

# Housing Committee

**Wednesday 8 September 2021 at 7.30pm**

**Council Chamber  
Runnymede Civic Centre, Addlestone**

## Members of the Committee

Councillors J Gracey (Chairman), J Hulley (Vice Chairman), A Balkan, J Broadhead, M Cressey, S Mackay, I Mullens, M Nuti, P Snow, and S Whyte.

Mrs J Hill (co-opted non-voting member) for the purposes affecting Council housing tenants

In accordance with Standing Order 29.1, any Member of the Council may attend the meeting of this Committee, but may speak only with the permission of the Chairman of the committee, if they are not a member of this Committee.

## AGENDA

### Notes:

- 1) **The following Measures to comply with current Covid guidelines are in place:**
  - **restricting the number of people that can be in the Council Chamber to 60**
  - **temperature check via the undercroft for Members/Officers and Main Reception for the public**
  - **NHS track and trace register, app scan is next to the temperature check**
  - **masks to be worn when moving around the offices**
  - **masks can be kept on whilst sitting in the Council Chamber if individuals wish**
  - **use of hand sanitisers positioned outside and inside the Council Chamber**
  - **increased ventilation inside the Council Chamber**
  
- 2) Any report on the Agenda involving confidential information (as defined by section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972) must be discussed in private. Any report involving exempt information (as defined by section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972), whether it appears in Part 1 or Part 2, may be discussed in private but only if the Committee so resolves.

- 3) The relevant 'background papers' are listed after each report in Part 1. Enquiries about any of the agenda reports and background papers should be directed in the first instance to  
**Andrew Finch, Democratic Services Section, Law and Governance Business Centre, Runnymede Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone (Tel: Direct Line: 01932 425623). (Email: [Andrew.Finch@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.Finch@runnymede.gov.uk)).**
- 4) Agendas and Minutes are available on a subscription basis. For details, please ring Mr B A Fleckney on 01932 425620. Agendas and Minutes for all the Council's Committees may also be viewed on [www.runnymede.gov.uk](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk).
- 5) In the unlikely event of an alarm sounding, members of the public should leave the building immediately, either using the staircase leading from the public gallery or following other instructions as appropriate.
- 6) **Filming, Audio-Recording, Photography, Tweeting and Blogging of Meetings**

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Filming should be limited to the formal meeting area and not extend to those in the public seating area.

The Chairman will make the final decision on all matters of dispute in regard to the use of social media audio-recording, photography and filming in the Committee meeting.

## LIST OF MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

### PART I

#### Matters in respect of which reports have been made available for public inspection

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## PART II

### **Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection.**

a) Exempt Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>TERM</b>	<b>EXPLANATION</b>
1-4-1 receipts	A proportion of retained RTB sale receipts that must be used by the authority to help provide new social housing.
Affordable Housing	Affordable Housing is the generic term which includes social rented, affordable rented and products such as shared ownership and rent-to-buy and is provided by local authorities and registered providers such as housing associations.
Affordable Rent	Affordable Rent must be no more than 80% of market rent
Benefit cap	A Government limit on the total amount of benefit, including Housing Benefit, payable to people aged 16 to 64 who are not working.
CBL	Choice Based Lettings system allows Housing Register applicants to 'bid' for available council and housing association properties online.
CHaRMM	Community Harm and Risk Management Meetings
Decent Homes Standard	A Decent Home meets the criteria for statutory minimum standard, state of repair, provision of facilities and services and thermal comfort required by MHCLG.
DFG	Disabled Facilities Grants are mandatory, means tested grants to provide adaptations such as shower rooms, ramps and stair lifts to disabled people who can be owner occupiers or private or social tenants.
DHP	Discretionary Housing Payments can top up the housing costs of Housing Benefit and UC claimants, for example to make up a rent shortfall due to the 'benefit cap' or 'spare room subsidy'. Awards are made in accordance with the Council's DHP policy. Payments are subsidised by Government with additional funding from the HRA.
DWP	The Department for Work and Pensions.
FRA	Fire Risk Assessment
H-CLIC	Homelessness Case Level Information Collection
HMO	House in multiple occupation.
HQN	Housing Quality Network
HRA	Housing Revenue Account. The statutory account that sets out expenditure and income arising from provision of social housing by the local authority as a landlord and is ring fenced from other council activities.
IRL	Independent Retirement Living is the brand for Runnymede's sheltered accommodation for older people.
LHA	Local Housing Allowance is the Housing Benefit entitlement for private sector tenants, based on a household's bedroom requirements. It is applied to areas known as Broad Rental Market Areas and determined by calculating the 30 <sup>th</sup> percentile of market rents for each area (i.e. 3 in 10 properties should be at or below the LHA level).
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

New Homes Bonus	The New Homes Bonus has been paid each year by Government, based on the number of new homes within an area when the Council Tax extract is submitted in October with additional payments for new affordable homes and a reduction for long term empty properties.
PSL	Private Sector Landlord.
PRC	Pre-reinforced concrete (non-traditionally built) properties.
RCRA	Runnymede Council Residents Association.
RP	Registered providers of social housing including; local authority landlords and housing associations
RTB	Right to Buy legislation and regulations giving secure tenants of councils and some housing associations tenants the right to buy the home they are living in, at a discount.
S. 106	Section 106 agreements are a legally binding agreement between the Planning authority and a landowner or developer in association with the granting of planning permission, often requiring a contribution to infrastructure and sometimes affordable housing – which can be on site or by way of a commuted sum.
SHMA	The Strategic Housing Market Assessment provides an evidence base for assessing the need and demand of future housing supply.
Shared Accommodation Rate	The level of LHA (Housing Benefit) that applies to single people in the private rented sector who are aged under 35 years.
Social Housing	Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers
Social Sector Size Criteria	Also colloquially known as “the bedroom tax” which was introduced in 2013 and which reduces Housing Benefit to working age claimants who are assessed as having a spare room.
Universal Credit	This benefit is gradually replacing a number of benefits including Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit etc. and in most cases is paid four weekly in arrears direct to the applicant.

1. **FIRE PRECAUTIONS**

The Chairman will read the Fire Precautions, which set out the procedures to be followed in the event of fire or other emergency.

2. **NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

3. **MINUTES**

To confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 June 2021 (Appendix A) as a correct record.

Appendix A

Runnymede Borough Council

HOUSING COMMITTEE

9 June 2021 at 7:30pm

Members of the Committee present	Councillors J Gracey (Chairman), J Hulley (Vice-Chairman), A Balkan, J Broadhead, M Cressey, I Mullens, M Nuti, P Snow and S Whyte  Mrs J Hill (Runnymede Council Residents' Association Representative – co-opted non-voting member)
Members of the Committee absent	Councillor S Mackay
Non Members of the Committee present	Councillor R Bromley

**48 NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

None.

**49 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 10 March 2021 and 6 April 2021 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

**50 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received.

**51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None declared.

**52 PROPOSED CHANGES TO HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME**

The Head of Homelessness, Housing Advice & Allocations advised that it was a legal requirement to have an up to date, fit for purpose Allocations scheme. The existing policy was over four years old and did not consider subsequent legislation changes.

Following a period of public consultation, the banding structure had been simplified, and the proposal to make only one offer to all applicants had not been included in the final scheme.

Leading Counsel had provided a number of comments following public consultation, which had been included within the final version of the report.

Members welcomed the thorough consultation, and were grateful that the views of those who fed into the consultation were clearly visible within the policy, which was considered comprehensive yet easy to read.



Members were also pleased that the policy made best use of the Council's existing housing stock, and thanked officers for the work undertaken.

**RESOLVED that –**

**The new Housing Allocations Policy and timeline for implementation was approved.**

**53 REQUEST TO APPROVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HOUSING SERVICES HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

The Compliance Manager reported that the Health and Safety Policy linked to the corporate Health & Safety policy but was specifically linked to Housing.

The purpose was to improve the awareness of Health & Safety across the board, with the aim of helping staff to ensure residents' safety.

There would be further policies linked in with the specific areas of the policy, covering items such as asbestos, gas safety, fire safety, water hygiene and electrical safety, many of which had been earmarked to go through the Housing Member Working Parties,

The policy would be reviewed on an annual basis, unless dictated otherwise by incidents or legislation changes.

As part of the kitchen and bathroom replacement system, properties that did not have hard wired smoke alarms would have them fitted. Others were checked regularly.

Some 3,068 individual hard wired smoke alarms were installed in some 1,770 properties across the borough. In response to the chair of the RCRA, it was confirmed it was commonplace that alarms were installed in the kitchen and the hallway rather than the upstairs area.

**Resolved that –**

**Members approved the implementation of the Housing Services Health and Safety policy.**

**54 ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

The Housing Services Manager advised that the existing policy was four years old, and a recent TIAA audit had revealed that policy had not been followed in some low impact instances.

The policy had subsequently been streamlined and followed methodical headings suggested by Resolve and the Housing Regulator – prevention, early intervention and support.

A number of revisions had been undertaken, including flexibility around warnings, how hate crime would be dealt with, and many more details about the community trigger. It had also been updated to reflect the positive working relationship with police and other partners.

The consultation had recently closed, and a handout was circulated on the night detailing feedback. Some further minor changes reflecting feedback from Councillors would be made after Committee.

The policy was currently awaiting comments from Counsel, and would be subject to revision depending on their comments.

Members pointed out that it took time to get to the bottom of antisocial behaviour, and it was something that was one of residents' main concerns. Members were keen to ensure that sufficient funding and resources were put in to address the issue.

The Corporate Head of Housing confirmed that much more was being invested in prevention, and it was hoped that bringing the policy to Committee would increase effectiveness and increase awareness amongst Members of antisocial behaviour amongst Council tenants.

It was also recognised that the policy included vulnerable perpetrators, and the importance of supporting people who fall into that category.

#### **Resolved that –**

**Members approved the Antisocial Behaviour policy and statement of procedures, subject to an approved EIA. Policy to come into effect from 1 July to allow Members to review any additional consultation feedback and the advice of Counsel.**

## **55 DISABLED ADAPTATIONS POLICY FOR COUNCIL TENANTS**

The Head of Housing and Business Development confirmed that the existing policy was nearly six years old and whilst the revised policy did not represent a change in policy, it sought to bring clarity and ensure that adaptations were not carried out in circumstances that disadvantaged the HRA, whilst not having a negative impact on waiting list times for families.

The policy would be operated in conjunction with the emerging Older Persons' Strategy and Development Strategy which would be brought to Committee in the Autumn. They would seek to create suitable and attractive downsizing options for residents and ensure that the Development Strategy includes the provision of family sized and one bedroom homes that are wheelchair accessible.

It was appreciated that many older residents would prefer to remain in their property and that moving can be difficult and stressful later in life. The ongoing strategy would be to communicate with residents and encourage them to downsize before their mobility becomes impaired

Currently there were 637 properties where it was believed there was under occupation, which was 23% of the Housing stock. 423 of these contain households over 60.

Minor adaptations such as handrails, steps, bannisters, lever taps etc. up to a combined total value of £1000 would be carried out to enable a resident to remain independently living in their home regardless of whether they were under occupying the property. Adaptations in excess of £1000 which constitute alterations to the home would not be carried out if the property was under occupied.

It was acknowledged this was a very sensitive area, and it was imperative that the support arrangements within the policy were accessible for those residents affected. However, the Council had an obligation to make the best use of its housing stock.

**Resolved that –**

**Members approved the new Disabled Adaptations Policy for Council tenants.**

## 56 **RENT SETTING POLICY**

The Head of Housing and Business Development reported that the purpose of the policy was to outline the Council's approach to setting the rent charged for its social rent and affordable rent homes, and was based on government policy.

The Chair clarified the difference between social rent and affordable rent, and hoped that the minimum levels of social rent would be maintained, including replenishing and increasing lost stock through right to buy sales.

Furthermore, whilst the policy says affordable rent should be "up to 80%" or market rent, that in no way meant a blanket 80% across the board on future developments and each case would be judged on its own merits and brought to Committee.

**Resolved that –**

**Members approved the new Rent Setting Policy.**

## 57 **OLDER PEOPLE STRATEGY CONSULTATION**

The Corporate Head of Housing advised Members that an older people strategy would set out how older people who live in the Council's stock would be supported. He went on to highlight the emerging themes.

Permission was sought to undertake consultation with partners, stakeholders, residents and other interested parties, ahead of bringing the policy to Committee later this year.

Members were encouraged to promote the consultation as widely as they could.

**Resolved that –**

**i. Members approved the request for the service to consult with its tenants and leaseholders on the draft vision for the older peoples housing service;and**

**ii. Members agreed to receive the results of the consultation alongside a final strategy in September 2021.**

## 58 **REPAIRS POLICY CONSULTATION**

The Head of Housing Technical Services sought permission to begin a consultation involving key events with residents and partners on the current and proposed policy.

There were currently two repair times within the draft policy. Whilst more options were desired, an IT integrated solution would need to be in place before this was possible. The policy would be revised and adapted once a solution was in place.

It was hoped that the process for ordering repairs would be simplified and digital, but officers were keen to ensure it was user-friendly for residents.

One of the many things of interest as part of the policy was around trees; Runnymede was a very green borough and issues with trees was a common occurrence, particularly around right to light.

As many views as possible were sought to help shape the policy, and every possible avenue would be utilised to ensure views were heard. It was hoped this would be the dawn of a new era of tenant involvement, reaching out to as many tenants as possible.

**Resolved that –**

**i. Members approved the request for the service to consult with its tenants and leaseholders on the draft Repairs Policy; and**

**ii. Members agreed to receive the results of the consultation alongside a final policy in September 2021.**

## 59 HOUSING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM UPGRADE

The Corporate Head of Housing advised that officers would like to accelerate the implementation of the upgrade of the Housing integrated IT system. This would require a significant additional spend, which was sought in principle pending the detail around what the money would be spent on.

The IT system was complex and required many additional modules, but would see a step change in efficiency and as well as the information available to Members. Whilst most other Councils invested in their IT annually, there had been considerable under-investment in Runnymede's IT system for around twenty years. It was anticipated that requests for a modest additional investment would be made annually.

It was felt this upgrade would greatly enhance the experience of residents reporting issues. The Corporate Head of Housing went on to say that the amount being sought was £200k rather than the £100k in the report. Members were being requested to approve this in principle, and any decisions ahead of the next Committee would be in conjunction with the chair and vice chair of Committee. This would allow the work to be progressed in the interim.

It was hoped that full functionality would be in place within 18 months, although many of the modules would be available sooner than that.

A Member agreed that this would bring the Housing team up to date, but was keen to ensure that the policies and features overlap, and any gaps were addressed to ensure that 100% of the policy was covered within the features of what was being implemented.

There was a lot of anxiety from some Members around the lack of detail and breakdown within the report, whilst it was currently unclear what the benefits would be.

The Chairman acknowledged the lack of detail in the report, but added that whilst the final decision would be for Corporate Management Committee, she believed it was important for any decision on Housing related matters to be put to Housing Committee in the first instance.

A meeting would be taking place with Northgate on 17 June where they would set out what would be required for implementation. This would enable officers to submit a far more detailed report to Corporate Management Committee on 22 July.

As well as consulting with the chair and vice chair, officers would circulate the details to the rest of Housing Committee prior to CMC.

**Resolved that –**

**Members agreed to recommend to Corporate Management Committee an additional HRA Capital estimate for up to £200,000 in principle to be used to bring forward the delivery of the Northgate Housing upgrade. This would be subject to sufficient scrutinisation by the Chair and Vice Chair as more details emerge.**

**60 UPDATE ON COMMUNICATION WITH THE REGULATOR OF SOCIAL HOUSING**

The Head of Housing Technical Services provided an update on electrical certification and fire safety actions. The Regulator was also being kept informed of the planned fire works at Surrey Towers.

Officers raised the issue of ending the notice period during a recent meeting with the Regulator, and were aiming for this to be done in September 2021. This would be dependent on the implementation of the Health & Safety policy and all fire risk actions being completed.

**61 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, Q4 AND YEAR END 2020/21**

The Head of Housing and Business Development admitted that the void performance remained at an unacceptable level and impacts on other Housing services. A recent review of the process had resulted in a voids project group being set up with officers from across the department to look at the failing areas.

Notice had been served on one of the contractors and whilst improvements were expected there was likely to be an initial period where the remaining contractor picks up their 50% of the Borough and would need to increase their own workforce and resources.

Improvement of Void timescales was a key management priority and was being appropriately resourced.

There were just six properties with an expired gas certificate (0.23% of the stock), four of which were unoccupied properties.

Electrical certification had risen to 92.3% and out of hours and doorstep contact continued with those tenants that had failed to respond to communication about this.

The Chairman added that the Council did not previously have the tools to address the outgoing, under-performing contractor, however this would be remedied when going out to tender to find its replacement.

A Member asked for an update on the works at Surrey Towers at future meetings, along with updates on the recent purchase of land.

(The meeting ended at 10:06pm)

Chairman

4. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

5. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

If Members have an interest in an item please record the interest on the form circulated with this Agenda and hand it to the Legal Representative or Democratic Services Officer at the start of the meeting. A supply of the form will also be available from the Democratic Services Officer at meetings.

Members are advised to contact the Council's Legal section prior to the meeting if they wish to seek advice on a potential interest.

Members are reminded that a registrable interest includes their appointment by the Council as the Council's representative to an outside body. Membership of an outside body in their private capacity as a trustee, committee member or in another position of influence thereon should also be declared. Any directorship whether paid or unpaid should be regarded as a disclosable pecuniary interest, and declared.

Members who have previously declared interests which are recorded in the Minutes to be considered at this meeting need not repeat the declaration when attending the meeting. Members need take no further action unless the item in which they have an interest becomes the subject of debate, in which event the Member must leave the room if the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or other registrable interest and/or the interest could reasonably be regarded as so significant as to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest.

**6. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2021-2026 (HOUSING, MAGGIE WARD)**

**Synopsis of report:**

**The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, approved by Members in March 2021, includes a commitment to deliver 125 additional homes within five years. This report submits the HRA Development Strategy 2021-2026 (Appendix B), which sets the parameters, approval mechanism and monitoring arrangements within which this activity will take place.**

**Recommendation:**

**Members approve the Housing Revenue Account Development Strategy 2021-2026 (Appendix B).**

**1. Context of report**

- 1.1 An approved Development Strategy will define the aspirations and processes within which development by the Housing Revenue Account will be initiated, approved, financed, and delivered.

**2. Report**

- 2.1 The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that HRA developments and acquisitions are identified, progressed, and delivered within the parameters approved by the Housing Committee. Through this strategy the Council aims to ensure:

- i. All new properties will be built or refurbished to an approved standard
- ii. The Council will develop sustainable, low maintenance homes which are affordable for the residents to occupy.
- iii. The target for new homes (125 over the next 5 years) is achieved
- iv. Innovative construction methods will be utilised where appropriate
- v. Value for money is achieved on all schemes and the financial viability of any proposal will be rigorously assessed.
- vi. The type and size of property including accessible properties address evidenced local need.
- vii. Larger schemes will provide low cost homeownership opportunities where possible

- 2.2 The Development Strategy will determine how the HRA programme will be identified, assessed for viability, approved, and delivered: The Strategy will outline the considerations for each element of the strategy:

- i. Affordable Housing Need in Runnymede
- ii. Funding for additional units
- iii. Scheme viability assessments
- iv. Rent Setting Policy
- v. Identifying development opportunities
- vi. Runnymede new home specification
- vii. Approval process from inception to completion
- viii. Tenure of new units / Local Lettings Policy

- 2.3 The draft Development Strategy has been considered by the Housing Member Working Party and has been amended to reflect members aspirations and comments.
- 2.4 The Development Action plan is attached at Appendix C to outline the initial plan for increasing development capacity and embedding the elements of the strategy within the emerging policies and procedures.
- 3. Policy framework implications**
- 3.1 All Development activity must comply with The Council's Contract Standing Orders (CSO) as set out in the Council's constitution and the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015).
- 4. Resource implications**
- 4.1 All Development Activity within the Housing Revenue Account will be subject to individual committee reports containing full business cases where appropriate. Depending on the size and scale of each scheme, it may also be necessary for supplementary capital estimate approval and amendment of the Council's Capital and Treasury Management Strategies at full Council to ensure the Council remains compliant with the Prudential Accounting regime.
- 5. Legal implications**
- 5.1 The relevant law is referred to in the HRA Development Strategy itself.
- 6. Equality implications**
- 6.1 Detailed analysis of housing need within the Borough will be regularly undertaken to ensure that specialist housing needs are considered within each development and specifically accommodation for older people and people with disabilities whose needs may not be met within the current stock.
- 7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**
- 7.1 The HRA Development strategy will incorporate Policy SD7 Sustainable Design from the Runnymede 2032 Adopted Plan and seek to ensure that sustainability and low costs for tenants are a priority in any design.
- 8. Conclusions**
- 8.1 Members are asked to approve the HRA Development Strategy 2021-2026

**(TO RESOLVE)**

**Background papers**

Housing [Committee](#) Agenda 10 March 2021



## Appendix B

# Runnymede HRA Development Strategy 2021 - 2026

*September 2021*



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**Runnymede**   
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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## Introduction

The purpose of the strategy is to ensure that HRA developments and acquisitions are identified, progressed, and delivered within the parameters approved by the Housing Committee. Through this strategy the Council aims to ensure:

- All new properties will be built or refurbished to an approved standard
- The Council will develop sustainable, low maintenance homes which are affordable for the residents to occupy.
- The target for new homes (125 over the next 5 years) is achieved
- Innovative construction methods will be utilised where appropriate
- Value for money is achieved on all schemes and the financial viability of any proposal will be rigorously assessed.
- The type and size of property including accessible properties address evidenced local need.
- Larger schemes will provide low cost homeownership opportunities where possible

## Context

From 2012 the Government introduced the opportunity for Local Authorities to refinance their housing stock. For Runnymede this involved a capital payment to the Government of £103,292,000 with no further annual payments to the Government's Housing Subsidy System. The capital payment would be financed by existing capital and loans from the Public Works Loans Board and would be paid back from the surplus accrued over a 30-year period. Annual interest payment of

Year	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	Total m
Capital Repayment (£m)	1.956	10	30	30	30	102.9

Historically Runnymede paid an annual subsidy payment (£6,860,000 in 2011) to Government from its rental income so did not accumulate significant surplus capital. The loan repayment and interest annually would be less than the subsidy payments and would enable the accrual of substantial surpluses to reinvest in improving and extending the social housing stock.

The 30 year HRA Business Plan approved by Housing Committee in March 2021 indicated that the expected surpluses had been reduced by approximately £50,000,000 over a 30 year period due to the Government imposed rent decrease from 2015.

The stock condition survey carried out between 2019 and 2020 has identified a requirement for a planned programme of works over 5 years from 2022 at a cost of £40,000,000. The HRA held £35,060,000 in reserves as at 31 March 2021 and with the continued forecast income and surpluses, all the stock should achieve Decent Homes Standard within existing available finances however providing additional homes at scale will not be possible from current income.



In October 2018 the Government issued a Determination lifting the HRA Debt Cap, providing more freedom and flexibility to undertake additional borrowing, subject to the principles of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities of affordability, sustainability, and prudence. This enables Runnymede to increase its social housing stock and provide additional income streams to the HRA for future development as the current reserves would facilitate a limited development capability in addition to the required investment in the existing stock.

Current low interest rates and Affordable rents on new units support a financial business case for investment in additional stock though additional borrowing.

The Development Strategy will determine how the HRA programme will be identified, assessed for viability, approved, and delivered: The Strategy will outline the considerations for each element of the strategy.

1. Affordable Housing Need in Runnymede
2. Funding for additional units
3. Scheme viability assessments
4. Rent Setting Policy
5. Identifying development opportunities
6. Runnymede new home specification
7. Approval process from inception to completion
8. Tenure of new units / Local Lettings Policy

## Affordable Housing Need in Runnymede – The Business Case for Development

The Office of National Statistics publishes information on house price affordability and the figures for Surrey and Runnymede shown that the cost of accommodation in the borough is high so that most low income owners cannot access home ownership and the private rented market is buoyant with most rents set above the level payable by housing benefit or housing element of Universal Credit, resulting in households, including those in employment being unable to access good quality private rented properties within the borough. This includes a large proportion of public sector staff and those working in retail, as carers, in building trades etc, skills which are essential to providing services for the residents of the borough.

Ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile gross annual (where available) workplace-based earnings by local authority district, Runnymede 2015 to 2020

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
10.16	11.94	13.47	12.93	11.56	11.21

Mortgages were historically expected to be agreed at 3 x gross salary and although this has extended to 4 or 5 x salary with longer payback periods it is apparent that Runnymede residents within the lower quartile income group are very unlikely to access homeownership. Shared ownership models require a smaller deposit and mortgage but as the rent on the unpurchased share is calculated at 2.5 – 3% of the value of the remaining share this can be prohibitive.





The Council has extensive statutory duties for provision of assistance with accessing suitable accommodation and prevention of homelessness, the Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002, and Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and in fulfilment of these duties expends significant resources in assisting residents to access the private rented market. It is essential that the existing and new social housing is not prioritised for households experiencing or threatened with homelessness so that the Housing Register remains the main route for accessing social homes.

In determining what type and size of properties the HRA should develop consideration will be given to a number of measurements of housing need within the area

- Strategic Housing Market Availability Assessment [Strategic Housing Market Assessment - SHMA - Runnymede Borough Council](#)
- Local Plan [Runnymede 2030 Local Plan – Runnymede Borough Council](#)
- Corporate Business Plan [Strategies and plans - Runnymede Borough Council](#)
- Data available from the Housing Register and Homelessness approaches

Social Housing within Runnymede is accessed through the Housing Register and Allocated according to the current Housing Allocation Scheme. Throughout the lifetime of this strategy this information will be continuously reviewed to ensure that schemes reflect the demand indicated by these data sets.

### Housing register Data as of 1 July 2021

#### Housing Need (Housing Register Applications)

Bed Need	Applicants	%
1	550	48
2	356	31
3	197	17
4	38	3
5	11	1
6	2	0
	1154	

#### Age Spread of one bed households

Age Band	No	%
60 and over	132	24
Between 55 and 59	68	12
Between 50 and 54	36	7
Between 45 and 49	25	5
Between 40 and 45	35	6
Between 25 and 39	143	26
under 25	111	20



	550	
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### Age Spread of two bed households

Age Band	No	%
60 and over	13	4
Between 55 and 59	15	4
Between 50 and 54	17	5
Between 45 and 49	30	8
Between 40 and 45	41	12
Between 25 and 39	203	57
under 25	37	10
	356	

### Current Runnymede Housing Stock

No of Beds	No of Units	%
bedsit	39	1
1	881	31
2	735	26
3	1069	38
4	110	4
5	14	0
6+	1	0

### Properties Let 1 January 2018 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Bed Need	No of Let	%
1	369	50
2	243	33
3	100	13
4	28	4
5	2	0
	742	

### Properties Let to Homeless Households

Bed Need	No of Lets	%
1	47	25
2	110	59



3	26	14
4	4	2
	187	

### Priority Band bedroom Need

Priority Band					
Bedrooms	A	B	C1	Total	% of applicants
1	15	11	24	50	21
2	1	14	54	69	29
3	0	4	84	88	38
4	1	1	19	21	9
5	0	4	1	5	2
6	0	1	0	1	0

It is apparent that the overriding need for new homes is one and two bedroom properties both for our statutory homelessness duties and applicants on the Housing Register.

### Funding for additional units

Sources of funding that will be considered:

- Existing HRA Surpluses
- RTB receipts
- Homes England grant
- Borrowing
- Section 106 (CIL) Commuted Sums

### Scheme Viability Assessments

All prospective purchases / developments will be subject to a viability assessment, this is a standard development process and involves analysis of a combination of estimated costs using current market data and a set of approved assumptions which will underpin all Runnymede HRA viability assessments.

- Estimated scheme cost (using Building Cost Information Service BCIS data)
- RBC standard management & maintenance costs )
- Deferred Major Repairs fund
- Estimated rental income
- Interest if borrowing
- Potential options for tenure mix
- Estimated % inflation /cost indices to apply to a scheme



The assessments are carried out utilising specialist software and on larger schemes specialist consultancy services.

Runnymede has commissioned a Development Appraisal Assumptions report from a specialist company. This will benchmark our current assumptions with other organisations nationally and regionally for an indication of whether these need to be amended to reflect current trends and wider market information.

This will include information on payback periods which are being utilised within the sector. This report will be used to support and inform viability assessments.

## Rent Setting Policy

Rent charged for any new properties will be set using the Rent Policy approved by Housing Committee in June 2021 [link](#)

The Council follows government guidance when setting the rents for its properties, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rents-guidance>. Since 2001 rents for the majority of Runnymede's properties have been let at Social Rent, based on a formula set by government. The method for calculating the Formula rent under the Government's Rent Standard is set out in the Policy Statement on Rents for Social Housing [here](#).

Affordable Rent may also be charged in line with the agreement the Council entered into in 2012 under which homes built as part of the retained Right to Buy receipts "1-4-1" replacement programme may be let at Affordable Rent where a signed statement is provided by the Council. Only additional dwellings may count as part of the programme. The addresses of the properties must be notified to MHCLG annually

Consideration will be given in each new development to the financial consequences of an Affordable or Social rent and also what is appropriate for the scheme. For instance, a development targeted at downsizers may strategically need to offer social rents.

## Identifying Development Opportunities

In a Borough that is predominantly within the Green Belt and significant areas within the flood plain and consequent high land values, the HRA Development Strategy will need to be flexible and agile to achieve additional units within a reasonable cost. The Development Strategy will have a number of strands

- Design and build on existing land
- Land acquisition
- Development acquisition
- Strategic Purchases
- Incremental addition to existing properties
- Permitted development additional floors





## Design & Build on Existing Land

Land held within the HRA will be utilised and will be scheduled for development according to its potential and availability.

## Land Acquisition

The HRA has very little land available for development at the current time and in order to develop additional units land acquisition will be required. Suitable sites will be identified for acquisition either through an approach to the owner or purchase following advertisement.

## Development Acquisition

Consideration will be given to acquiring completed developments if the quality, design, type of property and cost meet the requirements within this strategy and the financial parameters approved by Housing Committee.

## Strategic Purchases

Since 2013 Members have approved an annual budget for Strategic Property acquisitions, this is £1,300,000 in 2021/22.

This budget has been used to procure existing properties which have a strategic benefit to the Council such as located within a potential regeneration area, facilitating land accumulation or a buyback within a Council block.

Since 2013, 29 properties have been acquired and for the financial year 2021/22 a further 4 are under offer. Retained Right to Buy receipts have been utilised in these purchases.

## Incremental addition to existing properties

Within the Asset Management Plan potential for additional properties such as adding to a terrace, utilising large gardens or back land, or adding further storeys to blocks will be investigated and progressed where possible.

## Permitted development additional floors

The HRA owns a number of blocks of flats where potential extension will be assessed however there may be issues with this in terms of additional height within residential areas, there are a number of 4 storey blocks within the stock but these do not have lifts (other than Independent Retirement Living and Surrey Towers) and consideration would need to be given to whether further floors would necessitate the addition of lifts.



## Runnymede New Home Specification

### Quality Commitment

The HRA will build or purchase new properties that have been built to a high standard. There will be a Runnymede New Homes standard which development will be expected to meet including, space, amenity, and sustainability measures. Design will be expected to focus on low running costs for residents and economic long-term maintenance for the Council.

### Space Standards

The Government published the Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard in March 2015; this standard deals with internal space within new dwellings and is suitable for application across all tenures. It sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage, and floor to ceiling height.

Although it replaced the existing different space standards used by local authorities, it is not a building regulation and remains solely within the planning system as a new form of technical planning standard.

In determining the space standards to be applied to Runnymede development the Council will consider each site incrementally and provide the optimum space standards balanced against the need to optimise units on any site for financial viability and providing as many new units as possible.

In submission of any planning application or acquisition the Council will adhere to the nationally described space standards as below:

Figure: *Minimum M2 within dwelling*

Number of bedrooms	No of bedspaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built in storage
1	1	39 (37)			1
	2	50	58		1.5
2	3	61	70		2
	4	70	79		
3	4	74	84	90	2.5
	5	86	93	99	
	6	95	102	108	
4	5	90	97	103	3
	6	99	106	112	
	7	108	115	121	



	8	117	124	130	
5	6	103	110	116	3.5
	7	112	119	125	
	8	121	128	134	
6	7	116	123	129	4
	8	125	132	138	

## Parking Provision

Planning applications submitted will adhere to the minimum parking standards required within the Supplementary Planning Guidance.

## Construction Methods

The Council will consider available construction methods including MMC (modern methods of construction). In selecting an MMC construction method for a scheme there will be a requirement for a BOPAS (Buildoffsite Property Assurance Scheme) providing a minimum 100 years accreditation.

## Heating systems

The specification for all new schemes will incorporate the use of heating systems which are zero carbon rated. This is currently likely to be air source heat pumps as they are the most cost-effective method available at present.

## Sustainable Design

The HRA Development strategy will incorporate Policy SD7 Sustainable Design from the Runnymede 2032 Adopted Plan to include:

- a) Incorporate measures for the secure storage of cycles and storage of waste including recyclable waste;
- b) Protect existing biodiversity and include opportunities to achieve net gains in biodiversity as well as greening of the urban environment;
- c) Maximises opportunities for passive solar gain and passive cooling through the orientation and layout of development;
- d) Subject to feasibility, incorporate electrical vehicle charging points in accordance with guidance issued by Surrey County Council;
- e) In residential development, including replacements, conversions and sub-divisions achieve water efficiency of 110 litres per person per day through compliance with the Building Regulations and where feasible provide rainwater harvesting techniques;
- f) Unless it can be demonstrated that it is unfeasible to do so, in major residential schemes, achieve compliance with Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations with 5% of dwellings achieving Part M4(3). The Council will negotiate the size, type, and tenure



of units to achieve compliance with Part M4(3) and the split between wheelchair adaptable and wheelchair accessible units based on evidence of need.

g) Incorporate sustainable construction and demolition techniques that provide for the efficient use of minerals including a proportion of recycled or secondary aggregates and encourage the re-use of construction and demolition waste at source or its separation and collection for recycling

The Council is committed to ensuring that new development are accessible to all residents, that there is provision of wheelchair accessible homes, and properties suitable for tenants with restricted mobility. Ground floor properties will be future proofed to enable them to be modified simply for wheelchair use at a future date if required.

The Council is committed to improving the data that it holds on tenants with disabilities and their needs and on applicants and households approaching as homeless so that the level of unmet need for people with disabilities can be addressed within the new portfolio.

Within the constraints of development viability consideration will be given to boundary walls or natural boundaries rather than fencing as longer terms alternatives

Recycled materials will be prioritised where they are a suitable alternative

## Approval process from inception to completion

Stage	Authorisation	Additional Authorisation Required
Initial proposal – Business case to develop a feasibility study	Head of Housing & Business Planning	Housing Management Team
Approval of resources for feasibility study	Corporate Head of Housing	
Initial feasibility study progressed to outline proposal	Corporate Head of Housing	Corporate Leadership Team
Request for permission to develop full proposal and submit to Housing Committee	Member Working Party	
Report on proposed scheme with financial information including Viability Assessment. Request for permission to tender relevant contracts /	Housing Committee	Corporate management Committee Full Council



enter into negotiations to acquire		
------------------------------------	--	--

## Tenure of new units / Local Lettings Policy

All Housing Revenue Account developments will, as part of the scheme design and viability assessment of any scheme over 10 units have consideration for the Council's Affordable Housing Policy published within the Adopted Local Plan in 2020:

### Policy SL20: Affordable Housing

Over the period of the Local Plan the Council will seek to deliver 30% of all net additional dwellings as affordable units of which about 70% will be provided as Affordable/Social Rent and 30% provided as other forms of affordable housing. Development proposals of 10 or more (net) additional dwellings will be expected to provide 35% of dwellings as affordable units with a tenure split as above which includes 10% of homes for affordable home ownership (starter homes, discounted market sales housing and/or other products which provide affordable routes to home ownership in line with the definition contained in the 2019 NPPF)<sup>17</sup>. In seeking affordable housing provision, the Council will have regard to scheme viability and take a negotiated approach to the final percentage of affordable housing delivered and the type and tenure split of affordable units. Where viability evidence demonstrates that the full amount of affordable housing cannot be delivered the Council will negotiate a level of on-site affordable housing that can be delivered considering the mix of unit size, type and tenure and any grant subsidy received.

The Council supports the concept of mixed tenure schemes within HRA developments however historically shared ownership opportunities provided by Section 106 agreements have had very little take up from residents of the Borough.

The inclusion of homeownership products can impact highly on the viability of a scheme and the introduction of a new shared ownership model for properties developed using Homes England grant will further restrict the return for the landlord if using this funding mechanism.

Shared ownership payback period (for the rented share)

New 2 bed home	25% bought with £7,500 deposit	Rented Share	Annual Rent	Years to pay back HRA(without interest on borrowing)
£295,000	£73,750	£221,250	£5,520	40

Affordable Rent payback period



Affordable rent product	Affordable Rent	Annual Costs	Net income	Years to pay back HRA(without interest on borrowing)
£295,000	£13,156	£3,000	£10,156	29

Consideration will be given to supporting keyworker access to Affordable Housing, this will be facilitated through the Allocations scheme where local connection by virtue of employment is achieved after 3 years and on larger schemes Local lettings plans will enable a balance of waged and benefit dependent households by prioritising Working Households for a % of properties.

Where appropriate to ensure a sustainable development Local lettings Plans will be utilised and these will consider:

- Mix of Housing Register applicants and homeless households
- Allocation prioritised for working households
- Mix of age ranges for children
- Assisted home purchase schemes for existing HRA tenants unable to afford to buy their current property

The HRA Development Strategy supports all the themes in Runnymede's [Corporate Business Plan 2016-2020](#) and the those in the emerging Corporate Business Plan 2021-2024 delayed due to the Covid 19 pandemic:

- Environmental Sustainability – Good Quality Homes in Well managed Neighbourhoods
- A Revived & Prosperous Economy – New Council Owned Homes, Financial Inclusion Strategy
- Empowered Communities – Increased resident engagement

## Delivery and Monitoring

The Corporate Head of Housing and Head of Housing & Business Planning will be responsible for delivery of the strategy.

The Corporate Project Management Office (PMO) has responsibility for embedding a project management approach across the organisation to support, monitor and report on the progress of projects within the Council's Project Portfolio. In addition to the normal supervision and monitoring activities all HRA Developments will be subject to corporate oversight.

Housing Committee will receive regular reports on progress on development activity in addition to the mandatory approvals for, budgets, schemes and contracts.



Appendix C – HRA Development Acton Plan 2021-2023

Issue	Action Required	Activity to Date and Planned	Completed
No approved Development Strategy	Draft Development Strategy to be taken to Member Working Party and subject to comments to Housing Committee	Members Working Party – 21 July 2021 Housing Committee – 8 September 2021	
Lack of specialist Development Resource	Post of Development Manager approved by Committee, 3 rounds of recruitment failed to appoint.  Readvertise and if not successful consider temporary consultancy to avoid delays	Position readvertised and offered pending references. 23 August 2021	
Require Runnymede Development Standard for new build and new acquisitions. This to include investment in technology for sustainable homes.	Draft document to be prepared to be submitted to committee after member Working Party	Initial draft started will go to MWP 12 October 2021	
Need to register as Investment partner with Homes England	Application submitted	Application submitted and received confirmation on 11 August 2021, Runnymede Borough Council (43UG) is qualified to participate in the AHP 2021-26 and associated affordable homes programmes.	11 August 2021
RBC does not have access to current viability assessment software.	Preparation of specification for procurement exercise for viability assessment software. A number of available in the market.	Development Manager to undertake procurement exercise	
No project management system for development in use	Ensure Microsoft Project Manager or equivalent is utilised to manage and monitor all Development activity	Development Manager to put this in place with raining if required.	
Ensure staff trained on IMS (Homes England IT system)	Head of Housing & Business Planning and Head of Homelessness submitted bid	Development Manager to arrange training with Homes England if required for	

	to IMS successfully but further training required on submitting programme data.	submission of programme details for funded schemes.	
Endure all development activity is supported by process documentation and a project and financial management regimes are embedded and subject to regular audit.	Create template forms and documents for all Development Activity  Procedure manual for all expenditure on development activity	Development Manager to set up	
Complete benchmarking exercise to inform parameters for Runnymede Viability Assessments.	As very limited recent development it is necessary to investigate current sector costs and assumptions to ensure RBC viability assessments are valid	Benchmarking report procured from specialist development consultancy working with Local Authorities and RPs nationally. Report due September 2021	
Consultation Strategy required	A development consultation strategy is required to outline all the stages of a development at which consultation may be required including internal with other department, with members and residents. To be developed by Development Manager and Head of Housing & Business Planning	To be developed by Development Manager and Head of Housing & Business Planning	
Embed consultation with Technical Services and Housing Management within the initial concept and design stages for all developments.	Within consultation strategy	As above	
Ensure post handover, during defects period, learning from the scheme is captured and embedded in ongoing processes (feedback from Housing Management, Technical Services, Allocations & customers)	Within consultation strategy	As above	



Modern Methods of Construction (MMC)	Develop inhouse knowledge of MMC and embed a process of assessing efficiency benefits for consideration for each new development.	Development manager to action	
Heating solutions	Investigate the full range of heating solutions available to ensure that Runnymede maximises potential from new heating sources both in financial and sustainability terms and has identified alternative heating sources well in advance of the 2025 ban on gas boilers in new build properties.	Development Manager to action this	
Consider opportunities for joint procurement with the Commercial Assets Team	Identify where the HRA will require the use of external consultants and contractors and liaise with Corporate Head of Assets and Regeneration	Coordinate on schemes to establish where joint procurement can provide benefits	

## 7. OLDER PEOPLE STRATEGY (HOUSING, ANDY VINCENT)

### **Synopsis of report:**

A report was presented to the June 2021 Housing Committee requesting that the Housing Service consult with residents, Members and other stakeholders regarding proposals for a Housing Service - Older People Strategy

This consultation was conducted in July 2021 and August 2021 – a summary of the results is included below with full details in appendix E.

The aims of the strategy are as follows: -

1. First class older persons accommodation with modern facilities, that is highly sought after
2. High quality onsite support promoting independence, tackling isolation and maximising resident's health and wellbeing
3. A clear pathway into older persons accommodation with assistance where required
4. A partnership with Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care services to ensure residents receive the 'right' care services where they are required
5. Accommodation outside of Independent Retirement Living that meets the needs of older people

The cost implications of delivering the strategy are included within the finance section of the report. Upgrading the communal lounge, reception, hallways and landings, gardens, alarm call system, mobility storage, guest rooms and laundry facilities will cost up to £1.7m over 4 years.

### **Recommendation:**

Members are asked to approve the Housing Service – Older People Strategy (appendix D) recognising that this work alongside Decent Homes work – will lead to a significant upgrade in the quality of accommodation Runnymede Borough Council provides for older people living in our Independent Retirement Living.

1. **Context of report**
  - 1.1 Older People are a key constituency to whom the Housing Service provide services.
  - 1.2 Many older people have been tenants of Runnymede Borough Council for a considerable length of time.

Property Type	TENANTS OVER 65		TENANTS 65 & UNDER	
	Number of Tenants	Average Length of Tenancy	Number of Tenants	Average Length of Tenancy
GN	693	30	1,816	11
IRL	169	8	31	3
Both GN & IRL	862	25	1,847	11

- 1.3 Housing services specifically for older people are largely provided in the form of Independent Retirement Living accommodation and support.
- 1.4 Support for older people is also provided to assist households where appropriate to downsize into Independent Retirement Living accommodation.
- 1.5 Some general needs (GN) accommodation has been designated for older people. It is essential that this accommodation and the communities in which they are located are appropriate and work to minimise the potential for a 'clash of lifestyle' which other age groups.

## 2. Aims of the Housing Service - Older People Strategy

- 2.1 The following aims are articulated within the Housing Service - Older People Strategy: -
1. First class older persons accommodation with modern facilities, that is highly sought after
  2. High quality onsite support promoting independence, tackling isolation and maximising resident's health and wellbeing
  3. A clear pathway into older persons accommodation with assistance where required
  4. A partnership with Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care services to ensure residents receive the 'right' care services where they are required
  5. Accommodation outside of Independent Retirement Living that meets the needs of older people

- 2.2 The strategy sets out an action plan for delivery of the above aims. Progress against these aims will be reported back to the Housing Committee annually.

## 3. Consultation

- 3.1 Consultation with a host of stakeholders on the proposed vision contained within the strategy was undertaken in July and August 2021.

Groups of consultees included: -

- Runnymede Borough Council Councillors

- RCRA members
- Tenants – specific information was sent to IRL residents + their next of kin
- Applicants – including individuals who had previously expressed an interest in downsizing
- Stakeholders – including Age UK, Surrey County Council’s Adult Social Care Department, Look Ahead and the Salvation Army.

3.2 A summary of the results of the consultation are as follows: -

108 individuals responded to the consultation – 69 of the respondents are current residents of our Independent Retirement Living accommodation.

Generally, consultees agreed with the vision being presented. Some discrepancies did arise; for examples with the following: -

### 1. Reception areas

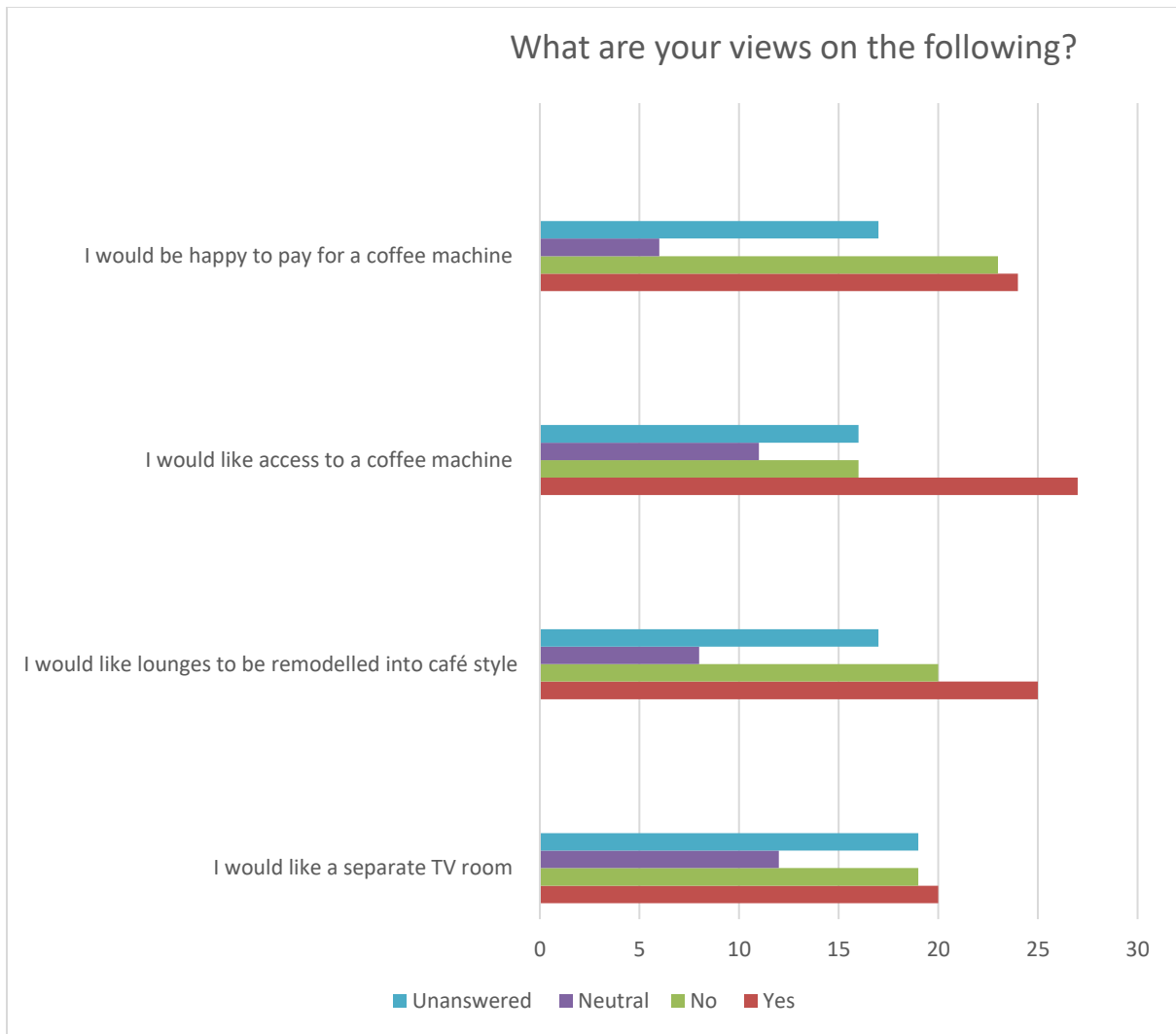
Consultees were not convinced by the suggestion of ‘hotel style’ reception areas – preferring private areas to talk to the Scheme Manager

Views on the Reception Area



### 2. Lounges

Consultees were not convinced of the value of a separate TV room. Further consultation will need to be undertaken with individual schemes before upgrades to the lounge areas are undertaken.

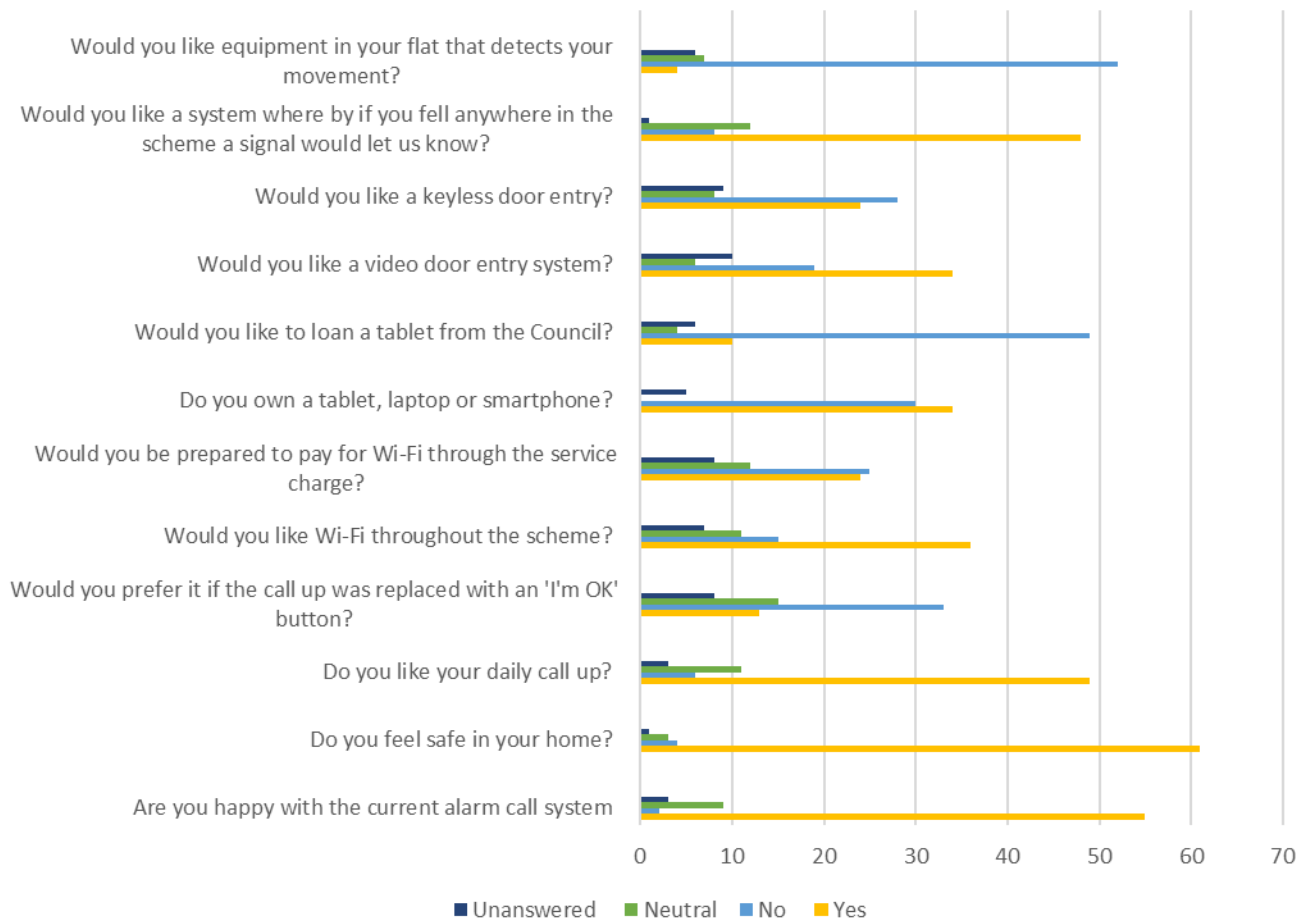


### 3. Alarm call systems

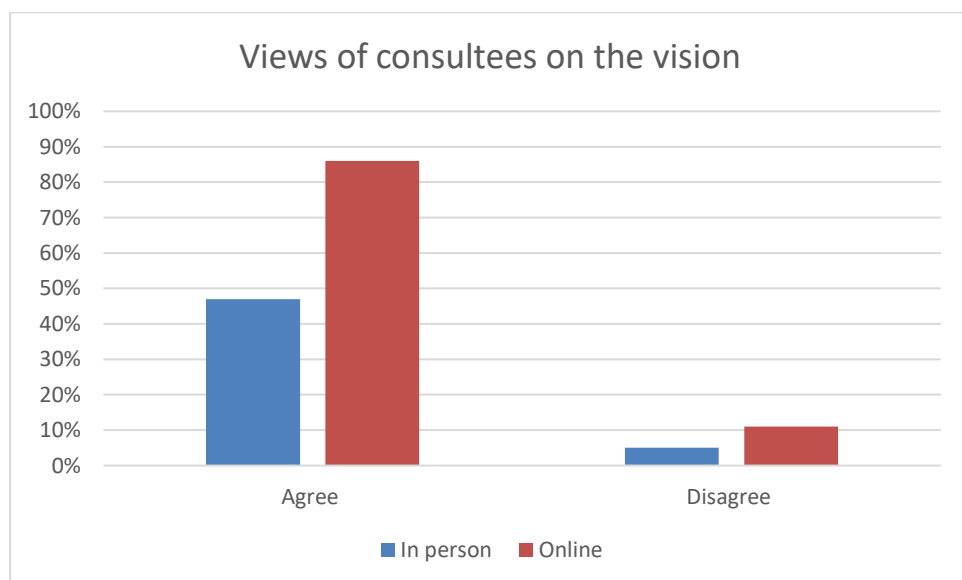
Consultees are happy with the current alarm call system.

Although the upgrade to digital calling will need to take place before the analogue system becomes obsolete in 2025. This feedback seems to suggest that there is no need to introduce a complex system with additional functionality.

## What are your views on the following in relation to the alarm call system and technology in the scheme?



### Overall views on the vision



## 4. Policy Framework Implications

#### 4.1 Housing Business Centre Plan 2021/22 (see below)

H8	Development of an Older Persons Strategy looking at the Council's Housing Assets and Support Services	<b>Corporate Head of Housing</b> Head of Housing Head of Housing Technical Services Housing Services Manager  Community Services		Completion by November 2021	Yes
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### 5. Resource implications

5.1 There are significant cost implications associated with the delivery of the Older People Strategy.

5.2 The refreshed Housing Asset Management Plan 2021-2026 identifies the following to support the strategy

*"In September 2021 we will seek approval from Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Committee for our Housing Services - Older People Strategy. This strategy will set out a vision for the future of our Independent Retirement Living stock and wider housing services for older people....."*

*To support this strategy £1.7m will be identified within the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan over the next 5 years to support the enhancement of facilities within Independent Retirement Living and the upgrading of alarm call systems (including enabling a switchover to digital calling which will be required by 2025)."*

5.3 The scope of work included within this strategy has grown from the items contained within the March 2021 Asset Management Plan. Items now include:-

- redecorating the communal lounge and refreshing the furniture in the communal lounge
- remodelling the communal kitchen areas
- remodelling communal reception areas
- redecorating the communal corridors
- digitalising the alarm call system and door entry system
- replacing and adding additional mobility scooter stores
- enhancing outdoor areas including socialising space and pathways
- upgrading the guest rooms and laundry

5.4 The following items were included in the original scope: -

- redecorating the communal lounge and refreshing the furniture in the communal lounge
- redecorating the communal corridors
- digitalising the alarm call system and door entry system

## **6. Legal implications**

- 6.1 Additional requirements are placed on social landlords who deliver support services to older people. These include those set out in the Part 1 of Care Act 2014, which places an emphasis on local authorities seeking to prevent the need for the provision of care and support to 'vulnerable' people. Also, the Supporting People regime, which originated in the Local Government Act 2000 and was introduced in 2003, which launched many of the current practices around the provision of support to 'vulnerable' people.
- 6.2 The Older Persons' Strategy amounts to a significant change in the housing management and section 105 of the Housing Act 1985 requires landlords to undertake consultation with its secure and demoted tenants. Consultation was carried out with those in Independent Retirement Living accommodation and a host of stakeholders.

## **7. Equality implications**

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment of the potential impact of the Housing Services – Older People Strategy has been undertaken to demonstrate the positive impact the introduction of the strategy on inclusivity and accessibility.

## **8. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**

- 8.1 The impact of the Older People Strategy will be to improve the physical environment in and around Runnymede Borough Council's Independent Retirement Living accommodation
- 8.2 It will facilitate an upgrading of the alarm call equipment within our Independent Retirement Living accommodation to ensure that it can make digital calls
- 8.3 It will lead to a modernisation of the support service and will ensure, where appropriate, support is in place to enable tenants/residents to downsize into Independent Retirement Living accommodation.
- 8.4 Plans to improve the energy performance of the accommodation are contained within the Housing Asset Management Plan

## **9. Other implications**

- 9.1 The consultation undertaken as part of compiling this strategy was undertaken in line with the Council's Consultation Strategy principles.
- A. Consultations should have a clear purpose and start at an appropriate stage
  - B. Consultations should take account of the groups being consulted
  - C. Consultations should be clear and concise
  - D. Consultations should last for a proportionate amount of time
  - E. Responses to consultations should be published in a timely fashion and facilitate scrutiny



## **10. Conclusions**

- 10.1 Significant investment has been identified to upgrade Runnymede Borough Council's Independent Retirement Living accommodation.
- 10.2 There is considerable support from the consultees for the work that is proposed within the Housing Services – Older People Strategy. Amendments to the vision have been made to reflect the consultation feedback on reception areas, television rooms and the need for additional seating in communal areas.
- 10.3 Some additional suggestions for areas of work have been suggested through the consultation – they include additional outdoor lighting and the need for improved parking.
- 10.4 Subject to the recommendations being approved, the next steps for the implementation of the strategy are: -
  1. Work to procure building, decoration and interior design services where necessary
  2. Work with Community Services to procure a digital alarm call system (conscious that this may require the upgrading of telephone lines within buildings and damage to communal decoration)
  3. Consultation with each individual scheme to devise a detailed plan for the improvements to the communal areas, gardens, lounge etc.
  4. A detailed project plan for the implementation of the work to the schemes to minimise disruption and ensure the correct order of work

### **(TO RESOLVE)**

#### **Background papers**

Housing Committee Report in June 2021 requesting authorisation to consult on the vision contained within the draft strategy

[9 June 2021: Housing Committee – Runnymede Borough Council](#)

Appendix D

# Housing Service - Older Persons Strategy

*Supporting our older tenants to remain independent*

September 2021



Runnymede Borough Council  
Runnymede Civic Centre  
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**Runnymede**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL 

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## Purpose of the Strategy

Predicted changes in demographics will see the number of older people increase significantly over the next 20 years.

### Population Growth 65+ Runnymede

Age	2020	2030	2040	% increase
over 65 years	15,100	17,300	19,300	27.81%
65 - 79 years	10,500	11,600	12,800	21.90%
80 - 89 years	3,700	4,700	5,000	35.14%
90+ years	900	1,000	1,500	66.67%

Runnymede Population TOTAL Source IPC

This strategy sets out how Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service will seek to respond to the challenges this presents over the next 5 years.

### Maintaining the popularity of the accommodation offer

The strategy also seeks to address emerging issues with demand for older persons accommodation provided by the Housing Service.

Some of the older persons accommodation offered by Runnymede Borough Council is attracting little interest from housing applicants.

Lower demand is focused on specific Independent Retirement Living accommodation offered by Runnymede Borough Council i.e. smaller, bedsit accommodation.

The table below identifies the average number of bids via RBC Living and Homes for the older persons accommodation offered by Runnymede Borough Council in 2019/20.

Address:	Average
Darley Dean	13.5
Heatherfields	1.5
Floral House	7
Grove Court	5

\*No properties were advertised at Beomonds, Chertsey in 2019/20

### Wider links and savings for the public purse

This strategy links into a number of corporate objectives. Although the focus of the strategy will be in particularly on health and wellbeing. The strategy seeks to promote independence and good health of older residents living within the Council own housing stock as long as possible into later life.



Delivering this successfully will enable savings for other public agencies – such as health, social care and related emergency services.

*“it is clear that an estimation of the cost savings generated by this housing [sheltered housing] (as distinct from other forms of older people’s housing) can be achieved. This, combined with the qualitative findings in the research, creates a compelling picture of significant social value delivered to the tenants who live there, and to the NHS, social care and related emergency services.”*

**Table 1 Summary box – possible cost savings per year from ‘sheltered housing’ in the UK each year**

Area of saving	Cost saving
<b>Reducing inpatient stays (all)</b>	£300 million
<b>Reducing inpatient stays (following an emergency admission specifically)</b>	£156 million
<b>Averting falls – savings to ambulance and A&amp;E</b>	£1.79 million £10.98 million
<b>Averting falls – savings to hospital care for hip fractures</b>	£79.5 million
<b>Averting falls – savings to post-treatment bed days, specifically for hip fractures</b>	£47.3 million
<b>Averting falls – savings to all health and social care for hip fractures</b>	£156.3 million
<b>Reducing loneliness – reduced health service use</b>	£17.8 million

*We cannot sum all of the totals in the table above, as some costs overlap. We would, however, reasonably be able to sum the following from the above table to provide an overall social value calculation:*

- *Reduced inpatient stays (all) = £300m*
- *Reduced immediate care costs of falls prevented (all) = £12.7m*
- *Reduced health and care costs of hip fractures prevented = £156.3m*
- *Reduced health service use by reducing loneliness = £17.8m*

**Total = £486m per year**



## Extra Care

The business case for extra care housing has been clearly made.

*“The financial impact of the findings was considerable, with the evaluation indicating that the cost of extra care housing was on average half the gross cost of the alternative placements.”* (The Business Case for Extra Care Housing in Adult Social Care: An Evaluation of Extra Care Housing schemes in East Sussex: Housing Learning & Improvement Network, 2013),

With the population aging and living in older age often with long term health conditions, there is a clear case for additional extra care schemes.

### **Defining the demand for extra care in the Runnymede Borough Council area**

Future extra care demand for the Runnymede Borough Council area has been calculated with regard to the nationally recognised methodology of the Housing LIN, which states that:

...demand for extra care is likely to be required at 25 units per 1,000 population aged 75 plus [...] The desired tenure mix will vary according to local and market factors.

Based on information available as at 1 April 2019, future demand for extra care (as defined earlier in this document) is set out below for 2025 and 2035:

Area	2025				2035			
	75+ population projection	Total demand	Rental unit demand	Leasehold unit demand	75+ population projection	Total demand	Rental unit demand	Leasehold unit demand
Runnymede	8,800	220	59	161	10,400	260	70	190

### **Existing Extra Care Accommodation in Runnymede**

Scheme Name	Managed by	Location	Tenure	No. of units
Aldwyn Place	Anchor Hanover	Englefield Green TW20 0RZ	Rental	56
Augustus House	McCarthy & Stone	Virginia Water GU25 4AB	Leasehold & Rental	40

Taken from: Commissioning Statement, Accommodation with care, residential & nursing care for older people, Runnymede Borough Council, April 2019 onwards – Surrey County Council





## Aims of the Strategy

This strategy is focused on delivering four clear aims. Metrics for measuring success will be identified later in the strategy.

1. First class older persons accommodation with modern facilities, that is highly sought after
2. High quality onsite support promoting independence, tackling isolation and maximising resident's health and wellbeing
3. A clear pathway into older persons accommodation with assistance where required
4. A partnership with Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care services to ensure residents receive the 'right' care services where they are required
5. Accommodation outside of Independent Retirement Living that meets the needs of older people

## Strategic Context

### Links to the Corporate Plan

#### Health and Wellbeing

Supporting current and future older tenants to remain independent and in good health for as long as possible - links to the Corporate Commitment on Health and Wellbeing.

#### Empower Communities

Runnymede Borough Council is committed to supporting communities to enable them to make decisions which impact on their future.

This strategy has emerged following considerable engagement with existing residents of our older persons accommodation, Council tenants, applicants for social housing within Runnymede, residents of the borough, Local Councillors and wider stakeholders.

### Links to other Housing Strategies

#### Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy identifies four strategic aims for the Housing Service.

1. Enable access to affordable housing for local people
2. Increase the provision of affordable housing including low cost home ownership
3. Ensure good quality affordable housing is available to local people in both social and private sector
4. Promote the delivery of specialist housing to meet the identified needs of local people



The development of an Older Persons Strategy supports the aims of enabling 'access to affordable housing for local people' and ensuring 'good quality affordable housing is available to local people'.

### **Housing Revenue Account Business Plan**

The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan identifies an aim of the service to 'review and modernise provision for older tenants' stating that Runnymede aspires to be the social landlord of choice for older residents, providing homes that people are proud to live in.

### **Housing Asset Management Plan 2021-2026**

The Housing Asset Management Plan identifies the areas where investment is required in Runnymede Borough Council's housing stock. The plan identifies that significant investment is required in the older persons accommodation provided by Runnymede Borough Council to ensure that is modern and fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Tenancy Strategy 2018-2020**

Runnymede Borough Council's Tenancy Strategy and Policy sets out the Council's commitment to ensuring that we make 'best use of the housing stock' and ensure applicants/tenants are housed in appropriate accommodation, include those people who need specific accommodation type, for example bungalows.

We also recognise the need to address levels of under-occupation, including offering 'financial and practical assistance is given to those who wish to move'.

## **Our route to delivery**

### **First class older persons accommodation with modern facilities, that is highly sought after**

Within our accommodation designated for older people we are committed to providing the following facilities: -

1. Dementia friendly communal areas with modern, welcoming reception areas
2. Café style lounges with links into the wider community
3. Phasing out the provision of bedsit accommodation
4. Some 1 ½ bedroom accommodation to enable guests to stay over night where this can be provided
5. Outdoor areas that are engaging, dementia friendly and encourage social interaction
6. Schemes equipped with modern, digitally enabled technology





7. Provision of modern ‘other’ facilities including mobility scooter storage, guest and laundry rooms

As part of providing dementia friendly communal areas – we are committed to reflecting the NHS ‘How to make your home dementia friendly – dementia guide ‘

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/home-environment/>

We will establish working groups of tenants to put together a specification for each of our lounge areas linking into the above dementia guidance. Depending on tenants’ view we may seek to enable a local coffee/food business to be established within the lounge space, during office hours.

We will also ask that our working groups to assists us with the specification for outdoor areas. We are keen to ensure our outdoor areas are engaging and spaces in which tenants want to spend time and reflect the latest guidance on providing dementia friendly outdoor spaces.

<https://www.prp-co.uk/news/features/why-dementia-friendly-gardens-are-more-important-than-ever%E2%80%A6.html>

We plan to phaseout the use of bedsit accommodation from our stock designated for older people. Where numbers of units are lost to older persons accommodation, we will seek to re-provide to reflect the growing need for older persons accommodation within the borough.

***Promote and advertise to increase demand***

We are conscious that many residents may not be aware of the services we offer in our Independent Retirement Living accommodation.

We will therefore seek to promote the services we offer. We will put together a communications plan designed to reach these groups.

***The name of our older persons accommodation***

Tenants and applicants as part of putting this strategy together have been consulted on the name of our accommodation designated for older people.

Do you feel the name Independent Retirement Living needs to be modernised to reflect our future vision?

Yes	11
No	22
Maybe	3



Those who answered yes had few suggestions. Those who did make suggestions wrote:

- 'Modernised to include the impact of Covid 19 to the conditions of independent retirement living'
- 'Sheltered Housing'
- 'Just Independent Living'
- 'Caring should be included somewhere'.
- 'Senior Living Options'

We will undertake further consultation with residents and other stakeholders before we consider any change to the name of the service. See Delivery Action Plan.

### *Appropriate age for accommodation designated for older people*

We have recently introduced a new Housing Allocations Policy (approved by Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Committee in June 2021)

Prior to any new policy being introduced we will consult with tenants and applicants on the appropriate age for accommodation designated for older people.

### **High quality onsite support promoting independence, tackling isolation and maximising resident's health and wellbeing**

We want to ensure the quality of support we are providing to our residents continues to improve and reflects best practice in the industry. We will continue to focus on delivering person centred support and will utilise a tailored version of the Outcome STAR designed to promote health and wellbeing and ensure a 'positive use of time' – which includes addressing loneliness to provide the basis of our support planning.

We will seek to enhance our link to Runnymede Borough Council's Social Prescribing Team to ensure we are offering as wide a range of activities as possible to residents – helping to address issues such as loneliness and health and wellbeing.

We plan to introduce an IT system for use by our Scheme Managers to record digitally support plans, promote reviews, record daily interactions and to enable information to be shared via Housing Online with residents and their next of kin should residents wish.

We intend to seek accreditation for our support service to test the service against industry best practice and provide a signal of the quality of service we provide to residents, prospective residents and the industry as a whole.

We also intend to do more to promote inclusivity, promoting our commitment to diversity and demonstrating our support for an environment which engenders respect for difference within our older persons accommodation. We will work alongside our tenants to achieve this and to put together an action plan that ensures this is an area of focus for us.



Finally, we will consult residents on the potential for offering different an enhanced support service for a higher support charge.

### **Promote a clear pathway into older persons accommodation**

We have recently (June 2021) reviewed our Housing Allocations Policy to improve access to older persons accommodation provided by social landlords within the borough.

We want to do more to support older people particularly those wishing to downsize into our older persons accommodation. We will produce a review of similar offers within the industry and look at the business case for a Runnymede approach.

### **Work with Surrey County Council's Adult Care Services to ensure residents receive the right care services where they are required**

We will work to enhance further our relationship with Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care Department.

We will explore the potential for co-location involving Adult Social Care staff and Independent Retirement Living Scheme Managers.

We will work with Adult Social Care to understand what more we can do to support them to provide care where required to residents of our older persons accommodation.

Finally, we will also work with Adult Social Care staff to document a procedure to ensure for our residents a smooth transition into a residential or nursing care setting if their care needs increase.

### **Accommodation outside of Independent Retirement Living that meets the needs of older people**

We will identify appropriate accommodation within our 'general needs' stock that are suitable for older people. This may include some bungalows.

We will ensure that Local Lettings Plans are put in place accommodation to restrict access to younger people without a support need.

We will re-designate our Independent Retirement Living blocks as 'general needs accommodation' and put in place local lettings plans to restrict the age of the new occupants.

### **Metrics for Measuring Success**

We anticipate that work to enhance the demand for our older persons accommodation will lead to an increase in the number of bids placed through our Choice Based Lettings scheme for empty homes within our Independent Retirement Living accommodation.



In 2019/20 (we have used 2019/20 as a baseline as 2020/21 does not represent a typical year due to the covid pandemic) the following were the average number of bids made for Runnymede Borough Council's Independent Retirement Living Accommodation

Address:	Average
<b>Darley Dean</b>	13.5
<b>Heatherfields</b>	1.5
<b>Floral House</b>	7
<b>Grove Court</b>	5

\* No vacant properties in Beomonds and therefore no bids

Following any enhancement work to our accommodation we will set a target for the number of bids to exceed 10 for every property advertised within our Independent Retirement Living estate.

In June 2021 29 Independent Retirement Living (IRL) properties are empty. We aim to ensure less than 1% of our accommodation will be empty by April 2022. This equates to less than 22 IRL properties.

We aim to ensure that satisfaction of Runnymede Borough Council tenants is in the top quartile of landlords nationally. We have not tested satisfaction for some time. In 2022/23 we will undertake a Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR survey). We aim for satisfaction among residents of our Independent Retirement Living accommodation to exceed 90%.

## Delivery Action Plan

The delivery action plan aims to ensure delivery of the objectives above. Dates for delivery if not published as part of the original strategy will be updated as soon as possible. Updates will be given to members as part of the annual review of the strategy.

<b>Aim:</b> <i>First class older persons accommodation with modern facilities, that is highly sought after</i>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Delivery target date</b>
Phase out bedsit accommodation	
Upgrade the physical environment	
Lounges (including communal kitchens)	
Gardens	
Policy on mobility scooters (number per scheme and allocation)	March 2022
New mobility scooter stores	



Communal carpets and redecoration	
Digital alarm call system	By 2025
Reception areas	
Develop a communications plan designed to promote the service to all Runnymede residents	March 2022
Consultation with tenants and applicants on the appropriate age for people to move into accommodation designated for older people	
Undertake further consultation on the name of our accommodation designated for older people	March 2023

<b>Aim:</b> <i>High quality onsite support promoting independence, tackling isolation and maximising resident's health and wellbeing</i>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Delivery target date</b>
Review Runnymede's support planning documentation	October 2021
Work with Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care Department to create synergies in support and care planning documentation	March 2022
Introduce a support planning IT system	March 2022
Achieve external accreditation for the support service in Runnymede's older persons accommodation	March 2023
Ensure the environment in Runnymede's older persons accommodation celebrates diversity	July 2022
Consult with residents of our Independent Retirement Living Accommodation regarding the possibility of offering an enhanced support service for a higher support charge.	March 2023

<b>Aim:</b> <i>A clear pathway into older persons accommodation with assistance where required</i>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Delivery target date</b>
Review existing support offers for older people to move into IRL accommodation settings by other social landlords	January 2022
Propose a Runnymede Borough Council offer to support older people to move	January 2022

<b>Aim:</b> <i>A partnership with Surrey County Council's Adult Care Services to ensure residents receive the 'right' care services where they are required</i>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Delivery target date</b>



Explore co-location between Independent Retirement Living and Adult Social Care staff	December 2021
Meet with Adult Social Care to discuss what more we can do to facilitate effective care provision in our Independent Retirement Living accommodation	December 2021
Document a move on procedure from IRL accommodation into care settings	March 2022

<b>Aim:</b> <i>Accommodation outside of Independent Retirement Living that meets the needs of older people</i>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Delivery target date</b>
Identify accommodation within our 'general needs' stock suitable for older people.	March 2022
Put in place Local Lettings Plans to restrict access to younger people without a support need.	July 2022
Designate outside blocks of Independent Retirement Living Schemes as for younger people – although with an LLP	July 2022
Meet with Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care to discuss the provision of Extra Care Accommodation within the borough	December 2021



Appendix E

# Vision for Older Persons Housing Services

# Introduction

The residents of Runnymede's Independent Retirement Living scheme were presented the Vision for Older Persons Housing Services. Tenants were asked for their feedback of the proposal, in the form of a questionnaire. The results from these questions help shape the strategy of future housing services for older people within Runnymede Borough, and plan for investing in our existing schemes.

The Vision for Older People was also available online for public access on the Runnymede Borough Council website. The proposal was followed by a online survey, in order to receive the public's feedback. The questions available here were structured to receive feedback and opinions from potential future tenants.

Most of the feedback shown in this presentation is from current IRL residents. The data collated from the online survey is shown when it relates to the IRL data.

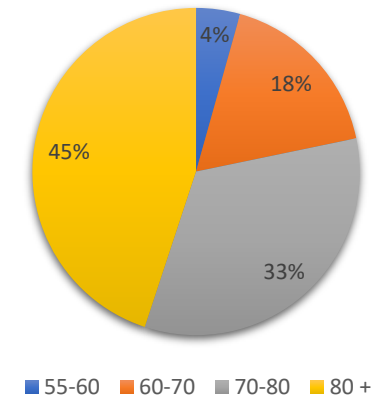
This feedback was collected from the 21/06/2021 – 5/08/2021.



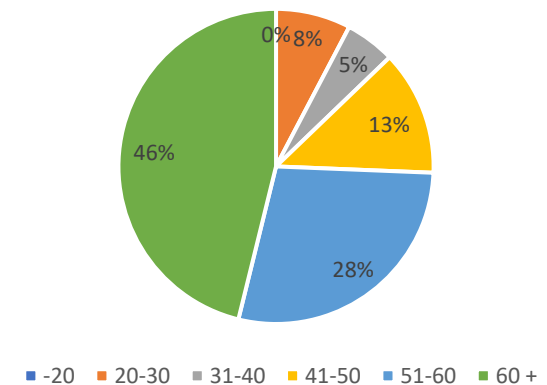
# Age Range

- The questionnaire for the Vision for Older Persons Housing Services was taken by 69 of Runnymede's IRL tenants.
- The majority age group that took the questionnaire were aged 80 years old and over.
- The results have been divided by age groups. This has indicated that some age groups differ on opinions.
- The second survey, on Survey Monkey, had 39 responses.
- The majority of these responses were from people aged 60 years old and over. The age of participants were aged from 20 – 30 years old.
- 35.14% of the online participants voted 'Yes' when asked if they were interested in moving into the Older Persons Accommodation within the next 10 years, and thus are potential future tenants for the IRL schemes.

Age  
Current Tenants



Age  
Online Survey



# Reception Area

A majority of those who took the paper questionnaire voted in favour of modernising the reception area (66.67%), 27.54% voted 'Neutral' or did not answer the question, there was a lack of opposition to modernise the reception area, with less than 6% voting 'No'. On the online survey, 69.44% voted in support of improving the Reception area.

There does remain a question of style, as 31.88% of tenants responded with 'No' when asked if they would like a 'hotel style reception'.

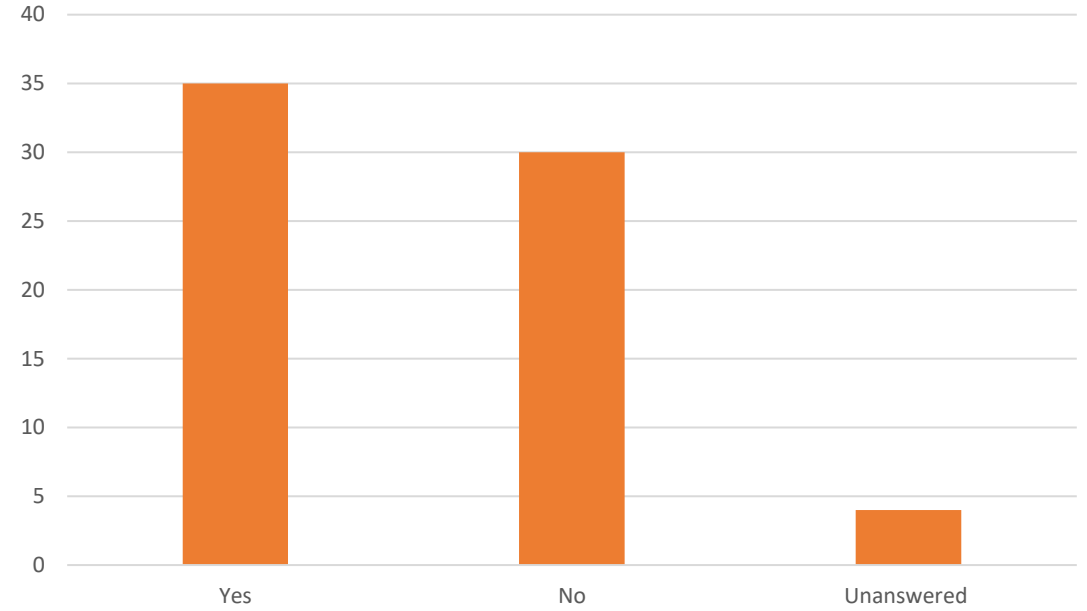
Views on the Reception Area



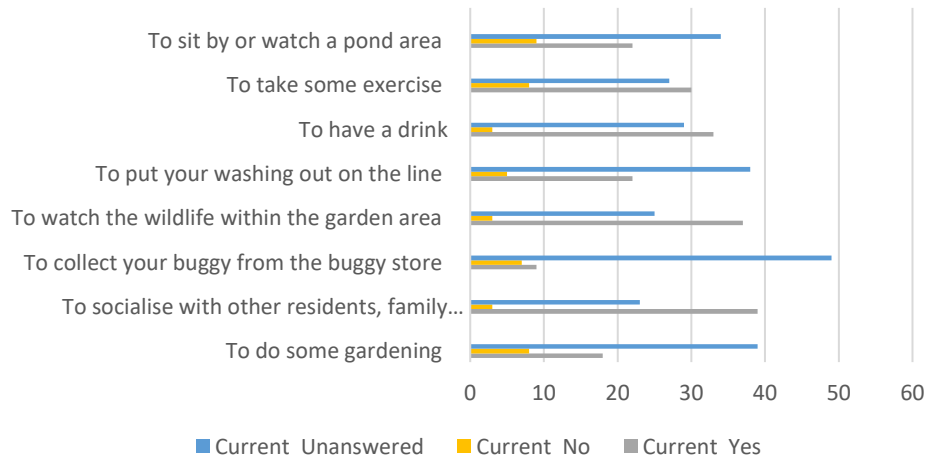
# Outdoor Space *Current Usage*

Currently, 43.48% of the residents use the outside space all year round. However, 75% of the age group 60-70 use the garden all year round.

Do you use the outside space all year round?



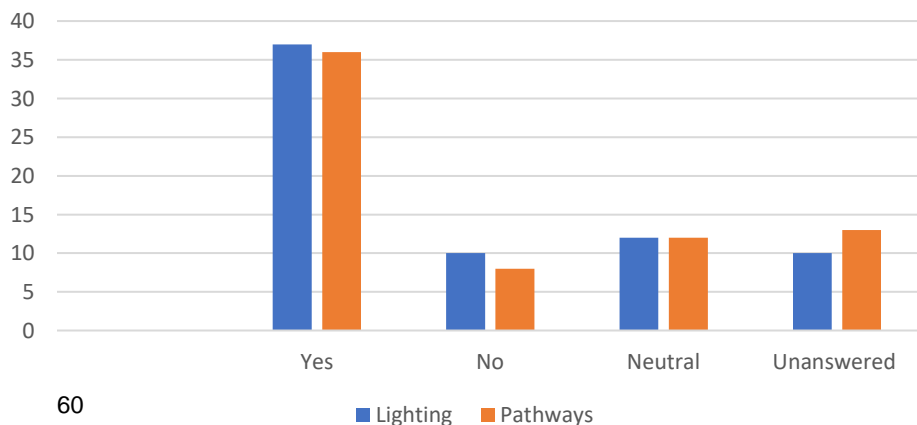
Current Usage of the Outside Space



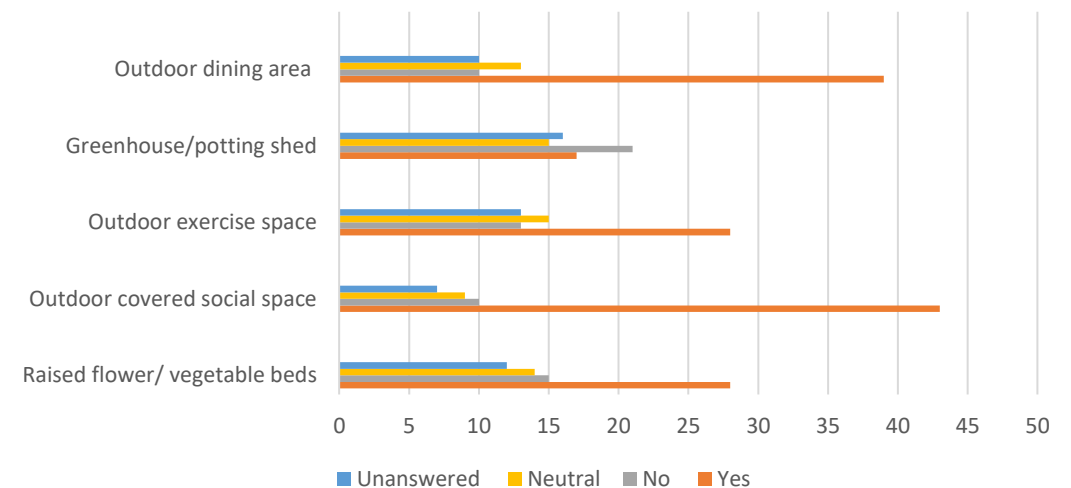
# Outside Space *Future Usage*

Many suggestions in this section were 'voted' in favour of by residents. The below charts could argue that residents are keen to exercise the use of outside space, particularly for sociable areas, such as 'outdoor dining area' and 'outdoor covered social space'. Currently, 49.48% of residents do not use the outside space all year round. When asked if they (the residents) would use the outdoor space if the pathways and lighting were improved, only 11.59% answered 'No'.

Would you use the outdoor space if the pathways and lighting were improved?



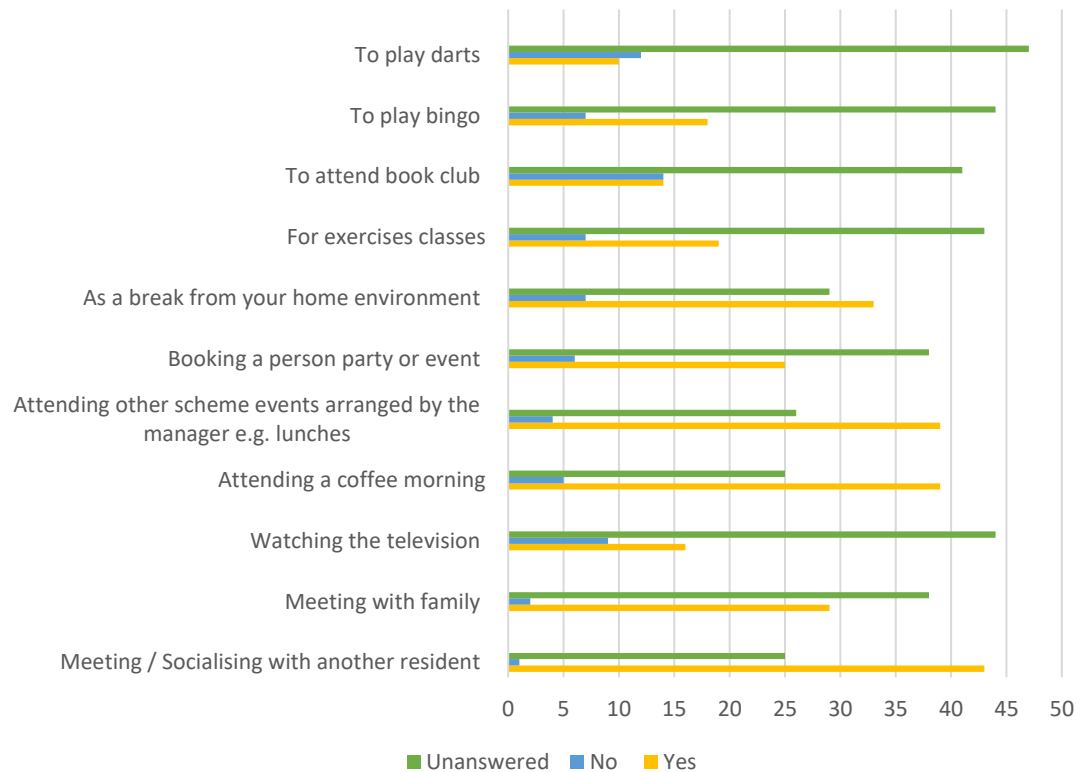
Would you use the following if we introduces this into the garden area?



# Communal Lounge / Kitchen

## *Current Usage*

Current Usage of the Communal Lounge



Many questions in this section went unanswered.

The suggestions that did go most answered would fall under 'sociable', where a large majority of participants voted in favour.

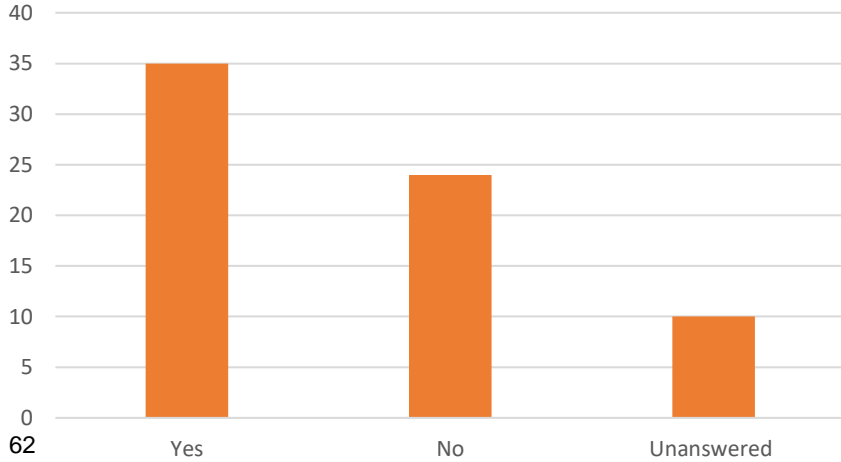
Though 62.31% failed to answer the suggestion of exercises classes in the communal lounge, 86.11% of online participants supported the idea of 'Identifying activities for older residents within the community designed to assist them to improve their health and wellbeing', suggesting that it may be an important usage of the communal lounge and outside space in the future.

# Communal Lounge / Kitchen

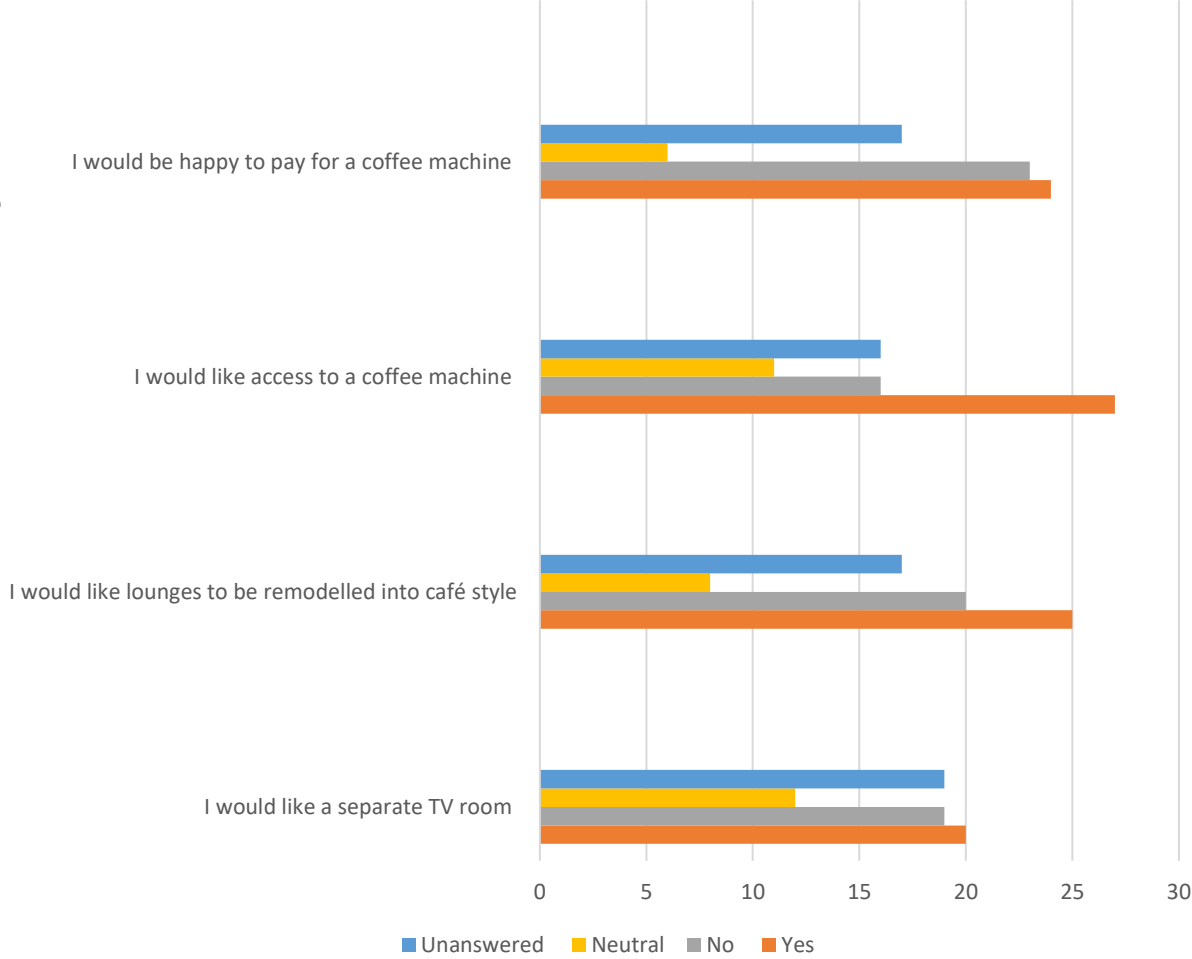
## *Future Usage*

- There was a mixture of response to the suggestions from current tenants.
- On the online survey, 83.33% voted to support 'Updating/redecorating the Communal Area and introducing a café space', thus suggesting a favourable design for future tenants.

Would you like the lounge to be used for other activities?



What are your views on the following?

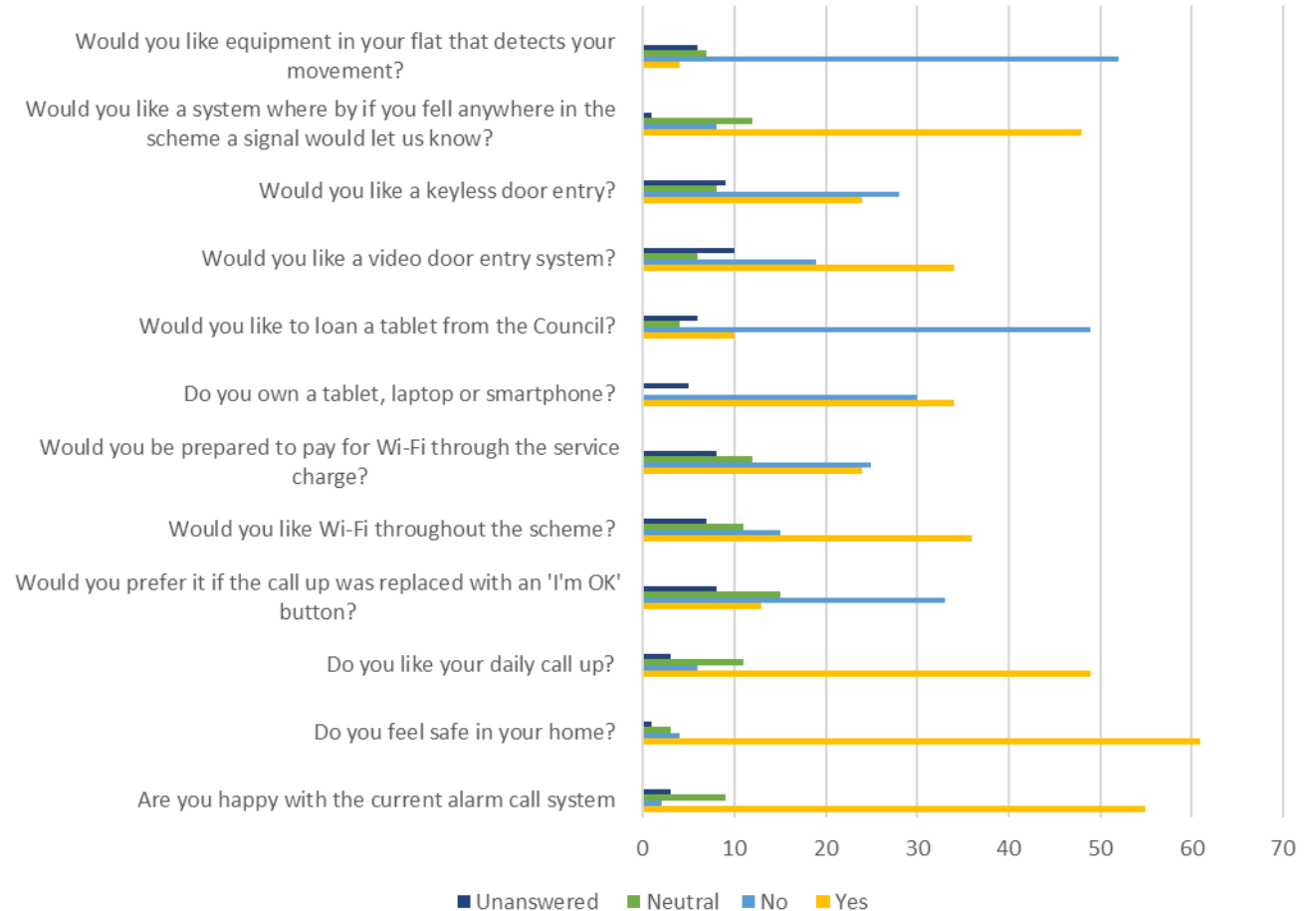


# Alarm Call System

Video and keyless entry seems to be age dependant. The older age groups largely voted against the instalment, whereas ages below 80, a majority voted 'yes' or 'neutral'.

A positive result was that tenants felt safe in their home, however with a majority voting in favour of a system to detect that they have fallen deemed popular and thus a way in which the council can do more.

What are your views on the following in relation to the alarm call system and technology in the scheme?



# Support

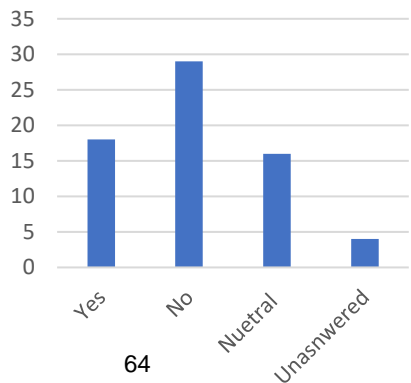
There was a lack of support for contacting a neighbour amongst residents. The majority of the 80 years and over age group voted 'No' (48.38%). Being older residents, they may have voted no due to the alarm system being of most important to them, and do not want to disturb their primary use.

Many voted in favour of having a have a dedicated manager on site during the day (75.36% voted Agree or Strongly Agree).

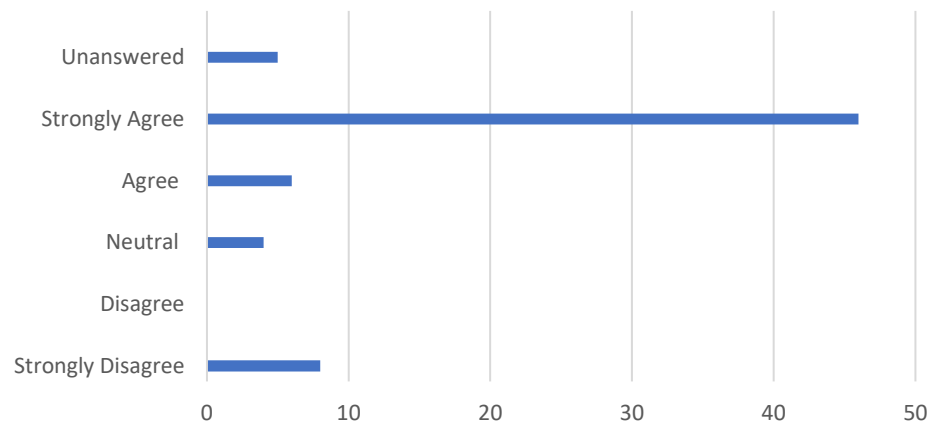
A majority of residents disagreed to a team of mobile managers (49.28% voted Disagree or Strongly Disagree).

On the online survey, many participants were in favour of supporting residents to move into the older persons accommodation (97.44%), mainly in forms of assisting with decorating. Other suggestions included transportation from one property to the other and emotional support for a known stressful process.

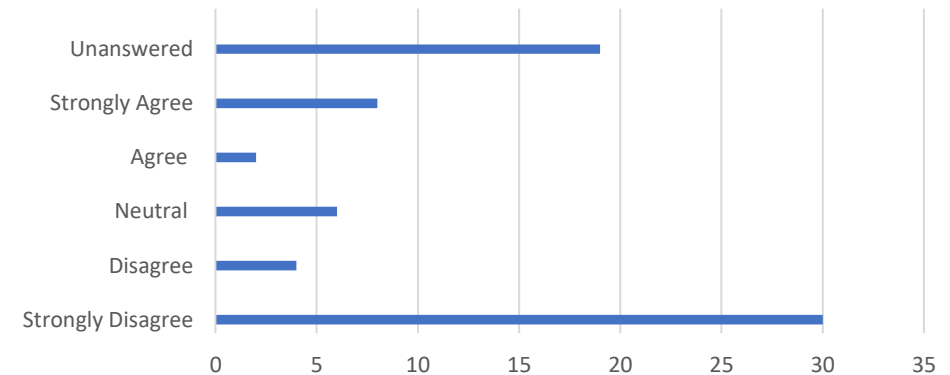
Would you like to be able to call your neighbour from your alarm/telecare system?



'All older persons housing schemes should have a dedicated manager on site during the day'



'It is not necessary to have a dedicated scheme manager; older persons housing schemes could be successfully managed through a team of mobile managers who work with residents across all schemes regardless of location'





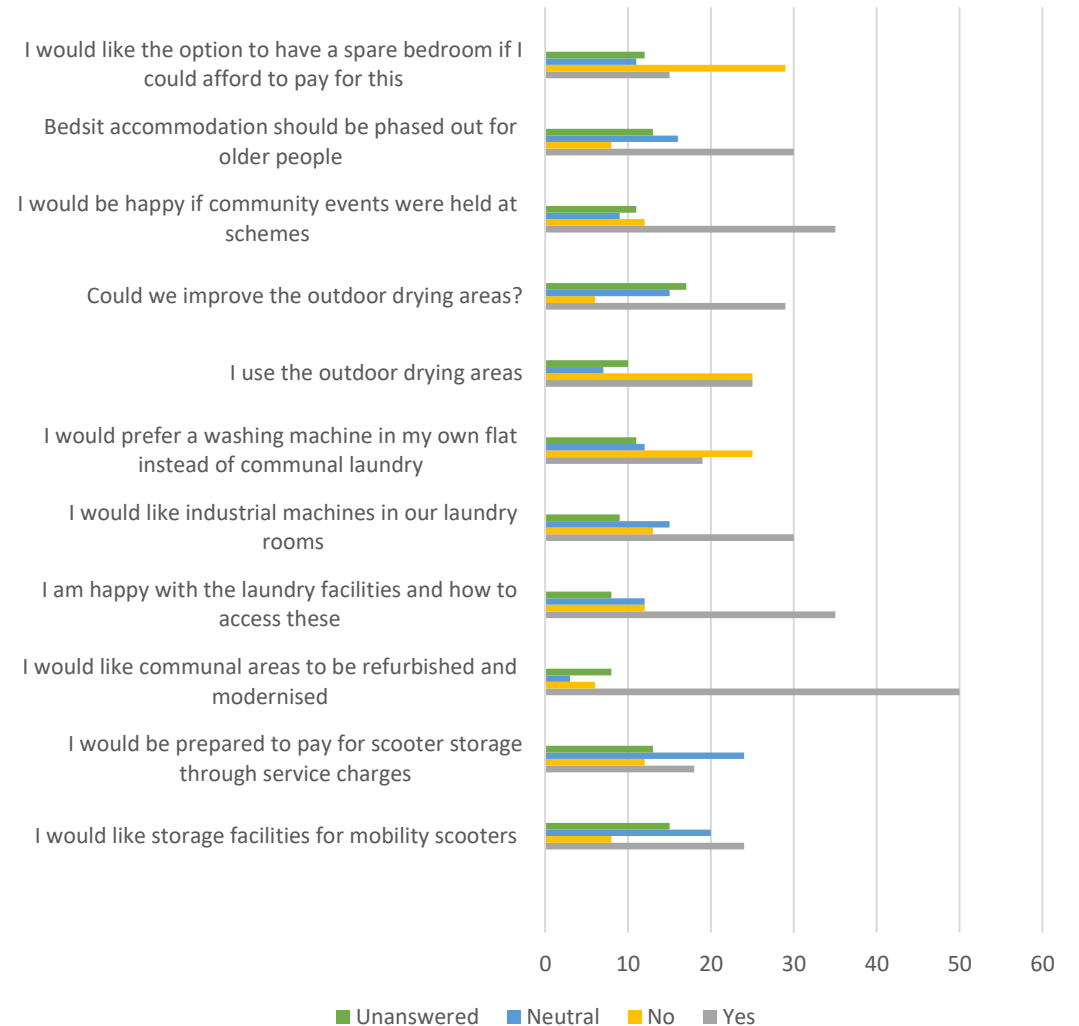
# Other Facilities

To modernise the communal area seems to be of most importance to current residents, along with tenant involvement in community events.

Laundry facilities were highly commented on, with current residents in favour improving outdoor drying areas.

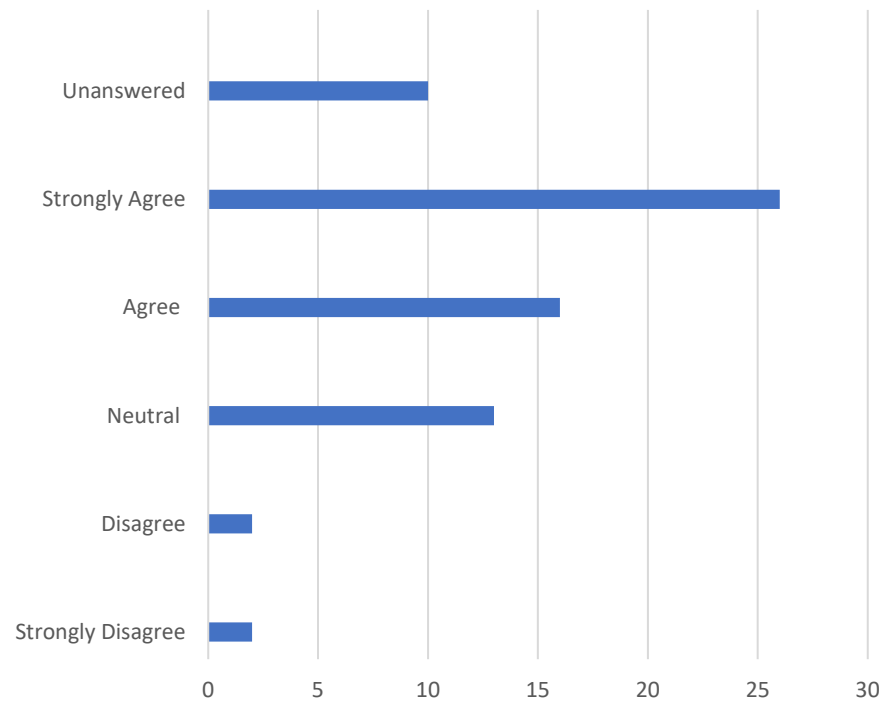
The online survey indicated that the laundry and scooter facilities to be improved was important, with 91.67% of participants in favour of the suggestion.

What are your views on the following:

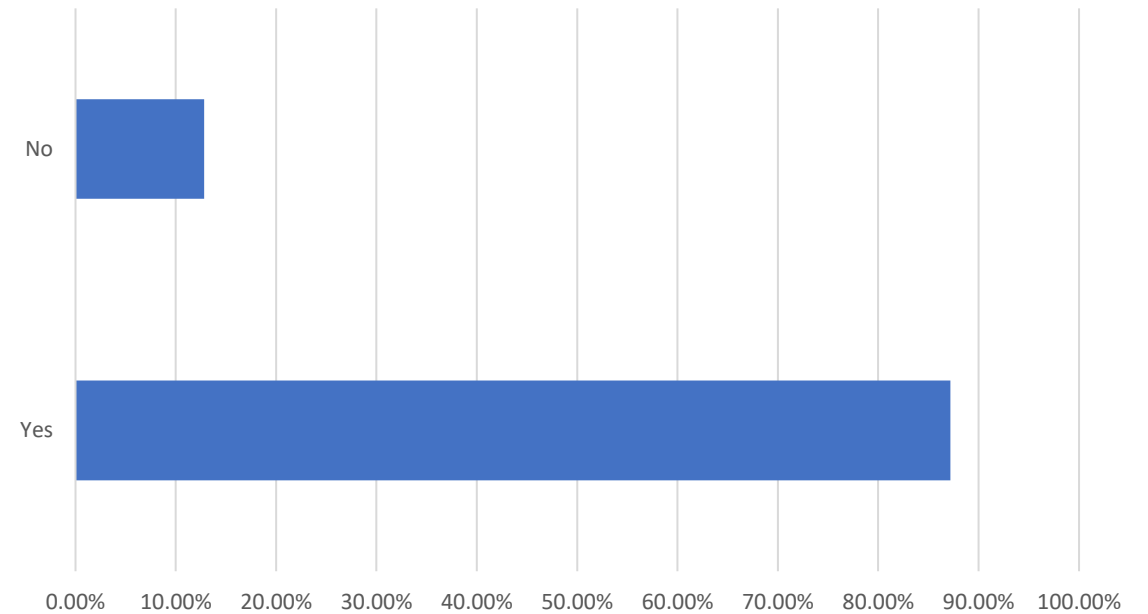


# Overall feedback of the Vision

Overall, do you like the vision for older persons housing you have seen today?



SurveyMonkey  
'Do you like the vision that is proposed for our Older Persons Accommodation?'



8. **HOUSING TECHNICAL SERVICE DAY TO DAY REPAIRS POLICY (HOUSING, SIMON ALLEN)**

**Synopsis of report:**

The Housing Technical Service Day to Day Repairs Policy was presented to Committee in June 2021 as a draft document. As part of that process, a commitment was given that a full customer consultation would be undertaken during July and August 2021. The final policy and outcomes from the consultation is now presented to Committee for full approval.

**Recommendation:**

Members are asked to approve the Housing Technical Service Day to Day Repairs Policy (appendix F).

1. **Context of report**

- 1.1 The Housing Technical Services day to day repairs policy is a key policy that drives the level of customer satisfaction and provides confidence in the Council in delivering key essential repairs to HRA homes.
- 1.2 The existing policy is outdated, has not been refreshed for some time, was not transparent in designation of responsibility, repairs timescales and it lacks specific details around key activities.

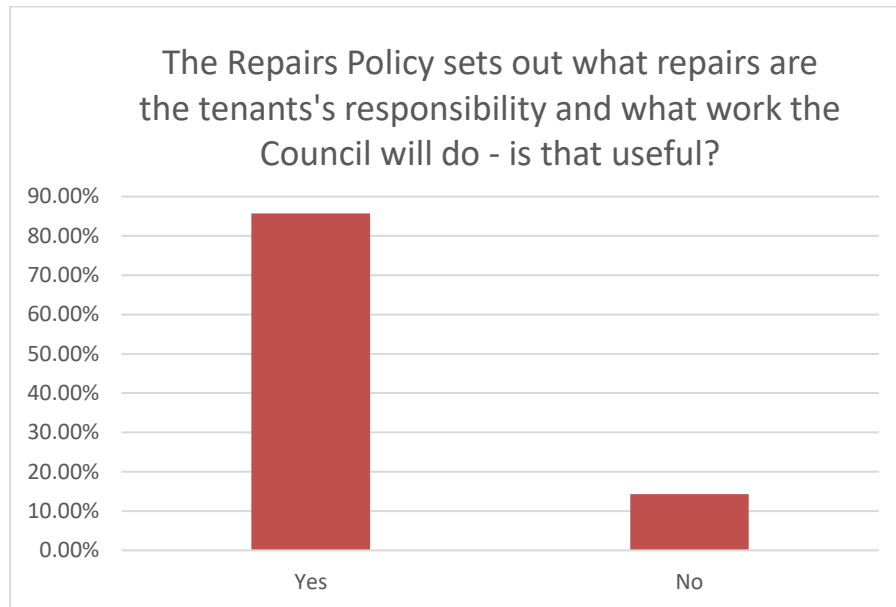
2. **Aims of the Housing Technical Service – Day to Day Repairs Policy**

- 2.1 The following aims are articulated within the Policy: -
  1. New repair timescales for Emergency and Routine works. Existing policy listed 5 different timescales, with the new policy detailing 2. 4 hours for emergency works and 15 working days for routine repairs
  2. Appointment slots listed as AM or PM
  3. Description of works we would undertake for leaseholder.
  4. Repairing obligations for mutual exchanges
  5. Greater detail around who is responsible for what repair
  6. Confirmation of the Council approach to fencing

3. **Consultation**

- 3.1 Consultation events with stakeholders on the proposed vision contained within the policy was undertaken during the week commencing the 9 August at –
  - Surrey Towers
  - Englefield Green
  - Hythe Centre
  - Chertsey Cricket Ground
  - Heathervale Park
- 3.2 The housing newsletter also held details of these events along with an online survey to enable digital responses. Furthermore, around 260 specific letters were sent to customers who had accessed the repairs service since April 2021.

- 3.3 During events officers also undertook door knocking to drive responses and to speak with customer specifically about the day-to-day repairs policy and its aims.
- 3.4 In total we received 37 responses and have analysed the results in relation to policy aims.



- 3.5 A vast majority of tenants are in favour of the repairs policy, a selection of comments can be found on the following pages.

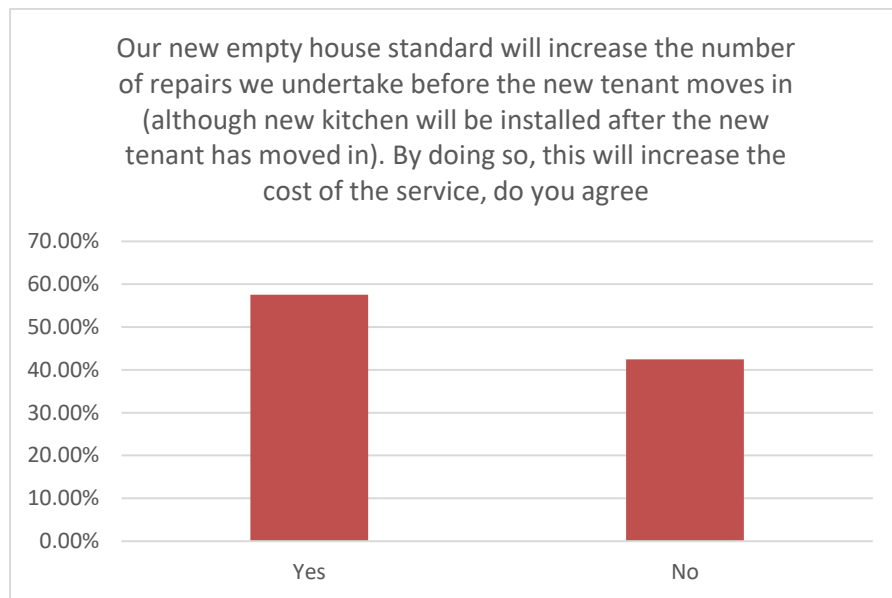


### In favour

- It would be good if tenants work and could not get time off during the week
- Have more time slots available to be a bit specific?

### Against

- Appointment times are not an issue, getting a repair work order seems to be very time consuming though
- Not worth increasing costs for RBC
- They struggle to turn up in the week when arranged so wouldn't want to waste my weekends as well
- The weekly service offers plenty of options to carry out a request
- I have taken annual leave at least three times this year to cover appointments where engineers haven't turned up or couldn't complete the job. Tenants do have full time jobs as well
- Your contractors don't keep appointments anyway!



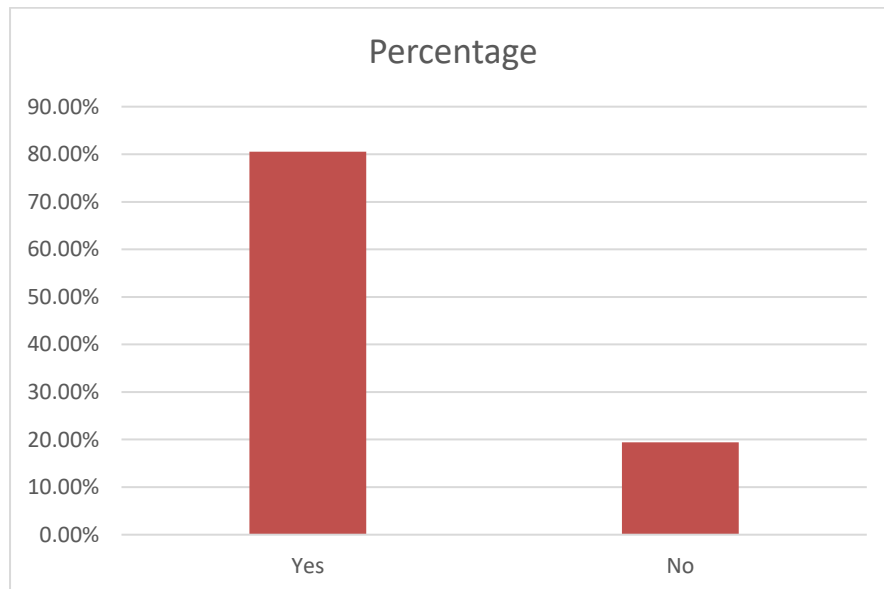
### In favour

- I agree that the empty home standard should be clean, safe, secure and in good repair. What is the minimum standards in housing? Looking at it from a different angle it would be sensible to decorate each house in a neutral colour e.g., white vanilla/cream walls, go grey floorboards or vanish for a hard-wearing wooden floor. This would stop the need to give out paint starter kits to tenants and save money to the taxpayer and reduce stress on everyone. Plus, council contractors can use non-branded paint. Thank you

## Against

- If you have an empty house, do the work when no one's there! It's a no brainer!
- No point increasing costs
- All repairs should be done before the tenant moves in as they will have to decorate, and t put a new kitchen in after the tenant has moved in is very disruptive
- Keep the service as it is to keep costs down
- Why not put new kitchens in before someone moves in less disruptive to people old and young
- Why not install the kitchen before the tenant moves in to cause less disruption to the new tenant.

**Finally, we have changed our repair priorities so that repairs will done within 4 hours if they are an emergency, or for standard repairs to be completed in 15 working days and by appointment at your convenience. Are you happy with this change?**



## In favour

- If they were actually done within the time stated and when arranged with the Tenant, then yes however most of the time the workman just turn up and expect you to be available

## Against

- It should be done quickest as it's been over 15 days and I'm still waiting
- 3 weeks and sometimes that can be too long

- I had an emergency repair and was given 72 hours, however that did not include weekend so how was that an emergency repair. I agree with 4 hours but not 15 working days as that is 3 weeks and sometimes that can be too long
- I would say with the new upgrades to the system that the Council has done there is nothing else that needs to be carried out. Our personal experience with the service over the years has been excellent

#### 4. Policy Framework Implications

##### 4.1 Housing Business Centre Plan 2021/22 (see below)

H6	<p>Introduce a Quality Management System to maintenance and roll out across the Department (ISO 9001)</p> <p>Supported by a strategy, policy and procedure framework</p>	<p><b>Corporate Head of Housing</b>            Head of Housing            Head of Housing Technical Services            Housing Services Manager</p> <p>Community Services</p>		<p>Started to be put in place by end of July 2021</p>	No
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#### 5. Resource implications

- 5.1 The service is currently resourced adequately to deliver the aims of the existing policy and budget provisions. The new policy amendments are not intended to increase the resources required to deliver day to day repairs and it is believed that no increase in staffing or budgets is needed.

#### 6. Legal implications

- 6.1 The law on housing repairs relevant to the policy was set out in the previous report to the June 2021 meeting and other legal matters are detailed within the policy itself, including under section 8 '*Legislation and Regulation*'.
- 6.2 Introducing the revised Repairs Policy, represents a change in a housing management practice or policy that engages the duty to consult secure tenants under section 105 of the Housing Act 1985. The authority undertook a wider consultation with tenants and leaseholders.

#### 7. Other implications (where applicable)

- 7.1 The consultation undertaken as part of compiling this strategy was undertaken in line with the Council's Consultation Strategy principles.
- A. Consultations should have a clear purpose and start at an appropriate stage
  - B. Consultations should take account of the groups being consulted
  - C. Consultations should be clear and concise
  - D. Consultations should last for a proportionate amount of time

- E. Responses to consultations should be published in a timely fashion and facilitate scrutiny

**8. Conclusions**

- 8.1 Officers ask that Committee approve the Housing Technical Services day to day repairs policy. Implementation of the policy will begin shortly after approval.

**(TO RESOLVE)**

**Background papers**

None



# **RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **HOUSING BUSINESS CENTRE**

### **Day-to-Day Repairs Policy**

Approved: 2021

Review due: 2024

## **1. Scope**

### **1.1 Runnymede Borough Council Day-to-Day Repairs Service**

The purpose of this document is to set out Runnymede Borough Council's policy when undertaking day-to-day repairs to our tenant's homes.

The policy also details the day-to-day repairs service Runnymede Borough Council's leaseholders can expect to receive.

## **2. Context**

This policy supports the Housing Landlord Service objectives of: -

1. Optimising Income and Efficiencies
2. Good Quality Housing

### **2.1 Data Protection**

Runnymede Borough Council is committed to ensuring the privacy of individuals is respected and that all personal data that is processed by the organisation is dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and other related legislation.

The GDPR lays down rules relating to the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing and sharing of personal data; it protects the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons and in particular their right to the protection of personal data.

The Council will therefore aim to ensure that all employees, elected members, contractors, agents, consultants, or partners of the Council who have access to any personal data held by or on behalf of the Council, are fully aware of and abide by their duties and responsibilities under the law. Specifically, in respect of:

- their responsibilities under data protection law for the protection of personal data
- the necessity of appropriate data sharing
- the benefits for good records management
- the technical and administrative controls operating in the Council

(This is an extract from RBC's Corporate Data Protect Policy)

## **3. Policy Objectives**

The objectives of our Repairs Policy are:

### **3.1 Our Goals**

- To maximise customer satisfaction with the repairs service – by being clear what repair work Runnymede Borough Council is responsible for and what repair work we expect our tenants/leaseholders to be able to undertake.
- To undertake repair work to the highest possible standard – getting as much work as possible completed ‘right first time’.
- Ensure value for money for Runnymede Borough Council and our tenants/leaseholders, by: -
  - promoting self service via Housing Online
  - checking on the quality of work undertaken
  - monitoring customer satisfaction
  - recharging for damage caused by neglect or misuse.
- To encourage our contractors to report any concerns regarding the tenant/leaseholder and their household they identify while undertaking repair work

### **3.2 Monitoring and inspection**

Runnymede Borough Council will monitor the quality of the repairs service being delivered by undertaking: -

- Post inspection
- Customer satisfaction monitoring

## **4. Policy Details**

### **4.1 Repairs Responsibilities**

#### **4.1.1 Runnymede Borough Council’s repairing obligations**

For our tenanted properties we are responsible for keeping in good repair the structure, fixtures and service installation at the premises, examples include:

Systems providing heating, gas, electricity and water in your home including:

- heating systems, water heaters fitted by the Council
- electrical circuits, sockets and switches
- internal pipes, baths, sinks, basins, toilets, taps and deck mixer showers (installed by us)
- other appliances we put in and own (such as communal

television aerials and door entry systems)

- annual servicing of Council gas appliances

Exterior of your home:

- external paint work
- chimneys, chimney stacks and flues but not including sweeping
- drains, gutters and outside pipes
- roofs, external walls and floors
- windows

- paths and steps
- fences, walls and gates erected and owned by the Council

- door fittings – locks, handles, hinges and letter boxes
- windows and window frames
- kitchen units and bathrooms

Interior of your home:

The Council is responsible for the following interior repairs due only to natural wear and tear. We are not responsible when damage has been caused through misuse.

- walls
- floors and ceilings
- plaster work
- doors and door frames

Communal area and facilities:

- lifts and entry phone systems
- fire detection and emergency lighting system
- shared entrances, halls, stairs and passages
- painting the inside and outside of shared areas
- parking areas and any other shared areas

In properties we managed owned by a leaseholder we are responsible for keeping in good repair the structure of the property (this does not include doors and windows except the frames) and the communal area and facilities.

#### 4.1.2 Our tenants repairing obligations

As a tenant you are responsible for maintaining certain parts of your property.

Examples of tenant's responsibilities include:

Interior of your home

- chimney sweeping
- curtain rails
- damage caused by you, anyone living with you, your visitors or pets
- door adjustments required when installing flooring or floor coverings
- doorbells (if battery powered) and door furniture
- fuses and plugs on your own appliances
- general decoration
- glazing (unless authorised by us)
- plugs and chains for all baths, sinks, wash hand basins and WCs
- shower heads and hoses
- smoke alarms (if battery powered)
- toilet seats (unless resident is in sheltered accommodation)

- TV aerials and satellite dishes (unless linked to a communal aerial)

Exterior of your home

- blockages to waste pipes, gullies and WCs caused by misuse
- damage caused by forced entry by the police (unless nothing was found, and no-one charged)
- gardens / garden contents
- keys - lost or stolen, including the replacement of locks
- pests (unless they are interfering with our ability to carry out repairs)
- wooden sheds or outbuildings.

## 4.2 Repair Reporting

Tenants and leaseholders are able to make repair requests via our Customer Service Centre and via website customer portal 'Housing Online'

## 4.3 Repairs Appointments

Repairs should be convenient, and tenants should be able to arrange for work to be completed to their home according to their availability and the availability of the contractor.

We are therefore proposing that we will only operate two categories of repair appointments: -

Emergency – emergency repair work will be completed within 4 hours

General – all repair work will be completed within 15 working days

Appointments will be given in two categories –

- AM (08:00 – 12:00)
- PM (12:30 – 17:00)

Appointments by arrangement for a specific timeslot can be arranged with the contractor directly to meet needs of residents.

Repairs to the structure of a property or to a communal area will normally be completed within 28 days. Leaseholders are able to make requests for this type of work either online or via our customer contact centre.

## 4.4 Out of Hours Emergency Repairs

Runnymede Borough Council provide an emergency out of hours service which operates from the hours of 17:00 until 08:00. This service is for emergency works only that cannot wait until the next working day. The service is a make safe only and any further works required will be undertaken during normal business hours.

Wilful neglect of this service may result in residents being recharged.

## 5. Repairing Specifics

There are certain types of repair jobs that require further explanation; these include: -

### Fencing

We will seek to repair existing fencing to prolong its life

Where existing fencing is in poor condition and needs replacing, the Council will: -

- Install 6ft close boarded fence panels bordering a public footpath
- Where an individual panel is 'down' we will replace if necessary, on a like for like basis
- Between gardens we will install x2 6ft close boarded fence panels from the back of the property to act as a privacy screen – all other fencing will be at 3ft. Including the rear of the property.

## **Fire Safety**

When we are installing new kitchens or while properties are empty, we will ensure the door from the kitchen into the rest of the property is a fire door conforming to FD30 compliance.

Signs on the door will remind tenants that removing the door closer makes the fire door ineffective.

We will complete Fire Risk Assessments for each of our flat blocks and Independent Retirement Living Courts. These will be made available to tenants at their request.

More detail on Runnymede Borough Council Housing Service's approach to Health and Safety is contained within our Health and Safety Policy.

## **Mould and condensation**

We will develop a procedure in relation to mould and condensation. The purpose of the procedure will be to support tenants with mould issues and address any 'lifestyle' issues that are impacting mould growth, alongside exploring issues associated with the fabric of the property.

## **Mutual Exchanges**

If a tenant has installed, after receiving permission from RBC's Housing Service a non-standard item – such as a kitchen, or conservatory – they may be asked to maintain it.

If a tenant who has a non-standard alteration seeks permission to exchange – the exchanging tenant may be asked to continue to maintain the alteration.

## **Raising concerns**

We encourage our repairs contractors to report concerns to us following visits to our tenant's homes. Where concerns are raised, we will ensure they are recorded and followed up by the relevant part of the service or external agency.

## **Trees**

Where trees are decayed and/or dangerous we will arrange for them to be inspected and removed.

Where requests are made for 'cosmetic' work – we will refer tenants to a list of approved contractors

### **Voids (Empty Homes)**

We have published a specification for new tenants which details the work that has been undertaken to make the property ready for its new occupants.

Our focus while a property has been empty is to ensure it is safe to occupy for the new tenant – this means a gas and electrical safety check, the identification of any asbestos in the property and a thorough clean as a minimum. We will also lock loft hatches to ensure insulation is not damaged and so it cannot be used for storage.

As part of our health and safety commitment we will also clear the garden so it can be maintained, check the condition of the fencing and remove any potential trip hazards on paths.

If the property needs more extensive work – such as a replacement kitchen or bathroom this will be installed when the new tenant moves in to enable them to have as much choice as possible over the design.

### **Where we are not able to undertake work**

The condition of some properties dictates that we cannot undertake repair work in them.

Where this is the case, we will record the contractor's objections.

The Council will support the tenant in making arrangements to enable the work to go ahead.

## **5.1 Permission for work**

Alterations and home improvements may be classed as damage to the property if:

- the Council's Housing Service has not given permission (Planning/Building Control permission must also be sought in line with current planning requirements)
- not carried out to the required standard (recharges will apply if Runnymede Borough Council needs to put right unsatisfactory work). In certain circumstances, the Council will require a qualified surveyor to sign off works undertaken to ensure it is satisfactory and safe.
- not safe or adequately maintained

If we need to bridge over for example an extension to undertake repair/maintenance work, we reserve the right to recharge the tenant extra cost that may entail.

## **5.2 Recharges**

The Council can recharge tenants for work that is the tenants' responsibility and for putting right some work. This can include: -

- Putting right unsatisfactory/poor repair work
- Repairing damage to our property as a result of misuse, neglect or wilful damage
- Removing rubbish from a property (normally after the tenant has ended their tenancy)
- Replacing lost keys
- Works listed as tenant responsibility as detailed within the policy

## 6. Consultation and communication

Tenants and leaseholders have been consulted on the content of this policy. Tenants and leaseholders will be consulted if any changes are made to the content of this policy.

Information on the repairs service will be communicated regularly via our newsletter and within our annual report including the performance of our repair's contractors.

Information will also be contained on our website and within our Repairs Handbook.

## 7. Monitoring and performance management

We aim to review this policy in 4 years (or before if there is a change in legislation) to ensure that it reflects current legislation and the latest examples of best practice.

We will consult staff and residents regularly about the operation of our policies.

We will meet with our contractors monthly to discuss the operation of this policy, including associated performance indicators and the success we are having in meeting our policy aims.

The Council welcomes feedback on its services. Complaints about the Repairs service or the operation of this policy can be made in line with the Complaints Policy ([link](#)).

## 8. Legislation and Regulation

The following regulation/legislation relate to this policy document: -

**Homes Standard** - The Home Standard sets expectations for registered providers of social housing to provide tenants with quality accommodation and a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service.

[Home Standard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

**Right to Repair** (Housing Act 1980: Section 41a Secure Tenancies (Right to Repair) Scheme 1985) – Local authorities must have a right to repair scheme in place for secure, flexible and introductory tenants to use.



## [Repairs available under the right to repair scheme](#)

Only certain types of repairs are covered under the right to repair scheme. These are called **qualifying repairs**. They include insecure windows and doors, unsafe power sockets or electrical fittings, leaking roofs and broken entry phone systems.

## [Using the right to repair scheme - Citizens Advice](#)

**Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** defines the fundamental structure regulation and enforcement of workplace health, safety and welfare.

The Act defines general duties on employers, employees, contractors, suppliers of goods and substances for use at work, persons in control of work premises, and those who manage and maintain them, and persons in general.

**Equality Act 2010** protects people against discrimination, harassment or victimisation in employment, and as users of private and public services based on nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

## **9. Equalities Implications**

We will monitor the take up of repair services. We want to ensure all parts of the community are able to access the service. We will act to ensure this happens.

Where individuals are over or under using the service, we may also seek to understand what is causing differences in use of the service.

## **10 Health and Safety**

Repairs undertaken to our properties will be undertaken in accordance with all relevant health and safety legislation and guidance.

Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service have produced a Health and Safety Policy which details how we seek to maximise the health and safety of our tenants/leaseholders, staff and contractors.

This policy will be updated to reflect changing to legislation/guidance/best practice etc.

## **11. Related Strategies and Documents**

Documents: -

- Runnymede Borough Council's Introductory/Flexible/Secure Tenancy Agreement
- Housing Asset Management Plan

- Housing Health and Safety Policy
- Runnymede Investment Standard
- Empty Homes Standard
- Repairs Handbook
- Improvements Policy

## Approval

<b>Version No</b>	
<b>Approved By</b>	
<b>Approval Date</b>	
<b>Effective from</b>	
<b>Date of next review</b>	
<b>Policy owner</b>	
<b>Policy author</b>	
<b>Consultation</b>	
<b>EIA</b>	
<b>DPIA</b>	

## Version Control

<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Details of Review</b>

**9. REQUEST TO APPROVE PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES (HOUSING, SIMON ALLEN)**

**Synopsis of report:**

**Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service (Technical Services) is required to provide a cost effective yet high-quality service to our residents. The Council is obligated to maintain its housing stock in a good condition that meets decent homes standards or beyond. As such this report provides details on the procurement activities planned over the next 18 months and contracts that are required to meet the decent homes standard.**

**Recommendation:**

**Members are asked to approve in principle the procurement of the new contracts listed within the report.**

**1. Context of report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide details around these key procurements activities that will bring the Council housing stock to a condition that as a minimum meets decent homes and addresses housing health and safety rating system failures.
- 1.2 The Council undertook a full stock condition surveys across 100% of its stock, which was finalised in January 2019. As part of this data gathering, the surveys looked at a number of property attributes, including component conditions. A stock condition survey allows us to collect information relating to the Government's Decent Homes Standard, and about the property in general.
- 1.3 This is used to identify, and programme future replacement works. We aim to carry out a stock condition survey at a rate of 10 to 15 percent annually to ensure that our data is kept up to date and accurate.
- 1.4 The survey covers three main areas:
  - Property condition survey – to assess the age and condition of the major elements of each home (such as kitchens and bathrooms), allowing us to estimate the renewal year for each item
  - Energy audit – to assess the energy efficiency of each home and check any potential improvements that will impact on the running cost of your home
  - Health and safety risk assessment – to highlight any potential risks to the occupant and any visitors to the home.
- 1.5 The survey also covers the building structure (roof, windows, doors), assessing any risk to health and safety, and noting energy efficiency.
- 1.6 The data that we capture is kept within an asset management application called SAM. This is a Northgate product and allows predictive cost modelling and planned expenditure based upon the stock condition data. As such, we can produce an initial five-year investment programme which details which homes are failing the decent homes standard and or contain components that are beyond their expected life.

1.7 This data has driven our procurement activity which is listed in the next part of this report.

## **2. Procurement**

2.1 Our investment programme over the next five years will address a number of property component replacements at a cost of circa £10 million per annum which accounts for a significant backlog of works and then future investments to maintain the current standards. This report provides clarity around this procurement activity, which will address much of the expenditure identified within the Asset Management Plan which covers the next five years and sets out our aspirations to maintain our stock, provide tenants services and mitigate compliance risks.

### **2.2 Planned Boiler Contract**

Over the next five years, our plan is to replace around 2,250 boilers at the estimated cost of £5.8m. This would mean replacing around 450 boilers per year to provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort to our residents in their homes whilst improving EPC ratings. We have appointed a consultant to help us in preparing the specification and requirements for the procurement. The procurement is expected to be completed before end of March 2022

### **2.3 Commercial Boiler Replacement**

Commercial boilers for two IRL schemes need replacing in order for it to maintain working capacity and efficiency. Estimated cost of replacement would be around £200k. The procurement is expected to be completed by early next financial year (April/May 2022).

### **2.4 Re-wiring Contract**

It is estimated that we needed to carry out new wiring to around 450 properties over the next five years at the cost of around £1m in order to maintain our stock to a decent homes standard level and provide further safety measure to our tenants and their homes. The procurement is expected to be completed before March 2022.

### **2.5 Main Roof Replacement**

According to our stock condition database, we need to spend around £16.75m over the next five years to replace roof coverings, chimneys, facia, guttering and downpipes to our properties in order to bring our stock to a reasonable decent standard to meet the criteria. A consultant has been appointed to help us complete the procurement by end of March 2022 with a view to start the roofing programme from April the same year.

### **2.6 Windows and Front doors Replacement**

Through the stock condition data, it has been identified that significant number of our front and back doors and windows are in a poor condition and would need replacing in order to meet the decent homes standard and help improve EPC ratings across our stock. It is estimated that it would cost

around £3.75m over the next five years. The procurement for this contract is to start soon and is expected to finish by end of March 2022.

#### **2.7 Cyclical Painting**

The current painting programme would be coming to an end in September next year, therefore the procurement is planned to start soon in order to maintain continuity of the programme and the completion date is likely to be March 2022. The estimated cost over the next 5 years would be around £1.5m.

#### **2.8 Surrey Tower Roof Replacement**

The roof is scheduled to be replaced in the summer of 2022 and we are working with AECOM to produce a specification and design for the whole roof replacement. This will include the removal and re-siting of the communication masks, new timber deck and flat roof covering. Due to the nature of the works being undertaken on a high-rise tower block, full scaffolding is likely to be needed to the building in full. We do not have predictive costs for these works yet, but expectation is that it will likely be around £800,000 to £1million.

#### **2.9 External Wall Finishes**

Our stock condition data shows that significant number of external walls primary and secondary finishing of our stocks have deteriorated and damaged. It would need around £5.7m over the next five years to bring it to the decent level. The tender for this work is expected to be starting towards the end of the year.

#### **2.10 Fire Door Replacement**

We have the fire risk assessments carried out by our fire consultants which indicates that a large number of our flat and communal fire doors appear to be not fully compliant with Approved Document B of the building regulations - BS 476- 22:1987 which fire tests on building materials and structures. It has been decided to identify and replace such doors using a three years planned programme with the estimated contract value of £1.2m. Officers are looking into the data and would be starting work on the procurement documents shortly. The work is expected to start early next year (January/February 2022).

#### **2.11 Repair, Maintenance and Void Contract**

The procurement for the above contract is in progress with the help of appointed consultant FFT. The annual contract value is around £1.2m with the initial contract period of 5 years with the provision of further 5 years extension on year-by-year basis. The estimated contract start date is January 2023.

### **3. Policy Framework Implications**

- 3.1 Procurement of key capital investment works has a direct link to the Housing Asset Management Plan (AMP) which provide detail on the expenditure on the HRA stock over a set and defined period. In addition, links to other key

policies is paramount in the delivery of an investment programme and has a direct effect on the Council ability to deliver day to day repairs, void management, and cyclical maintenance.

**4. Resource implications**

- 4.1 The tendering and procurement of such a multi facet contracts will present resourcing constraints on both the Technical Services Team and Procurement Department. However, to mitigate some of these resourcing implications, external consultancy support will be used in the building of specifications and ITT documentations. The procurement will be undertaken in house and via the councils preferred portal. We do however intend to use a range of procurement methods, including but not restricted to framework providers, restricted and open process. This is however dependant on the type of contract we are looking to procure.

**5. Legal implications**

- 5.1 All the proposed procurements will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Contract Standing Orders and in compliance with all relevant legislation, including the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

**6. Equality implications**

- 6.1 Approval of these procurement activities would provide the Council and its residents with a comprehensive investment portfolio of contracts which will address a number of needs, including regulator decent homes compliance and maintaining its stock at an appropriate level to discourage further dis-repair claims.
- 6.2 We will monitor the take up of improvements such as kitchen and bathrooms by our tenants to ensure 'fairness' and no inadvertent discrimination on the provision of services.

**7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 Members are requested to approve in principle the procurement of these key contracts within the Housing Technical Services Team to allow the Council to proceed in building a comprehensive investment programme for the next five years. By doing so, the Council will be able to invest significant sums in our housing stock to bring it to a decent level of asset conditioning which will improve the overall decency levels across the HRA owned homes.

**(TO RESOLVE)**

**Background papers**

None

**10. UPGRADE OF HOUSING IT SYSTEM (HOUSING, ANDY VINCENT)**

To follow.

## 11. HOUSING STAFFING RESOURCES (HOUSING, MAGGIE WARD)

### **Synopsis of report:**

**The changing nature of the social housing sector and expansion of activities within the Housing Business Unit has resulted in the need for changes to the current structure, with the uplifting of remuneration for some posts to reflect their responsibility and creation of a new post to manage the Estate Services Team.**

**Two Members of the Technical Services Team have had their applications for voluntary redundancy accepted. Permission is requested to recruit to two new roles within the team. Housing Maintenance Inspector (Empty Homes) and Repairs Manager, Job Descriptions which reflect the current demands of the service and grades to be agreed with HR.**

### **Recommendation(s):**

- (i) Members approve recruitment to the post of Housing Maintenance Inspector (Empty Homes) at grade 9**
- (ii) Members approve recruitment to the Repairs Manager role at grade 10**
- (iii) Permission for the Allocation Team Leader post be regraded. Dependant on the outcome, this may be regraded to 9/10 to reflect the supervisory responsibility and attain parity with other roles in the section.**
- (iv) Members approve the creation of an Estate Services Team Leader at Grade 9/10 to manage the Council's Estate Wardens**
- (v) Permission for the roles of Housing Services Manager and Homelessness, Housing Advice and Allocations Manager to be regraded. Dependant on the outcome the pay scales may change from SMA to SMB.**
- (vi) Subject to the above members approve a supplementary revenue estimate in the sum of £69,700 (at top of scale and including on-costs) as follows: General Fund £8,500, HRA £61,200**
- (vii) Subject to vi) above, the Corporate Management Committee be requested to approve a supplementary revenue estimate in the sum of £8,500 for the general fund element**

### 1. **Context and background of report**

- 1.1 The services provided by the Housing Business Unit are continually evolving and expanding due to changes in legislation, requirements of the Housing Regulator, lack of affordable housing within the area and an increasing number of clients with complex needs.

### 2. **Report**

- 2.1 The Housing Business Unit is expanding its activities resulting in a requirement for additional resources in some areas to reflect this.
- 2.2 The Council has experienced difficulty over the past few years in recruiting to some key housing posts, attracting managers of the appropriate level of skill and experience has resulted in several rounds of recruitment. In addition, staff from the

Housing Business Unit have been successful in securing positions in other housing organisations, often moving to more senior positions.

- 2.3 It is essential that the Council retains key staff and ensures that there are adequate Officers in place to cover current workstreams, that existing staff are not placed under too much stress by the additional functions being undertaken and are correctly remunerated for their level of responsibility.
- 2.4 The new IT system will enable Housing to provide additional and improved services to tenants and leaseholders. Whilst the infrastructure supporting Housing activities in terms of IT, Strategies, Policies and Procedures is being improved, the performance of the department will be determined by the quality of staff. Two years ago, the training budget for housing was significantly increased to reflect the continuing legislative changes and need to provide all staff with ongoing training, to ensure excellent customer services, a legally compliant workforce and resilience in dealing with an increasingly complex client group.
- 2.5 The Council is investing in Chartered Institute of Housing qualifications and membership for its staff, and it is essential that those staff who are performing well are compensated at market rates, provided with a positive and supportive working environment and that the investment in their training and development is not lost to other organisations.
- 2.6 This report details several recommendations to ensure that the Housing Business Unit is resourced to meet the aspirations of the strategies that are being brought forward to this Committee.

2.7 Technical Services Staff

Within the technical service team, two roles were removed as part of the voluntary redundancy scheme approved by the Corporate Management Committee in June 2021. It was envisaged at the time that the savings associated with redundancies would be reinvested in the service.

- 2.8 It is the intention to recruit to new roles within the team, with new titles and revised personal job specification to bring them into line with modern working practices and an improved way of working. The grades for these positions will need to be benchmarked prior to commencement of this process.
- 2.9 These posts are: -
- Housing Maintenance Inspector (Empty Homes)
  - Repairs Manager

2.10 Allocations Team Leader

Within the Housing Solutions Team there are three comparable posts: the Assistant Housing Solutions Manager (Grade 10) who deputises for the Housing Solutions Manager (Homelessness). This role has no direct reports. The Private Sector Management Officer (Grade 9/10) who oversees the management of our social lettings agency and has one direct report. Finally, the Allocations Team Leader (Grade 9) who deputises for the Housing Solutions Manager (Allocations & Sustainment) and has three direct reports.



- 2.11 The Allocations Team Leader has comparable duties and responsibilities and has a greater supervisory role than the other two senior positions. This is a crucial role within the Housing Business Unit that is responsible for ensuring properties are allocated and let in accordance with our Allocation Scheme, statutory duties and taking into consideration case law.
- 2.12 Officers are requesting that this key role is regraded to a 9/10 so that the pay reflects the level of responsibility of the other two senior roles within the Housing Solutions Team. This regrading will reflect the post's level of responsibility and attain equity with other supervisory roles in Housing. This is subject to a grade evaluation by Human Resources.
- 2.13 Estate Services Team Leader
- In July 2019 a new staffing structure was launched for the Housing and Neighbourhood Services Team, this included putting in place additional resources to manage rental income as well as bringing in new functions such as tenancy audits. The new structure has proved incredibly successful in improving performance in collecting rental income as well as some promising results from tenancy audits. Despite the changes in 2019 it is evident that an additional resource is required to successfully manage the estate services function.
- 2.14 The Senior Area Housing Manager (South) is currently responsible for managing the estate services function and line managing the team of three Estate Wardens. However, the same manager is responsible for line managing two Area Housing Managers and tenancy and income management in the South of the borough. It has proved challenging managing these two elements in parallel due to the demands of both functions, and this has been exacerbated during the pandemic when increased support to manage income was required as well as additional input to coordinating estate issues such as waste management. As we emerge from the pandemic, we are continuing to provide high levels of support to low-income families and emerging policies and procedures reflect this, we also continue to work with colleagues at the depot to bring improvement to waste and recycling arrangements across our stock.
- 2.15 We successfully recruited to the post of Mobile Estate Warden in March 2021 after several rounds of failed recruitment. The postholder and the Senior Area Housing Manager have been working together to establish the role and put in place a schedule of work covering the inspection, cleaning, and management of communal areas in blocks of flats and maisonettes across the borough as well as the servicing of temporary accommodation and shared houses between lettings. The next phase will be to embed the work, consult with residents and then launch service charges associated with the role of the Mobile Estate Warden. This work, alongside day-to-day management of the whole Estate Warden Team, is resource intensive and is impacting on the ongoing focus needed to maintain income levels and management of other tenancy issues and projects. To ensure the success of the roll out of the mobile Estate Warden function and to ensure buy-in from residents we are proposing to put an additional post in place to support the Estate Wardens and Senior Area Housing Manager, with the post reporting to the latter. It is proposed that the post of Estate Services Team Leader, supervising the three Estate Wardens will be at grade 9/10 given this line management responsibility. The grade will be subject to evaluation by Human Resources.
- 2.16 This additional post, as well as managing the team of Estate Wardens, will undertake the full range of estate inspections across the borough and both manage and coordinate estate improvements. Estate inspections are currently tasked to the Area

Housing Managers and although all team members value the importance of these inspections it is often a lower priority task in the context of other issues such as rental income and urgent tenancy issues. Having a focused resource would ensure an inspection regime is maintained and reassure our residents that we take the condition of our estates seriously.

2.17 A supplementary estimate for a budget to cover this new post initially is requested, but it is proposed that once the block cleaning regime is in place and following consultation with residents later this year that this post will be part funded through new service charges. Prior to levying these charges, we need to be confident that we are providing a consistent high-quality service to each block.

2.18 This additional post benefits both general needs tenants as well as tenants in our temporary accommodation and shared houses and helps to keep costs down associated with the latter by ensuring swift turnover at the end of each let and will help to maintain the low usage of B&B accommodation.

2.19 A supervisory role is necessary to derive maximum benefit from the estate services staff by scheduling regular tasks but retaining flexibility to deal with ad hoc issues. With services charges to be levied it is important that the manual aspects of the service are operated like a business with detailed scheduling, monitoring and cost information available.

#### 2.20 Management Posts

Two of the management posts within the structure require a regrading as the current responsibilities are not reflected within their Job Descriptions.

#### 2.21 Housing Services Manager

This post was last reviewed in 2013 and the role has changed substantially since then, the traditional tenancy management and income collection functions have changed substantially with a different set of challenges posed for the service. This has necessitated development of new specialist services and new approaches to deal with a more complex client group and spectrum of circumstances.

2.22 Income collection has changed with the move to Universal Credit, against the national trend Runnymede has maintained and last year improved its rent collection whilst managing a pandemic and having no legal recourse for non-payment. The management of income collection is more complex and requires levels of intervention and support to tenants previously required for a very small cohort. This role has a target of maximum 1.75% arrears on an annual rent debit of £18.5m this financial year and the HRA 30-year Business Plan is based on income projections with very low arrears, it is essential that the lead officer in this area is appropriately skilled and experienced.

2.23 The level of debt, social, health and other problems being experienced by many incoming tenants requires a new flexible and multi-skilled approach to tenancy management, this service now has a Sustainment function specialising in supporting tenants to address poor financial management and debt. There is a high level of contact with Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Mental Health, and addiction services with officers dealing with increasingly complex individuals and situations. The service lead must therefore be up to date with a wide range of legislation and ensure that the team are trained and supported in these roles.

- 2.24 In 2019 management of the 5 Independent Retirement Living schemes with all the budgets and responsibilities was transferred to Housing from Community Services and is now within the remit of the Housing Services Manager. In addition, in 2020 management of the Temporary Accommodation portfolio was transferred to the Housing Services Manager to separate the elements of service relating to the homelessness application and conduct of the tenancy as conflict often occurred in these legal duties.
- 2.25 The provision of Estate Services is being converted from the limited traditional caretaker service to providing inhouse cleaning of all the communal areas and servicing of the extended accommodation such as sleep pods and rooms in shared houses that we are now providing.
- 2.26 The council has a very robust approach to fraud and Anti-Social Behaviour and makes use of a wide range of legal mechanisms to deal with this. The increase in ASB and impact of fraud has necessitated the creation of a Tenancy Audit and Enforcement section. This is a complex and sensitive area and at any time there are several serious cases ranging from noise complaints to violence, drug dealing, other serious criminal activity from occupants of a Council property.
- 2.27 The Housing Services Manager will lead on Digital Transformation within their area, ensuring the transfer of the predictive arrears software from Rentsense to the NEC product, introduction of Support Services and implementing Task Manager to automate all the management processes within the section enabling them to be raised and progressed through an online account. In future the HSM will be responsible for ensuring that the modules and system functionality utilised within the section are reviewed and updated as required and enhancements are brought forward through the Housing Business Planning process annually to ensure that Runnymede's housing system is utilising up to date technology and functionality.
- 2.28 The level of responsibility within this role has expanded dramatically since the current post holder was employed without any review of the Job Description. It is proposed to submit a revised job description to Human Resources for a grade review.
- 2.29 Homelessness, Housing Advice and Allocations Manager
- This post was last recruited to in 2018 and the job description was reviewed at that point, but it does not reflect the current role due to significant changes which have been made to the service over the past 3 years.
- 2.30 This role has responsibility for provision of homelessness services, housing advice, Allocation of all social housing within the borough and a Sustainment function to support households threatened with or experiencing homelessness. This section deals with an increasingly complex client group, specifically single homeless people many of whom have significant mental health problems, a history of involvement with the criminal justice system and have often been subjected to traumatic person histories. Management of this function ensuring adequate systems are in place for complying with statutory duties and ensuring the safety of clients and staff is a significant change in emphasis from the traditional provision in Runnymede.
- 2.31 The cost of providing homelessness services is a burden for local authorities and within the current financial climate it is vital that this service is led by a manager with the ability to provide exceptional services within a budget and where possible to access alternative funding.

- 2.32 Government funding for homelessness is now split with only a proportion of funding being allocated directly to each Housing Authority, other grants are made available for specific services and can only be accessed through bids to MHCLG and Homes England. Only through accessing grant funding will Runnymede be able to extend its services and provide support to local residents above the statutory requirements. Over the past 18 months, 6 successful bids have been made to MHCLG and Homes England with a total of £478,897 being awarded to Runnymede for new initiatives despite the relative low levels of homelessness and rough sleeping in the area. The Council has moved away from provision of services to those who meet the legal definition of “priority need” to the principles of wider assistance within the Homeless Reduction Act which involves the often more difficult cohort with complex needs. This has been managed whilst reducing many of the costs previously incurred but to sustain and extend the service accessing income streams and bid submission is now a fundamental element of this role.
- 2.33 In the financial year 2017/18 Runnymede spent £270,451 on emergency B&B payments, under the current management this was reduced to £56,577 the following year, £13,389 in 2019-20 and £14,458 during 2020/21 despite the covid pandemic and some of this was covered by additional grant. Increased responsibility for income and expenditure will be reflected in a revised job description.
- 2.34 Although Runnymede does not have significant numbers of rough sleepers they do exist and are often difficult to place. The Council has embarked on a number of initiatives which have received praise from MHCLG, the shared house model and sleep pods which are being operated in conjunction with the Salvation Army. Responsibility for finding innovative solutions, partnership working with other agencies, providers and Boroughs have all increased significantly since the Homelessness Reduction Act.
- 2.35 Homelessness legislation is now more complex and provides a number of levels of review for applicants including an appeal to the County Court. The lead officer in this area must have adequate knowledge to ensure the Council’s decisions are valid, to manage the legal process if required and to manage this without using additional legal representation other than in exceptional circumstances. Over 4 years from 2014 the Council paid over £46,000 in Counsel’s fees for advice and representation. Under the current management no fees have been incurred other than to review the Council’s Allocation scheme which is standard practice. The standard of case management has improved, and this is evidenced by the reduction in legal challenges and an increase in positive prevention outcomes. This must be maintained.
- 2.36 The use of Temporary Accommodation (TA) has been reduced with the increased emphasis on prevention. This post undertook management of Magna Carta Lettings (MCL) in 2020 and the Runnymede Rentstart provision for single people was brought inhouse within MCL making savings but adding responsibility to this post.
- 2.37 Over the next year the Housing Solutions Service will undergo a Digital Transformation with all its services moving to a new computer system. This post will lead on this and in future the postholder will be responsible for ensuring that the modules and system functionality utilised within the section are reviewed and updated as required and enhancements are brought forward through the Housing Business Planning process annually to ensure that Runnymede’s housing system is utilising up to date technology and functionality.

- 2.38 Whilst Runnymede has the statutory functions and the challenges of larger organisations, we have struggled to attract more qualified and experienced candidates to key roles in Housing and it is essential that remuneration for management roles reflects the level of responsibility.
- 2.39 These two management posts are currently on grade SMA which is up to £60,514. The next pay scale is SMB and is £60,514 - £67,180. It is proposed that new job descriptions are submitted to Human Resources and subject to their regrading exercise the grade for this role is widened to SMA to SMB. If either of the roles become vacant the salary offered would depend on the experience and qualifications of a successful candidate, hence the extended grade boundary.

### 3. Resource implications/Value for Money

3.1 The potential costs associated with the proposals within this report are as follows: -

Change	Increase to top of band £
Regrade for Allocations Team Leader (from 9 to 9/10)	4,700
Estate Services Team Leader (New grade 9 to 10)	48,000
Regrade for Housing Services Manager (from SMA to SMB)	8,500
Regrade for Head of Homelessness, Housing Advice & Allocations from (SMA to SMB)	8,500
Totals	69,700

3.2 The additional cost of £69,700 (at top of scale and including on-costs) will require a supplementary revenue estimate split as follows:

- General Fund £8,500
- HRA £61,200

### 4. Legal implications

4.1 There are no additional legal implications to be highlighted outside of standard employment conditions.

### 5. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

5.1 There are no Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications.

### 6. Other implications (where applicable)

6.1 Advice has been received from the Corporate Head of HR on the potential bands for the roles.

6.2 It should be noted that this is no indication of the outcome of any review.

7. **Timetable for Implementation**

- 7.1 New Job Descriptions to be submitted to Human Resources for evaluation following which approved changes will be implemented.

8. **Conclusions**

- 8.1 It is recommended that members approve the recommendations set out at the beginning of this report

**(TO RESOLVE)**

**Background papers**

None

## 12. UPDATE ON SURREY TOWERS (HOUSING, SIMON ALLEN)

### **Synopsis of report:**

**This report provides an update on the progress of works at Surrey Towers in conjunction with the passive fire and kitchen and bathroom upgrades.**

### **Recommendation:**

**None. The report is for information only.**

#### 1. **Context**

- 1.1 Following the approval by Housing Committee in August 2020, work to address issues surrounding passive fire compartmentalisation as identified in a type 4 FRA survey and an additional report by AECOM, started in February 2021.

#### 2. **Report**

- 2.1 Work to Surrey Towers started in February 2021 after the successful appointment of a contractor through a competitive tendering process. The winning contractor was CLC Group.
- 2.2 Works have progressed well since commencement of the contract, notwithstanding a slower than anticipated start due to lack of materials, CLC continue to progress works to address both the passive fire compartmentalisation breaches but also the additional replacements of kitchens and bathroom to circa 50% of the dwelling.
- 2.3 Normally with programmed works like these, the contractor would start at the top of the building and work its way to the bottom. However, given the varied client group residing within the tower block, it was decided that the Council would offer an alternative to staying in occupation during the works.
- 2.4 As part of this process, tenants were offered alternative accommodation as well as staying in situ. As a result, CLC have accommodated a more sporadic approach and have facilitated works on multi floors within the block.
- 2.5 Thus far, this has worked well and Housing Management staff along with CLC have managed decants throughout the process, which have gone smoothly.
- 2.6 The original target date for completion was based upon a 24-week programme for passive fire works. However, with the addition of kitchen and bathroom replacements this was increased to 52 weeks in total. Therefore, our expected completion on site will be December 2021.
- 2.7 The above timing is based upon two set timescales for each passage of works and is a long stop date. Should no further delay be incurred, this programme may come in sooner than anticipated.
- 2.8 However, during works to flat No6 it was noted that external fire alarm cabling was entering the flat above the door head and via the timber door architrave.

RBC requested that this be investigated further to fully understand the extent of the post electrical works and if any issue presented in relation to compartmentalisations outside the original scope of work.

- 2.9 CLC and a fire specialist appointed from AECOM undertook a site visit on the week commencing 12 July 2021 to survey and inspect a further five doors within the block. A summary of the report (appendix G) will follow.
- 2.10 The report concludes that the doors, frames and finishing works are unsatisfactory at the time of installation and present a further fire risk that needs to be addressed with some urgency. Currently Surrey Towers has a “stay put” policy which is predicated on the capacity to stop the spread of fire, between each flat and communal spaces.
- 2.11 Flat entrance doors within a block must provide at least 30-minute protection. They should protect people from the heat and more importantly the smoke generated from a developing fire. Therefore, if any part of the door set, which includes the frame, has been compromised the door set may not perform in the way that it should and not provide the protection required. The installation of the door set is key to its performance and poor installation of flat entrance doors can be deemed very dangerous. The inspection carried out by CLC/AECOM has identified several issues in relation to the installation which require urgent attention. RBC could look at upgrading the doors and carrying out some works to improve the installation of the existing doors. However, the only way in which RBC can be sure the door sets comply with the current guidance on ‘Purpose-Built Blocks’ and provide sufficient protection to residents in the event of a fire is to replace them. The performance of the flat entrance doors is key to being able to support a stay put strategy within the block.
- 2.12 The Technical Services Team are also undertaking dialog with colleagues within our legal department as to what action could be taken in respect to the “contractor” that undertook the original door replacement programme some eleven years ago.
- 2.13 Given the nature of the finding, approval has already been sourced from procurement board under their urgent health and safety provisions to award further works to the incumbent contractor to undertake a full replacement of the relevant fire doors to each dwelling. The full costs of the works are expected to be around £260,000 which are still within the original budget approval for the works given by Housing Committee and Corporate Management Committee.
- 2.14 The table below provides an update on the current spend on all works at Surrey Towers included within this programme of works.

	Gross Valuation Nr3	Less retention	Valuation Nett of retention Nr3	Number of units delivered
Kitchen & Bathroom	£107,000	£ (5,350)	£101,650	39
Passive Fire	£49,300	£ (2,465)	£46,835	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>£156,300</b>	<b>£ (7,815)</b>	<b>£148,485</b>	



3. **Resource Implications**

- 3.1 Following a report to this Committee in January 2021, a budget of £496,000 was approved for the passive fire works and associated works at Surrey Towers for 2021/22. As the above report indicates the above works are proceeding to plan and works totalling £156,300 have already been carried out.
- 3.2 While carrying out the works a further issue has arisen regarding the integrity and non-compliance with Fire Regulations in respect of some of the flats' doors which it is now recommended should be carried out in conjunction with the other works to the building. This additional work will cost around £260,000 (as detailed in the report) and it is hoped that this can be funded from either the existing Central Heating or Kitchen & Bathroom budgets in 2021/22, while we make the necessary procurement arrangements for these programmes as detailed elsewhere on this agenda.

4. **Legal implications**

- 4.1 A contract is in place and is being adhered to as detailed within the contract particulars and through monthly supervision and quality management meetings. The nature of the works being addressed comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which ensures that the Landlord (Runnymede BC) mitigate risks for its tenants.

5. **Conclusion**

- 5.1 Housing Committee are requested to note the above points within the report regarding progress and issues identified with the existing doors and door sets.

**(FOR INFORMATION)**

13. **PURCHASE OF SITE FOR DEVELOPMENT (HOUSING, MAGGIE WARD)**

**Synopsis of report:**

**The Council is in the process of acquiring a plot of land in Chertsey, this report advises Members of progress on the purchase**

**Recommendation(s):**

**None. This report is for Information only.**

1. **Context of report**

- 1.1 The HRA 30 year Business Plan has a target of 125 additional homes within the next five years, 48 of which will be delivered on this site. Members approved the acquisition of a plot of land in Chertsey in April 2021 in order to facilitate 48 new units of housing.

## 2. **Report**

- 2.1 The HRA 30 year Business Plan and emerging Development Strategy set a target of 125 new homes over the next five years. Although the HRA owns some sites which will be brought forward, they are longer term projects with complex strategic issues to be addressed and are unlikely to realise the 125 target within five years, although schemes will be in progress . The purchase of this site will enable the development activity within the HRA to accelerate immediately whilst the work is carried out on the longer term strategic sites in tandem. With a pipeline of schemes, the Council can attract and resource a Development Team with an experienced manager.
- 2.2 The legal work for this purchase has been outsourced due to the value of the land and lack of current capacity within the inhouse legal team. There are two matters which are currently preventing completion. A planning condition is the safe removal of slow worms from the site to a specified location. The work was started in the Spring but unfortunately an error by Network Rail operational staff resulted in the specialist team being asked to leave the site before the work was completed and the removal of the slow worms cannot take place currently due to the temperature. The consultant is planning on commencing the removal of the slow worms in early September (subject to a fence relocation having taken place). The Council will not take possession of the land until this has been completed.
- 2.3 A second matter to be resolved is that although the land is in the possession of Network Rail, they have been unable to provide documents proving the title to the satisfaction of our solicitor. This will need to be remedied through production of additional documentary evidence and potentially a statutory declaration.

## 3. **Policy framework implications**

- 3.1 This purchase and subsequent development will contribute to meeting the aims of The Runnymede Borough Council Housing Strategy Statement 2021–26:
- Ensure good quality affordable housing is available to local people in both the social and private sector
  - Support local people to access appropriate housing
  - Increase the provision of affordable housing including low cost home ownership
  - Identify local housing need to plan effectively for the future.
- 3.2 The HRA 30 year Business Plan and emerging Development Strategy set a target of 125 new homes over the next five years.

## 4. **Resource implications**

- 4.1 A supplementary capital estimate in the sum of £4.5m was approved by the Council in April to cover the purchase and conveyancing costs associated with the purchase of this piece of land. Any subsequent development proposals will be subject to a separate report including a fully costed business case.

## 5. Legal implications

5.1 Legal issues are addressed in the body of the report.

## 6. Equality implications

6.1 There are no Equality Implications within this report although this scheme will increase the number of wheelchair accessible homes and in particular 4 ground floor 3 bed homes which will be a significant improvement to our current need to make adaptations to existing two storey houses.

## 7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

7.1 These new homes are within walking distance of a station, large public park, good schools, shops and community facilities. The scheme specification will focus on building sustainable homes, making sufficient capital investment to ensure low maintenance and energy efficient homes for the residents.

## 8. Conclusions

8.1 The purchase of a site in Chertsey is progressing but timescales will be determined by the outstanding matters which must be resolved by the vendor.

### (FOR INFORMATION)

#### Background papers

[Housing Committee 6 April 2021](#)

## 14. HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021-2026 (HOUSING, SIMON ALLEN)

### Synopsis of report:

The Housing Asset Management Plan sets a vision for the maintenance of the Council's Housing Asserts "*making our homes and environment fit for the future.*"

The plan is currently focused on achieving and maintaining homes at the government's 'Decent Homes Standard'. Delivery of large-scale regeneration projects will be built into this plan once options have been identified with clear costings.

Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Asset Management Plan highlights the Council's aspirations for its housing stock over the next five years.

- Good quality homes
- New council owned homes
- Environmental sustainability
- Properties that are safe and where risks are managed
- Investment into our retirement living accommodation
- A wider review of our assets

The plan details the investment identified to support each of the aspirations, plus the other asset types where investment over the life of the

**plan is required. Additional investment has been identified in a number of areas as part of the annual review of the plan.**

**Also, progress against the actions identified within the plan are summarised with an additional action set.**

**Recommendation(s):**

- i. It is recommended that Housing Committee members support the aspirations set out within the plan (appendix H) and the investment identified to support their delivery.**
- ii. It is recommended that members identify the \*progress made against the actions contained within the plan and consider the additional actions required for effective long-term delivery of the plan.**

**1. Context of report**

- 1.1 The development of a Housing Asset Management Plan is designed to ensure the effective management of the Council's housing assets.
- 1.2 The plan is focused on ensuring the delivery of the Decent Homes standard across all the homes owned by Runnymede Borough Council, delivery of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan, delivery of additional Council owned homes, investment in Runnymede's older persons accommodation and ensuring that other assets are maintained effectively.
- 1.3 The impact of estate regeneration activities will be built into the plan once investment plans and timescales have been agreed.

**2. Strategic Aims**

- 2.1 The Housing Asset Management Plan highlights Runnymede Borough Council's aspirations for the management of its housing assets over the next five years.
  - Good quality homes
  - New council owned homes
  - Environmental sustainability
  - Properties that are safe and where risks are managed
  - Investment into our retirement living accommodation
  - A wider review of our assets
- 2.2 The plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the aspirations continue to reflect those of the Council and to enable delivery to be closely monitored.

**3. 2021 Annual Review**

3.1 The following actions were identified within the plan presented to Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Committee in March 2021.

No.	Action	Timescale for completion	Update
1	We will work with members and tenants to develop a Runnymede standard.	November 2021	A draft standard will be presented to the Housing and Enabling Working Group in September
2	In 2021/22 we plan to implement a new asset management software system to enhance the quality of information we are able to provide in relation to the condition of our assets and to model scenarios around energy performance.	September 2022	A request for additional resources to support enhancements to the Housing IT system will be presented to the Housing Committee in September 2021
3	We will continue to undertake an annual rolling programme of 10% stock condition appraisal of our stock – to validate existing data and to ensure any alterations to our properties are captured.	15% completed in 2021/22	
4	By March 2022 we will establish the costs associated with achieving a C rating as a minimum for all our housing stock.	September 2023	We require the implementation of the asset database to assist us with this calculation
5	Develop a methodology for undertaking stock appraisals to enable viability assessments to be undertaken.	Complete	We have established methodology for undertaking option appraisals. This will be presented to the Housing and Enabling Working Group
6	During the life of this plan we will develop a Council Housing Heating Plan which will identify how Council owned homes will be heated in the longer term.	By March 2025	
7	In 2021/22 we will develop an Older Persons Strategy to look at the future of our Independent Retirement Living stock	September 2021	Presented to the September Housing Committee
8	A garage strategy will be delivered to support the Asset Management Plan in 2021/22.	March 2022	This work is yet to commence

3.2 One additional action has been added into the plan

No.	Action	Timescale for Completion
7	We will review our stock condition questionnaire to ensure when undertaking annual surveys, we capture additional information regarding the condition of the communal parts of our estate	March 2022

#### 4. Policy framework implications

4.1 The Housing Asset Management Plan links to other key strategic documents. The document sits underneath the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan identifying how the maintenance of the Council's Housing Assets is linked to the strategic objectives of the Housing Landlord Service and the wider objectives of the Council.

## 5. Resource implications (where applicable)

5.1 The Housing Asset Management Plan 2021-2026 identifies the investment into the Council's Housing Assets over the next 5 years. It therefore references considerable levels of spending (approximately £70 million).

5.2 Areas of additional spending following the review are: -

- Housing Service – Older People Strategy now £1.7m
- Investment in upgrading our lifts now £1m
- Expenditure on actions following fire risk assessments £340,000
- Further investment in environmental work now £200,000
- Investment to unlock government energy efficiency grants £375,000
- Resources to enable sprinkler system installations £891,000
- Costs to comply with the Building Safety Bill £60,000

5.3 Detailed delivery plans over the next financial year are articulated within the Housing Business Centre Plan 2021-2022.

## 6. Legal implications

6.1 There is no statutory requirement for a local housing authority to produce an asset management plan, but it is a convenient means of addressing the legal obligations are placed on social landlords. This includes the legal requirements to meeting specific health and safety obligations on, for example, fire, electrical, water safety and asbestos management. Obligations are also placed on landlords to ensure compliance with the Decent Homes Standard, plus meeting the requirements published by the Regulator of Social Housing.

## 7. Equality implications

7.1 None

## 8. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

8.1 The Housing Asset Management Plan sets out three commitments on environmental sustainability: -

- Energy Performance (minimum energy performance of our stock at a C energy efficiency rating by 2030)
- Commencement of work to deliver 125 additional units by 2026, these homes will be built to a high energy efficiency rating and include alternative heating sources to gas where appropriate.
- Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service will invest in its 'refuse areas' at flat blocks to promote recycling. This supports the corporate objective of Enhancing our Environment by reducing the amount of waste going to landfill and will limit costs to the HRA of excess general waste.

## 9. Other implications

## 9.1 **Consultation Strategy**

The Housing Service will keep this plan under review. The service will engage with its tenants via its newsletter and consultation mechanisms to ensure that the aspirations articulated within this plan remain relevant to the tenant population.

9.2 Any material changes to the themes and priorities will be brought back to Housing Committee as part of the annual review of the plan.

9.3 The Housing Asset Management Plan details the levels of investment planned for Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Assets over the next 5 years.

9.4 The plan does not detail the process for delivering that investment.

9.5 Delivery will be undertaken through tendered contracts where the contractor's approach to ensuring equality of access will be assessed as part of the award process.

9.6 Take up of improvement work will also be monitored, to ensure that different parts of the community are able to benefit from improvements to their homes.

## 10. **Conclusions**

10.1 It is recommended that Housing Committee support the aspirations identified within the Asset Management Plan. It is also recommended that Members note that the delivery of the aspirations contained within the plan within the Housing Business Centre Plan 2021/22.

### **(TO RESOLVE)**

#### **Background papers**

Decent Homes Standard

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-decent-home-definition-and-guidance>

# Appendix H

## Housing Asset Management Plan 2021-26

*Making our homes and environment fit for the future*

*March 2021*



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**Runnymede**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL 



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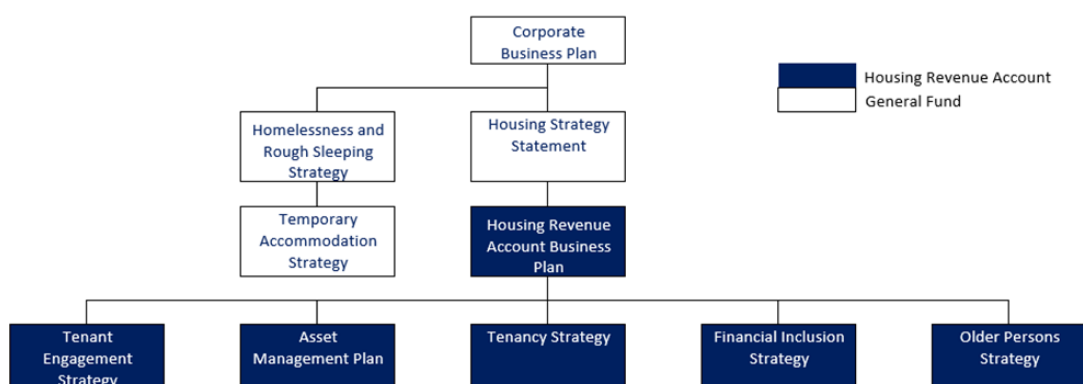


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## Purpose of the plan

The Asset Management Plan sits within a framework of other key strategic documents.



The plan identifies the key capital programmes of work for Runnymede Borough Council’s Housing Service over the next 5 years. Day to day maintenance activity is not referenced in detail within this plan as it is a responsive service not driving the long-term enhancement of the Council’s assets.

## Business Context

Runnymede Borough Council’s Housing Revenue Account owns 2850 properties.

The age, construction type, heating system, energy performance of these properties drives much of the need for investment in our assets.

Delivery of ‘Decent Homes’ also is a key driver of this investment strategy. This is dealt with in detail within the delivery of *Good Quality Homes* section of the plan.

## Age of the Housing Stock by Decade

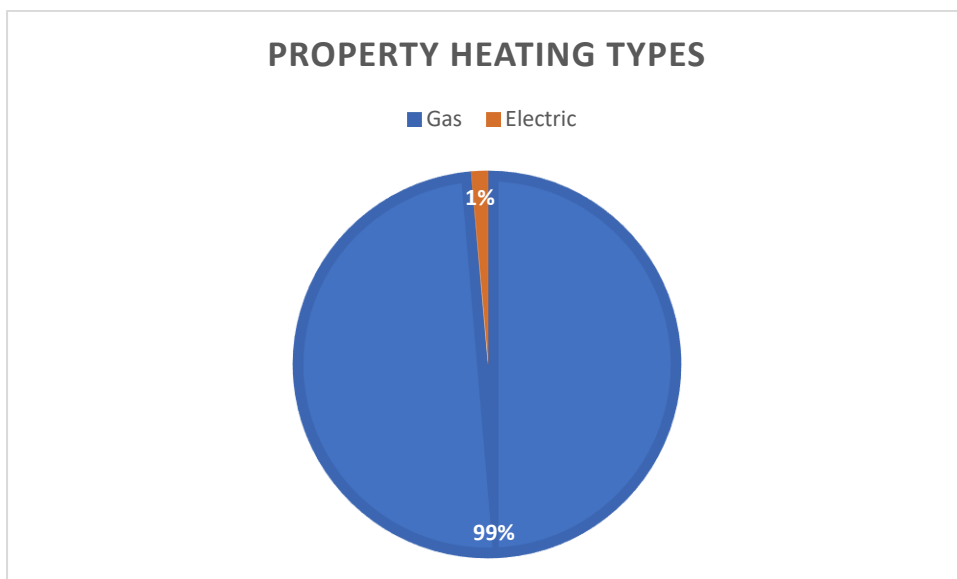
Built	1930/39	1940/49	1950/59	1960/69	1970/79	1980/89	1990/99	2000/10	2010
%	9.01%	13.34%	23.63%	19.06%	11.99%	16.25%	5.29%	0.00%	1.42%

## Heating types used within the Housing Stock

The vast majority of our homes are gas central heated via a conventional type boiler or similar. The average age of boilers within the stock is 18 years

39 of our 2850 homes are not gas centrally heated primarily where there is no gas supply to the block, or a gas fired boiler supplies electric heaters.





## Garage Stock

The Council own and manage 1214 garages which are spread over 102 sites. The construction is typical in that they are brick built with corrugated sheet roofing much of which contained asbestos.

## Strategic Context

This work in many cases supports other key strategic objectives of the Council as a whole or the Housing Service within the Council.

## Links to the Corporate Plan

The Asset Management Plan supports the following Corporate Business Plan themes:

## Environmental Sustainability

The objectives identified within this plan will serve to enhance the built environment by delivering over £50m worth of investment in the Council's 2850 homes. This plan also delivers estimated reductions in carbon emissions of 709 tonnes annually\* (by 2030) with the improvement in the energy efficiency performance of the Council's housing stock. The plan also seeks to reduce the amount of waste from Council owned homes going to landfill.

\*This is based on data from 498 properties where the CO2 rating exceeds C – performing at a C rating by 2030.



## Revived and Prosperous Economy

This plan sets out details of significant investment in the homes owned by Runnymede Borough Council. This investment will help enhance the economy within the Runnymede borough, particularly with the focus on utilising local businesses to deliver the investment needed in the Council's housing stock.

## Empower Communities

Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service will engage with its tenants and leaseholders over the delivery of this plan. It will offer choice where possible in design of for example kitchen units, tiles etc. as well as offering flexibility in the delivery of the plans – seeking to accommodate tenants and leaseholders' availability and working patterns.

Ultimately the delivery of the plan seeks to maximise satisfaction with the improvement work – building on the positive relationship the Council has with its tenants and leaseholders.

## Health and Wellbeing

The links between housing and health are well established (ref: [https://www.parliament.uk/globalassets/documents/post/postpn\\_371-housing\\_health\\_h.pdf](https://www.parliament.uk/globalassets/documents/post/postpn_371-housing_health_h.pdf) ). Improving the condition of Council owned homes will positively impact on the health of tenants/leaseholders

## The Aims of the Asset Management Plan

Runnymede Borough Council's Asset Management Plan highlights the Council's aspirations for its housing stock over the next 5 years and identifies the key work streams for ensuring effective delivery.

This plan will deliver: -

### Good quality homes

Council homes that meet Runnymede's quality standard. This standard will be developed alongside tenants and Councillors

### New Council owned homes

Additional new Council owned homes in response to the need for more affordable housing provision within the borough.



## Environmental Sustainability

Improvements in the energy performance of our existing Council housing stock and new homes built to industry leading energy performance standards.

## Properties that are safe and where risks are managed

This plan will focus on ensuring sufficient resources for delivering compliance in areas such as fire, gas and electrical safety, asbestos management and removal and legionella testing.

## Investment into our Independent Retirement Living accommodation

We plan to refurbish communal parts of our retirement living stock and enhance our alarm call systems to make them fit for the next 20 years.

## A wider review of our assets

This implementation of this plan will be reviewed annually by the Council's Housing Committee to ensure delivery is being monitored and that commitments made can be updated and additional data added into the document.

# Our route to delivery

## Good quality homes

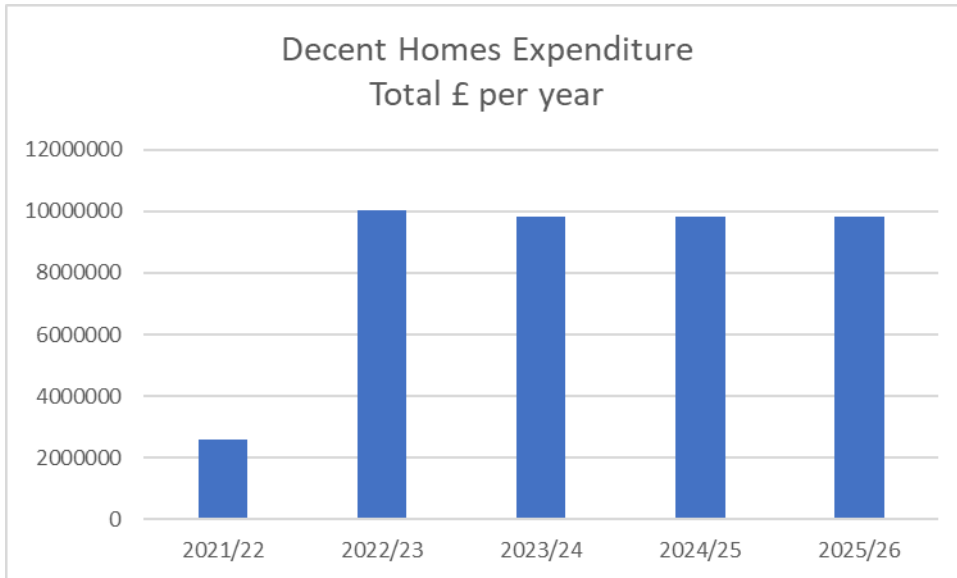
We want to go beyond the delivery of the 'Decent Homes' standard and will therefore create and implement a standard that aligns with the Council's aspirations for the provision of a quality housing stock

### **ACTION 1**

We will work with members and tenants to develop a Runnymede standard. This standard will incorporate measures to improve the energy performance of our homes and ensure the delivery of the 'Decent Homes' standard (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-decent-home-definition-and-guidance>).

Our existing investment for the improvement of our housing stock over the next five years can be seen below (further details of the breakdown of the investment by property attribute can be seen in appendix 1): -





We are conscious that our asset database needs enhancement to ensure we are capturing and reporting accurate information on the delivery of our plans.

### **ACTION 2**

In 2021/22 we plan to implement a new asset management software system to enhance the quality of information we are able to provide in relation to the condition of our assets and to model scenarios around energy performance.

We will also continue to ensure that requests for adaptations to our homes are prioritised. £200,000 per annum has been allocated within our Housing Revenue Account Business Plan to support adaptations to Council owned homes (uplifted by inflation annually).

This is largely a demand driven service – we have recently updated our Adaptations Policy, to ensure that only appropriate properties are being adapted and that where tenants are under-occupying work is not taking place.

Some adaptation requested will overlap with the Council’s Decent Homes programme. Budget provision has been made to replace and upgrade bathrooms within the Council’s social housing stock; funding it also available for wet room/wet floor showers within the adaptations budget.

Within these budgets there will be some savings due to this overlap. These savings will be significant over 5 – 30 years.

### **New Council owned homes**

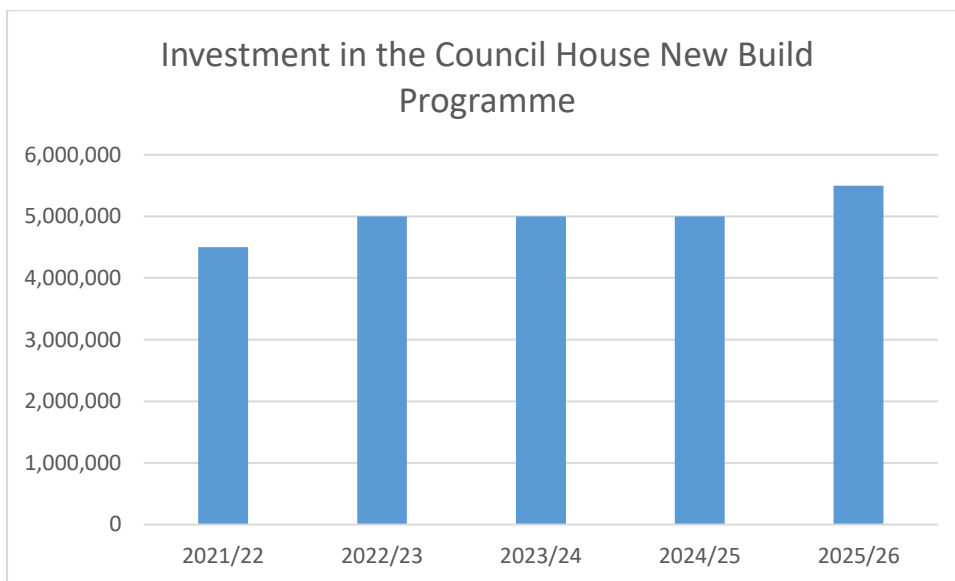
Our Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2021-2051 has identified £25million over the next 5 years for the provision of new affordable Council owned homes.



We anticipate this will equate to approximately 125 new homes being commenced within the borough and owned by Runnymede Borough Council over the next 5 years.

We commit to ensuring that these homes are built to a high energy performance standard (energy efficiency rating of A). We also commit to ensuring the provision of the infrastructure and charging points to support electric vehicle charging to future proof schemes and to support the long-term aim to promote environmental sustainability.

The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan identifies the level of resources available for the delivery of new homes for each year over the next 5 years: -



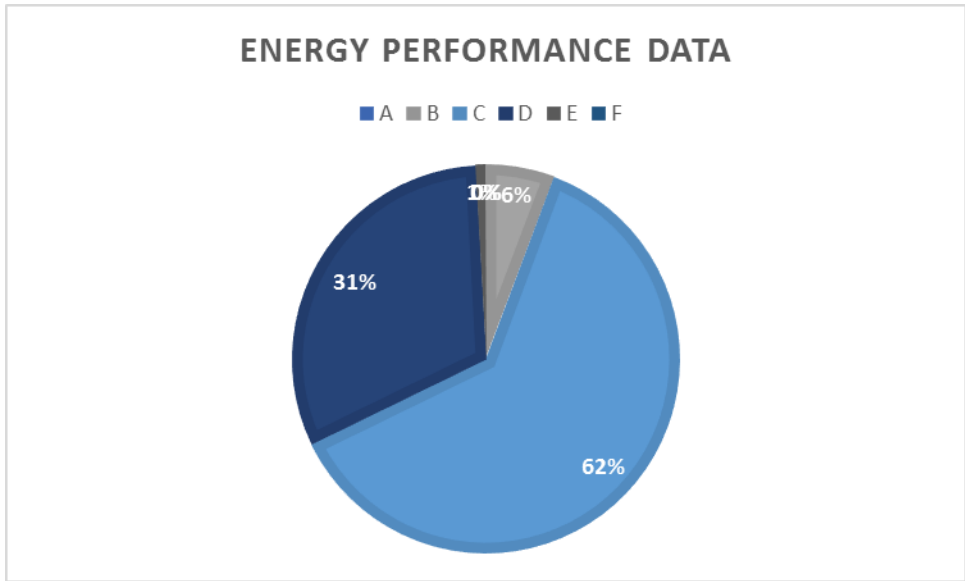
A delivery programme will be devised to enable the delivery of new homes; this will include identification of sites and scheme costs.

## Promoting Environmental Sustainability

The energy performance of our housing stock is set out below: -







There is further work to do to establish the costs associated with improving the energy efficiency rating of our homes.

We have been successful in being awarded a number of government grants to assist us to enhance the energy performance of our housing stock. So far this will deliver over £1m of additional investment.

We will be supporting this investment with an additional £375,000 of measures ourselves.

We are working with our partner housing associations to submit an application for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund which if successful will bring further investment.

We plan to ensure that the energy performance of all our homes achieves a C rating by 2030 in line with ‘Cutting the cost of keeping warm – a fuel poverty strategy for England’

This links to our Financial Inclusion Strategy by helping to address fuel poverty – by reducing costs associated with achieving ‘adequate’ levels of heat with our homes

**ACTION 3**

By March 2022 we will establish the costs associated with achieving a C rating as a minimum for all our housing stock.

Improvement work to enhance the energy performance of our homes will also be incorporated within the Runnymede Quality Standard.

Where individual units or specific construction types do not meet the C energy performance rating, we will conduct a viability assessment comparing the investment required to improve the performance versus redevelopment (if that is feasible).



Below are the construction types that currently do not deliver a C energy performance rating in the Runnymede Borough: -

Construction Type	Construction Methodology	Number of units
BISF 1947-50	Precast concrete with steel frame. No cavity wall	19
Cornish 1947 - 1960	Type 1 pre-cast reinforced concrete panel walls at ground floor level and second storey accommodation within in a timber framed mansard roof. Type 2 Cornish Units are generally two storey residential properties with pre-cast reinforced concrete external walls over both storeys.	49
Orlit 1945-1960	precast concrete frame structure, externally clad with 2-inch reinforced concrete hollow blocks.	40
Stent 1947-1955	concrete panel and post construction. No cavity wall.	44

## Heating types

The vast majority of the housing stock owned by Runnymede Borough Council operates gas central heating. A number of commercial gas heating systems also exist within our Independent Retirement Living accommodation. These heat multiple dwellings.

The life expectancy of these units are as follows: -

- Heatherfields was built in 1972 and the lifecycle of the boiler is circa 15 years, Pumps 5 to 15 years, Plate Heat Exchangers – The manufacturers were unable to advise a life expectancy, although the boiler is of limited life
- Floral House was built in 1987 and the lifecycle of the Boilers is 15 years, Pumps 5 to 15 years and Hot water cylinders – 20 to 25 years
- Beomonds was built in 1972 and was totally refurbished in 2015 and as part of that refurbishment the boiler and associated items were also upgraded. Lifecycle on the Boilers is 15 to 20 years, Pumps 5 to 15 years, Cold Water Booster set 5 to 15 years and the Heating Pressurisation unit 10 to 15 years

The remaining two independent living accommodation building are serviced by electrical heating which is separate to each dwelling.



Our current plans for the provision of heating systems to our tenants consist of upgrading boilers at the end of their life to more efficient systems.

#### **ACTION 4**

During the life of this plan we will develop a Council Housing Heating Plan which will identify how Council owned homes will be heated in the longer term.

Newly built homes are required to be 'off gas' by 2025. Although this requirement does not apply to existing homes this is pointing a direction where gas cannot be assumed to be the preferred heating type during the 2030s.

### **Properties that are safe and where risks are managed**

Policies and work schedules exist for managing compliance issues.

A specific example is the Fire Risk Management Policy, which describes the Fire Risk Assessment processes. This ensures that high, medium and low risk sites such as Surrey Tower and our Independent Retirement Living Accommodation and all blocks of flats have an annual Fire Risk Assessment.

Actions identified following Fire Risk Assessments are then prioritised into high, medium and low as set out in the example below.

Risk Rating	Qty	Target Completion
High	2	1 Months
Medium	5	3 Months
Low	3	12 Months
Management High	1	1 Month
Management Low	0	12 Months
Recommendation	0	Unlimited

A suite of performance indicators also ensure that effective management of compliance is being undertaken by Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service – these are reported to the Housing Committee 5 times per year.

See the indicators below: -

Health & Safety compliance	KPI Target
Gas Safety	
No. of CP12 certificates out of target at any given time	0
Electrical	
% of stock with valid safety EICR certification	100%
% of emergency lighting tests completed against target	100%
Asbestos	



% of stock with a valid asbestos survey	100%
<b>Fire Risk Assessment</b>	
% of inspections completed in target	100%
<b>Water Management</b>	
% of water management inspection test undertaken	100%
<b>Passenger Lifts</b>	
% of inspections undertaken against programme	98%
<b>Accidents Reporting</b>	
Number of RBC RIDDOR reportable incidents	0
Number of days lost to accidents and incidents	0

The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2021 – 2051 identifies the costs associated with fire remediation work, electrical rewires, asbestos encapsulation and removal, fire alarm upgrades (including digital switch over) and replacement and upgrading of emergency lighting. The cost of the work over the next 5 years is circa £3m.

Some additional costs have been identified which need to be added to the initial costings listed above: -

- The implementation of High-Risk actions resulting from Fire Risk Assessments - £30,000 to be spent in 2021/22
- The implementation of Medium and Low Risk Actions resulting from Fire Risk Assessments £310,000 to be spent in 2021/22
- Installation of sprinkler systems in our Independent Retirement Living accommodation - £600,000 for Independent Retirement Living and £291,000 for general needs accommodation
- Costs associated with compiling a building safety case for Surrey Towers. This will be a requirement under the new Building Safety Bill. We anticipate we will require up to £60,000 for this to be implemented.

If additional work is identified that has not been forecast revenue or capital budgets will be revised to ensure that this work is prioritised.

This plan will focus on ensuring sufficient resources for delivering compliance in areas such as fire, gas and electrical safety, asbestos management and removal and legionella testing.

## Investment into our Independent Retirement Living accommodation

We want our retirement living accommodation to provide first class facilities for its residents.



## **ACTION 5**

In September 2021 we will seek approval from Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Committee for our Housing Services - Older People Strategy. This strategy will set out a vision for the future of our Independent Retirement Living stock and wider housing services for older people; to provide: -

1. First class older persons accommodation with modern facilities, that is highly sought after
2. High quality onsite support promoting independence, tackling isolation and maximising resident's health and wellbeing
3. A clear pathway into older persons accommodation with assistance where required
4. A partnership with Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care services to ensure residents receive the 'right' care services where they are required
5. Accommodation outside of Independent Retirement Living that meets the needs of older people

To support this strategy £1.7m will be identified within the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan over the next 5 years to support the enhancement of facilities within Independent Retirement Living and the upgrading of alarm call systems (including enabling a switchover to digital calling which will be required by 2025).

Within the Older People Strategy, we will also review our provision of mobility scooter storage. We will bring a proposed policy on Mobility Scooters to the Runnymede Borough Council Housing Committee in 2022.

## **A wider review of our assets**

This plan has identified the need to review the service we provide to older people living in general needs or Independent Retirement Living accommodation and to consider the viability of non-traditional construction types particularly where they do not facilitate the delivery of medium levels of energy performance.

This plan will also initiate a wider review of our housing assets. Initially this will commence with a review of the stock set aside for use as temporary accommodation to ensure the number of units matches as close as possible predicted need.

If some accommodation is deemed surplus to requirements proposals will be brought to the Housing Committee regarding its future use.

The management and maintenance of our 1214 garage stock is also an area that will be regularly reviewed. Viability assessments of garage sites will be undertaken initially where opportunities exist to deliver new affordable housing, with the results being presented to the Council's Housing Committee.



## Other areas of asset management activity

There are a number of other areas where management of Council assets require capital investment.

### Garages

#### *ACTION 6*

A garage strategy will be delivered to support the Asset Management Plan in 2021/22 identifying areas for investment in the garage stock and opportunities for repurposing sites.

### Lifts

The management and maintenance of lifts is a key area where investment needs planning based on the life expectancy of the lift. Runnymede Borough Council has 8 lifts in its housing owned dwellings. Enclosed is a list of the lifts with their installation dates.



Item	Site Address	Lift type	Manufacturer	Stops	Duty load	Installed
<b>Runnymede Borough Council-Housing Lifts</b>						
1	Bemonds, Herriot road, Chertsey, Surrey KT16 9DT	Hydraulic Passenger	Stannah	2	375 Kg (3 persons)	2014
2	Floral House, Fox Lane South, Chertsey, Surrey KT16 9EE	Hydraulic Passenger	Stannah (Hydro-elite mod) Rear	4	630 Kg (8 persons)	2002 (mod)
3	Floral House, Fox Lane South, Chertsey, Surrey KT16 9EE	Hydraulic Passenger	Stannah Centre	3	630 Kg (8 persons)	1997
4	Heatherfields, New Haw, Addlestone, Surrey KT15 3PE	Hydraulic Passenger	Liftec	2	375 Kg (3 persons)	2011
5	Darley Dene Court, Garfield Road, Addlestone KT15 2NU	Hydraulic Passenger	H&C warden	3	630 Kg (8 persons)	1982
6	Grove Court, The Grove, Egham, Surrey TW20 9QJ	Hydraulic Passenger	Guideline	3	630 Kg (8 persons)	2012
7	Surrey Towers, Garfield Road, Addlestone, Surrey KT15 2NH	Traction Passenger	D&A (ILE controller)	16	630 Kg (8 persons)	1999
8	Surrey Towers, Garfield Road, Addlestone, Surrey KT15 2NH	Traction Passenger	D&A (ILE controller)	16	630 Kg (8 persons)	1999

Additional resources will be identified within the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan to support the maintenance and replacement of lifts. Over the next 5 years this equates to £1,000,000; this is an increase of £820,000 on what is currently budgeted for – see appendix 1.

## Aerials

Some communal aerials within flat blocks and Independent Retirement Living accommodation cannot support the most up to date digital television services. Work to upgrade these systems will commence in 2026 with approximate £200,000 investment over the following 5 years.

## Communal Areas

The Housing Service would benefit from additional information to support the management of communal areas of our social housing stock (these include; outdoor walkways, communal staircases, interior landings etc.)



## **ACTION 7**

We will review our stock condition questionnaire to ensure when undertaking annual surveys, we capture additional information regarding the condition of the communal parts of our estate.

### **Door Entry Systems**

Work has been identified where door entry systems need upgrading. This will be built into the business plan at a cost of £200,000 over the next 5 years.

### **Footpaths**

A significant number of 'estate' footpaths are also owned and managed by the Housing Service within Runnymede Borough Council. Investment in upgrading a number of these paths is also identified within our plans. Resources identified to support the upgrade of path over the next 5 years is £2.8m – see appendix 1.

### **Playgrounds**

The Housing Service own 4 playgrounds; at: -

- Sussex Court
- Middlesex Court
- Oaklands Court
- Lasswade Court

These are inspected on a monthly basis. Resources will be identified in 2021/22 to replace equipment which has reached the end of its life.

### **Refuse Areas**

Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service will invest in its 'refuse areas' at flat blocks to promote recycling. This supports the corporate objective of Enhancing our Environment by reducing the amount of waste going to landfill and will limit costs to the HRA of excess general waste. It is proposed to increase our environmental budget to £200,000 annually to enable expenditure on environmental improvements, such as refuse areas, parking, additional landscaping etc.

### **Trees**

Runnymede Borough Council is currently reviewing the data it holds on the condition of its trees. This review will inform an update on the tree maintenance programme currently in place and provide further clarity over cyclical inspections and zoning of tree stock. Resources set aside within the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan to support tree maintenance is £350,000 over the next 5 years. This is designed to ensure our tree portfolio is being managed proactively following a programme of inspections based on assessed risk.





## Key Contractors

It is essential for the successful delivery of this plan that key contracts are in place.

The Council's programme of contractor recruitment will be focused on ensuring value for money for the authority and its tenants and leaseholders, the delivery of quality products and services, recruitment of local contractors to benefit the local economy and ensuring where services are not meeting required standards provisions exist to either terminate the contract or enforce its clauses.

## Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement

Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service is committed to working alongside its tenants and leaseholders to ensure the effective delivery of the services described within this plan.

The Housing Services is also committed to offering tenants as much choice as possible in relation to the improvement activity they receive (for example on kitchens, doors, bathrooms etc)

Contractors employed to deliver key programmes of work will be expected to employ resident liaison offices to ensure tenants are engaged in the delivery of the improvement activity as possible.

Runnymede Borough Council will also seek to go further than the requirements of the Leasehold and Commonhold Act 2002 when engaging with its leaseholders over the proposed improvement activity.

## Risk Management

Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service published a comprehensive set of risks and mitigation measure in its annual Business Centre Plan.

The table below identifies the risks associated with management of the Council's assets (as reflected in the annual Business Centre Plan).

Ref	Issue	Consequences	Impact area <i>Life and limb Reputational Financial Legal</i>	Probability <i>(Pre-control measures)</i>	Impact <i>(Pre-control measures)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(Pre-control)</i>	Control Measure(s)	Probability <i>(Post control measures)</i>	Impact <i>(Post control measures)</i>	Rating <i>(Post control)</i>	Owner
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			<i>Other</i>								
HR 4	Claims for disrepair from tenants against the Housing Service	Tenants living in homes which are in poor condition  Financial compensation to tenant paid  Reputational damage to the Council	Financial  Reputational  Delivery of services	5	3	15	Key tenders in place  Effective IT systems – audit trail of repair work  Programme of tenancy audits and property inspections in place	2	3	6	CHo H
HR 5	Health and Safety requirements are not met within the Housing stock relating to fire risk control, asbestos, legionella, gas and electrical safety, lifts and safe working practices within the housing stock.	Failure to meet Council's responsibilities leading to death or injury and we are held liable for this or damage to property	Life and limb  Reputation  Financial  Legal	3	5	15	Contract in place and further resources agreed if required. Monitoring in place	2	5	10	CHo H
HR 6	Failure to achieve compliance on electrical testing within the year commitment	Risk of properties which have not been tested	Reputation  Financial  Legal	3	5	15	Contract in place and further resources agreed if required. Monitoring	2	5	10	CHo H
HR 8	Contracts are not properly procured	Liability for breach of contract law and breach of EU procurement rules. Complaints from contractors/prospective contractors. Non-compliance with health and safety legislation with potential fatal risk to residents and staff. Breach of RSH regulations. Accusations of collusion. No	Life and Limb  Reputation  Financial  Legal	3	5	15	Project plan in place for all procurement	2	4	8	CHo H



		value for money audit.									
HR 12	Regeneration of HRA stock not achieved	Non-traditional properties not replaced and continue to deteriorate.	Reputation on Financial Legal	3	4	12	Priority of Member Working Group	2	4	8	CHo H
HR 13	New development not achieved	New, additional provision not delivered. Abortive costs. Increased need for TA if suitable housing offers cannot be made  1-4-1 money not used within government timescale	Reputation on Financial Legal	3	4	12	Project monitoring in place	2	4	8	CHo H
HR 14	New IT system not procured	Current system not fit for purpose and it will not be possible to carry out planned service improvements	Reputation on Financial Legal	3	4	12	Corporate Digital Transformation Strategy with input from procurement and additional resources.	2	4	8	CHo H
HR 15	Council Garages not maintained	Rental income falls and asset depreciation	Financial Life & Limb	4	3	12	Stock Condition Survey and Review of all sites	2	2	4	CHo H
HR 16	Asset Management Plan is not fit for purpose	Operational and financial decisions are based on poor/incorrect data	Reputation on Financial Legal	3	3	12	Key staff from all relevant teams will be involved in the review. Data integrity assured	1	3	3	CHo H
HR 17	TA portfolio does not reflect current need	Increased expenditure on B&B (General Fund).  If too many properties, rent loss  If properties are too large under there will be under occupation	Reputation on Financial	3	4	12	Monitoring of need and usage. More one-bedroom properties to be brought into use and 3 beds put back into stock where possible.	2	3	3	CHo H



## Appendices

### Appendix 1 Details of the Housing Capital Programme 2021-2026

#### Details of the investment in property attributes by year

Property Attribute	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total Costs of 5 Year Investment
INT KITCHEN	501500	919020	919020	919020	919020	4177580
INT BOILER	500000	1159800	1159800	1159800	1159800	5139200
INT BATHROOM	401500	725596	725596	725596	725596	3303884
EXT MAIN ROOF	50000	1703254	1703254	1703254	1703254	6863016
EXT CHIMNEY		349680	349680	349680	349680	1398720
EXT RAINWATER GOODS	50000	1226888	1226888	1226888	1226888	4957552
EXT PRIMARY WINDOWS	25000	234720	234720	234720	234720	963880
EXT SEC WINDOWS		31590	31590	31590	31590	126360
EXT DORMER WINDOWS		20610	20610	20610	20610	82440
EXT DOORS TYPE 1	25000	332824	332824	332824	332824	1356296
EXT DOORS TYPE 2		163160	163160	163160	163160	652640
INT WIRING	220000	194560	194560	194560	194560	998240
INT INTERNAL DOORS		1084860	1084860	1084860	1084860	4339440
INT SMOKE DETECTORS		49712	49712	49712	49712	198848
EXT WALL PRIMARY FINISH		867898	867898	867898	867898	3471592
COM BOILERS IRL	200000	200000				400000
EXT WALL SECONDARY FINISH		165061	165061	165061	165061	660244
MSP PROVIDER	600000	600000	600000	600000	600000	3000000
Total £	2573000	10029233	9829233	9829233	9829233	42089932





**15. CONSULTATION ON THE GYPSY AND TRAVELLERS PITCH ALLOCATIONS POLICY (HOUSING, ANDY VINCENT)**

**Synopsis of report:**

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the development of a new draft Pitch and Plot Allocation Scheme for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople for the pitches and plots allocated in the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan.

This report seeks approval from the Housing Committee to carry out public consultation on the draft allocation scheme for a period of 6 weeks commencing in early October 2021. A copy of the draft allocation scheme is attached as Appendix I.

**In brief, the allocation scheme:**

- Sets out general background information on the pitches/plots being offered, including information on timescales for delivery and restrictions on occupation;
- Sets out the criteria that interested parties must comply with in order for the Council to confirm that they are eligible to acquire one of the pitches or plots on one of the allocated sites, including local connection criteria and evidencing that the planning definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson is complied with;
- Confirms how eligible applicants will be prioritised for market pitches;
- Sets out the additional eligibility criteria for any affordable pitches/plots that are delivered as well as additional information relating to how eligible applicants will be prioritised;
- Contains details of the evidence required to support an application for an allocated pitch/plot.
- Contains sections on data protection and privacy, equal opportunities and monitoring, appeals and reviews, complaints, fraud and the review mechanism for the allocation scheme.

**Recommendation:**

**Approve the draft Pitch and Plot Allocation Scheme for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople for public consultation for a period of six weeks.**

**1. Context and background of report**

1.1 The adopted Runnymede 2030 Local Plan allocates 10 plots for Travelling Showpeople at the Longcross Garden Village and 35 new pitches across 9 housing allocation sites (this includes the retention of 2 existing unauthorised pitches). The provision of new permanent pitches and plots in the Borough are part of the Council's wider strategy contained in the Local Plan to meet the identified accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

1.2 Local Plan Policy SL22: Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople states the following:

*Where traveller pitches are required to be provided on sites allocated through this Local Plan, the Council will secure their delivery through the imposition of appropriate planning conditions or obligations attached to any planning approval granted. Those obligations will include an appropriate management agreement including measures to secure:*

- Phasing of site delivery and trigger points to secure early delivery, proportionate to the site delivery;*
- Measures to ensure the site is secured in perpetuity for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople (in accordance with the relevant definition from the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, or any replacement guidance) as appropriate;*
- A policy for Allocation (to preserve access for those with local connection); and,*
- Further to Policy SL20, consideration of delivery of a proportion of the pitches or plots at below market rate, as affordable housing, based on evidence of need as set out in the Council's latest GTAA and viability at the time of the application. This consideration applies to both the provision of pitches or plots on site and in cases where provision is proposed off site.*

- 1.3 The draft allocation scheme at appendix A has therefore been produced in line with the 3rd bullet point of policy SL22. The Scheme also partially addresses the 2nd bullet point through seeking compliance with the eligibility criteria contained within the document.
- 1.4 For the avoidance of doubt, the Allocation Scheme ONLY relates to the pitches and plots specifically allocated through the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan through policies SD9 (Longcross Garden Village), SL6 (Pycroft Road), SL7 (Thorpe Lea Road North), SL8 (Thorpe Lea Road West), SL10 (Virginia Water South), SL11 (Parcel B, Vet Labs site), SL12 (Ottershaw East), SL14 (Parcel A, Chertsey Bittams), SL15 (Parcel B, Chertsey Bittams) and SL16 (Parcel C, Chertsey Bittams).
- 1.5 The draft allocation scheme has been considered at the Infrastructure and Economic Development Working Party on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and the Housing and Enablement Working Party on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021 before being brought to this Committee. It should be noted that approval for public consultation on the allocation scheme was also sought from Planning Committee on 1 September 2021.
- 1.6 The reason that this item is being brought to two separate Committees at the current time is because the allocation scheme has been developed to support the implementation of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan. For this reason the item relates to a planning policy matter and has therefore been presented before the Planning Committee. However, following the adoption of the allocation scheme, its administration and oversight will sit with the Council's Housing Department. This is due to their extensive experience in administering the Council's Housing Allocation scheme, including overseeing the appeal process.
- 1.7 Given the overlap between the Housing and Planning Policy functions, officers from both departments have been involved in the drafting of the allocation scheme.

## 2. **Report and, where applicable, options considered and recommended**

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the development of a new draft Pitch and Plot Allocation Scheme for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople seeking to purchase one of the pitches or plots allocated through policies contained in the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan. The allocation scheme, once adopted, will help to support the implementation of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan.
- 2.2 As set out in the synopsis above, the allocation scheme:
- Sets out general background information on the pitches/plots being offered, including information on timescales for delivery and restrictions on occupation;
  - Sets out the criteria that interested parties must comply with in order for the Council to confirm that they are eligible to acquire one of the pitches or plots on one of the allocated sites, including local connection criteria and evidencing that the planning definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson is complied with;
  - Confirms how eligible applicants will be prioritised for market pitches;
  - Sets out the additional eligibility criteria for any affordable pitches/plots that are delivered as well as additional information relating to how eligible applicants will be prioritised;
  - Contains details of the evidence required to support an application for a pitch/plot.
  - Contains sections on data protection and privacy, equal opportunities and monitoring, appeals and reviews, complaints, fraud and the review mechanism for the allocation scheme.
- 2.3 The remainder of this section provides a commentary on the eligibility criteria for the pitches and plots and how they were developed, as well as an overview of how eligible applicants will be prioritised.

### **Local Connections: Commentary on key considerations**

- 2.4 In terms of the local connection criteria developed, consideration has been given to how 'local connection' is defined in the Housing Act 1996, and how this has been translated into the Council's approved 2021 Housing Allocation Scheme. Both the national definition and the local definition already adopted by Runnymede in the 2021 Housing Allocation Scheme use residence and employment to define local connection. Both definitions also allow for a person to demonstrate a local connection based on exceptional health or welfare reasons which require them to live in the borough, or on the basis of family connections to an area. A commentary on the consideration of each of these different types of local connection during the development of the Pitch and Plot Allocation Scheme is set out below.

#### Residence

- 2.5 It is considered that, in line with the approved 2021 Housing Allocation Scheme, a local connection criterion relating to residence should be included. An additional criterion has been added specially for Travelling Showpeople which relates to living on a seasonal basis on Winter Quarters within the Borough.

#### Employment



- 2.6 In terms of working patterns, Gypsies and Travellers generally travel over much larger areas for work than the settled community and as such it is possible that allowing a local connection based on employment could potentially make households eligible for pitches/plots who live a significant distance from the Borough. For example, the Showmen's Guild has informally advised that its members can travel up to 120 miles for work. This could mean that the accommodation needs of a much wider pool of Gypsies and Travellers, over and above those interviewed as part of the Council's GTAA and whose needs have underpinned the level of pitch provision in the Local Plan, could be eligible for pitches and plots in Runnymede if part of the local connection test utilised by the borough is based on any kind of connection to the borough for work purposes. However, to not have a criterion relating to a connection for work purposes is considered to leave the Council's allocation policy open to criticism given the nomadic nature of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople many of whom traditionally travel for work.
- 2.7 Additional criteria have been added into the Local Connection Test, over and above those included in the Housing Allocation Scheme to ensure that the criteria respond to, and accommodate the travelling patterns of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

#### Unique/Exceptional Health or Welfare Need

- 2.8 It is considered that it is particularly important that a criterion relating to unique/exceptional health or welfare needs along similar lines to that included in the Housing Allocation policy is included, given that Gypsies and Travellers are known to experience some of the poorest health outcomes of any group in society<sup>1</sup>. Research has shown that despite experiencing worse health, they are less likely to receive effective, continuous healthcare<sup>2</sup>. A criterion has therefore been included in the draft allocation scheme to cover this type of local connection, and a supporting definition included.

#### Family connections

- 2.9 Under the Housing Act 1996, it is also possible for a person to demonstrate a local connection based on family connections to the area. 'Family' under this provision usually refers to parents, siblings and adult children. The local connection criteria in the approved 2021 version of the Runnymede Housing Allocations Scheme does not include a criterion related to local connection based on family connections. Similarly it is considered that expanding the definition of local connection for the Pitch and Plot Allocation Scheme to incorporate links to a wider pool of family members could mean that the accommodation needs of a much wider pool of Gypsies and Travellers over and above those interviewed as part of the Council's GTAA, and whose needs have underpinned the level of pitch provision in the Local Plan, could be eligible for pitches and plots in Runnymede. This could potentially prevent the accommodation needs of local Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople being met. Given the highly constrained nature of Runnymede and the difficulty in finding sufficient land to meet the accommodation needs of the local travelling community, it is considered that the needs of local households need

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/490846/NIHB - Gypsy and Traveller health accs.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/490846/NIHB_-_Gypsy_and_Traveller_health_accs.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-12-inequalities-experienced-by-gypsy-and-traveller-communities.pdf>

to be prioritised. As such, officers have not recommended that such a local connection criterion is introduced based on wider family connections.

#### Impacts of Covid 19

- 2.10 In developing the local connection criteria for the Pitch and Plot Allocation Scheme, officers have carefully considered the impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic, particularly if an interested party is seeking to try and demonstrate a local connection based on patterns of employment. This is given that like other sections of the community, opportunities to travel for work purposes during the pandemic are likely to have been restricted to varying degrees depending on the nature of employment, for example, the Showmen's Guild has reported that their members have been severely impacted by Covid 19 in terms of their ability to open fair grounds and other fayres. Officers consider that living and working patterns are therefore looked at over the previous five consecutive years, with a local connection needing to be demonstrated for three out of the previous five years. This is more generous than the approved 2021 Housing Allocation Scheme which requires local connection for residence and employment to be demonstrated over three consecutive years at the time of application.

#### **Meeting the definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson for planning purposes**

- 2.11 Beyond demonstrating a local connection to the Borough, applicants will also need to demonstrate that they (or a permanent member of their household) meet the planning definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson.
- 2.12 The planning definitions for a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson are set out in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS, 2015). To meet one of the definitions, it must be demonstrated that travelling for work purposes continues, or if travelling has ceased, that it has only done so temporarily. Those who have ceased to travel permanently do not fall under the planning definition of a Traveller.
- 2.13 There are a number of organised groups who represent Travelling Showpeople and Circus People (for example the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain) and the draft allocation scheme sets out that the Council will liaise with these organisations to get confirmation of whether applicants for the plots are active members of their organisations who are travelling for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows.
- 2.14 It is considered that there could be more difficulty determining whether Gypsies and Travellers meet the planning definition as the Council is not aware of any governing organisations where membership for active members is generally expected and could be verified. Gypsies and Travellers with an interest in a pitch on one of the allocated sites will be asked to confirm whether they still lead a nomadic way of life, and if they have ceased to travel for a temporary period, the reasons why. These applicants will also be asked to confirm when in the future they anticipate resuming travelling.
- 2.15 In cases where in any given household, no members of the family are currently travelling (whether Gypsies, Travellers, or Travelling Showmen), Officers will need to consider the evidence provided about why travelling has ceased and when it is likely to recommence to draw conclusions as to whether they are satisfied on the balance of probability that the travelling has only ceased temporarily. If officers are not satisfied that this is the case, applicants will be

deemed to not qualify for a pitch or plot. The draft allocation scheme sets out the appeal and review process that will be followed should applicants be aggrieved by the Council's decision regarding eligibility for a pitch/plot.

- 2.16 There is a large amount of case law on what constitutes travelling when one is making a determination on whether the planning definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Show person applies. Council officers will consider this case law when making their determination. The Council's 2018 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment sets out the case law in some detail.
- 2.17 The implication of the various rulings contained in the Council's GTAA in terms of applying the planning definition is that it will only include those who travel (or have ceased to travel temporarily) for work purposes, or for seeking work, and in doing so stay away from their usual place of residence. It can include those who have a permanent site or place of residence, but that it will not include those who travel for purposes other than work – such as holidays and visiting friends or relatives. It will not cover those who commute to work daily from a permanent place of residence (see APP/E2205/C/15/3137477).
- 2.18 It may also be that within a household some family members travel for nomadic purposes on a regular basis, but other family members stay at home to look after children in education, or other dependents with health problems etc. In these circumstances the household unit would be defined as travelling under the planning definition.
- 2.19 Households will also fall under the planning definition if they can demonstrate that they have ceased to travel temporarily as a result of their own or their family's or dependants' educational, health needs or old age. In order to have ceased to travel temporarily these households will need to demonstrate that they have travelled for work in the past. In addition, households will also have to demonstrate that they plan to travel again for work in the future.

#### **Prioritisation of applicants for the allocated pitches and plots**

- 2.20 It is expected that the majority of the allocated pitches and plots will be sold privately by developers to applicants that the Council has deemed to be eligible. For market pitches, the draft allocation scheme sets out that eligible applicants will be prioritised by date of their application to the Council. Officers are preparing a guidance note for developers on how the value of pitches and plots in the Borough for market sale will be determined to ensure that sales values are realistic.
- 2.21 If any affordable pitches or plots are brought forward, further information is provided on additional categories which if relevant to the circumstances of an applicant, would give them a higher level of prioritisation for a pitch/plot. These categories relate to those applicants 1) suffering overcrowding, 2) living in unsatisfactory housing lacking basic facilities, 3) whose housing is unsuitable for urgent, but not life threatening medical reasons, or due to their disability, but whose housing conditions directly contribute to causing serious ill health which could be rectified through the purchase of a private pitch or plot on one of the allocated sites 4) whose current accommodation is causing hardship and an urgent move is required in order to receive care or support, or 5) who are defined to be homeless households. Homeless households would include eligible Gypsies and Travellers who reside on unauthorised sites, or who live on

sites which only benefit from a temporary planning consent, where this temporary period is approaching its end.

### 3. **Policy framework implications**

- 3.1 Although the allocation scheme, once adopted, will not form part of the Development Plan, it will support the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan policies set out in paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4 of this report. The SPD also supports the 2030 Local Plan vision that, *'Runnymede will see healthier and safer communities which benefit from improved life chances and reduced inequalities achieved through the creation of inclusive places delivering a range of housing including for those with specialist needs and the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable communities'*.

### 4. **Financial and Resource implications**

- 4.1 Production of the draft allocation scheme has occurred in house under the existing budgets of the Planning Policy and Housing teams. The cost of consultation on the draft allocation scheme will also be covered by the existing Planning Policy budget for the current financial year.
- 4.2 The allocation scheme, once implemented, will be administered by the Council's Homelessness, Housing Advice & Allocations Manager within the Housing Department. No additional resource will be required to implement the scheme.

### 5. **Legal implications**

- 5.1 The draft Allocations Policy attached to this covering report details the legal implications impacting on the allocation of gypsy and traveller pitches/plots.
- 5.2 Under Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985, the Council has a legal obligation to consult "matters of housing management" which in the opinion of the landlord represent a change in the practice or policy of the authority.

### 6. **Equality implications**

- 6.1 The Council has a Public Sector Duty under the Equalities Act 2020 to have due regard to the need to:
- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
  - b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a Protected Characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - c) Foster good relations between those who share a relevant characteristic and persons who do not share those characteristics;
- in relation to the 9 'Protected Characteristics' stated within the Act.
- 6.2 The draft Allocations Scheme has been screened to establish whether there may be an impact whether positive or negative on any of the nine protected characteristics (namely, age, disability, race/ethnicity, pregnancy and maternity, religion, sexual orientation, sex, gender reassignment and marriage/civil partnership). The conclusion of the screening assessment has

confirmed that a full Equalities Impact Assessment is required. Officers will consider any comments made on equalities issues which are received during the period of public consultation and will feed these comments into the Equalities Impact Assessment prepared. The full Equalities Impact Assessment will be reported to the Housing Committee in due course alongside the final version of the Allocations Scheme proposed for adoption.

6.3 The EqlA screening is attached as Appendix J for information.

## 7. **Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**

7.1 The Local Plan is seeks to support sustainable patterns of growth which will create inclusive places which provide homes to meet a diverse set of housing needs. This allocation scheme will support this objective.

## 8. **Timetable for Implementation**

8.1 If approval is given by the Planning and Housing Committees to consult on the draft allocation scheme, the public consultation will take place for a 6 week period during Autumn 2021 (commencement anticipated early October). Following the period of public consultation, all comments received will be reviewed, with the allocation scheme amended as appropriate. The full Equalities Impact Assessment will also be prepared. It is anticipated that the final Allocation Scheme will be taken back to Housing Committee for adoption on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

## 9. **Other implications**

9.1 The public consultation exercise being planned will follow the Council's Consultation Strategy principles which are set out as follows:

- A. Consultations should have a clear purpose and start at an appropriate stage
- B. Consultations should take account of the groups being consulted
- C. Consultations should be clear and concise
- D. Consultations should last for a proportionate amount of time
- E. Responses to consultations should be published in a timely fashion and facilitate scrutiny

9.2 Officers will seek to ensure that alongside the standard consultation techniques utilised by the Planning Policy team, the following groups are targeted specifically: the developers/landowners of the sites allocated in the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan which are required to provide Gypsy/Traveller pitches or plots for Travelling Showpeople, all known Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople who reside in Runnymede Borough by sending correspondence to known addresses/sites, targeted consultation with specialist groups who either represent or work alongside Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities.

9.3 Particular care will also be taken to ensure that consultation material is tailored so that it is written in plain English which is accessible to all parts of the Travelling Community, some of whom may have difficulties reading and writing. Support will also be provided to assist local communities understand the contents of the draft allocation scheme. This support will be over the phone and in person at the Council offices on request.

10. **Conclusions**

- 10.1 Officers recommend that the draft Pitch and Plot allocation scheme is approved for public consultation for a period of 6 weeks.

**Appendices**

Appendix I-draft Pitch and Plot Allocation Scheme for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (September 2021)

Appendix J- Equalities screening assessment

**(TO APPROVE)**

**Background papers**

None

Appendix I

# **Runnymede Pitch and Plot Allocation Scheme for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

**September 2021**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The adopted Runnymede 2030 Local Plan allocates 10 plots for Travelling Showmen at the Longcross Garden Village and 35 new pitches across 9 housing allocation sites (this includes the retention of 2 existing unauthorised pitches).

1.2 Local Plan Policy SL22: Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople states the following:

*Where traveller pitches are required to be provided on sites allocated through this Local Plan, the Council will secure their delivery through the imposition of appropriate planning conditions or obligations attached to any planning approval granted. Those obligations will include an appropriate management agreement including measures to secure:*

- *Phasing of site delivery and trigger points to secure early delivery, proportionate to the site delivery;*
- *Measures to ensure the site is secured in perpetuity for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople (in accordance with the relevant definition from the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, or any replacement guidance) as appropriate;*
- *A policy for Allocation (to preserve access for those with local connection); and,*
- *Further to Policy SL20, consideration of delivery of a proportion of the pitches or plots at below market rate, as affordable housing, based on evidence of need as set out in the Council's latest GTAA and viability at the time of the application. This consideration applies to both the provision of pitches or plots on site and in cases where provision is proposed off site.*

1.3 This Allocation Scheme has therefore been produced in line with the 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet point of policy SL22. The Scheme also partially addresses the 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet point through seeking compliance with the eligibility criteria contained in this document.

1.4 For the avoidance of doubt, the Allocation Scheme **ONLY** relates to the pitches and plots specifically allocated through the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan on the following sites:

<b>Policy reference</b>	<b>Site address</b>	<b>No. of allocated pitches/plots</b>
SD9	Longcross Garden Village	10 plots
SL6	Pycroft Road, Chertsey	5 pitches
SL7	Thorpe Lea Road North	2 pitches*
SL8	Thorpe Lea Road West	3 pitches
SL10	Virginia Water South	2 pitches
SL11	Parcel B, Vet Labs Site, Addlestone	2 pitches
SL12	Ottershaw East, Ottershaw	2 pitches
SL14	Parcel A, Chertsey Bittams, Chertsey	5 pitches
SL15	Parcel B, Chertsey Bittams, Chertsey	2 pitches
SL16	Parcel C, Chertsey Bittams, Chertsey	12 pitches*

\*number includes the retention of an existing unauthorised pitch on the site

## **2. THE PITCHES AND PLOTS BEING OFFERED**

### **General Information**

- 2.1 In line with Policy SL22 of the Local Plan, the Council is looking to secure the delivery of permanent pitches and plots for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople who meet the planning definition set out in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). The identified accommodation needs for the Borough's Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will, in part, be met through the provision of new pitches and plots on sites allocated for development through the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan. The expectation is that the great majority (if not all) of the allocated pitches and plots will be sold privately via financial transactions between the developers and the Gypsy and Traveller households determined to be eligible, and to have the highest level of priority by the Council when assessed against the criteria contained in this Allocation Scheme. Chapter 5 of this Scheme sets out the additional eligibility criteria which will need to be complied with if any of the allocated pitches and/or plots are offered as socially rented products.
- 2.2 The allocated pitches which the Council is seeking to secure the delivery of are located in different parts of the Borough. Households assessed to be eligible for a pitch by the Council will be asked to confirm which of the allocated sites they would be interested in living on. Plots for Travelling Showpeople are only being offered in Longcross and as such, there will be no option through this Allocation Scheme to express an interest in obtaining a plot in another part of the Borough.

### **Preserving the pitches and plots for eligible Gypsies and Travellers in perpetuity.**

- 2.3 Local Plan Policy SL22 requires the Council to implement measures to ensure that the allocated pitches and plots are secured in perpetuity for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. To comply with this policy requirement, a clause will be contained in the Section 106 legal agreements which will be attached to the planning consents for each of the allocated sites and which will confirm that no person shall be entitled to reside on the pitches/plots unless he or she has obtained the prior written approval of Runnymede Borough Council by satisfying the Council that they meet the eligibility criteria set out in the Council's adopted Pitch and Plot Allocation Scheme for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 2.4 Any person who purchases one of the allocated pitches/plot will be written to by the Council shortly after purchase so that this requirement is clear. The letter will set out the steps to be followed if a site owner decides to sell their pitch/plot, or rent it to another household at any point in the future.

### **Timescale for the delivery of the allocated pitches/plots**

- 2.5 It must be remembered that the timing of the delivery of the pitches and plots on the allocated sites (whether market or affordable) is largely controlled by the relevant developers. It may be at the time of an interested party submitting their eligibility questionnaire in response to this allocation scheme, that none of the pitches or plots have yet been delivered or are due to be delivered imminently. The Runnymede 2030 Local Plan covers the period up to 2030, and as such, at the time of publishing this Allocation Scheme there are still almost 9

years of the plan period remaining over which this pitches and plots on the allocated sites could be delivered. Policy SL22 of the Local Plan does however require early delivery of the allocated pitches and plots on each site, proportionate to the site delivery. The Council's Housing team will however seek to provide advice and/or assistance to any party who applies through the Allocation Scheme and who has an emergency need for housing.

### **Alternative uses**

- 2.6 If within the time period specified in the Section 106 legal agreements for each of the development sites allocated in the Local Plan it has not been possible to secure the disposal of the allocated pitches/plots to Gypsies and Travellers who meet the relevant planning definition and have a local connection to the Borough (in line with the requirements set out in chapter 3 of this Scheme), the Council will allow the pitches and plots to be purchased/occupied by Gypsies and Travellers who can demonstrate a local connection to the Borough, but who do not meet the planning definition of a traveller. This is to meet an identified need for culturally appropriate accommodation for Gypsy and Traveller households who do not meet the planning definition, as identified in the Council's 2018 GTAA.
- 2.7 Therefore the details of any interested party who applies for a pitch/plot through this Allocation Scheme will have their details retained by the Council until all of the allocated pitches and plots have been sold/occupied. More information on this point can be found in chapter 7 of this document.

### 3. ELIGIBILITY

3.1 This chapter sets out the criteria that interested parties must comply with in order for the Council to confirm that they are eligible to purchase one of the pitches or plots on one of the allocated sites listed in Chapter 1 of this document. In broad terms, eligible applicants must demonstrate that they have a local connection to the Borough, and also that they meet the definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson for planning purposes as defined by the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) 2015 (or any subsequent replacement national policy issued by the Government). More information on both of these points is set out below.

#### **Local connection**

3.2 Allocated pitches and plots will be prioritised and preserved for those with a local connection to the Borough. This is in line with the requirement set out in Policy SL22 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan that the allocated pitches and plots should be preserved for those with local connection. To be eligible for one of the allocated pitches or plots, an applicant must demonstrate that they meet at least one of the following criteria:

#### **a) Residence**

- You or a permanent member of your household live in the Borough of Runnymede and have done so for at least three of the past five consecutive years, or;
- You or a permanent member of your household have resided on a site(s) within the Borough of Runnymede which you have used as winter quarters for at least three out of the past five consecutive years (SHOWMEN ONLY).

#### **b) Employment**

- You or a permanent adult member of your household are currently employed within the administrative boundary of Runnymede Borough Council and have been for at least three of the past five consecutive years<sup>1</sup>, or;
- You or a permanent adult member of your household have regularly traded at fairs, shows and events within the administrative boundary of Runnymede Borough Council for at least three of the past five consecutive years (SHOWMEN ONLY), or;
- You or a permanent adult member of your household have regularly carried out paid employment as part of self employment within the administrative boundary of Runnymede Borough Council for at least three of the past five consecutive years.

#### **c) Residence through a family member, with unique health / welfare need**

- You or a permanent member of your household have an ongoing unique/exceptional health and/or welfare reason to live in Runnymede. This is based on a specific health service which only exists in Runnymede and cannot be accessed elsewhere, and which can be evidenced by professionals supporting the household currently.

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<sup>1</sup> Work should not be of a marginal or ancillary nature and whilst every case will be considered on its own merits, generally it will be expected that applicants can demonstrate that they work for at least 16 hours per week.

- 3.3 In this section, unique/exceptional means that the care/support need is unique to a specific health service in the Borough of Runnymede, and cannot be provided anywhere else, including where the applicant currently lives. Support from friends or relatives living in the Borough is not a ground for exceptional need if support is already, or can be, achieved where the applicant currently resides, whether through professional / statutory services, or informal support which may involve travelling. Exceptional and specific health care will have to be evidenced by health professionals currently engaged with the applicant and will be assessed by the Independent Medical Advisor. This ground is meant for exceptional and unique circumstances only.
- 3.4 In this section, a permanent member of the household means someone who can evidence that they reside with an applicant on a full time basis, and have done so for at least the last 12 months consecutively.

**Meeting the definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson for planning purposes**

- 3.5 Beyond demonstrating a local connection to the Borough, applicants will also need to demonstrate that they (or a permanent member of their household) meet the planning definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson. This approach is in line with Policy SL22 which requires the following to be demonstrated for allocated sites:

*‘Measures to ensure the site is secured in perpetuity for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople (in accordance with the relevant definition from the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, or any replacement guidance) as appropriate’.*

- 3.6 Specifically, applicants will need to demonstrate that at least one permanent member of their household meets one of the definitions set out in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) (2015) (or any replacement guidance subsequently issued by the Government). The definitions contained in the PPTS are as follows:

1. For the purposes of this planning policy “gypsies and travellers” means:

*Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.*

2. In determining whether persons are “gypsies and travellers” for the purposes of this planning policy, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:

- a) whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life
- b) the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life
- c) whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.

3. For the purposes of this planning policy, “travelling showpeople” means: *Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family’s*

*or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.*

- 3.7 To verify whether applicants are genuine members of the Travelling community, the Council may need to share the relevant information provided in the submitted eligibility questionnaire (the applicant will be asked to agree to this as part of the eligibility questionnaire) with one or more of the following organisations:
- Friends, Families and Travellers*
  - Surrey Gypsy Traveller Communities Forum*
  - The Showmen's Guild of Great Britain\**
  - The Society of Independent Roundabout Proprietors\**
  - The Association of Independent Showmen\**
  - The Association of Circus Proprietors\**
  - The Amusement Catering Equipment Society\**
- 3.8 Any applicants identifying as Travelling Showmen or Circus People will be asked on their application form to confirm their membership number with either the Showmen's Guild, or one of the other organisations marked with an \* above for verification purposes.
- 3.9 The Council considers that verification with one of the bodies listed above is essential to help the Council determine whether applicants are genuine members of the Travelling community.
- 3.10 For the avoidance of doubt, it should be noted that the allocated pitches and plots are being prioritised for those households who meet the planning definition and as such will not initially be made available to members of the travelling community who have ceased travelling permanently. The eligibility questionnaire produced by the Council for interested parties to complete seeks confirmation as to whether the applicant (or a permanent member of the household) still leads a nomadic way of life, and if he/she/the whole household has ceased to travel for a temporary period, the reasons why. Where travelling has ceased temporarily, applicants will also be asked to confirm when in the future they anticipate recommencing travelling.
- 3.11 In such cases, the Council will need to consider the evidence provided about why travelling has ceased and when it is likely to recommence to draw conclusions as to whether they are satisfied that the travelling has only ceased temporarily. If officers are not satisfied that this is the case, applicants will be deemed to be ineligible for a pitch or plot.
- 3.12 Applicants will be given the opportunity to provide a supporting statement outlining why they (or a permanent member of their household) believe they meet one of the definitions of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showman as set out in the PPTS as part of their application.
- 3.13 As set out in chapter 2 of this document, if within the time period specified in the Section 106 legal agreements for each of the allocated sites it has not been possible to secure the disposal of the allocated pitches/plots to Gypsies and Travellers who meet the relevant planning definition and have a local connection to the Borough, the Council will make the pitches and plots available to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople with a local connection to the Borough who do not meet the planning definition.

#### **4. MARKET PITCHES AND PLOTS**

##### **Setting the price of pitches and plots**

- 4.1 It must be remembered that in the great majority of (if not all) cases, the pitches and plots on the allocated sites are being offered to the market by developers for private purchase. It is possible that a proportion of the pitches/plots may be affordable housing products and this is discussed in more detail in chapter 5 of this paper. However the majority will be sold privately via a financial transaction between the developer and the Gypsies and Travellers who have been determined by the Council to meet the eligibility and local connection criteria set out in chapter 3 of this Allocation Scheme.
- 4.2 A methodology has been developed which clearly sets out how the developers of the relevant allocated sites should calculate the value of the pitches and plots on their sites. This formula will be embedded into the legal agreements when permission is granted for the development of an allocated site. This is to ensure that the developers are calculating and then marketing the allocated pitches and plots in a transparent and fair way which will ensure a fair price to prospective purchasers for this type of product, as well as a fair return to the developers.
- 4.3 It should be noted that the allocated pitches are located in various settlements across the Borough and as such, values of some of the allocated pitches are likely to be higher in certain parts of the Borough where higher land values exist.
- 4.4 If interested parties do not have sufficient funds to purchase a private pitch or plot, they are still able to complete the eligibility questionnaire. Should they meet the eligibility criteria set out, their details will be kept on record and consideration will be given to their applications if any affordable pitches and/or plots are proposed by the developers of the allocated sites. There is a section within the eligibility questionnaire where interested parties can indicate an interest in an affordable pitch. In such cases, the Council will require details of income. More information on affordable pitches and plots can be viewed in the next chapter.

##### **Prioritisation of applicants**

- 4.5 For market pitches and plots, eligible applicants will be prioritised by date of their application to the Council. Details will be passed to developers in this order. If an agreement to purchase a pitch/plot is not reached between a developer and an eligible applicant, the details of the next eligible applicant on the Council's database applicant will be provided to the developer.

## 5. AFFORDABLE PITCHES AND PLOTS

5.1 Policy SL22 sets out the following in relation to the allocated pitches/plots:

*Further to Policy SL20, consideration of delivery of a proportion of the pitches or plots at below market rate, as affordable housing, based on evidence of need as set out in the Council's latest GTAA and viability at the time of the application. This consideration applies to both the provision of pitches or plots on site and in cases where provision is proposed off site.*

5.2 Having reviewed the Council's 2018 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), there is currently insufficient evidence of a need for affordable pitches and plots which would require a developer to provide them on the allocated sites. This position will be reviewed during the production of the next iteration of the GTAA.

5.3 However it may be the case that individual developers wish to provide affordable pitches or plots and can secure a registered provider to purchase the pitches/plots. Providing that there are sufficient eligible applicants for affordable pitches from interested parties who apply through this Allocation Scheme, the Council would look favourably on affordable provision on the allocated sites.

### **Prioritisation of Applicants for affordable pitches and plots**

5.4 Should any of the pitches/plots be affordable products, and should the demand for affordable pitches (as evidenced through the number of eligible applicants who apply through this Allocation Scheme) exceed supply, the Council will apply the following hierarchy of prioritisation where 1 indicates those who will be attributed the highest level of priority need, and 4 the lowest.

#### **1-Homeless households**

Reg 175(2) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) deals with homelessness and threatened homelessness, stating that, a person is homeless if he has accommodation but—(b)it consists of a moveable structure, vehicle or vessel designed or adapted for human habitation and there is no place where he is entitled or permitted both to place it and to reside in it. Under Section 166A(3) of the Housing Act 1996, the Council should give 'Reasonable Preference' to people with high levels of assessed housing need including all homeless people as defined in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, including people who are intentionally homeless and those who are in priority need.

The Council is aware of Gypsies and Travellers who have previously passed through the Borough or resorted to land within the Borough to site their caravans and who have stated that they have no lawful location to place or reside in their caravan. Such individuals are considered to meet the definition of a homeless household and would be prioritised for an affordable pitch/plot if they meet the eligibility criteria set out in this Allocation Scheme.

It is considered that the definition of homelessness would also be met by Gypsies and Travellers who reside on unauthorised sites in the Borough, or who reside on sites in the Borough which only benefit from a temporary planning consent, where this temporary period is approaching its end and the household has no lawful place to go. Again, such households



would be prioritised for an affordable pitch/plot if they meet the eligibility criteria set out in this Allocation Scheme.

## **2-Overcrowding**

This category of prioritisation applies in the following scenarios:

a) The applicant has been assessed as statutorily overcrowded by the Council's Private Sector Housing Officer, provided that any overcrowding is not a result of deliberate actions or failure to adhere to housing advice. Assessments on properties located outside of the Borough of Runnymede will not be taken into account as it is for the local authority in which the property/mobile home is located to take appropriate action.

b) Where a household is statutorily overcrowded (see clauses 324-326 of the Housing Act 1985<sup>2</sup>).

## **3-Applicants living in unsatisfactory housing (including mobile homes) lacking basic facilities**

This category of prioritisation applies to the following:

a) Applicants without access at all to any of the following facilities:

-Kitchen

-Bathroom

-Inside WC

-Hot or cold water supplies

b) Applicants who occupy a private property which is in disrepair or is unfit for occupation and is subject to a Prohibition Order and recovery of the premises is required in order to comply with the Order as defined by s. 33 of the Housing Act 2004.

## **3-Medical or disability**

This category of prioritisation applies where an applicant's housing is unsuitable for medical reasons, or due to their disability, but whose housing conditions directly contribute to causing serious ill health which could be rectified through securing an affordable pitch/plot through this Allocation Scheme.

- Supporting evidence will be required from relevant and qualified health professionals and is the responsibility of the applicant to provide. It must be current, relevant and specific to an applicant or a member of their permanent household's condition. The Council will not request or pay for any supporting evidence.
- The Council will consider all recommendations from health professionals but will make the final decision as to the assessment of an application.
- Supporting evidence must be less than 6 months old at the time of any request submitted.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/68/part/X/crossheading/definition-of-overcrowding>

#### **4-Welfare & Hardship**

This category of prioritisation applies where an applicant's current accommodation is causing hardship and a move is required in order to receive care or support.

- This needs to be exceptional whereby the health care is unique to a specific health service in the Borough of Runnymede and cannot be provided anywhere else including in the area where the applicant currently lives.
- Support from friends or relatives living in the Borough is not a ground for welfare if support is already or can be achieved in the current Borough the applicant resides in, whether through professional services or informal support which may involve travelling.
- Exceptional and specific health care will have to be evidenced by health professionals currently engaged with the applicant and will be assessed by the Council's Independent Medical Advisor.
- Applicants who need to move due to domestic abuse / actual violence or threats of violence / extreme harassment / intimidation / hate crime. This may include where a move is necessary to protect a witness to criminal acts. Evidence may also be sought from other professionals engaged with the applicant. Extreme violence or harassment will be verified through the Police and / or other agencies as appropriate.
- This ground is meant for exceptional and unique circumstances only.

#### **5-All other eligible applicants.**

This category of prioritisation will be applied to individuals who can demonstrate a need for an affordable pitch/plot and who meet all eligibility criteria but to whom the above circumstances (in categories 1, 2, 3 and 4) do not apply.

#### **Additional information required to evidence eligibility for an affordable pitch/plot**

In order for applicants to be eligible for an affordable pitch/plot they will need to demonstrate that:

-They do not have assets (beyond their mobile home and/or touring caravan) or savings that exceed £16,000.

-They earn less than £30,000 per annum if they are a single person household or £50,000 if they are a family.

Applicants will also need to provide details of their current address and a 10 year address history, providing details of why previous periods of occupation came to an end.

## **6. EVIDENCE REQUIRED IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION**

- 6.1 The burden is on the applicant to satisfy the Council with appropriate information and evidence that s/he is eligible for an allocated pitch/plot in Runnymede. This chapter summaries the types of information that will be required to support a person's eligibility questionnaire. The supporting information is also set out within the eligibility questionnaire itself.

### **General requirements to prove identity (all applicants)**

Applicants will be asked to provide one of the following to confirm their identity generally:  
Copy of passport, driving license, birth certificate, identity card or suitable equivalent.

Applicants will also be required to demonstrate that they have the right to enter and stay in the UK; this complies with [Immigration Rules part 1: leave to enter or stay in the UK - Immigration Rules - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules).

### **Local connection (all applicants)**

- 6.2 The following lists provide suggestions for the types of evidence that will be required in support of an applicant's claim that they have a local connection to the Borough:

#### **Connection for employment purposes**

-To establish whether the applicant or a permanent adult member of their household are currently employed within the administrative boundary of Runnymede Borough Council and have been for at least three of the past five consecutive years, the applicant will need to provide current payslips, the most recent P60 and/or bank statements to support their qualification through employment.

-To establish whether the applicant or a permanent adult member of their household has worked regularly within the administrative boundary of Runnymede Borough Council for at least three of the past five consecutive years as a self employed person (including through trading at fairs, shows and events), applicants will need to provide the Council with evidence of an on-going viable venture and provide business accounts.

- Historic (at least 12 months old) and current P45 or Payslip demonstrating the applicant's (or for the permanent adult member of the household who is seeking to demonstrate the employment link) address(es) of employment.

- Self-employment statement; the applicant must provide any evidence that they feel is relevant to support the statement.

#### **Connection through living in the Borough**

-Historic and potentially current utility bills demonstrating name and home address(es) of the applicant or the relevant member of the household seeking to demonstrate a local connection to the Borough on the grounds of residence (for at least three of the past five consecutive years);

**Unique or exceptional health/welfare need**

Supporting evidence from relevant and qualified health professionals which is current (less than 6 months old), relevant and specific to an applicant or a member of their permanent household's condition, who is seeking to demonstrate a local connection on this ground.

**Additional requirements for applicants seeking an affordable pitch or plot**

Current payslips, the most recent P60 and bank statements for all working members of the household.

Full details of current address and a 10 year address history which includes details of why previous periods of occupation came to an end.

## **7. DATA PROTECTION AND PRIVACY**

- 7.1 Data collected from applicants in their applications for the allocated pitches and plots in the Borough will be processed in line with the Data Protection Act 2018. For the purpose of the Act, Runnymede Borough Council is the “Data Controller” and so is responsible for the information held.
- 7.2 Applicants, when making an expression of interest in acquiring one of the pitches or plots on one of the allocated sites in the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan will be required to agree that the Council can share information they have provided with relevant agencies and departments, both within and outside of the Council, in order to process, assess, and verify their application, and subsequently determine if they are eligible for a pitch/plot. The Council may also need to request information from these agencies and departments. This may include information held by credit reference agencies, current or former landlords, government departments, health and/or social care providers and/or a representative agency for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople including the Showmen’s Guild of Great Britain and Friends, Families and Travellers. Applicants who are found to be eligible for a pitch/plot must also be aware that by providing their details, some of their information (name, address and contact details) will need to be shared with the private developers of the allocated pitches/plots. This is because the pitches/plots are being sold privately by the developers of the allocations. The sharing of the information set out above will enable the sale of pitches/plots to be formally agreed and processed. All of this information will be made clear on the application form.
- 7.3 Sensitive personal data such as racial or ethnic origin, criminal offences (including alleged offences) and physical and mental disabilities are required under the Equal Opportunities Monitoring statute. Any data provided may be disclosed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, although all data will be anonymised.
- 7.4 Outside of the permissions given to the Council as described in paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2, the disclosure of information included on the expression of interest form to a third party is prohibited except on a “need to know” basis in the following circumstances:
- For the purpose of fraud detection, the prevention of crime and the promotion of community safety.
  - Where disclosure is a legal requirement.
- 7.5 The personal data of all applicants who are found to be eligible for a pitch/plot on all grounds as well as those who demonstrate eligibility on all grounds except meeting the Planning Definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson will be held by the Council until all of the allocated pitches/plots have been disposed of.
- 7.6 The Council will take disciplinary action against any employee who makes use of any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, or who passes it to others who might use it in such a way. A report to the police will be made if it appears that a criminal offence has been committed.

## **8. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND MONITORING**

- 8.1 The Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in the delivery of all its services. Applicants will be invited to indicate if they wish to make use of the Council's translation and interpretation services, or if they require other special services as a result of visual impairment, hearing difficulties, low levels of literacy/illiteracy or for another reason.
- 8.2 Confidential interview facilities are provided at the Civic Offices. There is full access to the Civic Offices for wheelchair users. Home interview services are available for applicants who are elderly or who experience mobility difficulties or have other vulnerabilities.
- 8.3 The Council will seek to ensure that its allocation policies are being operated in a manner that is fair to all sections of the community regardless of nationality, ethnic origin, marital status, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/ maternity and religion. The information provided will be kept confidential and treated with respect. The Council believes it is important to understand the different communities who apply for a pitches/plots and it is only by asking these questions can the Council check that it is operating a fair system.
- 8.4 All applicants applying for a pitch/plot will be asked to provide equalities information. Provision of this information will not be obligatory and not a requirement for acceptance of an application. However, such information will help the Council monitor the number and types of equality groups seeking a pitch/plot and therefore applicants will be strongly advised to provide this information. Equalities records will be monitored regularly to ensure pitches/plots are being allocated fairly.
- 8.5 Allocation policies and any changes to them will be reviewed regularly to ensure they do not operate in ways that discriminate against or disadvantage any particular group.
- 8.6 An Equalities Impact Assessment screening opinion has been completed on the entirety of this scheme, and can be viewed on request.

## **9. APPEALS AND REVIEWS**

- 9.1 All applicants have the right to request general information about their application, including whether they are entitled to any preferential consideration (in line with the criteria for affordable pitches/plots set out in chapter 5).
- 9.2 All applicants will be informed in writing of the Council's decision. Applicants will also be advised whether they have been concluded to have priority based on their circumstances should any affordable pitches/plots be delivered. The written notification will give clear grounds for the decision which will be based on the relevant facts of the case. The applicant(s) will be informed of their right to request a review of the decision.
- 9.3 The appeal and review process is open to the following individuals:
- An applicant who is not deemed to be immediately eligible for one of the allocated pitches or plots;
  - An applicant who is deemed to be ineligible for a culturally appropriate pitch/plot should any become available;
  - An applicant who wishes to challenge the level of priority they have been concluded to have by the Council for an affordable pitch/plot should any be made available.

### **Review process**

#### **Pre-review stage:**

- 9.4 Applicants who are unhappy with a decision made under this Scheme should in the first instance contact the Council's Housing Team and explain why they think that the decision is unreasonable. At this time, the Officer will explain in more detail why an assessment has been made. If the applicant remains dissatisfied, they can progress to the formal review stage.

#### **Review process:**

- 9.5 Applicants can submit a review request within 21 days of the date of the original decision. This review will be conducted by the Service Manager. The review request should usually be in writing, and outline clearly what the applicant's reasons for a review are, and what outcome they are seeking. The applicant would usually be notified of the outcome within 56 days of the Council receiving the review request. In exceptional cases, the Council may need more time to consider a review, and the applicant will be notified of this as early as possible.
- 9.6 Applicants will be invited to submit any further evidence to support their review request, and the Council may seek any further information that it requires to make a decision, including advice from medical or other specialist advisors.

#### **Review of decision to bypass an applicant**

- 9.7 Where an eligible applicant has been bypassed for a pitch/plot, and where they believe they were the highest placed applicant, then they can request a review of the decision.
- 9.8 Applicants who wish to request a review of the decision to bypass their application should follow the same process as laid out in paragraph 9.4 above.

## 10. COMPLAINTS

10.1 The Council has a formal complaints procedure. Applicants can use the complaints procedure if they believe:

- Something has been done badly or wrong in the service delivery;
- If something has not been done that should have been done;
- If the service has not been delivered in accordance with policies and procedures;
- If they have been treated in an impolite or discourteous manner.

13.2 All applicants who make a complaint will be treated fairly and objectively. A written reply to any complaint received will be sent out within the timescales set out in the Council's Complaints Procedure, copies of which are available on the Council's website ([www.runnymede.gov.uk](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk)).



## **11. FRAUD**

11.1 The Council works in partnership with the NFI and all applications are subject to a full credit checking process using independent companies contracted to the NFI. By making an application for an allocated pitch/plot an applicant is agreeing to this process. There is also a question on the application form which an applicant is required to answer regarding sharing of information with other agencies.

11.2 The Council will refer applications to the Corporate Fraud Officer if there is any reason to suspect fraud and/or deception and this may lead to prosecution.

### **False or misleading information**

11.3 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and plots are in short supply in the Borough. The pitches and plots being offered through this scheme will provide a much valued opportunity for settled accommodation for those who qualify for it.

11.4 Therefore, the Council takes a strong approach to dealing with fraudulent applications and false information.

11.5 Under Section 2 and Section 3 of the Fraud Act 2006, an applicant, or someone acting on their behalf, commits an offence if:

- They knowingly or recklessly give false information, or
- They knowingly withhold information that the Council has reasonably required the applicant to give.

11.6 Applicants who are found to have given false information on their application form for the allocated pitches and plots, or in response to a request for further information in support of the application, or during review proceeding, will have their application removed immediately. Following this, an investigation will be carried out.

11.7 Applicants will be given 21 days to provide information showing that they are eligible for a pitch/plot. If they do not reply within this time, or they reply but the Council decides that they are not eligible they will be notified accordingly.

11.8 If, following the investigation the Council decides that a person has given false information or withheld information, it will take one or more of the following actions:

- a) Remove the applicant from Council's list of eligible applicants.
- b) Not allow the applicant to re-apply for one of the allocated pitches or plots for an indefinite period.
- c) Instigate criminal proceedings.

11.9 The applicant will be informed in writing of the Council's decision and action taken.

## **12. REVIEW OF THIS SCHEME**

- 12.1 This Scheme is subject to regular review, and where the Scheme requires changes which are minor in nature, or where the changes are required urgently for legal reasons, or changes in government policy and / or legislation, these changes will be approved by the Chair / Vice Chair of the Housing Committee.
- 12.2 Subject to the urgency of the change, as per paragraph 12.1 above, any major change required to the Scheme will be subject to full public consultation.
- 12.3 All changes to this Scheme will be noted within the Version Control on page 1 of this Scheme, and an updated Scheme document will be uploaded to the Council's website.

## Appendix J

The Equalities screening for the Runnymede Pitch and Plot Allocation Scheme for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is set out as follows:

POLICY/FUNCTION/ACTIVITY	LEAD OFFICER
Runnymede Pitch and Plot Allocation Scheme for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	Georgina Pacey

**A. What is the aim of this policy, function or activity? Why is it needed? What is it hoped to achieve and how will it be ensured it works as intended? Does it affect service users, employees or the wider community?**

The aim of this allocation scheme is to clearly set out the different criteria which an applicant will need to meet in order to be eligible for a gypsy/traveller pitch or travelling showman's plot in Runnymede. This allocation scheme only relates to the pitches and plots allocated through the following adopted policies of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan: SD9: Longcross Garden Village, SL6: Pycroft Road, Chertsey, SL7: Thorpe Lea Road North, Egham, SL8: Thorpe Lea Road West, Egham, SL10: Virginia Water South, SL11: Parcel B, Vet Labs site, Addlestone, SL12: Ottershaw East, Ottershaw, SL14: Chertsey Bittmas A, SL15: Chertsey Bittams B, SL16: Chertsey Bittams C.

The Allocation Scheme is needed to comply with Policy SL22 of the adopted Local Plan which is concerned with meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Specifically, this policy states, *'Where traveller pitches are required to be provided on sites allocated through this Local Plan, the Council will secure their delivery through the imposition of appropriate planning conditions or obligations attached to any planning approval granted. Those obligations will include an appropriate management agreement including measures to secure [amongst other things]:*

*-Measures to ensure the site is secured in perpetuity for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople (in accordance with the relevant definition from the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, or any replacement guidance) as appropriate;*

*-A policy for Allocation (to preserve access for those with local connection);*

It is hoped that the adoption of an Allocation Scheme for the allocated pitches and plots will ensure that they are purchased/occupied by Gypsies and Travellers who not only meet the definition of a Gypsy/Traveller or Travelling Showperson for planning purposes as set out in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) but also meet the identified accommodation needs evidenced in the Council's 2018 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). As part of the GTAA, all of the Borough's Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople were invited to conduct an interview with the Council's researchers to provide information about their own (and their family's where relevant) accommodation needs at the time of interview and also as predicted in the future to help the Council meet the Government's aim of ensuring that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites.

One of the aims of the Local Plan and, the key aim of this allocation policy is to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople as identified in the Council's 2018 GTAA.

In the drafting of this Allocations Scheme, the input of the Council's Housing, Legal and Commercial Services teams has been sought to ensure that the Allocation Policy is realistic and achievable. Once adopted, the Council will be able to measure whether or not the Scheme is working as intended when the next iteration of its GTAA is completed. This will determine whether the accommodation needs of the Borough's Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople have decreased since the assessment published in January 2018.

The Allocation Scheme will not affect any employees or service users on the basis of a protected characteristic(s) they have. Any effects it has on the wider Borough community, including those groups with protected characteristics is likely to be beneficial, particularly for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, through the provision of permanent authorised pitches/plots to live on. It must be recognised however that it is possible that some members of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities who would like an authorised permanent pitch or plot to live on will not be eligible for a pitch/plot which could mean that any current accommodation needs they have will remain unresolved.

**B. Is this policy, function or activity relevant to equality? Does the policy, function or activity relate to an area in which there are known inequalities, or where different groups have different needs or experience? Remember, it may be relevant because there are opportunities to promote equality and greater access, not just potential based on adverse impacts or unlawful discrimination.**

**The Protected Characteristics are; Sex, Age, Disability, Race, Religion and Beliefs, Sexual Orientation, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity.**

The Allocation Scheme is relevant to equality. It relates to the allocation of pitches and plots to a group who often have different accommodation needs to that of the settled community and who are known to experience inequalities.

The House of Commons committee report from 5<sup>th</sup> April 2019 titled, 'Tackling inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities found that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people have the worst outcomes of any ethnic group across a huge range of areas, including education, health, employment, criminal justice and hate crime.

In the Equality and Human Rights Commission report 'Inequalities experienced by Gypsy and Traveller communities: A review' from 2009 found *'The lack of suitable, secure accommodation underpins many of the inequalities that Gypsy and Traveller communities experience...Evidence is now available about the extent of provision and unmet need, as a result of the requirement for housing authorities to carry out formal accommodation assessments. These highlight a considerable shortfall in the quantity of residential and transit accommodation available to Gypsies and Travellers who do not wish to reside in conventional housing...Many Gypsies and Travellers are caught between an insufficient supply of suitable accommodation on the one hand, and the insecurity of unauthorised encampments and developments on the other: they then face a cycle of evictions, typically linked to violent and threatening behaviour from private bailiff companies. Roadside stopping places, with no facilities and continued instability and trauma, become part of the way of life. Health deteriorates, while severe disruptions occur to access to education for children, healthcare services and employment opportunities'*.

However, the Local Plan, and this related this Allocation Scheme is seeking to help address the known inequalities experienced by the Gypsy and Traveller communities by providing a mechanism for them to access suitable, secure accommodation through the provision of permanent, authorised pitches and plots for members of the communities who have a local connection to. This is considered to be a positive step forward. The allocations themselves are considered to be in sustainable locations with good access to a range of local facilities (including healthcare and education facilities) which the Council hopes will have a positive knock on effect in helping the travelling communities accessing these much needed services.

**If the policy, function or activity is relevant to equality then a full Equality Impact Assessment may need to be carried out. If the policy function or activity does not engage any protected characteristics, then you should complete Part C below. Where Protected Characteristics are engaged, but Full Impact Assessment is not required because measures are in place or are proposed to be implemented that would mitigate the impact on those affected or would provide an opportunity to promote equalities please complete Part C.**

**C. If the policy, function or activity is not considered to be relevant to equality, what are the reasons for this conclusion? Alternatively, if it is considered that there is an impact on any Protected Characteristics but measures are in place or are proposed to be implemented please state those measures and how it/they are expected to have the desired result. What evidence has been used to make this decision? A simple statement of 'no relevance' or 'no data' is not sufficient.**

It is concluded that this Allocation Scheme will have an impact on the Protected Characteristic of Race. The Allocation Scheme proposed seeks to firstly ensure that any eligible applicants meet the planning definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson. The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) sets out the relevant definition. Applicants will be given the opportunity on their application form to provide a brief supporting statement setting out why they are of the view that they meet the definition of a Gypsy and Traveller for planning purposes. The Council has requested the assistance of Friends, Families and Travellers and the Showmen's Guild in assessing whether applicants meet the relevant definitions.

The Council's 2018 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) provides the evidence of the level of need for new pitches and plots in Runnymede, and the Local Plan seeks to meet the level of need evidenced in this document. The GTAA calculated the accommodation needs of Borough's Gypsies and Travellers based on interviews with the Borough's Gypsies and Travellers. It is for this reason that a local connection element has been included in the Allocation Scheme-to make sure that the new pitches and plots are meeting the needs identified in the GTAA itself.

The Allocation Scheme also contains a financial solvency test. This will require applicants to demonstrate that they have sufficient funds to purchase a private pitch or plot. This on the face of it has the potential to discriminate against those who cannot afford to buy their own pitch or plot, but may have accommodation needs nevertheless. However, Policy SL22 of the Local Plan is clear that, *'Where traveller pitches are required to be provided on sites allocated through this Local Plan...Further to Policy SL20, consideration of delivery of a proportion of the pitches or plots at below market rate, as affordable housing, based on evidence of need as set out in the Council's latest GTAA and viability at the time of the application. This consideration applies to both the*

*provision of pitches or plots on site and in cases where provision is proposed off site*'. Whether a % of the allocated pitches and plots should be affordable has been considered in this paper. However, it has been concluded that there is insufficient evidence in the Council's GTAA to support that affordable pitches should be provided, and insufficient interest from public bodies to manage such pitches/plots.

Finally, the Allocation Scheme seeks to prioritise eligible Gypsies and Travellers for pitches/plots who are in the greatest level of need. This includes those who can demonstrate that one of the following circumstances applies:

- Welfare and hardship
- Overcrowding
- Homelessness
- Those living in unsatisfactory housing lacking basic facilities
- Those with specific medical conditions or disability

It is considered that this would help address accommodation inequalities where they are most acute.

It is recognised that Gypsy and Traveller communities face inequalities in education and the House of Commons Briefing Paper on Gypsies and Travellers from 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019 highlighted the low literacy levels in the Gypsy and Traveller communities compared with the settled community as being a barrier in many different areas and contributing to inequalities elsewhere. Therefore assistance will be offered to any interested person in completing the application form as it is recognised that some interested parties may otherwise experience a barrier to applying for one of the pitches or plots.

A six-week public consultation will be held on the proposed Allocation Scheme. This will include targeted consultation with planning agents who are known to represent Gypsies and Travellers in Runnymede, representative groups for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, as well as travellers living in the Borough. In relation to the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople themselves, it will be ensured that consultation material is kept concise, in plain English and with it being made clear who interested parties can contact by telephone or email for more information.

Any comments made on the draft Allocations Scheme will be carefully considered by the Council before the scheme is finalised and adopted. Equality implications will also be discussed with the Council's Equalities Group to ensure that the Allocations Scheme is fully compliant with the Equality Act.

Once adopted, the Allocations Scheme is considered to be likely to have a positive benefit for the traveller community in terms of allocating permanent pitches and plots for members of the community who meet the relevant eligibility criteria. Eligible applicants will be prioritised where they are in most need.

The Allocations Scheme is considered to be consistent and complementary to the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan, which has had a detailed EqIA undertaken at each stage of Plan preparation. The Allocations Scheme provides detailed guidance to help implement the relevant parts of policy

SL22 and of policies SD9: Longcross Garden Village, SL6: Pyrcroft Road, Chertsey, SL7: Thorpe Lea Road North, Egham, SL8: Thorpe Lea Road West, Egham, SL10: Virginia Water South, SL11: Parcel B, Vet Labs site, Addlestone, SL12: Ottershaw East, Ottershaw, SL14: Chertsey Bittmas A, SL15: Chertsey Bittmas B, SL16: Chertsey Bittmas C. The requirements of the above listed policies have already been assessed under Local Plan EqIA to have either positive or neutral impacts on protected characteristics of the population, including Race.

Continued monitoring of the Allocations Scheme will take place after it is adopted which may reveal any positive or negative impacts that are resulting which will assist officers in providing measures that seek to mitigate any negative impacts on any of the protected characteristics through an amendment(s) to the scheme.

Overall, when considering all the elements in the round, it is considered that a full Equalities Impact Assessment is required prior to the adoption of the allocation scheme given the potential impacts of the scheme on the protected characteristics of race/ethnicity.

Date completed: 18.08.2021

Sign-off by senior manager: Georgina Pacey, 18.08.2021

16. **URGENT ACTION – STANDING ORDER 42  
(LAW AND GOVERNANCE – JOHN GURMIN)**

Copies of proforma 979 detailing action taken after consultation with the Chairman of this Committee and the Community Services Committee and proforma 982 detailing action taken after consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of this Committee and the Chairman and Vice – Chairman of the Corporate Management Committee are attached at Appendices K and L. Approval by email has been given by the Chairman of the Housing Committee to Urgent Actions 979 and 982 and copies of the signed and dated proformas will be forwarded to officers when physically possible.

Regarding Urgent Action 979 and the joint reports to be submitted to the Housing and Community Services Committees after six months referred to in the last paragraph of section 5, the Chairman of the Community Services Committee has requested that, amongst any other information officers may deem necessary, the following information be provided :-

1. Clear information on the success or otherwise of the approach at that time (including the number of rough sleeping cases provided, the number of cases alleviated and the number (if any) of recurrences).
2. The continued need projected for the remaining period of the intervention (on the assumption that the six months mentioned is six months from the signing of the SO 42 and not six months from the start of the intervention).
3. If the issue of Rough Sleeping is deemed not to be likely to have ceased at the end of the twelve month intervention, what measures are recommended for onward addressing of the issue and how these are proposed to be funded (including what is recommended if no outside grants are available/won and no budget growth is possible).

Regarding Urgent Action 979, the Chairman of the Community Services Committee has also requested that, as the posts are being recruited on initial twelve month contracts, the approach to be taken to ensure appropriate consideration of any need for an extension to the roles and funding if required be reported as part of this information item. The Committee is advised that if officers recommend that the posts be extended beyond twelve months, a report seeking approval for this will be submitted to both Committees or approval will be sought via the Urgent Action procedure.

Regarding Urgent Action 982, a verbal update will be provided for Members at the meeting.

**(For information)**

**Background Papers**

Emails from Chairman of the Housing Committee approving Urgent Action Standing Order 42s 979 and 982

Email from Chairman of Community Services Committee to Democratic Services Manager of 5 August 2021



**RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL****CONSULTATION WITH APPROPRIATE CHAIRMAN IN RESPECT OF URGENT ACTION  
TAKEN UNDER STANDING ORDER 42**

**TO:** Councillor Jacqui Gracey, Chair of Housing Committee &  
Councillor Chris Howorth, Chair of Community Services Committee

**FROM:** Andy Kefford (supported by Andy Vincent) and Darren Williams

**MY REFERENCE:** Social Prescribing - Housing  
Resource Recruitment

**DATE:** 08/07/2021

05/07/21 sent.

**1. Synopsis of report:**

An application was made to the MHCLG's Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) and has been successful. A bid of £130,000 has been awarded to Runnymede of which £40,000 is to fund a housing led scheme for rough sleepers, £10,000 for personalisation budgets to support rough sleepers and £80,000 awarded for two full time staff. The funding is to be used to introduce rough sleeping initiatives that immediately intervene in, prevent, and reduce rough sleeping.

The award of the funding to the Housing Business Unit has allowed officers to consider how best to utilise the funding and also the resources that this creates. Discussions between officers of the Housing and Community Services Business Unit have determined that two posts are able to be recruited, on initial 12-month contracts, with the two units working in partnership to deliver this.

**2. Reasons why this matter cannot wait for a Committee Decision:**

With the funding having already been confirmed and received, there is a need to proceed as soon as possible with the proposed recruitment. Given the next scheduled meetings of both Housing and Community Services committees are in September 2021.

**3. Recommendation(s)**

Officers are allowed to recruit two new posts, these being a Housing Navigator, that will work as part of the Housing business unit and also a Social Prescriber (housing lead) that will work as part of the established Social Prescribing team in the Community Services business unit. Both posts are proposed to be recruited on initial twelve-month contracts.

#### 4. Context of report

The Government first announced Rough Sleeping Initiative funding in March 2018 to make an immediate impact on the rising levels of rough sleeping. Local Authorities had been encouraged to apply for this funding and the success of applications largely depended on the level of need in each area.

This is the fourth year of RSI funding, as the Government aspires to half rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027 in accordance with its Rough Sleeping Strategy. The pandemic heightened these aspirations as the need to protect those on the street from Coronavirus became a health priority.

The Council have applied successfully to multiple funding streams in the last twelve months to develop an offer to those who sleep rough and those that are at risk of rough sleeping in the Borough so that no one should find themselves rough sleeping. This includes introducing two emergency sleep pods in partnership with The Salvation Army.

An application to the RSI Year 4 fund was made for the provision of a housing led scheme with personalisation budgets so that there is supported move on options for rough sleepers. £40,000 has been approved for the housing led scheme and £10,000 for personalisation budgeting. This £10,000 can be accessed by the housing led scheme as well as the two full time posts as deemed required to support each individual.

The bid was also for two full time, twelve month posts, with the intention of early identification of rough sleepers and vulnerably housed in the Borough through a Housing Navigator post. This is so that we are able to intervene before a person becomes destitute. This post will lead on developing a "no second night out" scheme and undertake regular rough sleeper counts in the area, build up relationships with internal and external groups including hosting the Homeless Task Group. This is so that rough sleepers are provided with the support and assistance they need to find accommodation away from the streets and successfully maintain it.

The second post is for a Social Prescriber – housing lead. Rough sleepers often have health inequalities and the need for social prescriber intervention. This housing specific post within the Community Services Business Unit will enhance the positive joint working between business units and that will benefit the individuals that are in need of services.

There is a limited number of people that sleep rough in Runnymede, but these posts will enable the Council to be even more proactive in responding to the needs of a rough sleepers and reduce the risk of individuals ending up on the street.

## 5. Report and, where applicable, options considered

Having received confirmation of a funding award of £80,00, officers have considered how best to utilise the funding in the recruitment of two additional staff members. Lead by the Homelessness, Housing Advice & Allocations Manager, discussions have been held between the Housing and Community Services Business Units, in regard to the potential roles that could be recruited and how they could be utilised to continue the strong cross department working that has taken place as a result of the introduction of Social Prescribing into the Community Services Business Unit.

We have determined that whilst one post must identify and support rough sleepers from the streets and develop a consistent housing offer to rough sleepers, there is also a clear need to focus on residents who are, or who are facing the prospect of Homelessness and how they can be supported with their wider wellbeing support needs, given it is identified that housing is a key factor in considering the wider determinants of health.

As a result, it is proposed that the following roles are recruited:

### 1. Housing Navigator

The Housing Navigator role will report to the Housing Solutions Manager within the Homeless team. This position will alleviate some of the burden on the existing team as the Officer will specifically focus on rough sleepers, undertake visits to reports of rough sleepers, carry out a monthly rough sleeper count as well as the required annual count/estimate.

The role is to develop and implement a housing offer to rough sleepers in Runnymede. The role will involve supporting rough sleepers and those vulnerably housed to access housing pathways and to progress towards a life away from the street.

This position will play an important role in developing strategies to support rough sleepers, for example, introducing a "no second night out scheme" which means a rough sleeper should never spend more than one night on the streets, utilising existing provision and services.

The role will lead on the re-introduction of the Homeless Task Group, merging this with the FUSE group (Facilitate, Understand, Support, Empower), which is a the local partners, volunteers, foodbanks, churches to ensure a joint up approach to supporting those at risk of rough sleeping.

### 2. Social Prescribing Officer – Housing & Homelessness

This role will be recruited to the Community Services Business unit, who will be responsible for the leadership and management of the postholder. The role will join the established Social Prescribing team and provide a specialism within the team of housing issues and specifically homelessness. It is envisaged that this role will compliment the existing team and provide much needed capacity against increasing demand for support with wellbeing and other non-medical needs.

Positioning this role within Community Services enables the two business units to continue to work together and build off the initial success of the step-down accommodation initiative. In doing so, it will provide Housing with greater exposure to integrated health and care, in particular closing the gap with local Primary Care Networks (clusters of GP practices) and their wider teams of staff, including those working within the GPimHS service, which focuses on mental health. Building such relationships and a greater understanding will hopefully benefit the Housing Business Unit more widely in engaging with health and care partners in the future. It is proposed that this is also presented to the NW Surrey Alliance as a pilot supported by RBC, so that should it be successful, health partners may be considerate of providing continuing funding in the future.

Finally, the role will provide an opportunity to develop the knowledge and understanding of Housing, through information sharing, mutual support as a team and through joint caseload review etc.

Given the fact that grant funding has been received and internal partnership working has created a far-reaching approach and number of opportunities, Members are asked to support the SO42 request to enable the recruitment to take place in a timely fashion. It is proposed that joint reports are written by the two business units and are presented at both Housing and Community Services committees at the six month point, whilst an information item at your request relating to the SO42 could be presented at the September committee cycle.

**6. Policy framework implications**

As per the 2016-2020 Corporate Strategy, this project meets the priority of “Supporting Local People”. From the objectives listed in the strategy it is felt the project meets the following:

- To expand our care/prevention services in order to help relieve pressures on the NHS
- To take opportunities for improving the safety of our residents and visitors
- To continue supporting and improving the quality of lives of our vulnerable/deprived individuals

The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 details the following objectives:

- Establish clear and up to date pathway plans within the area
- Develop support for rough sleepers
- Continue and improve strong partnership relationships
- Provide a solutions approach, not just housing i.e. support people into work, education, training or volunteering. Signposting to relevant services such as debt and health

The Community Services Business Unit plan for 2021/2022 details the following objectives:

- Work in partnership with Primary Care Networks, North West Surrey Alliance and partner borough councils to deliver a new Social Prescribing software platform in North West Surrey, resulting in multiple service benefits

**7. Financial and Resource implications (where practicable)**

There are no financial implications for the Council given that the roles will be funded by the grant funding received, as detailed in the report. The table below sets the income and expenditure out as follows:

<b>Expenditure</b>				
<b>Post</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Salary Plus 28% On Costs (based on midpoint of band)</b>	<b>Other Costs (e.g. essential car user, Standby etc.)</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
Housing Navigator	9-10	£43,508		£43,508
Social Prescribing Officer	7	£32,640	£0	£32,640
Mileage Allowance				£1,000
ICT Costs				£1,000
			<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£78,148</b>
<b>Income</b>				
<b>Total Grant Funding Awarded</b>				<b>£80,000</b>
			<b>NET COST:</b>	<b>£0</b>

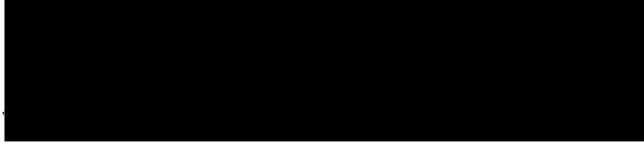
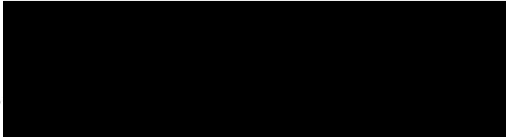

In regard to resource implications, whilst obviously two new employees will need to be recruited, all other supporting resources required will be provided by officers in Housing and Community Services, supported by Finance, Human Resources and ICT.

**8. Legal implications**

None. The use of the funding for the purposes outlined is in accordance with the criteria for its use.

**9. Equality implications**

None

<p>10. <b>Other implications (where applicable)</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p>11. <b>Background papers</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p>12. <b><u>Chief Officer(s) Decision</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Signature of authorised officer </p> <p>I have been consulted and am in agreement with the above</p> <p>Signature(s) and position(s) of other relevant Chief Officer, Corporate Heads or authorised representatives</p> <p>.....</p> <p><b>NB:</b> this <u>must</u> include the Corporate Director of Resources or his authorised representative where the decision involves expenditure, loss of income, or future implications for budget or financial forecast.</p>
<p>13. <b><u>Chief Executive's Decision</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Signature of Chief Executive </p> <p>I have been consulted and am in agreement with the above</p>
<p>14. <b><u>Chairman's Comments</u></b></p> <p>I concur in the Chief Officer's decision</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Signed _____ </p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date _____ </p> <p>I have the following further comments:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">.</p>

Further information may be obtained from Darren Williams on Ext. 5867

The completed copy is to be returned by the Councillor to the Corporate Head of Law and Governance (John Gurmin) who will send a copy to the Chief Officer and report to the relevant Committee as necessary.

**RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL****CONSULTATION WITH APPROPRIATE CHAIRMAN AND VICE- CHAIRMAN FOR URGENT ACTION TO BE TAKEN UNDER STANDING ORDER 42**

**TO:** Councillors N Prescott, T Gracey, J Gracey and J Hulley  
Chairman and Vice- Chairman of the Corporate Management and Housing Committees

**FROM:** Dr Marcel Steward

**OFFICER REFERENCE:** Afghan LES

**DATE:** 18 August 2021

**1. Synopsis of report:**

Members are aware of the current humanitarian catastrophe which is rapidly unfolding in Afghanistan.

The Government has invited all Local Authorities to support and welcome Afghan Locally Employed Staff (LES) who have worked for the UK and risked their lives alongside British Forces in the Afghanistan over the last twenty years and are now relocating to the UK with their families.

*T.G.*  
LES and members of their families are at high-risk injury or death.

In deciding whether to take part, the Council must consider the resources being made available by Government and the potential impact on the Council and residents

**2. Reasons why this matter cannot wait for a Committee Decision.  
(Please state if agreement of Chairman and Vice-Chairman required within 24 hours, and why)**

The humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan is escalating rapidly. Circa 3, 000 Afghan Nationals including families have already been brought to the UK where they are currently being accommodated in hotels pending settlement in the regions. More are expected to follow imminently.

The Home Office has made an urgent appeal to all Local Authorities to provide the help and assistance required as a matter of urgency. Meetings of the two Committees will not take place until September and the Government is seeking assistance immediately.

**3. Recommendation(s)**

i) Approval is given for Runnymede Borough Council to take part in the scheme by offering settlement to three families of up to five / six people per family.

ii) Approval of the required support including and additional to housing needs. It is expected that this will be coordinated via the Family Support Scheme in combination with Housing and Community Services

iii) A full report on the Scheme and Runnymede's response will be brought to Corporate Management and Housing Committees *in September.*

*T.G.*

#### 4. Context of report

- **Runnymede has precedent for offering humanitarian assistance. On 07 January 2016, Corporate Management Committee approved the settlement of ten Syrian households**
- **The Government Scheme to support Afghan LES relocating to the UK is similar to the Syrian Scheme**
- **LES and their families, who choose to relocate to the UK, are not expected to return to Afghanistan. After completing five years limited leave, they can apply for permanent residence in the UK ensuring that they can settle here permanently and continue to build their lives and future here**
- **People coming to the UK under this scheme may arrive either as a whole family unit or with the lead person arriving first and their them later**



5. **Summary of the Key Points of the Government Support Package:**

- **Government Funding is available for 12 months**
- **Funding includes an additional payment for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) for adults**
- **Where families do not travel and another family cannot be matched to the property, void costs can be claimed following the same criteria as with the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS)**
- **Exceptional Costs can be claimed, following the criteria of the UKRS**
- **No education tariff or separate payment for health provisions to clinical commissioning groups (i.e., GPs, Dentists, some hospital services, etc.) are included. Treasury's expectation is that Other Government Departments (OGDs) pick up additional costs from existing budgets**
- **Simplified payment structure comprising one tariff rate per person regardless of family size and which includes provision for void cost and set up costs**
- **Payments will be claimed in 3 instalments using the same process as the UKRS**
- **The payment process will be the same for those entering temporary (bridging) accommodation (with local authority support) with the exception that rent payments will not be payable until the individuals have entered their longer-term accommodation**
- **A funding instruction and an updated statement of requirements is expected shortly**

The table below sets out a breakdown of the funding package provided:

<b>Accommodation</b>				
Rent (ends after 4 months or when in receipt of benefit)	£15 per person per day			
<b>Integration</b>				
To provide integration support (includes element for void and set up costs for accommodation)	Per person rate £10,500			
<b>Cash support</b>				
Weekly cash support rates (up to 4 months or when in receipt of benefit)	Single (under 25)	Single (25 or over)	Couples	Child (under 18)
	£59.20	£74.70	£117.40	£37.75
<b>ESOL provision</b>				
£850 per adult (who requires it)				

- The funding package was reached on the expectation that families in this cohort will integrate more quickly than families who arrive under the UKRS and that the most intensive support is provided in the first few months and not for the full 12 months. The funding package is to provide a high level of intensive interventions and support in the 12 months following arrival into a Local Authority area and the commencement of the provision of housing and support to enable self-sufficiency for those relocated under these schemes. Given this intensive provision no funding is being made available for later years
- Unless specifically stated otherwise, the funding will be in respect of the costs of the Recipient (participating Local Authority) in fulfilment of its statutory duties and anything otherwise agreed with the Authority (Sec. of State for the Home Office acting through the Resettlement Operations on behalf of the Crown)
- The Recipient shall be free to determine how best to utilise the funding but for monitoring and evaluation purposes must be able to demonstrate that the funding has been committed in supporting Beneficiaries and furthering the aims of the Schemes
- The instruction under the scheme sets out the terms under which the Authority will make funding available to the Recipient, in respect of expenditure incurred supporting Beneficiaries brought to the UK under the Schemes during period 22 June 2021 to 31 March 2022
- In keeping with established HM Treasury funding policies, the Authority will issue a fresh indication for each financial year for which funding is approved. This will occur whether or not any changes are made
- The Recipient will comply with the transparency, confidentiality, data protection and data sharing requirements under the scheme and UK Data Protection Legislation



- No aspect of activity funded by the Authority may be party-political in intention, use or presentation and may not be used to support or promote religious activity not including activity to promote inter faith relationships and / or working
- Overpayments must be repaid to the Authority
- Payments may also be made to cover additional essential costs incurred by the Recipient subject to prior approval by the Authority e.g., Property Adaptation, Property Void Costs, Support for Children with identified educational needs and Social Care provision
- Unauthorised spends that exceed the maximum stated funding levels will not be reimbursed by the Authority
- In all instances, funding received is to be pooled and managed across all the Beneficiaries supported by the relevant Recipient
- All payments made also cover VAT or other duties paid by the Recipient to the extent that these are not otherwise recoverable
- The Recipient should manage and administer the quality and level of delivery relating to the support it provides to Beneficiaries. At a minimum the Recipient should provide reports detailing progress against the Statement of Outcomes. Detailed costings are not required but the Recipient must be able to provide the costs for individual cases and will, if required, be expected to justify, explain, and evidence costs
- On request, the Recipient shall disclose details of all Staff delivering the Schemes including CV's and / or Job Descriptions
- In regard to Staff, Recipients must consider eligibility for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS 2) checks
- The Authority accepts no liability to the Recipient or to any third party for any costs, claims, damage, or losses, however incurred, except where they are caused by the Authority's negligence or misconduct.

A full copy of the Home Office document entitled 'Funding Instruction for local authorities in the support of the United Kingdom's Afghan Locally Engaged Staff Ex Gratia and Afghan Relocation and Assistance Schemes; Financial Year 2021 – 2022' is available on request.

#### 6. Policy framework implications

- **Runnymede has precedent for offering humanitarian assistance. On 07 January 2016, Corporate Management Committee approved the settlement of ten Syrian households**
- **It is anticipated that the housing provision will be made via the private rental sector. Therefore, there is no perceived impact on the Council's Housing Allocations Policy**
- **There is no perceived relevance to any other existing policy, conformity, or departure**

#### 7. Financial and Resource implications (where practicable)

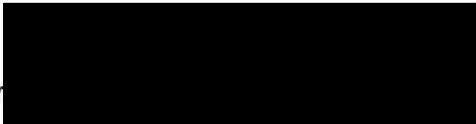

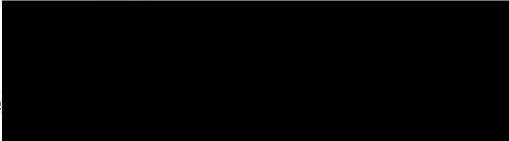
- The costs of housing managing and settling in the families will be met from the initial grant allocation set out in section 5 above. The Council's Homeless Team have the capacity to manage this in-house and as such we will be able to defray some of the staff costs against the scheme. This may include contracting further support if this is found to be necessary as the situation unfolds
- Comments of Assistant Chief Executive

#### 8. Legal implications

The UK Government has made a public commitment to provide assistance to Afghan nationals who worked for the UK in Afghanistan. Assistance is being provided by allowing such nationals leave to enter the UK initially with a view to them obtaining indefinite leave to remain.

Local authorities in the UK are being asked to provide temporary assistance to such Afghan nationals to enable them settle. Funding for the delivery of assistance services is being provided by the Government for a limited period of time. It is expected that due to their language skills such Afghan nationals will settle into the UK relatively easily. *The Council will support integration through*

*T.G. dedicated officer support.*  
Any services and assistance that local authorities provide will be under their existing statutory powers.

9.	<b>Equality implications</b>
	None
10.	<b>Other implications (Environmental/biodiversity/ sustainability must be addressed)</b>
	None
11.	<b>Background papers</b>
	A full copy of the Home Office document entitled 'Funding Instruction for local authorities in the support of the United Kingdom's Afghan Locally Engaged Staff Ex Gratia and Afghan Relocation and Assistance Schemes; Financial Year 2021 – 2022' is available on request.
12.	<b><u>Chief Officer(s) Decision</u></b>
	Signature of authorised officer 
	I have been consulted and am in agreement with the above
	Signature(s) and position(s) of other relevant Chief Officer, Corporate Heads or authorised representatives
	
	<b>NB:</b> this <u>must</u> include the Assistant Chief Executive or his authorised representative where the decision involves expenditure, loss of income, or future implications for budget or financial forecast.
13.	<b><u>Chief Executive's Decision</u></b>
	Signature of Chief Executive 
	I have been consulted and am in agreement with the above

14. **Chairman and Vice-Chairman Comments Corporate Management Committee**

I concur in the Chief Officer's decision

Signed

Date

Signed

Date



I have the following further comments:

**Chairman and Vice-Chairman Comments Housing Committee**

I concur in the Chief Officer's decision

Signed

Date

Signed

Date



Four horizontal lines for writing further comments, corresponding to the four signature/date pairs.

I have the following further comments:

Further information may be obtained from Dr Marcel Steward on Ext. 5502

The completed copy is to be returned by the Councillors to the Corporate Head of Law and Governance (John Gurmin) who will send a copy to the Chief Officer and report to the relevant Committee for information.

## 17. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, 2020/21 Q1 (HOUSING, ANGELA HORSEY)

### Synopsis of report:

This report provides the results of the Key Performance Indicators for quarter one and the recent monthly health and safety compliance statistics

### Recommendation(s):

That Members note the results of performance monitoring

#### 1. Context

- 1.1 This report informs Members of the Key Performance Indicator results for the first quarter of 2021/22, the results of the monthly health and safety compliance monitoring up to July 2021 and additional information on complaints and Universal Credit.

#### 2. Report

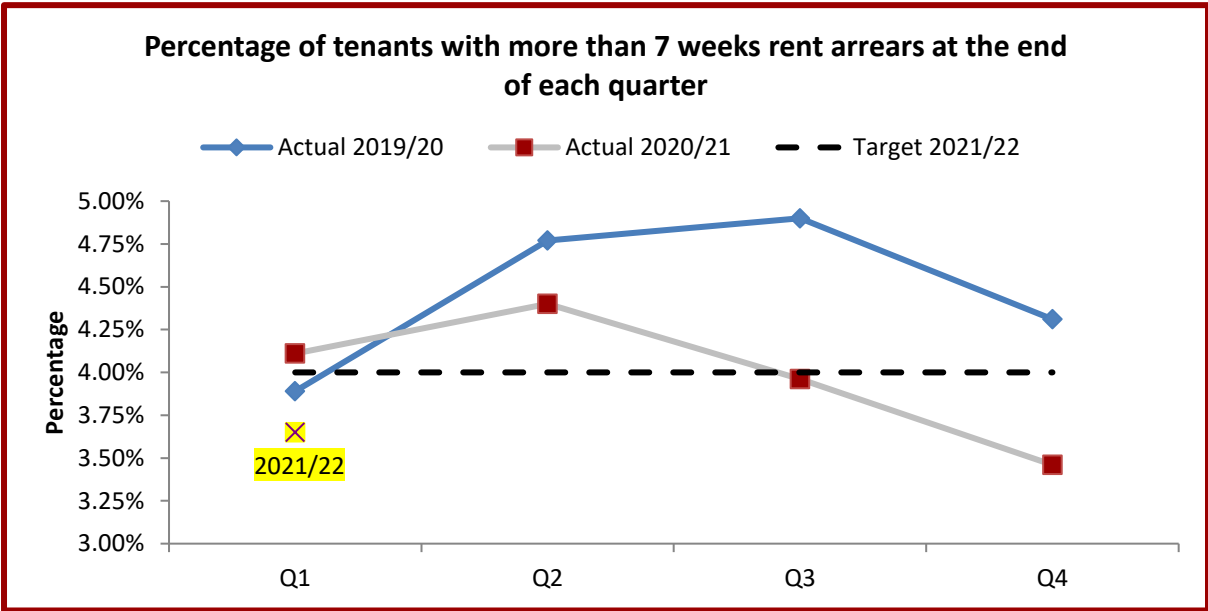
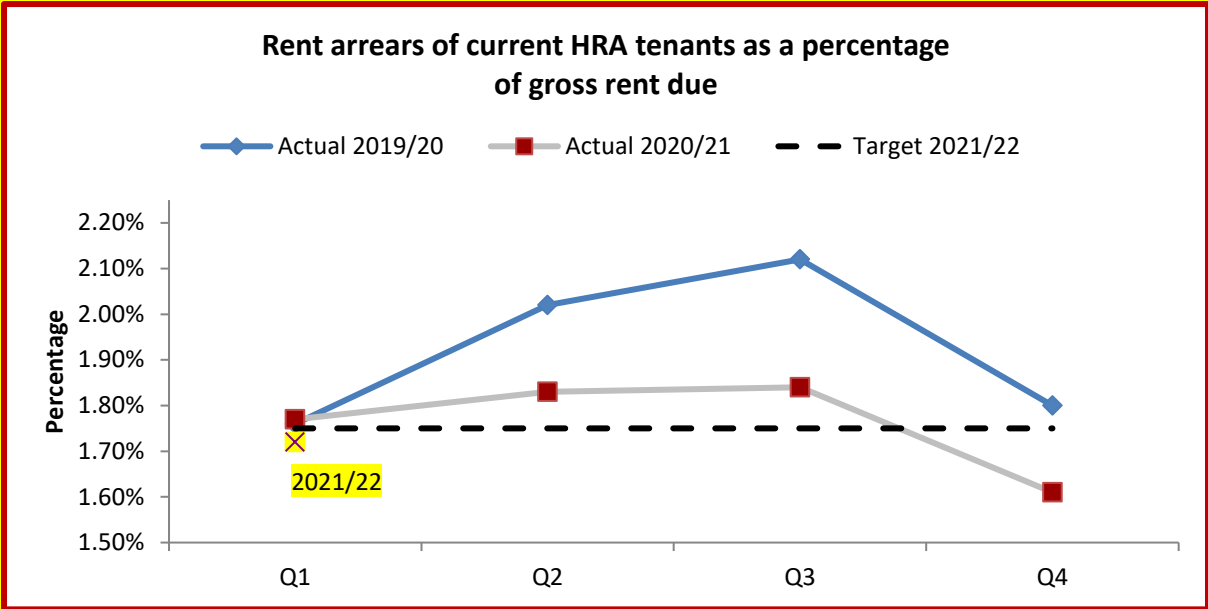
- 2.1 This report presents the full suite of KPIs for this year as approved by the Corporate Management Committee and identified in the annual Business Centre Plan. Since the investigation by the Regulator of Social Housing, Members have also regularly received the results of the monthly monitoring of health and safety compliance measures and this report presents the statistics up to July 2021, as reported to the Regulator. Additionally, analysis of complaints and Universal Credit is provided for information.

Performance Indicator	2020/21 Result	Q1 2021/22 Target	Q1 2021/22 Result
<b>H1:</b> Percentage of dwellings re-let to deadline per quarter	16%	50%	2.8%
<b>H2:</b> Average number of calendar days to re-let a void property (excludes major works voids)	<i>New indicator</i>	25	131
<b>H3:</b> Satisfaction with the overall reactive repairs service received (% of total number of responses returned)	93% (756 surveys)	95%	94.9% (159 surveys)
<b>H4:</b> Number of households in B&B for more than 2 weeks per quarter	7 (annual target of 16)	4	3
<b>H5:</b> Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due (cumulative result)	1.61%	1.75%	1.72%

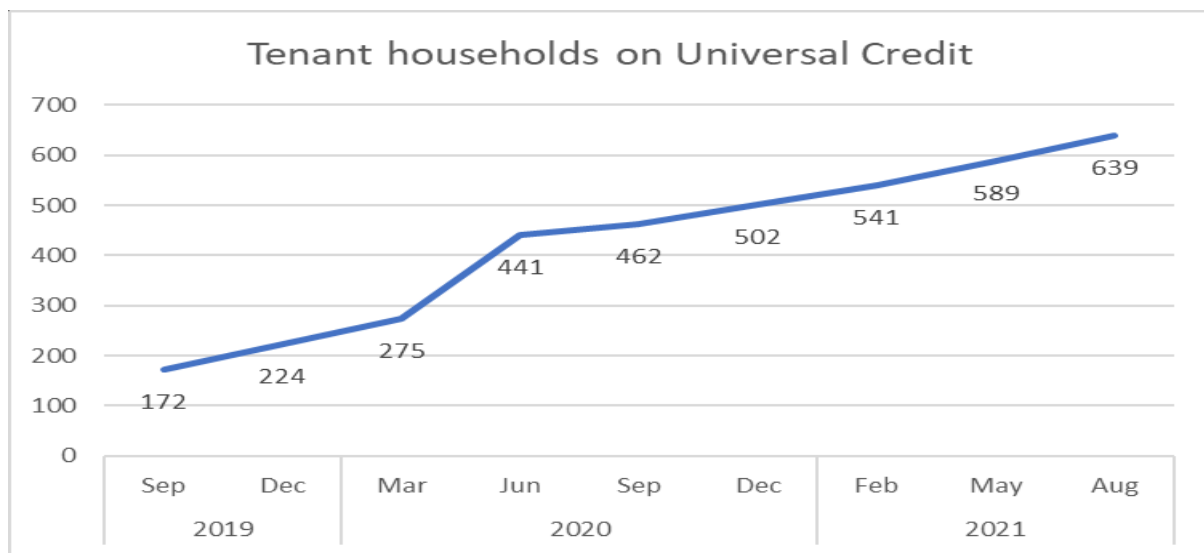
<b>H6:</b> Percentage of tenants with more than 7 weeks rent arrears at the end of each quarter	3.46%	4.00%	3.65%
<b>H7:</b> Percentage of stock with a valid annual landlord gas safety certification	99.81%	100%	99.81%
<b>H8:</b> Percentage of stock with a valid safety certification Electrical Installation Condition Report	85.8%	80%	92.4%
<b>H9:</b> Number of outstanding high-risk Fire Risk Assessment actions	New Indicator	70	87

- 2.2 Of 35 properties re-let in the quarter, only one was within the target identified. Improving the time taken to re-let void properties is a priority for the service and significant resources are being committed to this. With the termination of the contract of one of the two voids contractors a number of properties in which they had not carried out any work are now being addressed by the sole contractor. There has already been a significant improvement in performance and a number of long-term empty properties were let in quarter 1. However, this improvement is unlikely to be evidenced in the results until quarter 3 as the relet times within quarter 2 will reflect the backlog.
- 2.3 The new measure of average number of calendar days to re-let a void property (H2) has been introduced to reflect the importance being placed on improving this area of work. A number of long term empties and some properties requiring sensitive allocations were let during the quarter, impacting on the average number of days to re-let. As with H1, the anticipated improvement in results is unlikely to be evidenced until quarter 3 but as of 24<sup>th</sup> August the figure for quarter 2 is expected to be an improvement. A Void improvement plan is in place with weekly monitoring meetings.
- 2.4 The number of households accommodated in bed and breakfast continues to be low. The results for rent collection are also very pleasing.





## Tenants claiming Universal Credit



## Analysis of arrears by Benefit type

<b>August 2021</b>	Percentage of tenants	Percentage of tenants in arrears	Percentage of tenants more than 7 weeks in arrears
Tenants on UC	22.8%	39.3%	10.2% (66 tenants)
Tenants on HB	37.1%	10.2%	0.7% (7 tenants)
Tenants paying full rent	40.1%	17.5%	2.2% (25 tenants)

## Analysis of Complaints resolved in April – March 2020/21

	Not upheld	Upheld
About a member of staff	1	
Empty property		1
Housing Management	1	
Housing Register	1	
Neighbourhood Dispute (not ASB)	1	
Repairs (contractor service)		1
Tree Surgery	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>

- 2.5 The target for electrical certification (H8) was met for quarter 1. This target rises to 90% for quarter 2 and to 100% for quarters 3 and 4, which is considered achievable.
- 2.6 Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) are undertaken annually, and actions reported thereafter. These required actions are categorised based upon their level of urgency and risk i.e. high, medium or low, all with a timescale for completion. The target of 70 overdue high-risk FRA actions (H9) was not met for quarter 1 with 87 overdue against a target of 70. The target will reduce from 70 to 30 for quarters 2 to 4 as the backlog of actions is cleared. A contractor has been identified to undertake high risk fire safety works and will be appointed shortly. Once works start on site, it is anticipated that this will clear the outstanding actions to zero by the end of quarter 3.

<b>Fire Risk Assessment: Outstanding Actions over Target</b>			
	High Risk Factors	Medium Risk Factors	Low Risk Factors
<b>Q1 2021/22</b>	87	556	303

- 2.7 Since the engagement with the Regulator of Social Housing, Members have also received the results of the monthly monitoring of health and safety compliance measures. Officers have monthly calls with the Regulator to provide updates on the Council's progress with compliance and share the most recent data, as shown below.



### Health and Safety Compliance

	KPI Target	Result Apr '20	Result July '20	Result Oct '20	Result Jan '21	Result Feb '21	Result Mar '21	Result Apr '21	Result May'21	Result Jun'21	Result Jul'21
<b>Gas Safety</b>											
No. of CP12 certificates out of target	0	1	0	2	7	6	5	3	5	5	3
% of valid CP12 certificates	100%	99.96% (2644)	100% (2645)	99.92% (2647)	99.74% (2641)	99.77% (2642)	99.81% (2643)	99.89% (2646)	99.81% (2643)	99.81% (2643)	99.89% (2646)
<b>Electrical</b>											
% of stock with valid safety EICR certification	100%	41% (1184)	47% (1340)	64% (1827)	75% (2150)	81% (2312)	86% (2434)	90% (2583)	92% (2631)	92% (2639)	93% (2649)
% of emergency lighting tests completed against target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	87%	78%	77%	81%	73%	81%
<b>Water Management</b>											
% of water management inspection tests undertaken	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Passenger Lifts</b>											
% of inspections undertaken against programme	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Asbestos</b>											
% of stock with a valid asbestos survey	100%	45% (1280)	46% (1312)	50% (1443)	57% (1625)	58% (1670)	60% (1703)	64% (1836)	67% (1909)	68% (1946)	68% (1953)
<b>Accidents Reporting</b>											
Number of RBC RIDDOR reportable incidents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of days lost to accidents and incidents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Fire Risk Assessment</b>											

% of inspections completed in target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Lightning conductors</b>											
% of works required completed in target	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Sprinkler systems</b>											
% of annual servicing completed within target	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

2.8 The data provided is available from the systems currently in use. In some areas, such as asbestos, there have been issues with getting timely and reliable data from the contractor. The Compliance team have worked with our asbestos contractor to ensure the data held is up to date and accurate. This exercise has now been completed and the cleansed data has been sent to Propeller to update this system.

2.9 A reconciliation of all data across all compliance areas is planned to ensure that the data held is completely up to date and accurate. The information currently held in Propeller is believed to be largely accurate, however minor discrepancies may have occurred when properties have been sold or acquired which could be relevant to areas such as asbestos and electrical certification. The reconciliation exercise will ensure that clean data is uploaded into the new modules of Northgate. Once all the proposed Northgate modules have been implemented the need for manual updates between systems will no longer be required, giving confidence that we are inspecting and servicing all properties as legislation requires, keeping our residents safe and have robust data on which to report.

### 3. Implications

3.1 These results are presented for information and no additional implications have been identified.

### 4. Conclusions

4.1 This report presents a range of performance data for information, including the KPIs for quarter 1.

**(FOR INFORMATION)**

**Background papers – None**

**18. UPDATE ON COMMUNICATION WITH THE REGULATOR OF SOCIAL HOUSING (HOUSING, SIMON ALLEN)**

**Synopsis of report:**  
**To advise Members of the recent contact with the Regulator of Social Housing**

**Recommendation(s):**  
**None. This report is for Information.**

**1. Context**

1.1 Following the notice served by the Regulator of Social Housing in October 2019 Members requested an update at each committee on progress with remedying the service failures outlined in the notice.

**2. Report**

2.1 The Council continues to have monthly meetings with the Regulator to appraise them of progress with achieving compliance across the stock, issues encountered and to detail improvements to ensure full compliance is achieved.

2.2 During our last meeting, the regulator expressed that they were happy with the electrical safety compliance, but for the notice to be reviewed further, The Council will need to have addressed all high-risk overdue action for Fire Risk Assessments.

2.3 The Notice was served on the Council on 31 October 2019 and this will remain in place until the regulator is satisfied that the Council has proven that we are managing all risks detailed in the notice and can evidence this.

2.4 The electrical certification was 93.24% as of the <sup>t</sup> August 2021 with 193 tests still to be completed. This is a reduction of 244 tests since last report to Committee. To be noted that most of these outstanding tests have been issued to the contractors.

2.5 High risk fire safety action as report on the 11 May 2021 are at 87 in total. This is a reduction from 282 at 1 January 2021. To be noted that all outstanding high-risk actions have been tendered and contracts signed to complete these works within the next 12 to 16 weeks

2.6 The Regulator is being kept informed of the planned programme of fire prevention works for Surrey Towers.

2.7 The Regulator has been informed of the Councils decent homes percentage in advance of our LARS submission on the 30 July 2021. Runnymede BC have reported a 61% compliance with decent homes and have shared with the regulator a five-year plan to bring all stock to a 100% decency level within this timeframe.

3. **Legal implications**

3.1 The Regulator of Social Housing served a Regulatory Notice on the authority as a Registered Provider, under the powers in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. The Notice, published on 30 October 2019, cited the statutory fire and electrical safety standards that gave rise to the authority's breach of the Home Standard.

3.2 It remains open to the Regulator to take further formal action if they are not satisfied with the progress towards compliance.

4. **Conclusion**

4.1 The Council is continuing to engage with the Regulator monthly and are committed to ensuring that we have an open and transparent professional working relationship.

**(For information)**

**19. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

If the Committee is minded to consider any of the foregoing reports in private, it is the

**OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -**

**the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the relevant report under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the report in question would be likely to involve disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in the relevant paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.**

**(To resolve)**

**PART II**

**Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection**

a) Exempt Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)