

Task and Finish Group - Terms of Reference

The viability of setting up a local housing company to deliver affordable housing

Membership: To be appointed by Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
Chair to be appointed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Lead Officer: Ivan Western, Housing Delivery Manager

Officer Support: Finance and Legal support to be confirmed.

Purpose of the Group

The purpose of the Group is to examine the medium/long term viability of setting up a local housing company as an independent arm's length organisation wholly owned by the council and operated on a not-for-profit basis.

In doing this the Group will:

1. Consider the risks to capital invested in the council housing presented by the current right to buy referencing how other council's manage this risk.
2. Review the land under Council control and /or which has potential to be under council control with capacity to build up to 199 council houses.
3. Consider the likely set up costs and resources/ skills/expertise required to set up a local housing company, referencing other Council's models.
4. Consider how the Council can best deliver affordable housing including assessing the effectiveness of existing delivery mechanism's and alternative options to increasing affordable housing delivery in the district.

Scope

- The study will focus on an initial viability of setting up a local housing company to deliver affordable housing, to be made available as affordable/social rent or part-ownership.
- The study will consider alternative options to delivering affordable housing with pro's and con's of each approach.
- Market housing and for profit investment will not be within the scope of the study.

Methodology

- The study will involve desktop research, interviews with other local authority officers and visits to get an understanding of the issues involved.

Outcomes

- The findings/ recommendations of the Study will be reported back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee/ Cabinet and will feed into future housing policy and funding requirements.

Review period / timetable

The Group will meet monthly.

March - Initial meeting

Apr - June evidence collecting including visits

Jul- Sep analysing and assessing evidence

Oct-Nov Draft report

Report to SLT: December

Report to OSC: Jan 2021

Report to Cabinet: Feb 2021