

APPENDIX 1

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Affordable Housing

SCRUTINY MONITORING – PROGRESS UPDATE	
Review:	Affordable Housing
Link Officer/s:	Jane Edmends
Action Plan Agreed:	June 2025

Updates on the progress of actions in relation to agreed recommendations from previous scrutiny reviews are required approximately 12 months after the relevant Select Committee has agreed the Action Plan. Progress updates must be detailed, evidencing what has taken place regarding each recommendation – a grade assessing progress should then be given (see end of document for grading explanation). Any evidence on the impact of the actions undertaken should also be recorded for each recommendation.

Recommendation 1:	<p>The outcomes of the Affordable Housing Option Appraisal to date are supported, and officers be requested to carry out further investigation into a hybrid model to address the borough's affordable housing need, which should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling (which may include for example the Council seeking an increased requirement for the provision of affordable housing on sites the Council owns i.e. above our minimum planning requirement) • Partnerships with Registered Providers and Developers – partnerships may be a single partner or several partners and can come from a variety of sectors • Direct delivery (model to be determined)
Responsibility:	Assistant Director Housing and FSOT (Jane Edmends) / Service Lead Strategic Housing (Alan Glew)
Date:	End June 2025 (report to Cabinet) Long term action – annual review
Agreed Action:	Report to Cabinet (June 2025) to detail the outcome of the option appraisal process and seek approval for next steps.
Agreed Measure: Success	Report approved by Cabinet The number of affordable housing units delivered in the borough is increased (to secure a positive delivery trajectory)
Evidence of Progress (December 2025):	(a) SBC is part of the Governments Council Housebuilding Skills & Capacity Programme; we are 1 of 10 'vanguard' LA's being supported by the Local Government Association to explore skills and support requirements for local authorities exploring direct housing delivery.

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	<p>(b) Work is ongoing to make best use of S106 commuted sum monies (pre-market engagement planned for late November 2025)</p> <p>(c) Work is ongoing to identify best use of the small sites identified within the report to accelerate affordable housing delivery.</p>
Assessment of Progress (December 2025): (include explanation if required)	2. On track – as noted above work is ongoing to explore a range of delivery mechanisms.
Evidence of Impact (December 2025):	Not directly at this stage

Recommendation 2:	Correspondence is sent to Central Government to ask that the regulations for returning empty homes back into use are reviewed to ensure a more streamlined and strengthened process.
Responsibility:	Director of Regeneration & Economic Growth (Tracey Carter)
Date:	End of September 2025 (for letter to be sent)
Agreed Action:	Letter to be sent to the relevant Minister/s
Agreed Measure: Success	Government to act on feedback and implement a streamlined process for returning empty residential properties to use
Evidence of Progress (December 2025):	<p>Letter sent on the 19.9.25.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 responses received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) From Baroness Taylor (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing & Local Government) received 3.10.25 (j) From the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) Correspondence Unit 20.10.25. - Email received 28.10.25 from MHCLG asking for meeting to discuss the LA Empty Homes Working Group. Awaiting meeting date to be confirmed.
Assessment of Progress (December 2025): (include explanation if required)	1. Achieved (in terms of letter sent)
Evidence of Impact (December 2025):	Not directly at this stage.

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Recommendation 3:	Given the current demand for social/affordable housing, the Council (via its website and other means as appropriate) provide regular updates to applicants regarding general property availability and demand (for example with information on the average number of properties advertised per month/the average number of bids made on each property per month), in an attempt to manage applicant expectations.
Responsibility:	Team Leader Lettings & Nominations (Carol Bruce)
Date:	First update by end October 2025 End March 2026 (seeking feedback)
Agreed Action:	Website to be updated (within 1 month of each quarter end) with the detail highlighted in action 3 To explore options of seeking feedback from applications on Tees Valley HomeFinder to understand if the above information is of use/can be improved.
Agreed Measure:	Success Applicants registered on Tees Valley HomeFinder are better informed / improved awareness of waiting times etc.
Evidence of Progress (December 2025):	SBC website has been updated to include further under the 'Waiting Times' section, now includes ' social housing property availability ' section detailing the number of properties advertised by type and the average number of bids received on an estate by estate basis Social housing property availability 2025 to 2026 - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Assessment of Progress (December 2025): (include explanation if required)	2. On track (will continue to be updated on a quarterly basis)
Evidence of Impact (December 2025):	Additional information to inform customer choice and manage expectations

Recommendation 4:	Following Cabinet approval, and six months after the implementation of the revised Common Allocation Policy, an update be provided back to the Committee on the impact of banding changes (i.e. to provide a breakdown of applicants who have secured accommodation).
Responsibility:	Team Leader Lettings & Nominations (Carol Bruce)
Date:	Report to be prepared late Jan/Feb 2026 – to cover the 6 month period Jul to Dec 2025

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Agreed Action:	Updated report to be provided back to Committee
Agreed Measure: Success	Banding changes have supporting those in 'highest' housing need
Evidence of Progress (December 2025):	n/a as action not due until early 2026
Assessment of Progress (December 2025): (include explanation if required)	As above
Evidence of Impact (December 2025):	As above

Recommendation 5:	Council notes that Local Housing Allowance rates are not close to real costs, and local landlords are increasing rents to such a rate that people cannot afford, and this is putting pressure on local authorities to house people. Council therefore calls on central government to take this into consideration when reviewing Local Housing Rates and within the Renters Rights Bill.
Responsibility:	Director of Regeneration & Economic Growth (Tracey Carter)
Date:	End June 2025 (for letter to be sent)
Agreed Action:	Letter to be sent to the relevant Minister/s
Agreed Measure: Success	Government to consider the feedback from SBC when reviewing the local housing allowance
Evidence of Progress (December 2025):	Letter sent 19.8.25 to the Secretary of State for Work & Pensions
Assessment of Progress (December 2025): (include explanation if required)	1. Achieved (in terms of letter sent)
Evidence of Impact (December 2025):	Not directly at this time.

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Assessment of Progress Gradings:	1 Fully Achieved	2 On-Track	3 Slipped	4 Not Achieved
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