

Public Scrutiny Suggestions 2024/25

The suggestions are as submitted by the public. The Commentary/Additional Information, where available, has been provided by relevant Council officers.

Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board	
Suggestion	Commentary/Additional Information
<p>HMOs Impact of HMOs on the local community. We talk about HMOs in a narrow sense, parking issues for example, but it actually affects the sense of community in the street and how people feel about living there.</p>	<p>From a Planning perspective, controls are limited in that a HMO for up to 6 people can be created without needing planning permission. Last year there was an exercise carried out jointly between Planning and Housing to look at tightening controls on HMOs. An Article 4 Direction to remove the ability for an HMO to be created without the need to apply for permission was considered and simultaneously, Housing wanted to widen the Licensing scheme. The matter was discussed in some detail and ultimately the Cabinet decision was to hold fire with an Article 4 Direction but for Housing to continue with their Licensing scheme. The results from widening the Licensing scheme could provide the evidence base should members still feel the need for an Article 4 Direction.</p> <p>Report scheduled to go to Cabinet in June recommending the roll out of Additional Licensing for HMOs. Suggested that this be an item in second half of the year to provide members with the impact the Additional Licensing has.</p>
<p>Bringing Communities Together How to encourage communities to come together in an area as equals. Events, volunteering, culture sharing, breaking down barriers.</p>	<p>Libraries and museums offer a wide range of groups events and activities in a neutral environment to support this.</p>
<p>Housing Co-operative How should SMBC go about development of new co-operative housing?</p>	
<p>Grass-Roots Sports Clubs What is the state of grass-roots sports clubs in Sandwell? What can SMBC do to assist these clubs and increase participation, to</p>	<p>Libraries co-ordinate the 'find it, do it' site detailing information around local leisure and cultural clubs.</p>



address some of the major health inequalities in the Borough?	
Community Involvement in Green Spaces How can we increase community involvement in taking ownership of greenspaces to increase biodiversity and assist with the Borough's climate change objectives?	
Supporting New Community Organisations How are newer organisations encouraged to apply for grants?	

