

Brighton & Hove City Council

Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item 38

Subject: Co-Operative Housing Task & Finish Group Scoping Report

Date of meeting: 3rd November 2026

Report of: Chair of Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

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Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Key Decision: No

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 This report is to establish a Task & Finish Group to explore co-operative housing schemes. It will examine the potential role of co-operative housing in addressing Brighton & Hove's housing challenges, including affordability, housing supply and housing insecurity. The Group will explore the benefits of co-operative housing, identify barriers to its growth, consider lessons from successful schemes in the UK and internationally, and assess what practical steps the council could take to support and expand co-operative housing as part of the city's housing offer.
- 1.2 This report includes a scoping report for the Task & Finish Group (Appendix 1) and draft Terms of Reference (Appendix 2).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee agrees to establish a Task & Finish Group to examine co-operative housing and its potential to address housing challenges in the city.
- 2.2 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee agrees the Terms of Reference, membership and duration of the Task & Finish Group as set out in Appendix 2.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1 A Notice of Motion was submitted to Council on 29th January 2026 requesting that Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee establish a Task & Finish Group to explore how the council can support and expand the co-operative housing sector in Brighton & Hove. The motion highlighted the

need to raise awareness of co-operative housing, learn from best practice in other areas, and identify ways to support the delivery of affordable, community-led housing.

- 3.2 The Task & Finish Group will investigate the contribution co-operative housing can make to meeting the city's housing needs. This will include examining the opportunities and challenges facing existing and emerging co-operatives, considering funding and support mechanisms, reviewing the availability of land and housing stock, and assessing the role the council could play in facilitating future development. Evidence will be gathered from housing co-operatives, local authorities and sector specialists to inform recommendations.
- 3.3 Brighton & Hove faces significant housing challenges, including high private sector rents, growing demand for social and affordable housing, limited land availability and financial pressures. Co-operative housing has been identified both as an alternative housing management model that can provide more affordable and secure housing through resident control, and as a way of delivering new affordable homes and community-led development. It has the potential to contribute both to improving existing housing options and increasing the supply of genuinely affordable homes in the city. However, despite the presence of established co-operatives and interest from local residents and community groups, the sector remains relatively small and fragmented.
- 3.4 Area of focus for the Task & Finish Group may include:
- To explore what practical and realistic actions the council could take to enable the growth of co-operative housing and maximise its contribution to addressing housing need in the city
 - To understand how successful co-operative housing models operate in the UK and internationally
 - To identify barriers that prevent the creation and expansion of co-operative housing schemes locally and what support could be put in place to help
 - To explore how legal, governance and funding processes could be simplified or standardised to support new co-operatives
 - To see what funding opportunities are available through government, external organisations and the co-operative sector itself
 - To explore how to raise awareness of co-operative housing, particularly among younger people and those seeking affordable housing.
 - To see how the council can facilitate organisation of potential co-op groups and bring them together.
 - To see how the council could support co-operatives to access land and property for potential development of new affordable housing as well as the management of existing homes.
 - To speak with other councils in the UK who have successfully supported co-operative housing in their area
 - To speak with successful co-operative housing organisations both in the city and beyond

3.6 Task & Finish Group Scoping Report and Terms of Reference

More information on Co-Operative Housing is included in the Task & Finish Group scoping report (Appendix 1), including suggested areas of enquiry and witnesses. The draft Task & Finish Group Terms of Reference (Appendix 2) include suggested membership and duration of the Group.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 Members are free to amend the details of the Terms of Reference if they wish to pursue alternative options.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 This has not been considered at this stage but the Task & Finish Group will invite relevant community members to speak to the group as part of the process.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no expected financial implications associated with the establishment and operation of the Task & Finish Group as it is anticipated that any costs associated with their operation will be managed within the existing revenue budgets of each respective service area. The group will prepare a report that will be presented to the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee where the committee may decide to further refer the Task & Finish Group report recommendations to Cabinet for key decisions.

Name of finance officer consulted: John Lack Date consulted: 26/10/2026

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committees Terms of Reference in Part 2C of the Constitution provide for the Committee to establish informal task & finish groups to undertake in-depth reviews of specific issues. This group will then report back to the Committee with its conclusions next year.

Name of lawyer consulted: Allan Wells Date consulted 26/10/26

8. Risk implications

- 8.1 None specifically for this scrutiny report and the establishment of a Task & Finish Group

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 None specifically for this scrutiny report and the establishment of a Task & Finish Group

10. Sustainability implications

- 10.1 None specifically for this scrutiny report and the establishment of a Task & Finish Group

11. Health and Wellbeing Implications:

- 11.1 None specifically for this scrutiny report and the establishment of a Task & Finish Group

12. Conclusion

- 12.1 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee is being asked to establish a Task & Finish Group to examine co-operative housing and its potential to address housing challenges in the city and to agree to the Terms of Reference and membership of the group taking on this work.

Supporting Documentation

Appendices

- 1. Co-operative Housing Task & Finish Group Scoping Report
- 2. Co-operative Housing Task & Finish Group Terms of Reference