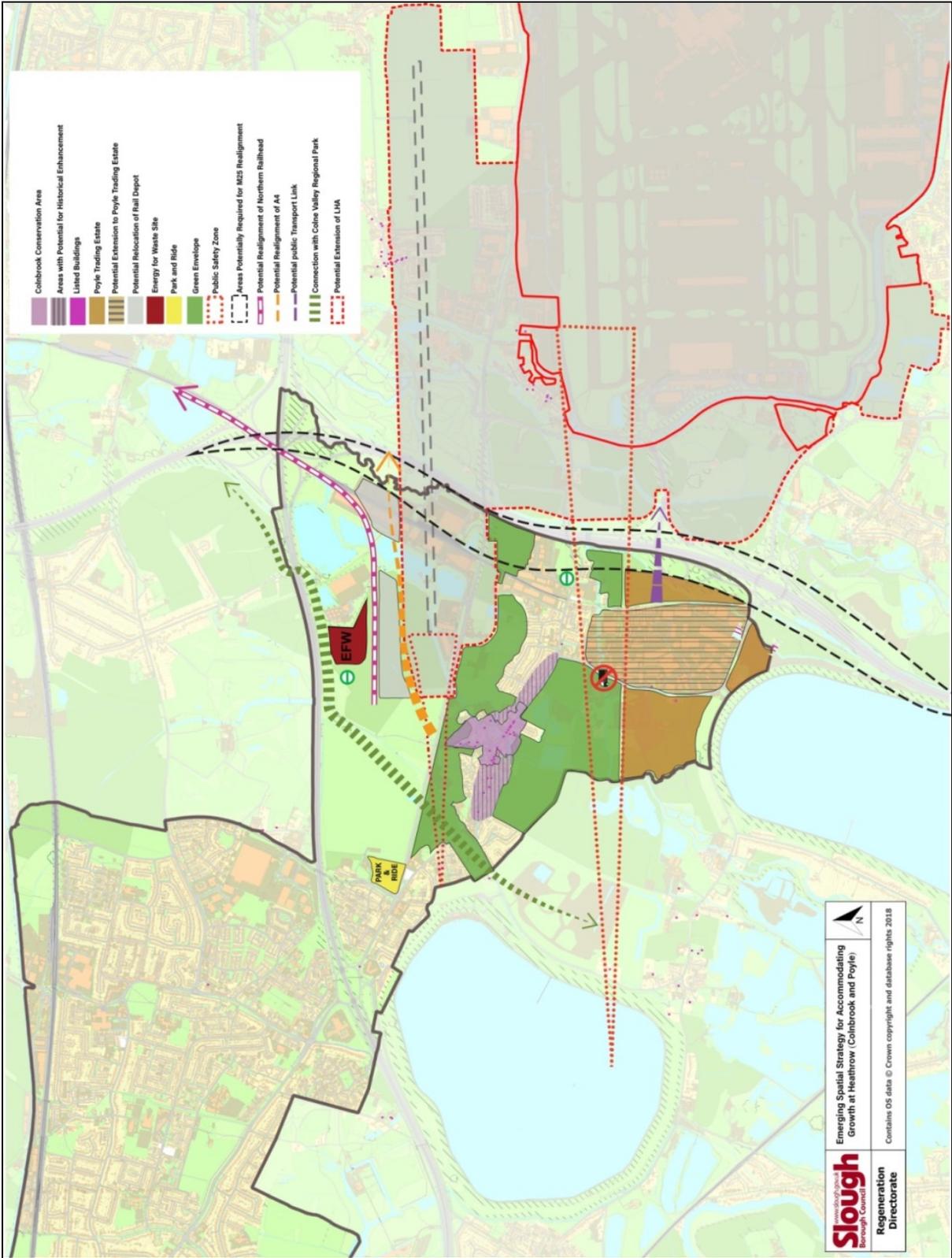


Figure 3 – Key Diagram for Colnbrook and Poyle

Promoting the northern expansion of Slough in the form of a “Garden Suburb”;

- 5.30 One of the key parts of the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy is the promotion of a northern extension of Slough into South Bucks District in the form of a “Garden Suburb”. This is considered to be the most sustainable way of meeting Slough’s unmet needs because of its proximity to existing jobs, facilities and community facilities. It also make use of major national infrastructure investment such as the crossrail service on the Elizabeth Line.
- 5.31 It could also help to solve some existing transport problems by providing major new infrastructure to promote public transport. It would provide a range of housing including a large supply of affordable and family housing. It would therefore help to rebalance Slough’s housing market and meet local needs.
- 5.32 In order to promote the proposed new “Garden Suburb” we commissioned a high level spatial plan for the Slough Northern Extension which was produced by Atkins in September 2017.
- 5.33 This attracted strong objections from South Bucks District Council for a number of reasons which included the fact that the release of Green Belt land has not been justified. As a result they have not agreed that there is a need to meet any of Slough’s unmet housing needs within South Bucks.
- 5.34 In order to help to resolve this important cross boundary issue we have obtained Government funding for a Joint Growth Study along with Windsor & Maidenhead, South Bucks and Chiltern Councils.
- 5.35 The first part of the work is to establish the geography for a wider area growth study which can be agreed by the authorities for sound for plan-making purposes.
- 5.36 Work on the first stage is being undertaken by Peter Brett Associates whose brief is to define a growth area, or study area, that may potentially accommodate unmet development needs from the four client local authorities. They will produce a final report in February.
- 5.37 Once the study area has been agreed, the second phase of the work is to develop and test various scenarios for meeting development needs at a strategic level. All appropriate options will then be tested in order to produce a preferred solution.
- 5.38 Overall it is considered that, as a result of the work on the Joint Growth Study, we are now making progress with the promotion of the northern expansion which remains as this Council’s preferred option for meeting Slough’s unmet needs.

Protecting the Suburbs

- 5.39 In addition to promoting growth in the most sustainable locations, an important part of the Preferred Spatial Strategy is the need to protect and enhance the suburban areas within Slough.
- 5.40 The suburban areas of Slough have already absorbed a lot of growth and it is unlikely that these areas would be able to deliver very much additional housing because of practical and viability issues.
- 5.41 They provide the main supply of family housing which is unlikely to be able to be provided elsewhere. They also contain distinctive communities with their own network of facilities.
- 5.42 As a result it is considered essential that the Preferred Strategy continues to protect the suburban residential areas from major intensive redevelopment and we maintain our current policy of not allowing the loss of existing family housing.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 This report sets out some of the important planning issues that are being considered in the development of the Preferred Spatial Strategy as part of the review of the Local Plan.
- 6.2 In particular it highlights the need to ensure that we continue to provide a range of housing to meet local needs and ensure that Slough has a balanced housing market where people can work, live and stay.

7 Background Papers

Agenda Papers, Planning Committee, 5th December 2018

Agenda Papers and Minutes, Neighbourhoods and Community Services
Scrutiny Panel, 2nd November 2017

This page is intentionally left blank

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**REPORT TO:** Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel**DATE:** 15th January 2019**CONTACT OFFICER:** Colin Moone, Service Lead, Housing Services
(For all enquiries) (01753) 474057**WARD(S):** All**PART I**
FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**REVISED HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME 2018-2022****1 Purpose of Report**

This report provides the Scrutiny Panel with an update on the first six months of the new Housing Allocations Scheme 2018-2022 as requested by members. Statistical information given is for the period 1st May – 31st October 2018.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel is requested to note the report and the impact of changes on specific groups affected by the main changes to the Allocations Policy.

3 The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**3a Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Housing is one of the key priorities of Slough's Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS). It contributes to reducing inequalities in health through access to high quality housing; there are clear links between housing and the JSNA priorities around improving health conditions, particularly mental health and protecting vulnerable children.

3b Five Year Plan Outcomes

Outcome 4 of the Five Year Plan states: "Our residents will have access to good quality homes". This outcome recognises the critical links between improved health and wellbeing and affordable good quality housing.

3c Housing Strategy

Slough's Housing Strategy sets out the council's shared vision and priorities to provide sufficient, good quality, affordable housing.

4 **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

There are no direct financial implications of proposed action.

(b) Risk Management

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights or other Legal Implications arising from this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The Council has a public sector duty under the Equalities Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to promote equality of opportunity to all persons and to those who share a protected characteristic under the legislation. A full EIA was undertaken in preparation for a review of the scheme.

(e) Workforce

There are no workforce implications.

5 **Supporting Information**

5.1 The Housing Act 1996, 166A is the primary legislation which sets out statutory reasonable preference categories: -

- (a) people who are homeless (within the meaning of Housing Act 1996 Part 7);
- (b) people who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under Housing Act 1996 section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3);
- (c) people occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;
- (d) people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including any grounds relating to a disability); and
- (e) people who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).

5.2 The introduction of the Localism Act 2011 enables local authorities to make local decisions on who should be given priority for an allocation of social housing.

5.3 The main changes to the scheme are:

- Reduce the community contribution qualification period from 12 months to six months
- Re-prioritise agreed homeless cases to meet the urgent needs for new households requiring temporary accommodation
- Reduce the number of offers of accommodation to one offer only with some

- discretion towards under occupiers
- Awarding households with a proven severe medical need, Band B placement
- Assist Key Workers

5.4 Community Contribution

836 applicants from band C were contacted individually asking if their circumstances met the new community contribution criteria. Responses came in from a number of applicants with an increase of 101 applicants meeting these criteria and moving to Band B. The total on the register in Band B at the end of April 2018 was 1097 and at the end of May 1198.

5.5 Homelessness

Agreed homeless households meeting the qualification criteria for the scheme are now awarded an additional preference (Band B). 147 homeless households have benefitted from this change.

Below represents a snapshot of the housing register by banding for statutory agreed homeless households before and after the changes to the policy.

	April 2018	May 2018
BAND B	70	217
BAND C	138	92
NOT ELIGIBLE	106	0
TOTAL	314	309

Case Study 1

Ms X was living in a one bedroom flat with her two children aged 6 & 3 when the landlord served a section 21 notice asking her to leave. Ms X was already registered on the housing waiting list from March 2012. Ms X had lived in Slough since 1992.

A possession order was granted to the landlord and Ms X was then placed into temporary accommodation in March 2017. A positive decision on her case was made. However Ms X had no real prospect of a move via the housing register prior to May 2018. Following the changes to the scheme officers were in a position to make an offer of accommodation in May 2018 to resolve her homelessness situation and free up a unit of temporary accommodation.

5.6 Medical priority

77 applications transferred from band C into Band B attracting an additional preference due to medical reasons. The majority of applicants in Band C would be unlikely to receive an offer of accommodation.

Case Study 2

Mr Y is 52 years old and had been on the housing waiting list from May 2008. He had been residing with family members in Slough for over 40 years. Mr Y was registered blind. His application had been awarded a Band C placement due to his medical condition following advice taken from an independent medical advisor.

Changes to the policy now meant that Mr Y was placed into Band B and an offer of accommodation was made to him in May 2018.

5.7 One offer only

We have already seen a dramatic fall in the number of refusals of offers made since the introduction of a one offer only policy.

The table below represents the allocations activity for the first six months of the scheme for offers of Slough Borough Council property in comparison with the previous four years.

YEAR	REFUSALS	LETTINGS DONE
May-Oct 2018	34	150
May-Oct 2017	65	128
May-Oct 2016	77	125
May-Oct 2015	108	167
May-Oct 2014	171	138

Members concerns about the consequences of a one offer only policy were noted. Some members had additional concerns about under occupiers on the register. The policy allows officers some discretion when dealing with the refusal of offers made to under occupiers. The Council has also increased payments made under the Tenants Incentive Scheme to facilitate a move.

Applicants have the right to a review on the suitability of any offer made. In the first six months of the scheme nine reviews were submitted regarding the suitability of the offer made. The reviewing officers upheld each case as a suitable offer.

In this lettings period nine under occupiers viewed and accepted offers. Eight of these accepted the first offer made and only one applicant refused who then went on to accept a second offer.

A further seven applicants were offered property and refused the offer made. Two of these applicants wished to have their application cancelled and a further four applicants are waiting for a second offer to be made. No under occupiers have been cancelled as a direct result of refusing an offer.

Case Study 3

Ms Z joined the housing register in June 2008 living in private rented accommodation.

Ms Z has three children and was residing in a 2 bedroom privately rented flat. She was offered a three bedroom house approximately four miles away from her current home. Ms Z refused the offer as she did not like the neighborhood and believed that gang crime was prevalent in the area. Following the refusal of this offer Ms Z was removed from the housing register. She did not ask for a review of this decision and was happy to remain in her current home.

5.8 Key Workers

Two key workers employed in Slough schools have joined the housing register. Offers of accommodation with James Elliman Homes will be made in due course.

5.9 Lettings made in the first 6 months of the scheme

202 social housing lettings have been made. The table below represents the band and reason for the banding together with the total numbers let to each group.

BAND	REASON	TOTAL
BAND A	ADAPTED PROPERTY	3
BAND A	DECANT	1
BAND A	EXCEPTIONAL CASE	3
BAND A	HOMELESS	17
BAND A	MEDICAL	3
BAND A	SEVERE OVERCROWDING	1
BAND A	SUCCESSION	5
BAND A	WELFARE	18
BAND B	CARE LEAVER	1
BAND B	HOMELESS	30
BAND B	MEDICAL	26
BAND B	UNDER OCCUPIER	9
BAND B	WORKING	77
BAND C	LOCALITY	1
BAND C	HOMELESS NO DUTY	1
BAND C	SHARING	6

6. Conclusion

Cabinet approved the Housing Allocations Policy on 16th April 2018.

The Council implemented a new scheme on 1st May 2018 for the Allocation of social housing following an undertaking to do so in its outcome plan.

The scheme is the policy by which the Council and other social housing is allocated as set out in the Housing Act 1996, Part V1 and Localism Act 2011.

Applications that have benefitted from the scheme are primarily those with medical needs or those that are statutory homeless.

The allocation of social housing is designed to help those who live in the most severe housing conditions. A one offer policy has further targeted these groups of need and those who refuse a reasonable offer can reapply after a two year period.

7 Appendices Attached

'A' Housing Allocations Scheme

This page is intentionally left blank

Housing Allocation Scheme 2018-2022

Effective 1 May 2018

Contents

- Section 1. Equality and diversity
- Section 2. The housing register
- Section 3. Eligibility
- Section 4. Who qualifies for the register
- Section 5. Who does not qualify for the register
- Section 6. Offers of accommodation
- Section 7. Administration of the register

Section 1

Equality and diversity

Slough Borough Council has a long commitment to progressing the equalities agenda; our track record in delivering culturally sensitive, equitable services to an increasingly diverse community is strong. The council seeks to foster an environment in which a person has an equal entitlement to high quality services, employment and opportunities for personal development, regardless of ethnic or racial origin, religion or belief, disability, age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or family circumstance.

Section 2

The housing register

Slough Borough Council will operate a managed Housing Register and will accept onto the Housing Register only those applicants who are over 16 and:

- Who meet the eligibility criteria
- Who qualify by meeting the reasonable preference criteria
- Do not fall into an ineligible non-qualifying category

Applicants who meet these criteria and are accepted onto the housing register will be placed into one of three bands.

The band they will be placed in will be determined by their circumstances. Additional preference will be awarded to applicants who meet the criteria set out within this scheme.

Applicants who are aged 16/17 year old will not normally qualify for an allocation until reaching the age of 18.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate their ability to meet any rental costs associated with an offer of social housing.

It should be noted that the allocations scheme cannot cover every eventuality. In special cases where there are exceptional circumstances, the service lead for strategic housing services has discretionary power to award exceptional priority and approve offers of housing, taking into consideration all factors relevant to housing and social needs. Where this document refers to rules and criteria for determining priority and eligibility for housing, subject to any legal constraints, discretionary powers may be used to deal with special cases which may need to be treated as exceptional.

To make sure the allocations scheme is operating fairly and within the law, the director of place and development, in consultation with the cabinet member for housing, will be able to approve any minor amendments to the scheme.

Our policy on choice

When making an application to join the housing register, qualifying applicants and members of their household, will be making an application to be housed:

- a. Anywhere within the borough of Slough
- b. In any tenure or tenancy type which meets their needs, whether council managed accommodation or a registered provider, normally a housing association
- c. In any size and type of property which meets the needs of the qualifying applicant and their household, as determined in this allocation scheme

Where more than one eligible applicant wishes to have a shared application, they will be joint applicants. Where applicants are applying jointly, both applicants must meet the qualification criteria.

All eligible and qualifying applicants will be placed on the register but when the council comes to decide what size or type of property the applicant is to be considered for, it will take account of whether other members of the applicant's household are eligible or qualifying persons. The council will also take into account a number of factors in making a decision on allocation.

For the purpose of the scheme, the following persons may be considered on the application:

- A care worker - where there is an identified need for a resident full time carer
- Dependant adult - where a relative requiring care normally resides with the applicant and there are no other housing options to consider
- Husband/wife/partner/civil partner
- Dependant children - this means the main applicant provides for the child and is in receipt or would normally qualify for Child Benefit and/or Tax Credits or other welfare benefits that include an element of provision for the dependent child.

The council will not accept the same children on more than one application and will not accept children who are housed elsewhere. A divorced or separated parent, who has staying access with a child or children, may not include them on his or her application. In the case of children, the test of normal residence as a member of the family will require residence as opposed to "staying" or "staying contact", even in cases of joint custody or joint residence or similar orders.

If the applicant's household includes only eligible and qualifying members, due to the high demand for large properties, the council may not include certain members of the household, such as non-dependant adult children, other adult relatives, non-relatives or lodgers, when determining what size or type of accommodation the applicant will be considered for in this scheme. Adult non-dependants are strongly advised to make an application in their own right. The council will take into consideration any non-dependant who is part of a statutory homeless family, only if no other solution can be offered.

In the case of large households, which may therefore not be accommodated together under this scheme, the council may discuss with the applicant how best the other members of the household may obtain accommodation, whether from the council or otherwise.

Section 3

Eligibility

Eligibility to join the Housing Register is determined nationally by law. The categories that are not eligible are set out in the Housing Act 1996 Part 6 section 160ZA (as amended) and in regulations made under that section. Applicants covered by those categories below will not be registered.

Section 160ZA reads:

Allocation only to eligible and qualifying persons: England

- (1) A local housing authority in England shall not allocate housing accommodation:
 - a. to a person from abroad who is ineligible for an allocation of housing accommodation by virtue of subsection (2) or (4), or
 - b. to two or more persons jointly if any of them is a person mentioned in paragraph (a)
- (2) A person subject to immigration control within the meaning of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 is ineligible for an allocation of housing accommodation by a local housing authority in England unless he is of a class prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State
- (3) No person who is excluded from entitlement to housing benefit by section 115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (exclusion from benefits) shall be included in any class prescribed under subsection (2)

- (4) The Secretary of State may by regulations prescribe other classes of persons from abroad who are ineligible to be allocated housing accommodation by local housing authorities in England

Persons who fall into these categories will not be considered by the council to be part of the household of an applicant, even if the applicant is themselves eligible.

If a person who has been admitted to the register ceases to be eligible, applying the above criteria, he or she will be removed from the register.

Section 4

Who qualifies for the register

Eligible applicants on the register will be those who (either by themselves or by the inclusion of a household member on their application form) fall within the persons accorded a statutory reasonable preference category. For these purposes, the council will apply the national categories of reasonable preference set out in the legislation. Those categories are:

(see Housing Act 1996, 166A (3))

- a. People who are homeless (within the meaning of Housing Act 1996 Part 7)
- b. People who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under Housing Act 1996 section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3)
- c. People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
- d. People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including any grounds relating to a disability)

- e. People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others)

Section 5

Who does not qualify for the register

Even if an applicant is eligible and would have satisfied the reasonable preference criteria, they will not be admitted to the housing register (and therefore will not qualify for an allocation) if they come within one of the following class of person, which the council has decided are classes of non-qualifying persons for the purposes of this scheme.

1. Applicants or those who can reasonably be expected to reside as part of their household, who have been convicted of housing or welfare benefit related fraud, where that conviction is unspent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Any person may re-apply once this conviction is spent.
2. Applicant(s) who have a joint gross household income exceeding £55,000.
3. Applicants or members of their household that have over £20,000 in savings, investments or equity. Monies that are gifted or transferred to another will be taken into consideration when assessing assets.
4. Applicants or members of their household who have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour, which makes them unsuitable to be a tenant. Includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Persistent failure to pay rent and/or service charges
 - b. Anti social behaviour perpetrated by the applicant or a member of his or her household which has caused a nuisance
 - c. Illegal or nuisance behaviour that has required Police or legal intervention

- d. Threats of and/or actual violence to any persons or members of their household
- e. Racial harassment or hate crime
- f. Obtaining a tenancy by deception and/or attempting to obtain a tenancy by fraud or deception

When making decisions regarding unacceptable behaviour, the council will consider when the unacceptable behaviour took place. Consideration will be given to the length of time that has elapsed and whether there has been a change in circumstances or behaviour.

- 5. Applicants who have been made one suitable offer of a secure (or introductory/starter) or assured tenancy anywhere within the borough of Slough, who have failed to accept the offer. Applicants and members of their household who have failed to accept a suitable and reasonable offer will be cancelled from the Register for a period of no less than 24 months.
- 6. Applicants who have accepted a suitable offer of a secure (or introductory/starter) or assured tenancy anywhere within the borough of Slough and have then terminated their tenancy within a 24 month period of the tenancy starting.
- 7. Applicants who have refused a suitable offer of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy made through the council's Social Lettings Agency or Rent Deposit Scheme.
- 8. Applicants or members of their household that have any housing related debt, including rent arrears or mortgage arrears, in respect of their current property or previous accommodation (This may be waived if agreement has been reached to clear the debt through a payment plan and this has been adhered to for a reasonable period). The council will consider a period of up to 10 years prior to applying to the Register and consideration will be given to applicants with mitigating circumstances. In the case of private accommodation, references may be sought from previous landlords/lenders.
- 9. Tenants who have failed to maintain their homes, have caused damage to their home or have breached the terms of their tenancy, either by their own behaviour or that of a member of their household.
- 10. Applicants who reside in Slough but have been placed in:
 - a. Temporary accommodation or assured shorthold accommodation by another council or Housing Association or agents, acting on their behalf
 - b. Institutional or residential accommodation by any other local authority, housing provider, health service or specialist provider
- 11. Any applicant who has committed acts of violence and/or aggression against any employee of the council. Any person using threats (verbal or other) or actual violence towards council staff will be removed from the register or will not be allowed to join the register.
- 12. Applicants or any members of their household who have previously purchased their home through right to buy/acquire (in the last 10 years), will also not be allowed to join the Register.
- 13. Applicants or any member of their household who own property in this country or abroad. This includes and is not limited to:
 - a. Those who are acquiring or have an interest in a freehold or leasehold residential property, including any property purchased under the right to buy/acquire/shared ownership/equity scheme
 - b. Those who may have gifted a residential property or equity to another within the last 10 years
 - c. Those who own or part own a houseboat or a fixed site mobile home
 - d. Those who have a financial interest in any such property where there are unresolved legal or financial issues

- 14. Secure, assured, flexible or fixed term tenants, holding a joint tenancy, where one tenant is absent.
- 15. Applicants who have continuously lived in Slough for less than five years up to and including the date of their application or the date on which a decision is made on their application whichever is the later.

The requirement of five year continuous residence may not apply where the applicant or any member of the applicant’s household, falls into one of the following:

- a. Forces applicants meeting additional preference
- b. A person who:
 - i. is already a secure or introductory tenant of the council or of any other local housing authority in England, or who is already an assured tenant of housing accommodation held by a private register provider of social housing in England and
 - ii. works in the district of the council or has been offered work in the council’s district and the council is satisfied that he or she has a genuine intention of taking up the offer of work (work or an offer of work which is short-term or marginal, ancillary to work in another district or voluntary work will not be considered as “work” for these purposes) and
 - iii. has a need to move to a particular locality in the council’s district because of (ii) above.
- c. Victims of domestic abuse escaping violence from another area and currently living in a charitable registered refuge in Slough
- d. A person with a custodial sentence who would otherwise meet the residence criteria
- e. A young person immediately taking a higher education course after leaving secondary education and who would otherwise meet the residence criteria

- f. Households who have been awarded Reasonable Preference under the Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.193(2)
- g. Relevant and looked after children residing in Slough
- h. Key workers

Priority on the register

Applications will be placed into one of three bands, as per assessment by the allocations officer.

The three bands are:

Band A	Urgent or exceptional need to move
Band B	Need to move due to reasonable preference and additional preference
Band C	Need to move due to reasonable preference

Band A - urgent need

The council will consider whether a person has a need to move due to an urgent circumstance:

1. Where an applicant, or any member of his or her household, has a life-threatening illness or disability and the accommodation occupied poses an immediate and exceptional risk of serious harm
2. Where an applicant is in severely overcrowded accommodation which poses a serious health hazard and that housing need cannot be met by other options, such as renting in the private sector. The property occupied must be insufficient by at least three bedrooms, as per the standard the council uses to allocate property. The council will consider if severe overcrowding has been brought about intentionally to gain any advantage
3. Where an applicant or any member of his or her household requires urgent re-housing on welfare grounds as a result of violence or threats of violence, including intimidated witnesses and those escaping serious anti-social behaviour or domestic violence

4. Where the local authority have served a demolition or prohibition order under the Housing Health and Safety Rating system where category 1 hazards exist and cannot be rectified and continuing to occupy the accommodation will pose a significant and immediate risk to the applicant's health or any member of his or her household
5. Where a Slough Borough Council tenant has succeeded to a tenancy and the property is too large for their needs
6. Slough Borough Council tenants who are required to move due to the redevelopment of their homes or where major works are required
7. Agreed statutory homeless cases in temporary accommodation where there is an urgent need to free up accommodation
8. Where the service lead has agreed an exceptional case

The Housing Needs Panel will make decisions concerning the award of urgent needs. The allocation manager in conjunction with the temporary accommodation team will prioritise the need to move an agreed homeless household.

Access to the housing needs panel is made on a strict referral basis. For Slough Borough Council tenants, neighbourhood housing officers will refer those experiencing urgent management problems. All other cases will be referred by the allocations officer.

The panel is made up of at least three of the following core representatives:

- Housing allocations manager or equivalent (Chair)
- Neighbourhood housing manager
- Community mental health - housing representative
- Specialist health visitor
- Senior occupational therapist

In the case of a split decision, the chair will have the final decision.

If required qualified medical opinion will be sought from the council's independent medical advisor (IMA).

Additional preference - Band B

The scheme allows the council to give additional preference to particular descriptions of people who are already within the reasonable preference categories. Taking into account local priorities and circumstances, the council have identified the following descriptions of people to give additional preference.

1. Applicants making a community contribution, as defined below:
 - a. Working Households - Applicants where at least one applicant is in employment. For the purposes of this scheme 'employment' means:
 - Single applicants working 16 hours or more per week
 - Joint applicants working 24 hours or more per week

Employment must be in the UK and for a continuous period of six months up to the point of application and the same at the point of offer. The council will disregard a period of up to three months whereby an applicant ends employment and becomes a job seeker and finds other employment within this timeframe. Workers employed in educational establishments will not be penalised for unpaid holiday closures.

- b. Training and Education - Applicants where at least one applicant is in training or education. For the purpose of this scheme studying or training means:
 - Single applicants studying or training 16 hours or more per week
 - Joint applicants studying or training 24 hours or more per week

Studying or training must be in the UK and for a continuous period of six months up to the point of application and the same at the point of offer. It must also be work related and lead to a recognised qualification. It may also be supplementary to any requirement by an employer.

c. Volunteering - Applicants where at least one applicant is volunteering. For the purpose of this scheme, volunteering means:

- Single applicants volunteering 16 hours or more per week
- Joint applicants volunteering 24 hours or more per week

Volunteering must be for a continuous period of at least six months up to the point of application and the same at point of offer. Volunteering must be on a formal basis and for an organisation accredited by the Slough Council for Voluntary Services.

2. Young people aged 16 to 21 (or up to 24 if in further/higher education), who have housing, or support needs and who have left or are due to leave the care of Slough Borough Council.
3. Single applicants leaving residential care.
4. Applicants who have been approved by Slough Borough Council to foster or adopt and have an existing track record of fostering or adopting for not less than two years.
5. Armed forces applicants with urgent housing needs who fall within the criteria for additional preference set out in section 166A(3) of the Housing Act 1996 as amended. This is applicable to a person who:
 - a. Is serving in the regular forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service
 - b. Formerly served in the regular armed forces

- c. Has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of that person's spouse or civil partner where the spouse or civil partner who has served in the regular forces; and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service; or
 - d. Is serving or has served in the reserve forces and who is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service
6. Households who have actively and positively engaged with the council's troubled families programme and have shown real progression within the programme.
 7. Social housing tenants who are under occupying a secure or assured tenancy that require a move to smaller accommodation. Private registered providers must agree that the resulting vacancy is given to the council as a nomination for another household in need on the council's housing register.
 8. The Right to Move - local housing authorities are required by law to give additional priority to applicants who meet the criteria as set out within the Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) (England) Regulations 2015.

The council will take into consideration:

- The distance and/or time taken to travel between work and home
- The availability and affordability of transport, taking into account level of income
- The nature of the work and whether similar opportunities are available closer to home
- Single applicants must be contracted to work 16 hours or more per week and joint applicants for 24 hours or more per week
- Other personal factors, such as medical conditions and child care, which would be affected if the tenant could not move

When a tenant has been offered a job and needs to move to take it up, they must be able to demonstrate a genuine intention to take up an offer of work. The council will need to verify evidence that confirms the intention, which could include a contract of employment or a formal offer letter. The council may contact the employer to verify an application at the point of joining the housing register and also when considering an offer of a property.

9. Households assessed with a need to move on medical grounds where the current housing conditions are having an adverse impact on the medical condition of the applicant or a member of the applicant's household. The condition or disability will be severe and remaining in the current home will contribute to deterioration in health. Such needs may relate to:
 - A mental illness or disorder
 - A physical or learning disability
 - Chronic or progressive medical conditions (e.g. MS, HIV/AIDS)
 - Infirmary due to old age

If required qualified medical opinion will be sought from the Council's independent medical advisor (IMA).

10. Households who have been awarded Reasonable Preference under the Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.193(2) and meet the qualification criteria for the scheme
11. Key worker - the council is aware that there are some vital services, for example in education and social care, which are being hampered in their recruitment of key staff because of the difficulty of securing suitable and affordable accommodation.

The council plans to adopt a scheme for assisting key workers who may not be able to afford to buy a home or to pay market rents. Key workers can also be prioritised for other housing opportunities including shared ownership schemes with our housing partners and affordable rented homes through the council's subsidiary housing company.

The scheme will only apply to those with an identified recruitment and retention need.

Reasonable preference - Band C

The council will apply the national categories of reasonable preference set out in the legislation.

1. Households who and have been awarded Reasonable Preference under the Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.193(2) and do not meet the qualification criteria for the scheme
2. People who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under Housing Act 1996 section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3)
3. Households occupying overcrowded housing. Overcrowding means the property is insufficient by one bedroom of the standard the council uses to allocate property. Where a property has two separate living/reception rooms, the second and any subsequent living room will be counted as a bedroom for the purpose of assessing overcrowding. Applicants who choose to sublet may not meet this criteria
4. Households occupying insanitary housing conditions and lack or share kitchen, bathroom and toilet facilities with a separate household. Applicants who choose to sublet may not meet this criteria
5. Households who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others)
6. People living in supported hostel accommodation

If a person who has been admitted to the register ceases to qualify applying the above criteria, he or she will be removed from the register.

Section 6

Offers of accommodation

Properties becoming available for allocation under this scheme will normally be treated as available for letting to qualifying applicants in a particular band or bands. Such a property will be allocated to the applicant who has waited longest in the relevant band, unless there are circumstances that support the objective of effectively matching available housing stock. Such exceptions are:

- When a property becomes available which is suitable for an individual applicant who has specific needs, in particular relating to a disability or medical condition or for extra care accommodation
- When dealing with under-occupation or assisting a transfer chain
- When decanting tenants whose homes are to be included in regeneration programmes or have major works
- Where there are a defined permitted number of persons allowed to occupy a property
- Where a sensitive let is required
- Where there is an exceptional circumstance
- Key worker

In these or similar circumstances, a senior officer will need to agree that the applicant may be allocated the property ahead of applicants who have waited longer.

Size, type and suitability of housing offers

Those accepted onto the housing register will be given one offer of suitable accommodation.

If a council or housing association tenant is prepared to move to a property with fewer bedrooms then it is in the council's interest to ensure that a move is facilitated as quickly as possible. The number of direct offers made will be at the discretion of the allocations team.

All other applicants who have failed to accept one suitable offer of accommodation will be removed from the housing register.

The council are unable to consider pet ownership when allocating property, unless it is a registered assistance animal such as a guide dog. Any refusal of an offer of accommodation on these grounds will be considered as unreasonable.

Due to the limited supply of accommodation in the borough, we are unable to consider the personal parking requirements of applicants.

The property size that will be allocated for a particular household will be assessed according to the following guidelines and will be based only on the actual household composition. The council uses the Government's bedroom standard for housing benefit. In some cases the council will count any second living room as a bedroom for allocation purposes.

Applicants are normally entitled to a bedroom each for the following groups:

- Single or co-habiting couple
- Any child over the age of 16 years
- Any two children of the same sex under the age of 16 years
- Any two children any sex aged under the age of 10
- A disabled child who cannot share a bedroom with another child
- A resident care worker

Applicants offered property due to the redevelopment of their homes or where major works are required will be entitled to the bedroom number on a like for like basis of their current home.

The council will discharge any duty owed under s.193 (2) where one offer of accommodation is refused. The offer will constitute the final offer for the purposes of s.193(7).

Each year the council will publish the number of lets made to each band by bedroom size.

Consideration will always be given to applicants in higher priority bands. Applicants in Band A will always be considered first followed by those with an additional preference, Band B and then a reasonable preference, Band C.

Transfer chains

In order to maximise the use of our stock and meet the needs of as many applicants as possible, the process of establishing transfer chains will be supported. Transfer chains may also be used to enable a particular type, size or location of property to be made available for a specific priority housing need. A transfer chain is created when an identified 'chain' of social housing tenants is waiting to move into the next property in the chain. To ease this process, the council will consider offering a suitable vacancy to the tenants at the head of the chain, enabling everyone in the chain to move.

Older persons accommodation

In order to qualify for older person's accommodation, all applicants must meet the qualifying criteria as set out in the scheme.

In addition the applicant(s) must meet the following qualifying criteria:

1. Be a minimum age of 50

Extra Care housing for the over 55's will be considered on the basis of care and support needs.

Local lettings plans

New affordable and social housing developments (both housing association and council and through an agreed partnering arrangement) and some existing estates or communities, may be subject to a local lettings policy adopted by the council.

A local lettings policy will set criteria for nominations or allocations (including transfers, beneficial transfers and moves due to best use of stock) to homes in the relevant area, aimed at achieving or maintaining balanced and sustainable communities or to address or prevent management problems and/or antisocial behaviour.

Priority will also be given in a local lettings policy to households opting to downsize.

Section 166A(6)(b) of the Housing Act 1996 enables local housing authorities to allocate a particular accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall into the reasonable preference category. This section enables the council to set aside homes on a particular estate or certain types of properties across the housing stock, for applicants who meet specific criteria, as set out in a local lettings plan applicable to those properties.

Section 7

Administration of the scheme

The guide 'How the scheme works' will outline all the procedural elements for the scheme.

Following receipt and processing of an application, applicants will be informed in writing as to whether or not:

1. They have met the eligibility criteria
2. They have met the reasonable preference criteria
3. They are in a non-qualifying class
4. They have been registered on the housing register (if so, with the date of registration)
5. Any additional preference has been awarded

If requested by applicants, the council will provide in writing:

- Information relating to decisions taken based upon the facts of the case which determine whether or not to allocate particular housing
- Information providing, and as far as is possible, the predicted waiting time until accommodation is likely to become available. The time period an applicant on the housing register is likely to have to wait is difficult to predict due to the unpredictable availability of suitable properties and varying volume of applications

Requesting a review

1. An applicant may request a review of the decision within 21 days of the original decision:
 - a. Whether or not the offer made to them is suitable
 - b. That they are ineligible to join the housing register for an allocation due to them being subject to immigration control (160ZA (2))
 - c. That they are not a person qualifying to join the housing register
 - d. That any particular facts are or are not going to be taken into account in considering whether to allocate them accommodation
2. The applicant shall be notified in writing of the decision of the review and the grounds for that decision. The council aims to respond to review requests within 56 days.
3. An applicant found not eligible or to be non-qualifying may make a fresh application if they feel that they should be treated as an eligible or qualifying applicant. A new application will only be considered should there be a material change in circumstances, which would reverse the original decision.

There is no further right to a review of a decision. If an applicant remains dissatisfied, they may seek independent legal advice. Applicants may also pursue a complaint through the council's formal complaints procedure. If they remain dissatisfied, having done so, they may then take their case to the Housing Ombudsman.

Fraud prevention

Housing Act 1996 Section 171 makes it an offence for anyone seeking assistance from a housing authority under Part 6 of the 1996 Act to:

- Knowingly or recklessly give false information
- Knowingly withhold information which the housing authority has reasonably required the applicant to give

Ground 5 in Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended by section 146 of the 1996 Act) enables a housing authority to seek possession of a tenancy granted as a result of a false statement by the tenants or a person acting as the tenant's instigation. The same test applies to assured tenants of private registered providers of social housing (Ground 17, Schedule 2, Housing Act 1988).

It is important for Slough Borough Council to protect scarce housing resources. Any applicant seeking to obtain housing by making a false or misleading statement, failing to inform the council of a material fact relevant to the outcome of their application or of a change in circumstances, will have their application immediately cancelled.

The council will not hesitate to prosecute any applicant(s) who have either been allocated a home or applied for a home by using false or fraudulent information.

Deliberate worsening of circumstances

Where appropriate, a decision may be made to exclude the applicant from the housing register, where an applicant or member of the household has deliberately worsened their circumstances in order to gain priority.

Members of the council, staff members and their relations

In order to ensure that the council is seen to be treating all applicants fairly, any application for housing or re-housing from members of the council or employees of the council or associated persons, must be disclosed.

These applications will be assessed in the normal way but any allocation of housing will require specific approval by the service lead for strategic housing services.

Failure to disclose such matters as set out above, will lead to the necessary disciplinary actions being taken, as set out in the council's governance and policies.

This document can be made available on audio tape, braille or in large print, and is also available on the website where it can easily be viewed in large print.

Housing Allocation Scheme 2018-2022

If you would like assistance with the translation of the information in this document, please ask an English speaking person to request this by calling 01753 875392.

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज़ में दी गई जानकारी के अनुवाद कए जाने की सहायता चाहते हैं तो कृपया किसी अंग्रेजी भाषी व्यक्ति से यह अनुरोध करने के लए 01753 875392 पर बात करके कहें.

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਵਿਚਲੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਬੋਲਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ 01753 875392 ਉੱਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਹੋ।

Aby uzyskać pomoc odnośnie tłumaczenia instrukcji zawartych w niniejszym dokumencie, należy zwrócić się do osoby mówiącej po angielsku, aby zadzwoniła w tej sprawie pod numer 01753 875392.

Haddii aad doonayso caawinaad ah in lagu turjibaano warbixinta dukumeentigaan ku qoran, fadlan weydiiso in qof ku hadla Inriis uu ku Waco 01753 875392 si uu kugu codsado.

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز میں دی گئی معلومات کے ترجمے کے سلسلے میں مدد چاہئے تو، براہ کرم ایک انگریزی بولنے والے شخص سے 01753 875392 پر کال کر کے اس کی درخواست کرنے کے لئے کہیں۔

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhood & Community Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 15th January 2019

CONTACT OFFICER: Karan Lewis, Information & Participation Manager

(For all Enquiries) (01753) 874437

WARD(S): All

PART I
FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY OVERVIEW INDICATORS**1. Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the new set of Scrutiny Overview Indicators (SOI) for Neighbourhood Services, as agreed at the 4th April 2018 Panel meeting. This is the first report presented for Neighbourhood Services covering these new agreed indicators for 2017/18 and covers reporting for quarters 1 and 2.

This report advises that following a restructure of both Neighbourhood Services and Strategic Housing Services that took place on the 1st November, all subsequent reporting of the Scrutiny Overview Indicators detailed in this report and those reported by Strategic Housing will be presented via the Housing Services, Scrutiny Panel report.

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

- The Panel note the Scrutiny Overview Indicators Dashboard as presented.
- The Panel note the future reporting of Scrutiny Overview Indicators for Housing Services

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan

3.1 The Scrutiny Overview Indicators (SOI's) track and follow activities and performance in key areas of operation for Neighbourhood Services and therefore contribute towards the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy and the Council's Five Year Plan.

3.2 ***“Our residents will have access to good quality homes”***
“Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit”

- Voids – measuring the average time to prepare properties for allocation, to ensure key-to-key times are efficient and allow Housing Allocations to meet housing demand for good quality housing meeting strategic well being priorities. The overall management of the voids process is laid out in the Neighbourhood Services ‘Void Property Management Policy’.

- The average time for re-letting a standard void after works have taken place.
- Repairs & Maintenance - measure the repair response performance of the three priority categories against the set targets as stated within the RMI contract.
 - RMI Performance priority 1 - Emergency
 - RMI Performance priority 2 - Urgent
 - RMI Performance priority 3 - Routine
- Housing Regulation – identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings ensuring those in the private sector are in safe, good quality housing. The monitoring report highlights the risks identified within the private sector and the management of House in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).
 - Number of private properties that have had ‘Category 1’ hazards removed.
 - Number of enquiries from private sector tenants regarding their landlord’s failure to repair.
 - Number of mandatory licenced HMOs.
- Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) – to monitor levels of ASB and two of the powers used to tackle it, ensuring that Neighbourhood Services works effectively with partners to protect people who are suffering as a result of the behaviour of others. We recognise that ASB is an overarching term to describe a broad range of criminal and nuisance behaviour.
 - The number of new ASB related cases received.
 - Number of Closure Orders.
 - Number of Community Protection Notices issued
- Repairs and Capital Investment – to ensure all council housing stock is a safe, good quality home for residents; the home has a valid gas safety certificate providing safe housing that remains legally compliant. We will be reviewing the approach to electrical testing in preparation of the Housing White Paper.
 - Landlord Statutory gas compliance for all HRA properties
- Recharges – to monitor the number of recharges that have been raised and the total value of recharges invoiced during the quarter.
 - Number of and total value of recharges invoiced

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial

There are no financial implications of proposed action.

(b) Risk Management

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Panel note the Scrutiny Overview Indicators Dashboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Opportunity to understand services supply & demand.Risk of loss of revenue and additional expense of households in temporary accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Indicators monitored monthly and reported on a quarterly basis	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Regular (monthly) meetings with stakeholders to monitor and progress void activity – identify and resolve blockages.RSM bespoke audits.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no human rights or other implications.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

An EIA is not required as the report requires the SOI Dashboard to be noted and approval of subsequent changes required. No impact on equality has been identified.

5 Agreed reporting for the financial year 2018/19

5.1 As stated previously a revised set of indicators was approved in April 2018 and the full list of these are shown below.

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Overview Indicators (SOI's)

- SOI 1 Average re-let time in days (standard re-lets)
- SOI 2 RMI Performance priority 1 (Emergency) repairs
- SOI 3 RMI Performance priority 2 (Urgent) repairs
- SOI 4 RMI Performance priority 3 (Routine) repairs
- SOI 5 The percentage of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate (RAMIS reporting via Property Services)
- SOI 6 Number of and total value of recharges invoiced
- SOI 7 Number of Category 1 hazards removed from private rented accommodation
- SOI 8 Number of enquiries from private sector tenants regarding landlords failure to repair
- SOI 9 Number of mandatory licenced HMO
- SOI 10 Number of Closure Orders

SOI 11 Number of Community Protection Notices (CPN's)

SOI 12 Number of ASB related cases received (HRA & Private Sector), showing top ten case types

SOI 13 Number of stage 1 complaints received

SOI 14 Number of stage 2 complaints received

SOI 15 Number of stage 3 complaints received

5.2 On the 25th June 2018 the Panel agreed for Neighbourhood Services and Strategic Housing Service alternate in providing six monthly updates. Each of the services 'exception' reports are received by the Panel for indicators reporting a significant change, specifically:

- Where there is an identified risk to the service
- A significant positive impact
- Specific indicators raised by residents and Members for discussion and/or awareness

5.3 SOI 1 Average re-let time in days (standard re-lets)

Due to average re-let time for a standard void during quarter 1 which is detailed in the SOI dashboard (Appendix 'A') a RAG Rating Action Sheet was raised (Appendix 'B'). This sheet outline the reason given for the RAG rating and what responsive action is being taken to bring the indicator back in line with it expected performance.

5.4 SOI 6 Number of and total value of recharges invoiced

The new Rechargeable Repairs Policy was approved by the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel on Monday, 25th June. The policy has been launched via Osborne but recharge data and performance by Osborne requires further definition before recharges can be robustly pursued. One recharge has been raised to a non-customer for contributory costs for estate works. The new Clienting Recharges Officer commenced in post on 15.10.2018 and routine recharging is expected to commence by December 2018.

5.5 SOI 13 Number of stage 1 complaints received

When setting the initial RAG rating measure for this indicator and SOI 14 Number of stage 2 complaints received the RAG rating measure was based on the previous years trend. This measure had to be adjusted after Q1 as it did not take into account that some complaints regarding the new RMI provider might come via the Neighbourhood Services complaint route. Following the adjustments both indicators SOI 13 & SOI 14 attained a Green RAG rating for Q2.

5.6 The full Neighbourhood Service Scrutiny Overview Indicator dashboard is Appendix 'A'

6 Comments of Other Committees

No other committees at Slough Borough Council have considered this report.

7 Appendices Attached

'A' Scrutiny Overview Indicator Dashboard.
'B' RAG Rating Action Sheet 07

8 Background Papers

None

This page is intentionally left blank

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Overview Indicators

SOI Ref	PI Description	Target 2018/19	Performance	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	Year to Date	Comments for Scrutiny
Voids									
SOI 1	Average re-let time in days (standard re-lets)	35 days within 20%	RAG	Red	Red			Red	<p>For Q1 the figure will be made up of any old coded routine voids & the RMI contact description V2 standard void.</p> <p>Q2 There has been two consecutive monthly falls in the average day's to re-let a V2 Standard Void and for the month of September the figures was 64 days.</p>
			Average re-let time in days (Pre-contract voids)	253					
			Average re-let time in days (Osborne voids)	97	111			105	
Repairs & Maintenance									
SOI 2	RMI Performance priority 1 repairs (Emergency repair)	95% Within 1%	RAG	Green	Green			Green	<p>SOI description - Percentage of Priority 1(Emergency repair) attend within 2 hours and complete within 24 hours (or the next working day) qualifying repairs completed on first visit.</p>
	As contract performance indicator KDI 7		Actual	98%	97%			97%	
SOI 3	RMI Performance priority 2 repairs (Urgent Responsive repair)	95% Within 1%	RAG	Green	Green			Green	<p>SOI description - The percentage of Priority 2 repairs completed "Right First Time"</p>
	As contract performance indicator KDI 13		Actual	97%	97%			97%	
SOI 4	RMI Performance priority 3 repairs (Responsive repair)	97% within 0.5%	RAG	Green	Green			Green	<p>SOI description - The percentage of Priority 3 (non-emergency) for which an appointment was made and kept during the quarter.</p>
	Extracted from contract performance indicator KDI 6 for P3		Actual	96.92%	97.10%			97.01%	
Repairs and capital investment									
SOI 5	The percentage of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate (RAMIS reporting via Property Services)	100%	RAG	Green	Green			Green	<p>The figure is based on a snapshot produced on the last day of the quarter, the information for the indicator is obtained from the corporate risk database (RAMIS). 100% performance achieved for both snapshots at the end of Q1 & Q2</p>
			Actual	100%	100%			100%	

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Overview Indicators

SOI Ref	PI Description	Target 2018/19	Performance	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	Year to Date	Comments for Scrutiny
Recharges									
SOI 6	Number of and total value of recharges invoiced	0%	Number Raised	No recharges raised for Q1	1			1	The new Rechargeable Repairs Policy was approved by the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel on Monday, 25th June. The policy has been launched via Osborne but recharge data and performance by Osborne requires further definition before recharges can be robustly pursued. One recharge has been raised to a non-customer for contributory costs for estate works. The new Clienting Recharges Officer commenced in post on 15.10.2018 and routine recharging is expected to commence by December 2018.
			Value		565.46			565.46	
Housing Regulation									
SOI 7	Number of CAT1 removed	19 (within 10%) PQ	RAG	Green	Green			Green	Q2 figure is down 5 on Q1 this year but up 5 on the same quarter last year. Green RAG rating given as within anticipated range.
			Actual	26	21			47	
SOI 8	Number of enquiries from private sector tenants regarding landlords failure to repair	60 (Within +10%) PQ	RAG	Green	Green			Green	Q2 figure is down 19 cases on Q1, Green RAG rating given as within anticipated range.
			Actual	55	36			91	
SOI 9	Number of licensed Mandatory HMO	74 within 10% PQ	RAG	Green	Green			Green	Q2 has seen a slight increase in licensed HMO's up 3 on Q1, a Green RAG rating given as within anticipated range. There is to be a 3 months statutory consultation for the proposed licensing scheme in Slough and depending on the outcome and what proposal is adopted will have an effect on the following quarterly outturn figures.
			Actual	81	84			84	

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Overview Indicators

SOI Ref	PI Description	Target 2018/19	Performance	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	Year to Date	Comments for Scrutiny
Anti social behaviour (HRA & Private Sector)									
SOI 10	Number of closure orders	0 - 1 PQ	RAG	Green	Green			Green	The first closure order of the year has been recorded in Q2, a Green RAG rating has been given as the outturn is within the anticipated range.
			Actual	0	1			1	
SOI 11	Number of Community Protection Notices (CPN's)	0 - 5 PQ	RAG	Amber	Green			Green	The number of CPN's issued dropped by two in Q2 to four, a Green RAG rating has been given as the outturn returned into the anticipated range.
			Actual	6	4			10	
SOI Ref	Title			Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4	Full year	Detail of indicator
SOI 12	Quarter 4 Target or M/CP		RAG	Green	Green			Green	<p>The RAG rating for this indicator is based on the combined total of HRA & Private Sector ASB related service requests mapped against previous trend for the last five years.</p> <p>This indicator has performed as expected based on previous yearly trends and has been given a Green RAG rating for both Q1 & Q2.</p> <p>Vehicle ASB recorded by Neighbourhood Services tops the table for the first two quarters, but this is up just 19 cases on the same period last year. Recorded Fly-tipping on public land by Neighbourhood Services has seen a decrease of 304 cases over the two quarters.</p>
	1242 (within +10%)	Type							
		Vehicles	233	282				515	
		Fly Tipping (Public Land)	201	186				387	
		Loud rowdy nuisance behaviour	62	137				199	
		Neighbour dispute	71	55				126	
		Noise-Single family house	66	61				127	
		Fly Tipping (Private Land)	54	63				117	
		Nuisance neighbour	39	71				110	
		Rats	48	40				88	
		Planning Application	36	40				76	
		Untaxed Vehicle		70				70	
		Messy Garden/Overgrown	35					35	
			810	1005	0	0		1815	
		1322	1521	0	0		2843		
		61%	66%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!		64%		

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Overview Indicators

SOI Ref	PI Description	Target 2018/19	Performance	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	Year to Date	Comments for Scrutiny
Complaints, compliments and enquiries									
SOI 13	Number of stage 1 complaints received	54 within +30% PQ	RAG	Amber	Green			Green	The initial measure for the RAG rating of this indicator was based on the previous year trend and did not take into account that complaints regarding the new RMI provider might come via the Neighbourhood Services complaint route. This indicator was adjusted after Q1 to take into account this factor and so attaining a Green RAG rating.
			Actual	47	70			117	
SOI 14	Number of stage 2 complaints received	7 within +30% PQ	RAG	Amber	Green			Green	The initial measure for the RAG rating of this indicator was based on the previous year trend and did not take into account that complaints regarding the new RMI provider might come via the Neighbourhood Services complaint route. This indicator was adjusted after Q1 to take into account this factor and so attaining a Green RAG rating.
			Actual	8	6			14	
SOI 15	Number of stage 3 complaints received	0 - 2 PQ	RAG	Amber	Green			Green	The outturn figure for Q2 on this indicator has returned to expected levels and achieved a Green RAG rating
			Actual	3	0			3	

RAG Rating Action Sheet (1)

Appendix B

1. To be completed by the SOI monitoring officer

SOI No.	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TITLE:	RAG RATING AWARDED	
SOI 1	Average re-let time in days (standard re-lets)	Red	
Team/Operational area		Data owner	Data supplier
Neighbourhood Services		Mark Reynolds	Kevin Smith
Target, or SPC limit reached or breached		Actual target performance or outturn reached	
35 Days within +20%		Average re-let time in days (Pre-contract voids) 253, Average re-let time in days (Osborne voids) 97.	
Reporting quarter	Quarter1 18/19		
Date Raised:	7/9/18	RAG sheet No	07

2. To be completed by respondent for the service area affected

REASON GIVEN FOR RAG RATING:				
<p>Under the new RMI contract, due to processes and procedures not being fully embedded, performance has been below acceptable targets as reported for Quarters 1 and 2 and has retained the RAG rating above.</p> <p>In Quarter 2 there have been two consecutive monthly falls in the average re-let time for a V2 Standard Void and for the month of September the figures was 64 days.</p> <p>Re-let times continues to be a key priority of performance management within the RMI partnership with the intention to improve this position and achieve the 35 day target.</p>				
(PLEASE SELECT BEST MATCH OF ROUTE CAUSE)				
PROCESS INADEQUACY	TRAINING	COMMUNICATION	RESOURCES	*OTHER
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
*If stated other please suggest category header for route cause				
RESPONSIVE ACTION TO BE TAKEN:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurate weekly performance reports being produced and reviewed, to ensure timescales are being achieved. Regular partnership meetings between Client and Service Provider to review progress, and workflow volumes. Continued on-going communications between all internal parties within SBC to ensure processes are adhered to and timescales met Additional resources being provided by Service Provider to complete void property volumes within necessary timescales. Review policy and procedure to ensure process is efficient. Intention to be within performance target by beginning of financial year. 				
Respondent	Date	Action target date		
Mark Reynolds	26/10/18	1/4/19		

3. To be completed by the SOI monitoring officer

RESULT & EFFECTIVE OF ACTION:			
ACTION SHEET		CLOSED/CARRIED FORWARD (<i>DELETE AS APPLICABLE</i>)	
Review date:		Reviewing officer:	

RAG rating action sheet 1

If carrying forward please use RAG rating action sheet 2

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhood and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 15th January 2019

CONTACT OFFICER: Neale Cooper; Head of Finance (Transformation)

(For all enquiries) (01753) 875417

WARD(S): All

PART I
FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION

2019/20 HOUSING RENTS AND SERVICE CHARGES**1 Purpose of Report**

To present the changes in the Housing rents and service charges for 2019/20.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Panel is requested to scrutinise and comment on the following aspects of the report which will be considered by Cabinet on the 21st January and then by Council on 29th January:-

- (a) Council house dwelling rents for 2019/20 to decrease by 1% over the 2018/19 rent with effect from Monday 1st April 2019. This is in line with current government guidelines and legislation.
- (b) Garage rents, heating, utility and ancillary charges to increase by 2.4% with effect from Monday 1st April 2019. This is based upon the September CPI figure.
- (c) Service charges to increase by 2.4% with effect from Monday 1st April 2019. This is based upon the September CPI figure.
- (d) 'Other committee' property rents to increase by 2.4% from Monday 1st April 2019 in line with the September CPI figure.
- (e) Properties leased from James Elliman Homes to increase by 2.4% from Monday 1st April 2019 in line with the September CPI figure; currently, these are Pendeen Court and 81-83 High Street used as emergency and temporary accommodation for homeless households.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

This report sets out the context and implications for the council over the setting of housing rents and service charges for the next four years and impact upon the local community.

3b Five Year Plan Outcomes

This report will primarily have implications for Outcome 4 in the delivery of future social and affordable homes by the council, and the maximisation of the rental stream and asset value to the HRA.

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial

The financial implications are contained within this report.

(b) Risk Management

If the Council follows Government guidance and legislation in the setting of its dwelling rents, then the risk to the Council will be mitigated.

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal	n/a	
Property		
Human Rights		
Health and Safety		
Employment Issues	n/a	
Equalities Issues		
Community Support		
Communications		
Community Safety		
Financial	Ensure that the Council sets a balanced HRA annual budget and matches the capital programme to the available resources.	
Timetable for delivery		Approval in January of the new rents will enable tenants to receive notification well within the statutory timescales.
Project Capacity		
Other		

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The 1% reduction in council housing rents is applied across all the council's social housing and will have a positive impact on the tenants.

5 Supporting Information

Background

- 5.1 For the 10 years prior to 2015/16, the setting of Council social rents has been guided by the Government policy called rent convergence, the intention of which was to bring parity to Council social rents across the country, and reduce the 'gap' between Council social rents and Housing Association rents.
- 5.2 Driving these annual rent charges was a Government prescribed formula which linked the following year's rent changes to the previous September's RPI and was weighted for regional differences e.g. salaries and house prices.
- 5.3 However, in the summer budget on the 8th July 2015, the Chancellor announced that "rents paid in the social housing sector will not be frozen, but reduced by 1% a year for the next four years". In previous years, the Government has always allowed Councils 'discretion' in changing their rents but produced a rent policy to guide Councils in the setting of their rents. Slough Borough Council has followed Government 'rent policy' and set its rents in line with that policy.
- 5.4 The Government has now departed from the previous practice of issuing rent 'guidance' to setting social rents across the country through primary legislation. Section 23 (1) of The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 states that:-

In relation to each relevant year, registered providers of social housing must secure that the amount of rent payable in a relevant year by a tenant of their social housing in England is 1% less than the amount that was payable by the tenant in the preceding 12 months.

- 5.5 Section 23 (6) then goes on to define the relevant applicable years as a year beginning on the 1 April 2016, 1 April 2017, 1 April 2018 or 1 April 2019.
- 5.6 The Act does allow exemptions from this rent reduction to be granted by the Secretary of State but these are very limited and clearly specified and cover properties such as specialist supported housing, temporary social housing, care homes and nursing homes. One of those exemptions (section 25(10)) is if the SoS considers that the local authority would be unable to avoid serious financial difficulties if it were to comply with the 1% rent reductions.

In effect, this means that for 2019/20, the Council will again need to set its social rents (HRA) 1% lower than the rents current in this year.

Impact

- 5.7 The HRA 30 Year financial Business plan has been updated to reflect the introduction of the 1% decrease this year and next year. The impact on this year is an estimated reduction of £0.3m over last year's rental income of £32.4m.

The estimated average weekly rent for the current year is now £102.46 and the Government proposals will produce an estimated loss in potential rental income of £0.9m over this year and next year, and an average decrease in weekly rent to £101.44 next year; this roughly equates to the loss of 3 new social properties.

Next Four Years

5.8 The rent decrease will apply this year and for next year. On the 4th October 2017, the Government announced that from 2020, social housing rents would be limited to CPI plus 1% for the following five years. In September 2018, the Government launched a consultation document 'Rents for social housing from 2020-21' in which it was proposed that rents could be increased by up to CPI+1% each year for a period of at least 5 years from 2020. This consultation has now closed but the outcome is not yet known. However, this has now been assumed in the HRA 30 year Financial Business Plan with just CPI for the remaining years (CPI has been assumed to be 1%).

5.9 The other changes likely to impact on the HRA and the Council's tenants in the next few years are:-

5.9.1 Universal Credit

The full UC service is still being rolled out and will affect all new claims from working age customers with less than three children e.g. unemployed, sick, disabled, carers, lone parents, foster carers plus change of circumstances; certain client groups e.g. over 65s, supported housing, will be exempt. The financial impact on the HRA for 2019/20 is difficult to estimate but the budgeted rental income collection rate has been revised downwards and the bad debts provision increased in anticipation of the switch to monthly payments, the longer processing time, and the merging of HB with several other benefits into one payment. The HRA Financial Business Plan will be reviewed on a regular basis as the full impact of Universal Credit becomes clearer.

5.9.2 HRA Borrowing

From 2012, Councils were restricted in how much their Housing Revenue Account could borrow to fund new council housing and major refurbishment programmes. The Government has now removed this restriction by abolishing the Housing Revenue Account cap that controlled local authority borrowing for house building. Details are still emerging but it is likely that any new borrowing will be governed by the CIPFA developed *The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities* - a professional code of practice to support local authorities in taking decisions on capital investments. Key objectives of the Code are to ensure, within a clear framework, that local authorities' capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable; that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice; and that local strategic planning, asset management planning and proper option appraisal are supported.

A number of proposed new build schemes are in the development stage and these will be reviewed to ascertain the optimal balance of new units achievable with this additional source of loan funding.

6 Comments of Other Committees

The Housing rents and service charges 2019/20 will also be presented to Cabinet on the 21st January 2019 prior to Council making their final decision.

7 **Conclusion**

The Panel is requested to scrutinise and comment on the housing rents and service charges 2019/20 prior to submission to full Council on the 29th January 2019 for the ultimate decision.

8 **Background Papers**

- '1' Welfare and Reform Act 2016
- '2' Housing and Planning Act 2016
- '3' 'Rents for social housing from 2020-21'

This page is intentionally left blank

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 15th January 2019

CONTACT OFFICER: Dean Tyler, Service Lead Strategy & Performance
(For all Enquiries) (01753) 875847

WARDS: All

PART I
FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION

NEIGHBOURHOODS & COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL
2018/19 WORK PROGRAMME

1. **Purpose of Report**

For the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel (NCS Scrutiny Panel) to discuss its current work programme.

2. **Recommendations/Proposed Action**

That the Panel note the current work programme for the 2018/19 municipal year.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3.1 The Council's decision-making and the effective scrutiny of it underpins the delivery of all the Joint Slough Wellbeing Strategy priorities. The NCS Scrutiny Panel, along with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and other Scrutiny Panels combine to meet the local authority's statutory requirement to provide public transparency and accountability, ensuring the best outcomes for the residents of Slough.

3.2 The work of the NCS Scrutiny Panel also reflects the priorities of the Five Year Plan, in particular the following:

- Our residents will have access to good quality homes

3.3 In particular, the NCS Scrutiny Panel specifically takes responsibility for ensuring transparency and accountability for Council services relating to housing, regeneration and environment, and safer communities.

4. **Supporting Information**

4.1 The current work programme is based on the discussions of the NCS Scrutiny Panel at previous meetings, looking at requests for consideration of issues from officers and issues that have been brought to the attention of Members outside of the Panel's meetings.

4.2 The work programme is a flexible document which will be continually open to review throughout the municipal year.

5. **Conclusion**

This report is intended to provide the NCS Scrutiny Panel with the opportunity to review its upcoming work programme and make any amendments it feels are required.

6. **Appendices Attached**

A - Work Programme for 2018/19 Municipal Year

7. **Background Papers**

None.

NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL
WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

Meeting Date
28 February 2019
Proposed date - Crime and Disorder Reduction Panel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly tipping and use of CCTV • Rogue Landlords • Market Lane – to include representation from Network Rail
3 April 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing – performance statistics (to be taken as first item) • Downsizing • Key workers' housing • Home Improvement Agency • Review of plans to expand low and medium rise housing

To be programmed:

- Residents' experiences (first meeting of 2019 – 20)
- Licensing of housing in multiple occupancy

This page is intentionally left blank

MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE RECORD

NEIGHBOURHOODS & COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL 2018 – 19

COUNCILLOR	MEETING DATES					
	25/06/2018	06/09/2018	01/11/2018	15/01/2019	28/02/2019	03/04/2019
N. Holledge	P	P	Ap			
Kelly	Ap	P	P			
S Parmar	P	P	P			
Plenty	P	P	P			
Rasib	P	P	P			
Sabah	P	P	P			
A Sandhu	P	P	P			
Shah	P	Ap	P*			
Wright	P	P	P			

P = Present for whole meeting
Ap = Apologies given

P* = Present for part of meeting
Ab = Absent, no apologies given

This page is intentionally left blank