

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Thursday, 12th June, 2025 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Halleh Koohestani (Chairman)
Cllr Nadia Martin (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr M.J. Tennant (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Abe Allen
Cllr Leola Card
Cllr Thomas Day
Cllr Steve Harden
Cllr G.B. Lyon
Cllr Bill O'Donovan
Cllr Becky Williams

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr S. Trussler.

Cllr Mara Makunura attended the meeting as a Standing Deputy.

1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Cllrs. Nadia Martin and M.J. Tennant be appointed as Vice-Chairmen of the Committee for the 2025/26 Municipal Year.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th March, 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

3. REGISTERED PROVIDERS TASK AND FINISH GROUP - ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

The Committee welcomed Mrs Zoe Paine, Strategy and Enabling Manager, who was in attendance to provide the Annual Report on the work of the Registered Providers Task and Finish Group during the 2024/25 Municipal Year. Cllr Keith Dibble, Housing and Planning Portfolio Holder was also in attendance to answer Members questions.

Mrs Paine, advised on the purpose, membership, terms of reference and process of the Group. It was noted that the Terms of Reference had been amended to fit with the new Council priorities and Registered Providers (RPs) that had not been invited to meet with the Group had been asked to complete a questionnaire online, only three had completed this.

It was noted that the three invited RPs had been, Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing Association (MTVHA), A2 Dominion and VIVID. Engaging with the largest provider of social housing in the area, VIVID, had been challenging, with them refusing to meet with the Group, but offering an all Member seminar instead. It was felt that the level of engagement achieved in a seminar would not be the same as achieved in a smaller meeting with appropriate representatives from the housing association. It was noted that Managing Director, Ian Harrison, would be meeting with VIVID's Chief Executive, Mark Perry, later in June, and part of the agenda for the meeting would be to discuss engagement with the RP Group. In the cases on A2 Dominion and MTVHA, less senior members of staff had been sent to the meeting than in previous years, resulting in more operational conversations rather than the desired strategic discussions.

During the discussion, a number of comments/suggestions were made, these included:

- establish a timetable that allowed more RPs to be seen more frequently – see those performing well, not just those that are not performing
- explore the use of communications channels to raise awareness of issues raised/poor performance – “name and shame”
- explore the option of working with the local MP to improve engagement
- RPs should be responding to all councillors equally
- address the work flow/process of the Task and Finish Group before calling out RPs on performance – important to retain good relationships
- establish what we want the RPs to be doing in the Borough, by being more strategic and time efficient
- establish a scoring system to rate RPs
- work with the Task and Finish Group to revise the questionnaire to ensure relevance – currently very long and could be reason why response rates were low
- work with neighbours linked through Local Government Reorganisation to strengthen voices and raise issues wider
- review how we work internally
- improve engagement on the wider community benefits/assets – open spaces, parking areas, playgrounds, community buildings etc.

In response, the Portfolio Holder advised that, together with the Leader of the Council and the Managing Director, he would be meeting with the top five social housing providers in the Borough to talk through the relationship with the Council and the importance of establishing good working relationships to help provide an acceptable service for residents. He also suggested gathering data from the Ombudsman, via Freedom of Information requests, to be armed with evidence based data to challenge performance at an executive level. In response to the suggestion to review internal working methods, Cllr Dibble felt that things had changes significantly since the Group was first established and that this would be a good starting point for any changes.

In summary, the Chair noted that the situation with RPs had changed significantly and suggested that the Group consider its Terms of Reference and question the best

use of time to achieve strategic discussion with relevant RP partners. Consideration would also be given to the makeup of the Group and the option to widen the membership.

ACTION

What	Whom	When
The Chairman to write to the Managing Director to express the disappointment of the Committee in relation to the lack of engagement from Registered Providers, in particular VIVID, on a strategic level with the RP Group.	Cllr Halleh Koohestani	24 June 2025

The Chairman thanked Cllr Dibble and Mrs Paine for their time and contributions to the meeting.

4. APPOINTMENTS 2025/26

RESOLVED: That the following Members be appointed to serve on the following Groups for the 2025/26 Municipal Year:

(1) Overview and Scrutiny Progress Group

Chairman	Cllr Halleh Koohestani
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Nadia Martin
Vice-Chairman	Cllr M.J. Tennant
Labour Group	Cllr Thomas Day
	Cllr Bill O'Donovan
Conservative Group	Cllr G.B. Lyon
Liberal Democrat	Cllr Leola Card

(2) Council Tax Support Task and Finish Group

Labour Group	Cllr C.P. Grattan
	Cllr Halleh Koohestani
	Cllr M.J. Roberts
Conservative Group	Cllr P.J. Cullum
	Cllr S. Trussler

(3) Farnborough Airport Task and Finish Group

Chairman	Cllr Halleh Koohestani
Labour Group	Cllr Abe Allen
*	Cllr Bill O'Donovan
Conservative Group	Cllr P.J. Cullum
	Cllr G.B. Lyon
Liberal Democrat	Cllr C. Card

*Cllr Jules Crossley (Portfolio Holder for Policy, Performance and Sustainability) would be invited to the meeting as and when appropriate

It was noted that any meetings of the Farnborough Airport Task and Finish Group, which was tasked to look at the environmental and economic impacts of the airport, would be adjourned until the outstanding planning application had been determined.

(4) 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

5. WORK PLAN

The Committee noted the current Work Plan and the proposed items for the July and September meetings. In July, Ms Paine would provide a report on the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy and in September, the Police and Community Safety Team would be in attendance.

The Committee considered the Council Delivery Plan 2025/26 and the Council Plan, Performance and Risk Register Quarterly Update and Year End 2024/25 Cabinet Report and identified a number of items for consideration, these included:

- Leisure Centre
- Finance
- Communications Strategy
 - Community Engagement
 - Youth Engagement
 - How we consult?
 - Transparency of the Council – decision making and communications
- Environmental Services
 - SERCO
 - Walk this Waste Pilot
- Community Safety
- Economic Development
 - Town Centre development (town square funding)
 - support for businesses
- Local Government Reorganisation
- Social Housing - allocation process

At the meeting of the Progress Group on 17th June, a discussion would be held on how to take these items forward and the potential of focussing items to sit within the five priority areas identified in the Delivery Plan.

In addition, it was agreed that, the Cabinet Champion reports could again be considered outside a meeting in the form of a written report from each Champion and that the voluntary sector organisations, Citizens' Advice Rushmoor and Rushmoor Voluntary Services should not be required to attend during the 2025/26 Municipal Year.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

CLLR HALLEH KOOHESTANI (CHAIRMAN)
