

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERONON ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF
ON MONDAY, 29TH JANUARY, 2024 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Adam Compton (Chair), Val Bryant (Vice-Chair), Matt Barnes, Clare Billing, Mick Debenham, Dominic Griffiths, David Levett, Nigel Mason, Ian Moody, Ralph Muncer and Daniel Wright-Mason.*

In Attendance: *Steve Cobb (Licensing and Community Safety Manager), Susan Le Dain (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Jo Doggett (Service Director - Housing & Environmental Health), Jo Dufficy (Service Director - Customers), Geraldine Goodwin (Revenues Manager), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager), Mark Scanes (Systems and Technical Manager) and Jeanette Thompson (Service Director - Legal and Community).*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting there were four members of the public present.*

276 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 1 minute 55 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ian Moody.

277 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 7 seconds

There was no other business notified.

278 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 12 seconds

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded.
- (2) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.
- (3) The Chair advised that for the purposes of clarification clause 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution does not apply to this meeting.

279 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 2 minutes 56 seconds

There was no public participation at this meeting.

280 URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 1 second

No urgent or general exception items were received.

281 CALLED-IN ITEMS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 7 seconds

There have been no called-in items.

282 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 12 seconds

No questions had been submitted by Members.

283 PRESENTATION FROM SETTLE

Audio recording – 3 minutes 16 seconds

The Chair invited Mr Anderson and Ms Coulson, from settle Group, to provide Members with a presentation providing information about the organisation, with a focus on the projects they have been working on over the last 12 months. Mr Anderson and Ms Coulson thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided a presentation, accompanied by slides, which advised of the following:

- settle was a Letchworth based housing association with around 10,000 properties of which 8,600 properties were in North Herts.
- settle wanted to help their customers to comfortably live in their homes and to be able to lead the lives they wanted.
- They focused on being a good landlord and providing services that customers valued.
- settle wanted to provide quality affordable home and to also improve the areas where their homes were based.
- settle was regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) which was part of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- The Rental Reform Act would not have an impact on settle as it related to private landlords and not landlords providing social and affordable lettings.
- A main area of focus was providing a first-time fix of problems for their customers which was currently at 95%.
- There were robust anti-social behaviour policies in place and specific staff who worked with stakeholders to manage any anti-social behaviour.
- There had been around 400 customer complaints received so far this year.
- settle had a two-stage complaint process. The first stage was the raising of a complaint and if this was not satisfactorily resolved, a resident could escalate this to a stage 2 complaint by taking it to the Housing Ombudsman.
- settle was now investing £13 million in their properties.
- There was 97% customer satisfaction with the work carried out on their properties.
- Decent homes compliance was performing well with 99.6% being graded as decent.

- 37 homes were completed in the summer of 2022 at Kingfisher House.
- The John Barker Place development had only been delayed by 3 months due to the contractor going into liquidation.
- The new planning application for Hawksley Bungalows at Letchworth was close to being submitted and this would provide 157 new homes on a site where currently there were only 80 homes.
- settle provided new homes across North Herts, working with developers through section 106 contributions and were very happy to have been able to provide an adapted bungalow on one site, to meet specific needs of a family.
- They regularly worked with Cala, who lead on private sales and settle would oversee the affordable home sales.

Councillor David Levett advised the committee that he was a settle tenant.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason
- Councillor Clare Billing
- Councillor Nigel Mason
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Adam Compton

In response to questions, Mr Anderson and Ms Coulson advised of the following:

- Section 106 contributions in North Herts enabled settle to charge the 80% target affordable rent to any properties with below 3 bedrooms.
- The government provided extra funding through Homes England which enabled settle to provide homes with social rent.
- There was a 32% dissatisfaction rate for complaints and analysis had shown this equated to only 20 customers.
- They had 260 open damp and mould cases and a team of surveyors and operatives had been set up to monitor damp and mould in any of their properties.
- One mal administration case had been filed this year and this was currently being reviewed by the Housing Ombudsman.
- settle had multiple solutions to assist with insulation of properties and would carry out either external or internal insulation depending on the age of the property.
- 63% of properties are at Engineering, Procurement, Construction and Commissioning (EPCC) standard or above and work was being carried out on the 600 properties that were below this to get them complaint.
- settle agreed to share their maps and software system, 'Land Insight' with the Council, which showed ownership of properties.
- settle had a mutual exchange process through which they promoted exchange of their properties through Home Swapper.
- If a property was overcrowded, it would be banded and entered onto the shared housing register which settle had with the Council.
- settle worked with the Council in cases where a property was at undercapacity.
- Robust repair policies were in place and stock investment analysis was carried out to find out what repairs were required.
- settle would not put any residents into hotels whilst they were waiting to move into the new Letchworth development and the decamp would be managed by utilising properties on site.
- settle was 100% complaint with Forward Rate Agreements (FRA) actions.
- Their viability rating had been downgraded to grade 2, which was still a compliant grade, due to changes in development of their financial matrix.

The Chair thanked Mr Anderson and Ms Coulson for their and for taking the time to answer questions from Members.

284 CRIME AND DISORDER MATTERS

Audio recording – 41 minutes 55 seconds

The Chair invited Inspector James Lant and Sergeant Chris Adshead, from Hertfordshire Constabulary, to provide Members with a presentation on Hate Crime in North Herts. Inspector Lant and Sergeant Adshead thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided a presentation, accompanied by slides, which advised of the following:

- The objective of the evening was to help Members gain an understanding into Hate Crime in North Herts and to paint a national picture around Hate Crime.
- The National Police Chiefs Council publish figures weekly which were collated by the National Communication Tension Team to produce weekly tension reports.
- These weekly tension reports could be studied over periods to show national changes to reporting of the five hate crimes.
- An international event or disaster would have an impact in national hate crime rolling figures which would produce an increase in all the five hate crime strands.
- The five hate crime strands were:
 - Faith.
 - Disability
 - Sexual orientation
 - Race
 - Transgender
- Hate crime was a crime that was recorded as having a motivation or hostility when committed towards one of the five hate crime strands.
- A non crime incident could be reported under one of the following three circumstances:
 - When it was not clear whether a crime had been committed or not.
 - A crime had to be recorded because of its nature for intelligence purposes.
 - An incident that fell short of criminal activity, but that might lead to criminal conduct.
- Reporting of hate crime had increased and the objective for 2024 was to enable more people to feel able to report hate crimes.
- There was an increase in third party reporting centres to assist people who did not speak English or did not want to come to a police station. The North Herts District Council offices was one of these reporting centres.
- True Vision was a website devised by the Metropolitan police through which hate crimes could be reported anonymously.
- PC Lewis Thomson had been appointed as the new hate crime officer in North Herts, to make people aware that hate crime must be reported and that it was taken very seriously by the police.
- North Herts police followed certain national standards to record crimes where every incident reported was recorded and audited.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Clare Billing
- Councillor Val Bryant
- Councillor Mick Debenham

In response to questions, Inspector Lant and Sergeant Adshead advised of the following:

- Communications had been built over the last 12 months with the Jewish community where police officers make connections with community groups to help them to feel safe.
- Crimes against women and girls did not fall under the five strands of hate crime. However, this was a very serious matter and was taken very seriously by the police and a lot of time and work was undertaken to ensure women and girls felt safe in North Herts.
- North Herts had signed up to the White Ribbon UK an organisation who worked with men and boys to challenge cultures that lead to harassment against women and girls.
- Project Vigilant was a new initiative and would be introduced in North Herts in March, whereby a select group of police officers would be trained and then would be put on surveillance from 4pm – 7pm to try to identify individuals that may prove to be a risk to women. This project had been based on training used by Thames Valley Police with the aim to make North Herts a safe place at nighttime.
- North Herts Police were working with Dignify a charity in South Hertfordshire to deliver a comprehensive package to schools about online safety.

The Licensing and Community Safety Officer advised that:

- North Herts were currently working on two main projects, violence against women and girls and anti-social behaviour.
- North Herts Council worked in partnership with the police and were a third party reporting centre.
- A video promoting 'The Women's Safety Charter' was ready to be filmed and it was hoped this would be rolled out by the end of February and would be publicised throughout North Herts.

The Chair thanked Inspector Lant and Sergeant Adshead for their presentation and answers provided to the questions.

N.B. Following the conclusion of this item there was a short break in proceedings until 21:20.

285 RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Audio recording – 1 hour 57 minutes 21 seconds

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager presented the item 'Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee' and highlighted:

- The 'Local Plan Review', 'Q2 Update on Progress Against the Council Delivery Plan' and 'The 2024/28 Marketing and Communications Strategy' reports were all approved at the meeting of Cabinet on 16 January following on from the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9 January.
- At the same meeting in January, Cabinet noted the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members regarding the 'Community Survey Results March – June 2023' report and added a formal resolution to the recommendations to ensure all future reporting of any survey results would still be submitted to a formal Cabinet meeting.

Councillor Adam Compton proposed and Councillor Val Bryant seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the report entitled 'Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee' was noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review and comment on actions and feedback received regarding resolutions previously made.

286 CALL TO ACCOUNT - LORD LISTER HOTEL - CHAIR'S REPORT

Audio recording – 3 hours 1 minute 3 seconds

Councillor Adam Compton, as Chair, advised the committee that Councillor David Levett, as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Civic Year 2022-23, would present the report entitled 'Call to Account – Lord Lister Hotel – Chair's Report'. Councillor Compton also advised Members that supplementary papers including the relevant section of the report and minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 28 September 2022 had been circulated earlier today.

Councillor David Levett advised that:

- Most of what he wanted to say could be found in the lessons learnt.
- The 'Special Urgency' had resulted in the weighing up of community interest against the urgency of the situation.
- The origin of the situation went back to February 2021 and the deadline of 31 August 2021 for completion of the purchase by key stage.
- From the lessons learnt, it had been identified that this matter should have been referred to Cabinet, following the normal procedure, as a non-urgent item.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Val Bryant
- Councillor Ralph Muncer

In response to questions, Councillor Levett advised that:

- The lessons learnt were set out in the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting and had been circulated to Members prior to this meeting.
- The Council Chamber was a formal environment, and not a suitable place to conduct a Call to Account. The process would have been more beneficial in a less formal environment and encouraged better discussion on the topic.

Councillor David Levett proposed and Councillor Adam Compton seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee referred the report, attached as Appendix A, to Council, together with the copy of the lessons learnt and the appropriate section of the minutes of the meeting of 28 September 2022.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: The recommendations had been made following the Call to Account on 28 September 2022.

287 EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY

Audio recording – 1 hour 28 minutes 44 seconds

Councillor Sean Prendergast, as Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health, presented the report entitled 'Empty Homes Strategy' and advised that:

- This strategy would feed into the current Housing Strategy of the Council and bringing empty homes back into use formed a key part of meeting the housing needs of the district.
- Empty homes were a wasted resource and, as often in bad repair, had a negative impact on the local community.

- This strategy would provide an opportunity to help bring the vast majority of empty homes back into use which would boost the local economy.
- This strategy was important for addressing shortages, revitalising the community, stimulating local economy and would also help to promote environmental sustainability.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason
- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor Adam Compton

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health advised that:

- Most other local authorities had an Empty Homes Strategy in place.
- This report highlighted that the number of empty homes was increasing across the district.
- Currently the Council could only rely on Council Tax records to identify empty homes, which was not sustainable.
- Having a new officer in post would help to provide resources to identify empty properties.
- The main aim of this strategy was to bring empty homes in the district back into use to meet the needs of the residents.
- It was important to set achievable targets with the resources available and to learn the reasons behind why properties were empty.
- Statistics had shown that there was an increase in the number of homes that had been empty for 2 years to 5 years and this needed to be investigated.
- The strategy would encourage residents to report any empty homes to the Council.

In response to questions, the Environmental Health Manager advised that:

- It was not a legal statutory requirement for the Council to have an Empty Homes Strategy.
- The target of this strategy was to identify empty homes and to prevent them from being a negative impact on the community.
- This was a new target for the Council and it would take time to identify the empty homes and to work with home owners before any results would be seen.
- The residents of North Herts tended to remain in their properties for many years.
- 10% of empty homes in North Herts had been vacant for over 2 years.
- The Council would be contacting owners in North Herts where homes had been vacant for 2 years or more to try to identify the reasons why they were empty.
- Homes that had been empty for longer periods had proved harder to reoccupy.
- There were several reasons why a property was empty.
- The new post of a part time officer had not yet been filled. However, it would enable research into identifying what funding was available for homeowners to improve their properties, when required.
- This new post would also enable research into identifying what funding was available for the Council to further promote owners of empty homes to improve their properties.
- The New Homes bonus, which was currently available to the Council for every house that is brought back into occupancy, was likely to cease, however this was not the reason for this strategy. The main reason was to reduce the number of empty homes in the district.

The following Members took part in a debate:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor David Levett

Points raised in the debate included:

- Would the implementation of this strategy be an effective use of resources.
- There did not appear to be anything new to be gained from this strategy being implemented.
- It was up to the homeowner to decide if they wanted their property to remain vacant.
- Empty housing being reoccupied would be a benefit to the community of North Herts.
- The aims of the strategy were worthwhile but would only result in a small number of empty homes being reoccupied.

Councillor Matt Barnes proposed and Councillor Clare Billing seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDATION TO CABINET:

- (1) That Cabinet adopt the Empty Homes Strategy 2024-29.
- (2) The Cabinet should note that although there is no legal requirement for the Council to have an Empty Homes Strategy, there have been several significant Government-focussed documents and papers highlighting their importance, including a House of Commons Briefing Paper stating that each local authority should have such a strategy to help reduce the number of long-term empty homes in their districts.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) The recommendation and considerations are being made to allow the Council to formerly adopt the 5-year Empty Homes Strategy 2024-29 to allow the Environmental Health service to work directly or with others to identify and deliver the most appropriate intervention programme to allow the Council to aim to bring as many long-term empty homes back into occupation as practicable.
- (2) The strategy allows the Council to state its intention to consider every aspect linked to the housing sector to bring into use as many opportunities as it can to meet the district's housing needs, without having to rely solely on new build. Whilst the number of long-term empty homes is small, and the number likely to be brought back into occupation will be smaller still, this strategy does address this sector which would otherwise be omitted from the overall resource potentially available to form our housing stock.
- (3) By adopting the strategy and allowing for the development of a culture of greater awareness of vacant homes, allows for homes which become vacant to be highlighted sooner, and so they can be monitored and their owners challenged at an earlier point, thus also contributing to hopefully having more homes available for the residents of the district.

288 COUNCIL TAX PREMIUMS FOR EMPTY AND SECOND HOMES

Audio recording – 2 hours 26 minutes 7 seconds

Councillor Ian Albert, Executive Member for Finance and IT, presented the report 'Council Tax Premiums for Empty and Second Homes', and advised that:

- This report detailed the proposed changes to Council Tax premiums on empty and second homes which followed the updated government legislation.
- The Council had previously only been allowed to introduce a Council Tax premium on the length of time a home was unoccupied.
- In 2019 the Council introduced the current 100% premium for a property empty for more than 2 years.
- North Herts has 157 properties that have been empty for over 2 years.
- The recent change in legislation allowed a premium to be charged on a home that has been empty for less than 1 year.
- This paper related to the ability for the Council to increase Council Tax premiums to encourage empty homes to be brought back into occupation.
- A premium could be avoided if a homeowner furnished an empty home which changed it into a second home.
- North Herts Council awarded a 10% Council Tax discount on second homes.
- From 1 April 2024 the changes to premium would affect the 43 properties in North Herts which had been empty for over 5 years. The Council would be contacting all of these residents to make them aware of this change.

The following Councillors asked questions:

- Councillor Adam Compton
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor David Levett

In response to questions, the Service Director – Customers, advised that the Empty Homes & Second Homes Premium Policy was still in draft form and could not be finalised until government regulations had been received. The Service Director apologised that the draft policy was not circulated to Members with the agenda and advised that she would circulate a copy to Members following the meeting.

In response to questions, the Revenues Manager, advised that a property that was furnished, but was not in occupation all the time, was classed as a second home. A second home could be in another district to the main home of a resident.

The following Members took part in a debate:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor David Levett

Points raised in debate included:

- Members felt uncomfortable voting on the recommendations without having time to read and scrutinise the content of the draft policy, which had not been circulated before the meeting.
- The second homes premium would have more relevance and impact on other areas of the country, such as Cornwall where there was a higher population of holiday homes, but would not be such an issue for North Herts.

The Chair advised that he split voting on the recommendations into two parts, to ensure Members were clear on the content of each.

Councillor Nigel Mason proposed and Councillor Mick Debenham seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That in accordance with Section 11B and 11C of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Section 2 of the Rating (Properties in Common Occupation) & Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, Cabinet considers increasing the council tax premiums on empty homes and introducing a new premium on second homes in a phased approach as follows:
 - (1.1) That from 1 April 2025 the Council adopts the following full Premium levy rates:
 - Properties empty for one year but less than five will receive a 100% Premium.
 - Properties empty for five years but less than ten years a 200% Premium.
 - Properties empty for more than ten years a 300% Premium.
 - (1.2) That from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2025 the following interim premiums are introduced:
 - Properties empty for one year but less than two will not receive a Premium.
 - Properties empty for more than two years, but less than five years will receive a 100% Premium.
 - Properties empty for five years but less than ten years a 150% Premium.
 - Properties empty for more than ten years a 200% Premium.

Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason proposed and Councillor Matt Barnes seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (2) That from 1 April 2025 a 100% Premium is levied on all properties that are determined as a second home, subject to any exceptions once these have been confirmed by Regulations and that the Service Director – Customers in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and IT is delegated authority to make any amendments following further confirmation of the Regulations.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) To support the principle of bringing unoccupied properties back into occupation in line with the proposed empty homes strategy. At the time of writing there are 43 properties that have been unoccupied for over five years.
- (2) The introduction of a phased approach of increasing the premiums enables us to advertise the changes. As the introduction of premiums for properties unoccupied for between one and two years is new there will be no expectation on the owners of these properties of an additional premium and therefore it is recommended that this aspect is deferred until 2025 to allow time to advertise the change.
- (3) In respect of a premium on Second Homes the Council is required to give one year's notice as this is the Council's first determination in this regard and therefore a resolution must be made before the end of the 2023/24 financial year in order to bring in the premium from 01 April 2025.

- (4) The Council does have the ability to revoke the decision in relation to Second Homes premium, during the year should any consultation that is carried out provide evidence that this would not be effective.

289 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT ('RIPA') ANNUAL REVIEW

Audio recording – 2 hours 56 minutes 19 seconds

The Service Director – Legal and Community, presented the report and supplementary papers entitled 'Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Annual Review' and highlighted that:

- One of the annual functions that the Council had to undertake was to review the procedures in place to deal with RIPA and to see whether any changes were needed to the policy and procedures in place.
- The Council had a few internal monitoring procedures and audits in place and were inspected every 3 years by the Investigatory Powers Commissioners Office (IPCO).
- The IPCO inspection carried out last year was conducted under their new risk-based system, which involved completing a questionnaire detailing procedures in place.
- An assurance letter received from the IPCO following receipt of the completed questionnaire, detailed that the Council was complying with all regulations and that no further action was required. This letter was set out in Appendix A.
- The Council would review any procedures following adoption of the Bill to check if any action was required at a later point.

Councillor Adam Compton, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Ralph Muncer seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the content of the report, and the IPCO's assurance letter Appendix A, was noted by the Committee.

REASON FOR DECISION: To comply with best practice guidance and the Committee's terms of reference.

290 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Audio recording – 3 hours 6 minutes 57 seconds

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager presented the report entitled 'Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme' and drew attention to the following:

- The most recent version of the Forward Plan uploaded on 5 January was still the most recent version ahead of Cabinet meeting in February.
- The Forward Plan would next be updated on 16 February ahead of the Cabinet meeting in March.
- Members should advise the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager, or email the Scrutiny inbox details of any items for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- The report on the Harkness Court Project Call to Account would be presented at the March meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- The draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report would also be presented at the March meeting and would then be referred to Council.
- There were no further updates for the Committee regarding the Local Government Association (LGA) peer review.
- The Scrutiny Officer interviews would take place on 31 January. There had been 9 applications, with 4 people shortlisted for interview.

Monday, 29th January, 2024

- Audio visual equipment was being installed in rooms 2 and 3 to enable the recording and broadcasting of meetings held in those rooms.

In response to a question from Councillor Ralph Muncer, the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager advised that rooms 2 and 3 would not solely be used for scrutiny meetings but could be used for any smaller committees and also Task and Finish groups to enable meetings to be held in a less formal environment to the chamber.

Councillor Adam Compton proposed and Councillor Val Bryant seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee prioritised topics for inclusion in the work programme attached as Appendix A and, where appropriate, determined the high-level form and timing of scrutiny input.
- (2) That the Committee, having considered the most recent iteration of the Forward Plan, as attached at Appendix B, suggested a list of items to be considered at its meetings in the coming civic year.
- (3) That the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan as attached at Appendix C was considered.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To allow the Committee to set a work programme which provides focused Member oversight, encourages open debate and seeks to achieve service improvement through effective policy development and meaningful policy and service change.
- (2) The need to observe Constitutional requirements and monitor the Forward Plan for appropriate items to scrutinise remains a key aspect of work programming.

The meeting closed at 10.42 pm

Chair