

Name of meeting: Cabinet

Date: 20th October 2020

Title of report: Ad-hoc Scrutiny Report – Consultation on the future arrangements for the management of the Council’s residential housing stock

Purpose of report:

To present the findings of the Ad-hoc Scrutiny panel on the consultation process and the on-going work relating to the future arrangements for management of Kirklees social housing stock.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Not Applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council’s Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u>	Key Decision – No Private Report/Private Appendix – No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	No If no give the reason why not – Report of Scrutiny Ad-hoc Panel
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Richard Parry- 7 October 2020
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	Eamonn Croston – 8 October 2020
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Julie Muscroft – 7 October 2020
Cabinet member <u>portfolio</u>	Cabinet Member for Housing and Democracy

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: Not applicable

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? There are no GDPR implications arising from the report

1. Summary and background

- 1.1 The Ad-hoc Scrutiny panel was initially established by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) in November 2019 to carry out a focussed piece of work to identify the best option(s) for the Council to achieve the right balance of risk and outcomes for local residents in relation to the housing stock for which it is the landlord.
- 1.2 The outcome of that scrutiny exercise was reported to Cabinet on 21st May 2020 and a link to the report is included in the Background papers section of this report. It made a number of recommendations which were noted by Cabinet as part of its consideration of the options for the future management of its housing stock on 2nd June 2020.
- 1.3 A link to that report is included in Background Papers. Cabinet resolved at its meeting in June as follows:
 - That the outcome of the options assessment for the management and maintenance of housing stock be noted.
 - That approval be given in principle to changing the model to an inhouse-delivery of council housing management and maintenance services by transferring activity undertaken by Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing back to the Council and adopting an approach of combining the benefits of the ALMO model with those of in-house delivery.
 - That approval be given to the proposal to engage with tenants on the preferred model, using a range of approaches, including the place standard tool and that authority be delegated to the Strategic Director – Adults and Health to finalise and implement the approach.
 - That, pursuant to (3) above, engagement with tenants and Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing staff be undertaken over the summer period.
 - That, following the engagement exercise, a report be submitted to Cabinet in September/October 2020 in order to inform the final decision on the future housing management and maintenance of council housing in Kirklees, including recommendations on matters that would require to be progressed to run Council housing services in-house on or before 31 March 2021, should that decision be confirmed.
- 1.4 Following the decision by Cabinet on 2nd June 2020 OSMC met on 9th June 2020 and agreed that the Ad-hoc Panel should continue its work with revised terms of reference during the period of the engagement exercise with tenants.
- 1.5 The Ad-hoc Panel have continued their work over the summer period and this report sets out their findings.

2. Information required to take a decision

- 2.1 The terms of reference for the ad-hoc scrutiny panel were set out in the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee dated the 9th of June 2020, proposing the re-establishment of the Ad-hoc Scrutiny Panel. These were:

The Ad-hoc Panel will:-

- Scrutinise, advise and contribute to tenant engagement proposals, including the Communication Plan and materials during the phases of engagement;
- Consider the consultation results and scrutinise, advise and contribute to proposals for the way forward with tenant engagement; and
- Monitor progress on the responses to the Panel's recommendations outlined in the Action Plan, agreed by Cabinet on 21 May 2020.

- 2.2 Ad-hoc Scrutiny met on 5 occasions during this period on 10th June, 8th & 29th July, 26th August and 21st September at which they received various updates and information on the engagement process and updates on progress made with work to carry out the recommendations which were made to Cabinet in the Action Plan.
- 2.3 The panel was able to scrutinise and comment on the consultation materials and communication plan before the consultation period and received an update on progress through the consultation process. The panel were happy overall with the consultation process that was undertaken under difficult circumstances. The panel would have liked to see more input from young people.
- 2.4 The Action plan in the Ad-hoc Scrutiny report of 21st May is included at Appendix A of this report and includes the Panels response to progress of the various recommendations.
- 2.5 Cabinet is asked to note the following main recommendations from the Panel in relation to the Action Plan.

The panel monitored the consultation process which was undertaken during unusual times. The panel would like to see learning taken from the consultation on how tenant engagement can be improved moving forward.

In the comments on the recommendations (Action Plan) Scrutiny has asked for further updates in several areas including on the Assurance Board after twelve months of operation and how, if cabinet proceed, changes in governance operate in practice and how there is engagement and listening with the wider tenant and leaseholder body on an ongoing basis.

At OSMC discussion took place on how future updates, especially on governance, are to take place and these are to go to the Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel.

OSMC would like to see greater involvement of ward councillors in the governance structure.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

Not applicable

3.2 Working with Partners

Not applicable

3.3 Place Based Working

This has been intrinsic to the approach taken.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

Not applicable

3.5 Improving outcomes for children

Not applicable

3.6 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

Not applicable

4. Consultees and their opinions

Not applicable

5. Next steps and timelines

- 5.1 Cabinet will consider and decide upon the future arrangements for Kirklees' social housing stock on 20th October 2020.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

That Cabinet note:-

The responses from the Ad-hoc Scrutiny Panel in the action plan at Appendix A.

In particular that the Panel recommend further work to be undertaken including:

- youth engagement
- strengthening the tenant voice
- learning from the consultation to be put in place
- how any changes in governance structure for housing going forward enables engagement and listening to the wider tenant and leaseholder body.
- ensuring that the housing panels contribute to the cabinet decisions

Explore the request from OSMC on how ward councillors can have greater involvement moving forward.

7. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

Cabinet welcomes the work of the Ad Hoc scrutiny panel and recognises the work that the panel undertook in responding to the consultation.

8. Contact officer

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9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/documents/g5962/Public%20reports%20pack%2021st-May-2020%2015.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/documents/s36272/CAB-02-06-20%20Review%20of%20Housing%20Management%20and%20Maintenance%20Final.doc.pdf>

10. Service Director responsible

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