

# Public Document Pack

## NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 20TH MARCH, 2018

#### SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

Please find attached supplementary papers relating to the above meeting, as follows:

**Agenda No**   **Item**

13.        **COMMON HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME - UPDATE** (Pages 1 - 2)

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE

To receive a verbal update regarding the Common Housing Allocation Scheme.

14.        **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS** (Pages 3 - 4)

To receive and respond to any questions from Members either set out in the agenda or tabled at the meeting.

16.        **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 5 - 10)

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

To consider the issues that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee plans to review at future meetings and the activities of its sub-groups.

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## Update on the Common Housing Allocation Scheme March 2018: equalities information

**Table 1. General needs registrations by ethnicity, 2016 and 2017**

	No. of registrations		% of registrations*	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
White	499	598	86.0%	85.3%
Black/Black British	38	43	6.6%	6.1%
Asian/Asian British	15	25	2.6%	3.6%
Mixed race	27	35	4.7%	5.0%
Other ethnic group	1	0	0.2%	-
Not known/stated	110	95	-	-
<b>BME</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>14.0%</b>	<b>14.7%</b>
Total	690	796	100%	100%

\* where ethnicity is known

**Table 2. General needs lets by ethnicity, 2016 and 2017**

	No. of lets		% of lets*	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
White	318	295	85.9%	83.8%
Black/Black British	22	29	5.9%	8.2%
Asian/Asian British	9	11	2.4%	3.1%
Mixed race	20	17	5.4%	4.8%
Other ethnic group	1	-	0.3%	-
Not known/stated	48	47	-	-
<b>BME</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>14.1%</b>	<b>16.2%</b>
Total	418	399	100%	100%

\* where ethnicity is known

**Table 3. General needs registrations by religion, 2016 and 2017**

	No. of registrations		% of registrations*	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
No religion	292	362	53.2%	54.4%
Christian	229	257	41.7%	38.8%
<b>Other religions</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>
Not known/stated	141	133	-	-
Total	690	796	100%	100%

\* where religion is known

**Table 4. General needs lets by religion, 2016 and 2017**

	No. of lets		% of lets*	
	2016	2017	2016	2017

No religion	159	164	47.0%	50.3%
Christian	159	142	47.0%	43.6%
<b>Other religions</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>6.1%</b>
Not known/stated	80	73	-	-
Total	418	399	100%	100%

\* where religion is known

**Table 5. General needs registrations by sexual orientation, 2016 and 2017**

	No. of registrations		% of registrations*	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
Heterosexual	515	643	96.3%	97.3%
<b>LGBT</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>
Not known/stated	155	135	-	-
Total	690	796	100%	100%

\* where sexual orientation is known

**Table 6. General needs lets by sexual orientation, 2016 and 2017**

	No. of lets		% of lets*	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
Heterosexual	335	312	98.2%	97.2%
<b>LGBT</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>
Not known/stated	77	78	-	-
Total	418	399	100%	100%

\* where sexual orientation is known

**Table 7. General needs registrations by medical priority, 2016 and 2017**

	No. of registrations		% of all registrations	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
High priority	8	4	1.2%	0.5%
Medium priority	79	82	11.4%	10.3%
Low priority	85	76	12.3%	9.5%
Total with any medical priority	172	162	24.9%	20.4%

**Table 8. General needs lets by medical priority, 2016 and 2017**

	No. of lets		% of all lets	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
High priority	8	2	1.9%	0.5%
Medium priority	95	83	22.7%	20.8%
Low priority	54	58	12.9%	14.5%
Total with any medical priority	157	143	37.6%	35.8%

<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 20 MARCH 2018</b>
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<b>*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No.</b>  <b>14</b>
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**TITLE OF REPORT: MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

Councillor Martin Stears-Handscomb has asked the following question:

“Noting the inconvenience caused to residents and damage caused to public space by the construction traffic servicing the development in Lucas Lane, Hitchin and the potential increased use of unsuitable and sometimes dangerous routes to development sites in the District, which will increase following the adoption of the District Local Plan, will the Scrutiny Community investigate whether an approach to new developments which identifies access problems at an early stage is possible?”

This will be referred to the Head of Development and Building Control for a response, which will be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE  
ANNUAL REPORT  
2017 - 2018**

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## Foreword from the Chair

*To be completed after the Committee has reviewed its work in 2017/18*

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### **1. Overview and Scrutiny in North Hertfordshire District Council**

- 1.1 The depth and breadth of the Council's work means that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has to use its resources efficiently in order to scrutinise as many topics as possible in the time available. It does so by:
- considering a number of issues during its Committee meetings and making recommendations to Cabinet;
  - appointing dedicated task and finish groups which can examine issues in depth and make recommendations to improve services;
- 1.2 This year, the Committee has continued to put more emphasis on its overview function while still continuing its scrutiny role. Its Committee meetings sought to take a more strategic view of the Council's work while still examining the Executive's major decisions.

### **2. Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- 2.1 There were six scheduled meetings this year at which the Committee considered a range of topics including scrutinising key decisions going to Cabinet, checking whether the Council has met its performance indicators as well as reviewing other issues which the Committee has decided would benefit from closer scrutiny. The Committee held an additional meeting in advance of Cabinet meeting which was expressly convened to consider the Council's proposed waste contract. At that meeting detailed consideration was given to all of the reports which Cabinet subsequently received (see 2.3.5 below)
- 2.2 The Committee can scrutinise issues in a number of ways:
- by considering reports from, and questioning officers about different aspects of the Council's business;
  - by submitting written questions which require a written answer, and which members can follow up by asking supplementary questions in Committee;
  - by interviewing and questioning Cabinet Members about their portfolios;
  - by calling in decisions which are of great concern to members or to the public;
  - by inviting representatives from outside bodies to talk about topics of interest to the public in North Hertfordshire.
- 2.3 Call-In
- 2.3.1 The call in process allows the Chairman of the Committee, or five members of the Council, to call in a decision which is the responsibility of the Executive, which has been made but not implemented.
- 2.3.2 The Committee can ask the Executive to reconsider it or can refer it to Council.
- 2.3.3 This year the Committee called in Cabinet's decision to change its Waste Management Contract and commence a Shared Service for Waste and Street Cleansing and at the same time commence charging for the collection of Green Waste.



2.3.4 On 9 October 2017 an additional meeting was called with a single focus for its agenda – that being the new waste contract. This meeting made a recommendation to Cabinet that, in respect of the proposal to charge for the collection of Green Waste, Cabinet give due weight to the feedback from the public consultation.

2.3.5 Following a decision by Cabinet to introduce a chargeable waste service, the decision was called-in and a meeting was held on 9 November 2017 at which it was resolved, following a recorded vote, that no further action be taken.

#### 2.4 Presentations by Executive Members.

The Committee decided not to continue its previous practice of inviting Executive Members to speak regarding their portfolios on a rolling basis. They decided that the Committee would rather invite Executive Members only to address specific issues or to present reports that were of interest to the Committee. The Committee are grateful to the following Executive Members for making presentations this year:

- Councillor Jane Gray
- Councillor Michael Weeks

#### 2.5 Crime & Disorder Scrutiny

The Committee is also the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee for North Hertfordshire which is required to meet at least once a year. The Committee was grateful to Chief Inspector Julie Wheatley of Hertfordshire Constabulary who attended the Committee in December to talk about the work of the police in the district. CI Julie Wheatley is responsible for Neighbourhood Policing across North Hertfordshire and has Chaired the Community Safety Partnership since mid 2016.

2.6 The Committee continued to take a close interest in safeguarding matters and received its annual update on the Council's safeguarding performance in September 2017.

2.7 In total, the Committee has considered 21 items in its meetings this year. It has made 3 recommendations on 2 topics to Cabinet.

2.8 No written questions were asked by members during the year.

### **3. Task and Finish Groups in 2017/18**

3.1 Task and finish groups are an opportunity for members to scrutinise a topic in much more depth than is possible in a single Committee meeting. They recommend improvements to the Council's performance which are then considered by Cabinet.

3.2 The Committee held a debate regarding the value of Task and Finish Groups and whether the recommendations resulting from them added value to the work of Cabinet and the Council

3.3 The Committee decided not to undertake any further Task and Finish Groups until such time as it could be ascertained how best to act as a critical friend and support Cabinet in their decision making. To this end a workshop is being developed for all members of Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet to discuss the best way forward to ensure that the outcomes add value.

### **3.4 The Council’s Management of Larger Projects**

3.4.1 This TFG’s remit was to review the effectiveness of the Council’s management of its larger projects.

3.4.2 It considered a range of projects between September 2016 and February 2017 and considered the report of the T&F Group in June 2017. The Committee raised queries in relation to a number of matters in that report and these were responded to by the T&F Group.

### **4.4 Future Task and Finish Groups**

4.4.1 The Committee has prioritised the following topics for 2018/19:

- Consultation;
- Impact of the Grants Policy Review;
- Section 106 Funding.

4.4.2 The Committee decided that the following topics be kept in reserve:

- The Urban/Rural Divide;
- The value for money of NHDC’s Document Centre;
- Balancing cost savings against possible environmental impacts.

4.4.3 The Committee has undertaken to look at the Hitchin Town Hall and Museum project once it has finished.

## **5. Scrutiny in 2017/18**

**5.1 *To be completed after the Committee’s meeting on 21 March.....***

## **6. Public Participation**

6.1 The scrutiny process is open to involvement by local people and the Committee encourages public participation.

6.2 Approximately 26 members of the public attended the Committee’s meetings this year.

6.3 Some of the ways for the public to get involved include suggesting a topic for investigation as a task and finish group; providing evidence to or at a meeting; and being co-opted on to a topic group. The Committee is keen to see more public participation both in its task and finish groups and in its committee meetings.

6.4 Further details about the work of scrutiny and contact details can be found at:

<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/council-and-democracy/overview-and-scrutiny-committee>

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2017 – 2018**

**Members of the Committee**

Cllr Cathryn Henry (Chairman)  
Cllr Steve Hemingway (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr Ian Albert  
Cllr Clare Billing  
Cllr John Booth  
Cllr Bill Davidson  
Cllr Steve Deakin-Davies  
Cllr Elizabeth Dennis  
Cllr Jean Green  
Cllr Steve Jarvis  
Cllr Ben Lewis  
Cllr Gerald Morris  
Cllr Michael Muir  
Cllr Janine Paterson  
Cllr Frank Radcliffe  
Cllr Valentine Shanley

**Substitutes**

Cllr John Bishop  
Cllr Paul Clark  
Cllr Simon Harwood  
Cllr Terry Hone  
Cllr Paul Marment  
Cllr Mike Rice  
Cllr Adrian Smith  
Cllr Martin Stears-Handscomb

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