

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

5th June 2025

A meeting of the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel was held on Thursday, 5th June 2025 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall Nuneaton.

Present

Councillor C. Phillips (Chair)

Councillors: E. Amaechi, M. Bird, T. Cooper, S. Dhillon, M. Etienne (Vice-Chair), B. Pandher, B. Saru and C. Smith

Apologies: None

PART I – PUBLIC BUSINESS

HC1 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Housing and Communities OSP held on 23rd January 2025 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

HC2 **Declarations of Interest**

RESOLVED that the declarations of interest are as set out in the Schedule available on the website.

HC3 **Questions to Cabinet**

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

Councillor M. Bird asked the following question the Portfolio Holder of Housing:

Can you just confirm that the waiting list for applications is now fully open? It was suspended at one time, wasn't it? But it's fully open now to all applicants, is it?

Councillor C. Watkins, Portfolio Holder for Housing responded as follows:

I think it's I'll have to get back to you with a full response, but as far as I know that there was. People that are in temporary accommodation will get first priority, but I'll get back to you with a full response.

HC4 **Integrated Performance Report – Third and Fourth 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.

The following points were raised:

- It was raised regarding the difficult to let property data was not included in the analysis. The Risk Management and Performance Officer confirmed that only two areas are included for this panel, one general purpose property and the other independent living. The difficult to let properties are excluded from the figures.
- It was raised that the verbal presentation of the report be in line with the written report in order for the panel to better follow the information.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report with consideration given to the verbal presentation of the report be noted.

HC5 Housing Performance Quarter Three and Four 2024/25

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

The panel discussed the following points:

- The panel raised concerns regarding the carbon monoxide monitors and the paperwork being incorrect with the certificate. The Assistant Director advised that because the contractors were using a new PDA system it was not recording the spillage test but the contractors are now using paper forms that is capturing the spillage test. NBBC do have access to the paperwork and certificates to check they have been completed and monitor compliance.
- The panel asked why supply carbon monoxide alarms if there is no gas in the property. The Assistant Director advised that they took advice from Morgan and Lambert and as a belt and braces approach in case of a neighbours house leaking gas it was advised to fit one in all properties.
- The panel asked what work had been done in relation to Damp and Mould to enable the decrease in number of damp and mould cases identified. The Assistant Director advised that a full stock condition survey had been completed last year and a then a 20% survey year on year with a full stock condition survey completed every 5 years.
- The panel asked what are Cat1 Hazards? The Assistant Director advised that this are serious hazards usually associated with damp and mould that would be a high priority for the council.
- The panel enquired after reading a post on social media about if the council have a 'stay put' policy in case of a fire in our social housing. The Assistant Director advised that it does depend on the fabric of the building but in some properties, we do have a 'stay put' policy but we ensure the tenants and fire services are aware of the policy in case of fire evacuation. The Assistant Director also confirmed that none of the council's properties have cladding.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

HC6 Tenant Satisfaction Survey Measures 2024/25

The Assistant Director – Social Housing and Community Safety submitted a report to provide the Panel with the results of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2024/25 prior to being submitted to Cabinet and to the Regulator of Social Housing.

The follow points were raised:

- The panel asked what alternative strategies had been considered to encourage more surveys being completed. The Assistant Director advised that they have offered incentives for example being put into a prize draw for a voucher, there is also Stan the Van and the hub at Lexington Court where staff are available to help fill in questionnaires or help residents. Online surveys have been considered but 54% of residents wanted a paper survey and there are strict criteria that have to be adhered to ensure we have representative assessment.

RESOLVED that

- a) the report be noted;
- b) the Assistant Director – Social Housing and Community Safety be required to work with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Strategic Director for Housing and Communities to utilise the results of the TSM's to improve services and service delivery; and
- c) the Assistant Director be required to consult with the Housing & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel upon any such service and/or service delivery improvements identified.

HC7 Housing Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement 2024/25

A report of the Assistant Director – Social Housing and Community Safety was submitted to the panel providing details of the Social Housing Complaint Handling Code self-assessment 2024/25 along with the Housing Complaints Annual Report for 2024/25.

The panel raised the following points:

- The panel requested an explanation of Stage 1 and Stage 2 for complaints handling. The Assistant Director advised that Stage 1 is when the complaint is logged and a response is given and Stage 2 is if they are not satisfied with the response the complaint is escalated to a senior staff member. If the complainant is not satisfied still then they can submit to the ombudsman.
- The panel noted that there is a low percentage of responses to Stage 2. The Assistant Director advised that the majority of complaints are for Responsive Repairs where the manager is currently off work but a system is now in place and the response rate is improving.
- The panel asked that if the council fail to satisfy a complaint, is this used as evidence of potential staff shortage or lack of resources. The Assistant Director advised that the complaints and responses are looked at and analysed for any service improvements.

RESOLVED that

- a) the report be noted; and

- b) the comments be made as per requirements of the Housing Ombudsman Service.

HC8 **Houses of Multiple Occupancy Working Group**

Due to the change in membership of Cabinet/Committees, the membership of the working group needed to be reviewed.

RESOLVED that

- a) Councillors B. Hughes and Councillor T. Venson be removed from the working group membership due to their appointment as Cabinet Members; and
- b) Councillor C. Phillips and Councillor B. Saru be added to the working group membership.

HC9 **Corporate Plan and Delivery Plan 2025 – 2029**

The Corporate Plan and Delivery Plan showing the strategic aims and themes that the Council are working towards was presented to the panel for information.

RESOLVED that that Corporate Plan and Delivery Plan 2025 – 2029 be noted

HC10 **Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan showing the key decisions that will be made in the four months commencing 1st July 2025, was provided to the Panel for information.

RESOLVED: that the Forward Plan be noted.

HC11 **Work Programme**

The Panel were presented with the Work Programme for the municipal year 2025-2026.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme be approved.

HC12 **Any Other Items**

None

Chair