

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

22nd January 2026

A meeting of the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel was held on Thursday, 22nd January 2026 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall Nuneaton.

Present

Councillor C. Phillips (Chair)
Councillor M. Etienne (Vice-Chair),

Councillors: E. Amaechi, M. Bird, T. Cooper, S. Dhillon, B. Pandher, B. Saru and C. Smith

Apologies: None

PART I – PUBLIC BUSINESS

HC27 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Housing and Communities OSP held on 25th September 2025 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the chair.

HC28 **Declarations of Interest**

RESOLVED that the declarations of interest are as set out in the Schedule available on the website. [Councillor Schedule of Declarations of Interests for Meetings | Councillor Declarations of Interests for Meetings | Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council](#)

HC29 **Questions to Cabinet**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing (Councillor C. Watkins) and Communities & Public Services (Councillor K. Price) was in attendance to answer questions from the Panel.

No questions were asked.

HC30 **Motion from Extraordinary Council – 16th September 2025**

A motion was put forward and agreed at full council held on 16th September 2025, this is as follows:

‘The Chief Executive be requested to write to the Home Office, Serco, Warwickshire Police and Warwickshire County Council (Communities Team) to invite them to an extraordinary meeting of the Housing and Communities OSP to be called by the Chief Executive to scrutinise the placement, housing, monitoring and support of asylum seekers within Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough. The NBBC Communities Team is also to attend the extraordinary meeting. ‘

The following representatives were in attendance:

- John Coleman (Director – Children and Families from Warwickshire County Council)
- Insp. Ryan Walker (Inspector – Warwickshire Police)

- Abu Malek (Communities and Community Safety Manager – Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC))
- Dawn Dawson (Strategic Director – Housing and Communities – NBBC)
- County Councillor George Finch (Leader of WCC)
- County Councillor Dale Bridgewater (Portfolio Holder for Community Safety)

No representatives from SERCO or Home Office were in attendance

Public Speakers:

- County Councillor Keith Kondakor
- Lesley Nelson (Priory Street Residents Group)
- Heather Kincaid
- Councillor Michele Kondakor
- Councillor Kris Wilson

The following points were raised and are summarised:

- The panel questioned how the Dispersal Grant is spent, the WCC Director - John Coleman responded that the grant is divided by the Borough and Districts and WCC. WCC allocate money towards English courses, equipment and to help induct them into the UK. The courses are voluntary and cannot be enforced. We receive numbers from SERCO/ Home Office it does not detail where they are placed. We will raise with SERCO if there are any issues we need to be aware of but receive very limited information. When an asylum seeker enters the country, they are interviewed by Border Force and they will raise any risks with SERCO/Home Office
- A panel member was concerned that very little information is given to Police and the Council regarding where the asylum seekers are settled and if there are any identified risks for the community.
- A panel member asked if the grant is put towards giving them an activity as you cannot work when you are an asylum seeker. The Strategic Director – Housing and Communities responded that they work with support partners responding to the needs presenting and putting programmes in place that will help the most amount of people however it is not mandatory to take part.
- A panel member asked if the Passport to Leisure could be looked at for asylum seekers giving them access to activities and integrated in the community. The Strategic Director – Housing and Communities advised that they need to seek advice from their partners and see what is currently in place for asylum seekers to access.

It was moved and seconded that Cabinet be asked to examine the possibility of giving asylum seekers access to the Passport to Leisure Scheme and that the minutes of the Priory Street Resident Groups be retrieved and brought to the next meeting.

RESOLVED that

- a) it be recommended to Cabinet to examine the possibility of giving access to the Passport to Leisure Scheme for asylum seekers; and
- b) the minutes of the Priory Street Residents Group be brought to the next meeting of the Housing and Communities OSP.

HC31 **Integrated Performance Report – Quarter 2 2025/26**

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.

RESOLVED that the report be noted

HC32 **Voluntary Sector and Community Sector Performance**

The Community and Community Safety Manager presented the report to the panel.

The panel expressed their thanks for collating the report and to the other voluntary groups for providing vital support to the residents of the Borough.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

HC33 **Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) Working Group**

A verbal update of the progress of the HMO Working Group was given to the panel by the Strategic Director – Housing and Communities and a vice chair was sought for the Working Group.

A summary of the update is as follows:

- Progress is being made in producing a Frequently Asked Questions Mythbusting fact sheet on HMO's which will be published on the council website.
- Not all HMO's contain asylum seekers, often they are used by young professionals or can be used to house victims of domestic violence. In addition, with the shortage of social housing, well managed HMOs can be utilised for this.
- Planning are involved in considering Article 4 and the working group will be examining the evidence that would be required for this and the impact it would have on HMOs.
- Licensing for HMO's is also being discussed in respect of the conditions of the licence that could be attached to the HMO.

Public Speakers:

Russ Dyable (from Rent-a-Room)
County Councillor Keith Kondakor
Councillor Michele Kondakor

RESOLVED that

a) the update be noted;

b) Councillor M. Bird be elected as the Vice-Chair of the Working Group;

c) Russ Dyable (Rent-a-Room) be invited to the next meeting of the Working Group to provide information on selective licensing conditions.

HC34 **Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan showing the key decisions that will be made in the four months commencing 1st February 2026, was provided to the Panel for information.

RESOLVED: that the Forward Plan be noted.

HC35 **Work Programme**

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

RESOLVED that the Work Programme be approved with the following addition:

- the inclusion of a report on new council houses being built and community cohesion activities; and
- Information on HMO be a standing item.

HC36 **Any Other Items**

None

Chair