

## SCRUTINY INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID) – DRAFT

Review: The Effectiveness of Housing Services Communications

Scrutiny Review Committee: Housing Scrutiny Committee

Director leading the review: Maxine Holdsworth, Service Director, Housing Needs and Strategy

Lead officer: Paul Byer, Service Development Manager

Overall aim: To review the effectiveness of communications between Housing Services and residents

Objectives of the review:

- To assess if internal processes and staff training are sufficient to achieve effective communication with residents.
- To review how Housing Services respond to and learn from feedback and complaints.
- To evaluate the take-up of new electronic communication methods used by the Council's Housing Services, if these have been successfully implemented, and plans for any further 'channel shift'.
- To review how the council can be assured that the council's contractors and their subcontractors are communicating with residents effectively.
- To identify areas of good practice and how housing communications could be improved.

How is the review to be carried out:

### Scope of the review

The review will focus on:

1. Ensuring the quality of communications
  - Communication processes – how are letters and other forms of written communication drafted
  - Staff training – what training is received
  - How the quality of communications with the Housing Service is evaluated
  - How the service seeks to achieve consistency
  - Expectations of service communications

## 2. Feedback and complaints

- Examples of common complaints and feedback
- How Housing Services learn from feedback and complaints
- Feedback and complaints processes

## 3. The development of Housing Communications

- New online communications methods
- The reasoning for 'channel shift'
- The benefits and costs of online services
- Plans for the further development of online services

### Types of evidence

- Evidence from officers
- Feedback from residents
- Documentary evidence
- Workshop for members and officers to jointly review how complaints have been handled.
- Visit to frontline staff.

### Additional information:

In carrying out the review the committee will consider equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses. The Executive is required to have due regard to these, and any other relevant implications, when responding to the review recommendations.

### Programme

Key output:	To be submitted to Committee on:
1. Scrutiny Initiation Document	17 July 2017
2. Draft Recommendations	11 December 2017
3. Final Report	30 January 2018