

**NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW  
AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**26<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

A meeting of the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel was held on Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> September 2024 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall Nuneaton.

**Present**

Councillor B. Hughes (Chair)

Councillors: M. Etienne (Vice-Chair), E. Amaechi, M. Bird, T. Cooper, S. Dhillon, B. Pandher, C. Smith (substitute for Councillor W. Markham) and T. Venson.

Apologies: Councillor W. Markham

**PART I – PUBLIC BUSINESS**

HC9 **Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Housing and Communities OSP held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

HC10 **Declarations of Interest**

**RESOLVED** that the declarations of interest are as set out in the Schedule attached to these minutes with the addition of Councillor C. Smith as substitute.

HC11 **Questions to Cabinet**

The portfolio holder for Housing (Councillor C. Watkins) was in attendance to answer questions from the Panel.

No questions were asked by the Panel.

HC12 **Integrated Performance Report – First Quarter 2024-25**

A report of the Risk Management and Performance Officer. The Panel were presented with a report which seeks to provide appropriate performance measures, budget information and risk data for service areas within the scope of the Panel. The report has been adapted to reduce the volume of data (as previously reported under the former scrutiny panel arrangements), whilst still providing the Panel with sufficient information to monitor results to address issues arising.

**SPEAKER:** Mr Peter Smith

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

HC13 **Draft Housing Strategy**

A report of the Assistant Director –Strategic Housing submitted a report to provide the Panel with the draft Housing Strategy 2024 – 2034 for comments and amendments

**SPEAKER:** Mr Peter Smith

The panel discussed the following points:

- The replacement of boilers with gas and not a heat pump
- The licensing surrounding Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) and the regulations only requiring a license if the HMO is for 5 rooms or more.
- The suggestion of the balancing of HMO's within the towns and if there is any scope to displace around the borough, however there is no planning requirement to enable this to happen at planning application stage and the current legislation is limited.
- Single and two bed properties and how this links into planning and developers. S106 monies is allocated to affordable housing and with developers the council can stipulate one/two bed properties based on this strategy.
- What the council's statutory powers are in relation to empty properties. In circumstances of the empty property being deemed as dangerous if in disrepair or causing disturbance due to anti-social behaviour the council have powers to give notices, put charges on the property, and potentially a compulsory purchase order however these are long winded and have a fraught legal process in addition to this is if there needs to be the budget to afford the capital. Prior to these options officers would be encouraged to talk to landlords in bringing their properties up to specifications. There are less than 2% privately owned empty homes in Nuneaton and Bedworth and most are turned around in 18 months/2 years.
- Difficult to let housing stock are under the Independent Living Schemes and it is mostly bedsits but this is a tiny proportion of the council's housing stock.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

HC14 **Housing Performance – Quarter one (2024/25)**

The Assistant Director – Social Housing and Community Safety submitted a report to provide the Panel with the performance figures for the first quarter 2024/25.

The follow points were raised:

- A target to be set for Asbestos to work on for next meeting.
- Installation of smoke alarms to be completed by 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024. Carbon monoxide testing at the same time.
- More communications to residents regarding electric fires and the fire risks surrounding them. The officers are working with Citizens Advice Bureau and those in Independent Living Units.
- Pest control reporting depends on the type of property as to who has the responsibility to action the reported case.
- Housing Rent Arrears officers have moved back into the Housing team from Revenues and Benefits and so it is anticipated that performance in debt recovery will improve. The council support tenants as much as possible with their rent payments and we must show we have followed protocol especially if the council go on to evict a tenant.
- It was recommended that the total rent arrears figure be included in the next report to the panel including the totals from former and current tenants.
- The panel asked if the previous data for pest control reports be included.

- In respect of anti-social behaviour cases 30 were closed out of 107 however a case will not be closed on the system until all avenues to resolve it have been explored and if building a case for court this can take a considerable amount of time. The panel requested that the number of anti-social behaviour cases be split into wards and circulated to all members.

**RESOLVED** that

- a) the report be noted; and
- b) the total rent arrears figure be included in the next report to the panel including the totals from former and current tenants.

HC15 **Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan showing the key decisions that will be made in the four months commencing 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024, was provided to the Panel for information.

**RESOLVED:** that the Forward Plan be noted.

HC16 **Work Programme Suggestion Form**

A work programme suggestion form was received from Councillor C. Phillips in respect of Policy review for Houses of Multiple occupation.

**SPEAKER:** Councillor W. Hancox submitted a statement to the Chair which was read to the panel

**RESOLVED** that the work programme suggestion of Policy review for Houses of Multiple occupation be added to the Housing and Communities Work Programme

HC17 **Work Programme**

The Panel were presented with the Work Programme for the municipal year 2024-2025.

**RESOLVED** that the Work Programme be noted with the addition of Policy Review for Houses of Multiple Occupation

HC18 **Any Other Items**

None

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Chair

**Housing and Communities OSP –  
Schedule of Declarations of Interests – 2024/2025**

	<b>Name of Councillor</b>	<b>Disclosable Pecuniary Interest</b>	<b>Other Personal Interest</b>	<b>Dispensation</b>
	General dispensations granted to all members under s.33 of the Localism Act 2011			Granted to all members of the Council in the areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Housing matters</li> <li>- Statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992</li> <li>- An allowance, payment given to members</li> <li>- An indemnity given to members</li> <li>- Any ceremonial honour given to members</li> <li>- Setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992</li> <li>- Planning and Licensing matters</li> <li>- Allotments</li> <li>- Local Enterprise Partnership</li> </ul>
	E. Amaechi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employed NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP)</li> <li>- Ricky Global Consultants Ltd</li> <li>- Purple Dove Events Ltd</li> <li>- Director – Techealth Ltd</li> </ul>	The Labour Party (sponsorship) - Foundation Governor - Our Lady and St. Joseph Academy, Nuneaton.  - Member of: - British Computer Society. - Igbo Community Coventry. - Mbaise Community, Coventry.  Representative on the following Outside Bodies: - Committee of Management of Hartshill and Nuneaton Recreation Ground - EQuIP: Equality and Inclusion Partnership - West Midlands Combined Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee - Pride in Camp Hill (PinCH)	
	M. Bird		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Life Member of National Association of British Market Authorities.</li> <li>- Member of the Stockingford Allotment association and Pavillion Club.</li> </ul>	
	T. Cooper	None		
	S. Dhillon	Employed by UHCW NHS Trust	Member (Rep) at Unison – UHCW Trust  Representative on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warwickshire Adult</li> </ul>	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
			<p>Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camp Hill Urban Village: Pride in Camp Hill Board</li> <li>• Committee of Management of Hartshill and Nuneaton Recreation Ground</li> <li>• George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust – Public/User Board</li> <li>• West Midlands Combined Authority Wellbeing Board</li> </ul>	
	M. Etienne	Employed by Network Rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member of The Conservative Party and Nuneaton Conservative Association</li> <li>- RMT Member</li> </ul>	
	B. Hughes	Full Time Carer	<p>Member of the Labour Party. Member of the National Trust. Member of the Caravan and Motorhome Club Member of CAMRA</p> <p>Representative on the following Outside Bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- George Elliot Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Governors</li> </ul>	
	W. Markham		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Governor at Ash Green School for SEND</li> <li>- Member of Unite Union</li> </ul>	
	B. Pandher		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member of Warwickshire County Council.</li> <li>- Member of the Conservative Party</li> <li>- President &amp; Trustee of Nanaksar Gurdwara Gursikh Temple Coventry;</li> <li>- Coordinator of Council of Sikh Temples in Coventry;</li> <li>- Secretary of Coventry Indian Community;</li> <li>- Trustee of Sikh Monument Trust</li> <li>- Vice Chair Exhall Multicultural Group</li> </ul>	
	T. Venson	Employed by Freightliner Heavy Haul	<p>ASIEF Trade Union The Labour Party</p> <p>Representative on the following Outside Bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Building Control Partnership Steering Group</li> <li>- Warwickshire Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee</li> </ul>	

	<b>Name of Councillor</b>	<b>Disclosable Pecuniary Interest</b>	<b>Other Personal Interest</b>	<b>Dispensation</b>
	C. Smith (substitute)	Software Engineer – Prophet PLC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member of Labour Party and Unite</li> <li>- Safeguarding – Manor Park RFC</li> </ul> Representative on the following Outside Bodies: Astley Charity	