

# Overview and Scrutiny Board

19th November 2024

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## Housing Task Group Update – Proposed Additional Objective

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Shirley Webb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	
Relevant Assistant Director	Judith Willis, Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services
Report Author Jess Bayley-Hill	Job Title: Principal Democratic Services Officer Contact email: <a href="mailto:jess.bayley-hill@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk">jess.bayley-hill@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</a> Contact Tel: (01527) 64252 Ext: 3072
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Housing and Sustainability
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

### 1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to **RESOLVE**

- 1) to consider whether to approve the additional objective for the Housing Task Group investigation proposed by Members of the group; and
- 2) to note the update in respect of the Housing Task Group's investigation.

### 2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 This report details the background to, as well as the wording of, an additional objective that has been proposed by Members of the Housing Task Group for their investigation.

### 3. **OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 3.1 At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024, Members considered a Topic Proposal form that had been submitted by Councillor H. Rone-Clarke. Based on the content of the form, the Board agreed to launch the Housing Task Group. The objectives for the review were detailed in the Topic Proposal Form.

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- 3.2 At a subsequent meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024, the membership of the Housing Task Group was agreed. The following Members were appointed to the group: Councillors A. Bailes, A. Dale, R. Hunter, B. Kumar, P. McDonald and H. Rone-Clarke.
- 3.3 The first meeting of the Housing Task Group took place on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024. During the meeting, Councillor H. Rone-Clarke was appointed as the Chairman of the Task Group.
- 3.4 At the first meeting of the group, Members also considered their terms of reference and the sources of evidence that Members wanted to gather to enable them to complete the review effectively.
- 3.5 During the discussions around the terms of reference, Members identified a specific aspect of Housing that they felt had not been included in the terms of reference but which they felt would benefit from further investigation. Specifically, this related to reviewing the Council's Housing Allocations Policy, including in relation to how properties were allocated to people on the Housing Register. Members also were keen to review the quality of the properties available to people on the Housing Register.
- 3.6 With this in mind, the group are proposing that the following, additional objective should be added to their terms of reference:
- “To scrutinise the allocations policy and housing register regarding eligibility, qualification and allocations and explore standards of housing let under the policy.”*
- 3.7 The Overview and Scrutiny Board, as the parent Committee of the Housing Task Group, is invited to consider the proposed additional objective and to determine whether to add this to the Housing Task Group's terms of reference.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications.

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## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Scrutiny Procedure Rules, at Part 12 of the Council's constitution, specify that the terms of reference for Scrutiny Task Groups will be agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Therefore, any changes to the terms of reference for the Housing Task Group, including those proposed by Members of the Task Group, need to be approved by the Board.

## **6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

### **Relevant Council Priority**

- 6.1 The Housing Task Group is reviewing a range of matters relating to housing. At the end of the review, Members will have an opportunity to bring forward recommendations that should help to support one of the Council's key priorities, as detailed in the Council Plan 2024 - 2027: Housing.

### **Climate Change Implications**

- 6.2 There are no specific climate change implications.

### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.3 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 There is a risk that issues Members feel to be important to a review of housing could be missed if the additional proposed objective is not added to the Housing Task Group's terms of reference. The group proposed this additional objective as Members felt that this was an important issue that should be considered as part of the review.
- 7.2 However, there is also a risk that if the scope of the review is too large, the Housing Task Group may be unable to complete their investigation within the time allocated by the Board, which was six months.
- 7.3 The Chairman of the group, will provide updates to the Board in respect of the progress of the review, which should provide Members with opportunities to assess whether the scope of the review remains manageable.

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7.4 Members of the group have already discussed their work programme for future meetings and felt confident that they could complete their investigations, including consideration of matters relating to this additional objective, within the time allocated.

## **8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### Appendices

Appendix 1 – Current Terms of Reference (not including the proposed additional objective)

### Background Papers

Topic Proposal Form for the Proposed Housing Task Group, considered at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024: [Housing Task Group Topic Proposal](#)

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024: [Overview and Scrutiny Board Minutes - 23rd July 2024](#)

Housing Task Group report to the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024: [Overview and Scrutiny Board Agenda - 10th September 2024](#)

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024: [Overview and Scrutiny Board Minutes - 10th September 2024](#)

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## 9. REPORT SIGN OFF

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Shirley Webb	
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Judith Willis, Assistant Director of Community and housing Services	11.11.2024
Financial Services	Pete Carpenter, Section 151 Officer	09.11.2024
Legal Services	Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	08.11.2024