

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Thursday, 13th June, 2024 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Halleh Koohestani (Chairman)
Cllr Nadia Martin (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr S. Trussler (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Leola Card
Cllr A.H. Crawford
Cllr P.J. Cullum
Cllr Thomas Day
Cllr C.P. Grattan
Cllr G.B. Lyon
Cllr Bill O'Donovan
Cllr M.J. Tennant

1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Cllrs. Nadia Martin and S. Trussler be appointed as Vice-Chairmen of the Committee for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th March, 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

3. REGISTERED PROVIDERS TASK AND FINISH GROUP - ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

The Committee welcomed, Tim Mills, Executive Head of Property and Growth, Zoe Paine, Strategy and Enabling Manager, and Sarah Clark, Strategic Housing Officer, who were in attendance to provide the Registered Providers Task and Finish Group 2023/24 Annual Report. Report No. PG2418, set out the purpose of the Group, which allowed Members to monitor the performance of the local Registered Providers and helped build working relationships to resolve residents issues. Outlined in the Report were areas that were working well, where there was cause for concern and any issues that needed to be monitored.

During 2023/24 the Group had met with A2 Dominion, VIVID Homes and Riverside Group. It was also noted that the team had extended an invite to Vivo/Pinnacle, who managed army accommodation situated within the Borough, however a response had not been forthcoming and this had been escalated to senior management based at the Aldershot Garrison to assist in setting up a meeting.

Following a discussion, the Committee identified a number of points, these included:

- Provision on a direct line to all registered housing providers, similar to that set up with VIVID
- A list of contacts for each provider, including Area Managers and Chief Executive Officers
- Data on retrofitting, including insulation – what had been done and where?
- Better understanding of vacancies within the military area
- Request to meet with the larger providers more frequently to ensure continuity and ease of holding to account
- Data on the number of complaints received by each provider and the nature of the complaints, damp/mould etc.
- Provision of a schedule of who has been seen in recent years, to help guide the discussion on who should be seen in 2024/25 (VIVID seen every year)
- Use of a questionnaire for smaller providers to help keep a watching brief on the current situation and highlight areas of concern should they arise
- Better understanding of service level agreements (SLA) on response times to customer queries/complaints

In response to the issues engaging with Vivo/Pinnacle, it was recommended that a letter be written to the Defence Select Committee and future Veterans Minister raising the issue and asking for support.

The recommendations set out in the Report were ENDORSED and the Committee felt that developing a more strategic relationship with the Registered Providers would help understand the providers business objectives and how they aligned with the Council's priorities.

4. HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION STRATEGY

The Committee again welcomed, Tim Mills, Executive Head of Property and Growth, Zoe Paine, Strategy and Enabling Manager, and Sarah Clark, Strategic Housing Officer, who were in attendance to report on the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy. Report No. PG2417, set out the aims of the strategy which was in place to ensure all residents had access to good quality housing at all stages of life and could access a range of appropriate support and advice to deal with housing related issues, including preventing homelessness and maintaining housing standards.

The Strategy had three themes, and the progress against each was set out in the report. It was advised that Service and Technical Managers had included action points within their service plans to enable effective progress tracking and reporting. Cross team collaboration and a project management approach to delivery had ensured that actions were appropriately planned for and resourced. The approach also ensured a greater transparency of monitoring and reporting.

The Board discussed the Report and the following comments/queries were made:

- With regard to the delivery of housing need, what is the number of stalled developments in the Borough? How many developments are started but not completed? and, how many have not been started to date?
- What is the amount of SANG available after 2032?
- Data required to help understanding of future reports:
 - Affordability of housing on a local and national level
 - Local employment data
- Use of social media for engagement with young people – is it the correct platform, what will we learn from it? Use of local charities, such as Step by Step and church organisations, to assist with engaging with young people
- Extend engagement to a wider audience, such as the Nepalese community, the elderly, disabled residents, carers, those suffering from mental health issues etc.
- Is the Council on track to provide the right number of affordable homes?
- How many people are currently homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, in the Borough?
- Recommendation to request that the Cabinet review the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy

It was advised that the additional requests for data would be added to the Committee's action tracker and shared with officers. The request to review the strategy had been noted and a meeting of the Progress Group would be identified to scope the purpose of the review.

The Chairman thanked, Mr Mills and Ms' Paine and Clark for their Reports.

5. **APPOINTMENTS 2024/25**

RESOLVED: That the following Members be appointed to serve on the following Groups for the 2024/25 Municipal Year:

Overview and Scrutiny Progress Group

Chairman	Cllr Halleh Koohestani
Vice-Chairmen	Cllr S. Trussler
Labour Group	Cllr Thomas Day
	Cllr C.P. Grattan
	Cllr Bill O'Donovan
Conservative Group	Cllr P.J. Cullum
Liberal Democrat	Cllr Leola Card

Council Tax Support Task and Finish Group

Vice-Chairman	Cllr S. Trussler
Labour Group	Cllr C.P. Grattan
	Cllr Lisa Greenway
	Cllr M.J. Roberts
Conservative Group	Cllr P.J. Cullum

Farnborough Airport Task and Finish Group

Chairmen	Cllr Halleh Koohestani
Labour Group	Cllr A.H. Crawford
*	Cllr Bill O'Donovan
Conservative Group	Cllr P.J. Cullum
	Cllr G.B. Lyon
Liberal Democrat	Cllr C. Card

*Cllr Jules Crossley would be invited to the meeting as and when appropriate

Review of Registered Providers Task and Finish Group

Chairman	Cllr Halleh Koohestani
Labour Group	Cllr Gaynor Austin
	Cllr Bill O'Donovan
Conservative Group	Cllr S.J Masterson
	Cllr M.D. Smith

6. WORK PLAN

The Committee noted the current Work Plan and the proposed items for the August and September meetings. In August SERCO would be attending the meeting and in September, the Police and Community Safety Team would be in attendance.

Following a discussion, the items below would be considered by the Progress Group at their first meeting:

- Financial Position/CIPFA Report
- Key Priorities for the New Leadership
- Union Yard
- Leisure Facilities
- Hampshire Highways
- Water Quality

The meeting closed at 9.21 pm.

CLLR HALLEH KOOHESTANI (CHAIRMAN)
