

**COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF MEETING
Wednesday, 9th November 2016**

PRESENT: Councillor Butterworth (in the Chair); Councillors Susan Emmott, Malcolm, Meredith, O'Neill, O'Rourke, Stott, Wazir, Winkler and Zaheer.

OFFICERS: D. Bowler (Assistant Director – Place), M. Robinson (Assistant Director – Planning and Development), D. Cook (Programme Co-ordinator: Rochdale Development Agency) and P. Thompson (Resources Directorate).

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor West.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

27 There were no declarations of interests.

MINUTES

28 **DECIDED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Communities, Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held 7th September 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

29 The considered a report of the Assistant Director (Legal, Governance and Workforce) which presented the updated Communities, Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2016/17, including the Committee's Action List.

The recommendations were put forward as Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7 requires Overview and Scrutiny Committees to set a work programme and to report it to the Council.

**DECIDED – that (1) Work Programme 2016/17 as appended to the submitted report be noted;
(2) the actions list appended to the submitted report be noted.**

ROCHDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2016-2019

30 The Committee scrutinised a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods that provided Members with an update about the draft Homelessness Strategy that is currently available for consultation and to invite Members to contribute any views or observation in regard to the draft Strategy.

The Council had approved a Homelessness Strategy (2013 - 2016) in 2013 following an independent review. The Strategy identified the priorities for the Council in meeting the needs of homeless households and those at risk of homelessness. A detailed Strategy Action Plan had also been agreed by Members and this was monitored by the Homelessness Strategy Board chaired by the Portfolio for Housing and Environment, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Services. Representatives from strategic partners including Health, Adult Care Services, Children's Social Care Services and Community Safety were also members of the Board. A number of services have been commissioned to provide a range of preventative and reactive services to help households to prevent them from becoming homeless and to support those that do become homeless. In 2015, the

Homelessness Strategy Board agreed to undertake a further review of homelessness and, in consultation with members, stakeholders, service users and the wider community, will develop a revised Homelessness Strategy for 2016 - 2019.

Members considered the report in detail and sought clarification on the sites that the Council provided for gypsies and travellers. A Member stated that the presence of gypsies and travellers was a cause of concern for members of the public and had been, in recent times, a particular problem in the Council's Healy Ward. Concern was expressed at the detritus left at locations after the gypsies/travellers had moved on. The Committee was advised that the Council had two sites in the Borough for accommodating gypsies and travellers, one of which was of a temporary nature and the other was for more permanent travellers. The Council was currently devising a revised strategy for unlawful encampments of gypsies and travellers and working Counsel who advised on Harlow District Council in Essex who had recently taken out an injunction against local gypsies/travellers, which would inform a revised strategy.

Members also sought clarification on the status of asylum seekers and refugees in terms of the Council's obligations towards them; noted that there was to be a Greater Manchester Homeless count to ascertain how many rough sleepers there may be in the Borough; and also noted the work that was being carried out to introduce a Greater Manchester Hospital Discharge Protocol between hospital services and the local authority homelessness services.

DECIDED – That the report be noted.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING OF REGISTERED PROVIDER PARTNERS

31 The Committee scrutinised a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods which provided Members with an update on the performance of the Council's Registered Provider Partners in 2015/16 across a range of initiatives and the joint work they are involved in through the Strategic Housing Partnership to deliver strategic priorities at a neighbourhood and borough-wide level.

The Committee were advised that there are currently 14 Registered Providers (formerly known as housing associations) operating across the Borough. These organisations managed over 20,000 properties, the majority of which were social or affordable homes for rent, however included in this figure were affordable homes for sale, mainly shared ownership, and supported housing.

The main Registered Providers operating in the Borough, seven in total, were all members of the Rochdale Strategic Housing Partnership (RSHP). The seven RPs are: Rochdale Boroughwide Housing, Contour Homes, Great Places Housing Group, The Guinness Partnership, Regenda Group, Riverside Group and St. Vincent's Housing Association

The RSHP is the Borough's high level strategic housing group and was established to maximise the contribution of housing towards the Borough's broader objectives and the delivery of targets in key Council and Partner Strategies. The RSHP meets on a quarterly basis.

In considering the report Members sought clarification as to the influence that the Council can bring to bear on the operations of the Borough's RP: Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH). Members were advised that from April 2017 the 5 year period for RBH to deliver the commitments, promises and aspirations within the Transfer Agreement ends, so to does the Council's right to a representative on the RBH Executive Board. RBH will not be under an obligation to present performance

reports on an individual basis as they currently do. Members of the Committee urged that appropriate officers of the Council be requested to look carefully at future obligations that could be imposed on RBH and that where possible stringent performance targets be established.

DECIDED – That the report be noted.

DIRECTORATE PLANS 2016-17 QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

32 The Committee scrutinised a report of the Director of Economy and the Director of Neighbourhoods which presented the positions of their respective Directorates at the end of Quarter Two (30th September 2016) and of the activities contained in the Economy Directorate Plan 2016/17 and the Neighbourhoods Directorate Plan 2016/17.

In terms of the Economy Directorate 91.67% (22 out of 24) of the actions included in the Directorate Plan 2016/17 are not yet due for completion but were on target for successful completion. Of the two other actions one was successfully completed and the other was not completed by the target date, his latter action related to proposed heritage and public realm projects (specifically including the Rochdale River reopening scheme and the Middleton Townscape Heritage initiative) which the Committee were advised was progressing.

The Director of Economy also submitted an additional appendix to his report that provided Members with performance information on the activities of the Rochdale Development Agency which are undertaken on behalf of the Council, for the first two quarters of 2016/17 (April - September).

In terms of the Neighbourhoods Directorate 78.57% (22 out of 28) of the actions included in the Directorate Plan 2016/17 are not yet completed but are on course to be successfully completed. Of the remaining six actions two were completed successfully and by the target date whilst the other four (relating to the New Place Branding Project; developing a strategy to bring forward a supply of good quality housing sites in the Borough; the roll-out of the eRIC project; and the Transport Asset Management Plan) had not been completed by their target date. These four actions had been given revised completion dates in light of their unexpected delay and the meeting was advised that the Director of Neighbourhoods was confident that these revised target dates would be successfully reached.

Members sought clarification on a number of issues that were raised in the report, including seeking assurances that Marks and Spencer were committed to maintaining a presence in Rochdale town centre. The Committee were advised that Marks and Spencer had given assurances about their future operations in Rochdale. A Member asked for clarification as to the future development of the indoor and outdoor markets in Rochdale town centre including possible locations. Various locations had been put forward as potential sites for both markets including The Butts, The Walk and Yorkshire Street. The meeting was advised that the tender was about to be let for the Market's Operators licence. The Director of Economy undertook to keep Members updated with regard to issues relating to the market.

The Chair requested that the Council's ICT Service be requested to amend the Council's performance management template so that Councillors can identify lead officers for each Council objective and so that reports can be stored on the Member's Intranet pages. The Chair also referred to previous versions of the performance report management template, including dashboards, which had been approved by the Council, in July 2015, which had not yet been fully implemented.

DECIDED – That (1) the report be noted;

(2) the Council’s ICT Service be requested to amend the performance management reporting template so that Councillors can identify lead officers for each Council objective and also enabling reports to be stored on the Member’s Intranet pages;

(3) the Head of Corporate Policy and Performance be requested to review the Council’s performance management template, including dashboards, which was approved by the Council, at its meeting on 15th July 2015, with a view to it being rolled out for consideration of performance management reports at future meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

GMCA/AGMA SCRUTINY POOL

33 DECIDED – That the Minutes of the meetings of the GMCA/AGMA Scrutiny Pool held 9th September and 14th October 2016 be noted.