

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: Scrutiny Management Committee

Subject Matter

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1. Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on 10 October 2018 the Scrutiny Management Committee requested:
“That the Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee’s Planning Group be requested to consider how best the scrutiny of the Council’s Regeneration Programme could be best managed and fitted into the scrutiny work programme and a proposal submitted to the next meeting of the Management Committee.”
- 1.2 The Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee’s Planning Group has met on two separate occasions (17 October and 7 November 2018) to discuss how best to scrutinise the Council’s Regeneration Programme. On both occasions the Planning Group received input from the Council’s Head of Regeneration, Kathryn Eames.
- 1.3 This Briefing Note sets out the issues with the Regeneration Programme identified by the Planning Group requiring scrutiny, together with suggestions as to how this can be done.
- 1.4 Following these meetings, the proposal was considered by the Communities and Housing Committee on 14 November, which recommended that:
 - the time for the first meeting was insufficient;
 - the time required to scrutinise at key points would overload the Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee once four or more estates were in progress; and
 - experience over the past year indicated that ongoing scrutiny of the engagement process was required.
- 1.5 It therefore recommended the strongly preferred proposal that a standing sub-committee be set up to monitor regeneration, with a reformulation of some of its scrutiny aims as in **Annex B**. The importance of starting quickly was agreed and the Committee discussed dates for a first main meeting and nominated members for the quick working group if the proposal is agreed.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 The process of regeneration at present can broadly be described as an iterative loop comprising elements:
 - Consultation with residents;
 - Development of residents aims for the project (encompassed in the Tenants/residents Charter);

- Outline specification, layout and design of schemes;
- Outline spec and design of community facilities, green spaces, etc. that will be used by the wider community too;
- Outline design, spec and commissioning of other support services, education programmes, action programmes, training, etc to attack other socio-economic performance indicators;
- Costing of schemes, decision about Housing Revenue Account budget and assessment of what further development may be required as enabling development, inside or outside the Housing Revenue Account.

2.2 At some point the Steering Group leading the regeneration decides to firm up on three options for the physical regeneration, with allied statements about services, action plans, etc. and go to a vote, but there are, typically, at least two iterations of the loop before and two after that point before anything gets to a planning application.

2.3 There are three interested groups:

- the “stakeholders” whose homes are designated for regeneration;
- the steering group, which will overlap heavily with the first but may incorporate others, who experience the low socio-economic outcomes identified, and which will be involved in the push to improve these outcomes, so that some of the consultation and actions are aimed at the narrower, stakeholder group and some the wider community;
- the wider community who also use green spaces, community facilities etc. that may be upgraded, redesigned, moved, etc. to facilitate good spatial layouts, and other outcomes.

At present, all the decision-making as to what to put forward appears to be confined to the narrower group, and consultation with the two wider groups varies, although ultimately the Cabinet makes the final decisions.

2.4 At some point a “red line” is drawn around the physical site involved in the regeneration, defining the stakeholder group, and about which the stakeholders have a vote. This may need to be reconsidered as a concept.

3. Initial Proposal for Scrutiny

- 3.1 At present, the Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee is required to fit in a session scrutinising the Housing Revenue Account budget – **but it has no meeting in the time period at which the budget will be available for scrutiny. It therefore wishes to refer scrutiny of the Housing Revenue Account budget back to the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee.**
- 3.2 The Planning Group’s proposal is to add an extra meeting which will cover scrutiny of the first two regeneration items in the attached schedule (Annex A). Ideally this will be in early December between the availability of the budget for scrutiny and the Regeneration Sub-Committee on 12 December which will determine the first estate’s Tenants Charter and review principles for the second estate’s Tenants Charter.
- 3.3 The Planning Group would also like to propose adding a short package of work as a councillor-led working group very quickly to work with officers to develop a comprehensible statement of the process of regeneration. Officers are willing for this to happen. That would then feed into the meeting in early December for public comment as the new material would be part of the residents’ information. It may

include a component of policy development on how the specification of community facilities, green space, etc is handled in regeneration as this is the subject of much contention between stakeholders and the wider community.

- 3.4 Other items are identified as more suitable to the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee, or for adding into next year's Work Programme due to the timing of work.

4. **Attachments**

Annex A: Regeneration Scrutiny Schedule

Annex B: Modified Regeneration Scrutiny Schedule

Annex C: Regeneration Activity Map

Annex D: Regeneration Activity Map – Supporting Narrative