

## Housing and Community Safety Select Committee

### Review Title: Registered Social Landlords

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<b>1. Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?</b>  Liveability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make Stockton a cleaner, greener place to live, work and visit</li> <li>• Deliver quality and choice in the housing market and address housing market failure</li> <li>• Prevent homelessness</li> </ul> Community Safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce anti-social behaviour and offensive incidents</li> </ul>	
<b>2. What are the main issues?</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RSLs work in partnership with the Council to deliver affordable housing (for sale and rent) within the Borough. At the present time there are 12 RSLs in the Borough who rent social housing properties, this equates to approx. 3,150 properties (at 31.3.07). Their stock is dispersed across the various townships (including rural locations). In addition, a number of other RSLs are entering into partnerships with private sector developers to deliver affordable housing for sale (secured through Section 106 Planning Agreements).</li> <li>• As the LA is currently unable to build new housing, SBC rely on effective partnerships with RSL's to deliver much needed new housing for rent. New housing is funded through National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) monies, which are provided by the Housing Corporation. NAHP is allocated on a competitive bidding process and bids will only be funded if they are supported by the LA in terms of delivering the LA and regional strategic housing priorities. In the last round of bidding to the Housing Corporation (Nov. 07) the value of funding sort (for investment into the Borough) from our RSL partners was £93.4million.</li> <li>• RSL's are also key partners in the wider 'place shaping agenda' and, in actively assisting the Council, deliver housing regeneration in the Hardwick, Mandale and Parkfield areas.</li> <li>• Stockton is currently working in partnership with the other TV LA's to sign the first NE sub-regional protocol with the Housing Corporation.</li> </ul>	

**3. The Thematic Select Committee's overall aim/ objectives in doing this work is:**

To assess the relationship between the Council and those RSLs who operate within Stockton Borough and identify improvements where possible.

**4. The possible outputs/outcomes are:**

Strategic development:

- Evaluation of new build schemes for rent and determine whether they address our stated objectives and provide value for money.
- Assessment of how RSLs engage with the Borough's strategic planning arrangements and the Local Strategic Partnership.
- Assessment of the future business plans for RSLs - for example have they recently or are they considering forming group structures (if so what do they see as the potential benefits of this development)/where do they see their future focus i.e. special needs housing or general needs housing or both/Medium to long term growth/expansion plans/Post decent homes what are their plans for future improvement of existing stock
- Identification of best practice and possible criteria for developing a 'preferred list of partner RSLs' to work in partnership on S106 sites to deliver affordable housing.

Housing management:

- Evaluation of partnership arrangements to ensure they are effective in terms of addressing housing need ie. nomination arrangements and complementary policies
- Assessment of whether RSL partners are taking an active role in the communities in which they are present ie. are they good landlords and what additional community wide initiatives do they undertake/support. Comparison of costs for housing management/tenant involvement with Tristar.
- Assessment of whether RSL partners are assisting the LA in terms of delivering and supporting the wider 'homeless prevention agenda'.
- Ensure actions contained within the Sub-Regional Protocol are delivered.

**5. What specific value can scrutiny add to this topic?**

Detailed consideration of the issues, bringing the range of stakeholders together.

**6. Who will the panel be trying to influence as part of their work?**

Cabinet, RSLs.

**7. Duration of enquiry?**

6 months

**8. What category does the review fall into?**

Policy Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policy Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
External Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Performance Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Holding Executive to Account	<input type="checkbox"/>		

<b>9. Extra Resources needed? Would the investigation benefit from the co-option of an “expert” witness?</b>	
<b>10. What information do we need?</b>	
<b>Secondary Information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc.)</b>	<b>Primary/new evidence/information</b>
RSL property numbers within Borough.	Tees Valley Sub-regional Housing Corporation Protocol
Recent levels of investment made by the Housing Corporation into the Borough.	Best practice in relation to developing ‘preferred list of partner RSLs’ to work with and deliver affordable housing on s.106 sites.
RSL nominations and lettings within Borough	Annual Reports of the RSLs.
‘Tackling homelessness: The Housing Corporation strategy.’	
‘Investing for lifetimes: Strategy for housing in an ageing society.’	
<b>Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet Member/portfolio holder, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc.)</b>	<b>What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?</b>
Jane Edmonds, Housing Strategy Manager	Situation of RSLs within Borough, general advice to Committee
Caroline Wood, Housing Options Manager	Role played by, and relationship with, RSLs in addressing housing need and preventing homelessness.
Marilyn Davies, Community Safety Manager	Role played by, and relationship with, RSLs in relation to anti social behaviour.
Housing Corporation (Funding arm)	Explanation of their role within the Borough, achieving value for money of schemes, selection of partners, Sub Regional Protocol
Meet with representatives of key RSLs active within Stockton Borough: RSLs that act as landlords <u>and</u> developers: Endeavour Tees Valley Housing Nomad E5 Erimus Mainly landlord but active partner: Accent	Their role in borough, to inform the Committee in relation to the issues identified in section 4.
Appropriate private developer	Explain method involved in selecting RSLs to

deliver any affordable housing element of new schemes.

**11. What processes can we use to feed into the review? (site visits/observations, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, written questionnaire, etc.)**

Site visits to schemes funded by Housing Corporation (eg Aspen Gardens, Parkside Court) and to those funded by RSLs themselves (eg. Eden House).

Survey of remaining RSLs active within the Borough.

**12. In what ways can we involve the public and at what stages? (consider whole range of consultative mechanisms, local committees and local ward mechanisms)**

Potential engagement with appropriate local resident/tenant groups (meeting/questionnaire?).  
Potential use of Viewpoint if applicable.

**13. Diversity – How will we address the six strands of diversity (age, disability, faith and belief, gender, race, and sexual orientation) in order to uphold the Council’s Single Equality Scheme?**

To be aware of equality issues during the review.

## Project Plan

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KEY TASK	DETAILS/ACTIVITIES	DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>Scoping of Review</b>	Information gathering to feed into the scope.	By date of tri-partite meeting	Scrutiny Officer
<b>Tri-Partite Meeting</b>	Meeting to discuss aims and objectives for review.	<b>15 April</b>	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Corporate Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
<b>Agree Project Plan</b>	Scope and project plan agreed by Committee.	<b>17 April</b>	Select Committee
<b>Publicity of Review</b>	Press release	Following agreement of scope and project plan	Scrutiny Officer

<b>Obtaining Evidence</b>	Presentation by Jane Edmends (to inform scope) on the general situation of RSL activity within the Borough.	<b>17 April</b>	Select Committee
	Operational Role of the RSLs	<b>12 June</b>	Select Committee
	Strategic Role (as regeneration partners)/Site Visit	<b>10 July (TBC)</b>	Select Committee
	Strategic Role (engagement with LSP/Future business plans)	<b>21 August (TBC)</b>	Select Committee
<b>Members decide recommendations and findings</b>	Members of the HCSSC to review findings and draft recommendations.	<b>Special meeting in September</b>	Select Committee
<b>Circulate Draft Report to Stakeholders</b>	Circulation of report.		Scrutiny Officer
<b>Tri-Partite Meeting</b>	Meeting to discuss findings of review and draft recommendations.		Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Corporate Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
<b>Final Agreement of Report</b>	Approval of final report by Committee.	<b>2 October</b>	Select Committee
<b>Consideration of Report by Executive Scrutiny Committee</b>	Consideration of report.	<b>28 October</b>	Executive Scrutiny Committee
<b>Report to Cabinet</b>	Presentation of final report with recommendations for approval.	<b>6 November</b>	Cabinet/ Approving Body

<b>Report to RSL Boards</b>	Presentation of final report with recommendations for approval.	<b>As appropriate</b>	