

Title of Report:	Proposed topic for Scrutiny – Children and Family Services
Report to be considered by:	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
Date of Meeting:	5 January 2016

Purpose of Report: To propose the establishment of a task group to work with officers in the Housing Service to develop a Housing Grants and Loans Policy.

Recommended Action: It is recommended that the Commission agrees to the establishment of a task group to work with officers in the Housing Service to develop a Housing Grants and Loans Policy.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman	
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Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper sets out a proposal for a small task group to work with officers in the Housing Service to assist with the development of a Housing Grants and Loans Policy. It provides some background and a proposed methodology for taking the work forward.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council currently has in place a Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy which sets out the types of assistance available from West Berkshire Council to households living in the private sector, the eligibility criteria and the procedures for accessing assistance. The policy may be viewed at <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=37280>.
- 2.2 As part of a periodic revision schedule, officers in the Housing Service have determined that an opportunity is now presented to change the focus (and name) of the current policy towards grants and loans.
- 2.3 A new policy (in line with the change outlined in 2.2, above) has been drafted and approval is being sought from the Executive for the policy to be put out for a 6 week public consultation from February 2016.

3. Proposed action

- 3.1 In order that backbench councillors might have the opportunity to influence the further development and refinement of the policy, officers in the Housing Service have requested that the matter might be considered through Overview and Scrutiny.
- 3.2 It is proposed therefore that a small task group is established to work with officers in the Housing Service to comment on and further shape the policy prior to its adoption.
- 3.3 The task group should comprise 4 members (3 x Conservative, 1 x Liberal Democrat) and should be able to report back to the February meeting of the Commission

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Commission agrees to the establishment of a task group to work with officers in the Housing Service to develop a Housing Grants and Loans Policy.

Appendices

There are no Appendices to this report.