

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

22 JANUARY 2014

Present: Councillor K Collett (Chair)
Councillor A Khan (Vice-Chair)
Councillors J Aron, N Bell, S Greenslade, K Hastrick, S Johnson
and A Lovejoy

Also present: Tina Barnard (Watford Community Housing Trust) and
Gareth Lewis (Watford Community Housing Trust)

Officers: Committee and Scrutiny Officer
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (RW)

54 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Martins.

Apologies had also been received from Councillors Dhindsa, Chair of Budget Panel and Councillor Rackett, Vice-Chair of Budget Panel.

55 **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY)**

Councillor Hastrick informed the Scrutiny Committee that with reference to minute number 57, she was on Watford Community Housing Trust's Board and therefore would not take part in the discussion of that item.

56 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2013 were submitted and signed.

57 **PREVIOUS REVIEW UPDATE: WATFORD COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST**

The Scrutiny Committee received Watford Community Housing Trust's latest response to the Task Group's recommendations.

The Chair welcomed Tina Barnard, the Chief Executive, and Gareth Lewis, Director of Property & New Business to the Scrutiny Committee. She thanked them for attending the meeting and the speed with which they had responded to the requests for information and updates.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the responses and discussed some in more detail.

Recommendation 2 – To inform residents that their neighbourhood teams are available to clarify any issues.

Following a question from Councillor Aron about methods of communication with residents, Tina Barnard explained that in addition to “Gateway News”, leaflets were provided to tenants, which included all contact details of the Neighbourhood Teams and their photographs. It was sometimes difficult to ensure that a particular officer was available if people arrived at the offices without an appointment.

The Chair asked whether it would be possible for all Councillors to receive a copy of “Gateway News” as she had seen it in the past and had found it extremely useful.

Tina Barnard stated that she would ensure that all Members received an electronic copy.

Recommendation 3 – the Handbook must be made more user-friendly, updated regularly and accessible to all residents.

In response to a question from the Chair, Tina Barnard advised that the next Communications Group meeting would take place in March. The Group would look at the detailed draft of the handbook. It was proposed that the final version would be produced soon after that meeting. The aim was to ensure that all the information was available in one place and to reduce the number of separate leaflets.

Recommendation 4 – To improve clarity in presentation of bills sent to residents ensuring that all charges are clearly itemised.

Councillor Aron enquired how the Trust signposted people to staff and other organisations. She acknowledged the Trust was required to produce the bills in a prescribed format but questioned whether the other information was lost.

Tina Barnard responded that this was a big challenge for the Trust. When the bill was sent to residents it was accompanied by a letter which encouraged them to approach the Housing Trust, the Credit Union or Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) if they were experiencing difficulties. In addition, the information was included in “Gateway News”. The details were provided on a regular basis throughout the year.

Councillor Khan said that he wanted to thank the original Task Group, which he had chaired, for their work. The Task Group had raised some good points which the Housing Trust had taken on board. He said that a key issue which had arisen during feedback from residents was the accuracy and clarity of bills. He referred to an example where some residents had been charged for Legionnaire testing even though they did not have a water tank.

Tina Barnard said that this was a valid point and it was acknowledged that some mistakes had been made. She assured Members that anyone who had been

charged incorrectly would be refunded. Officers were working to ensure that the errors did not recur when the new bills were issued in March.

Recommendation 5 – To provide a clear process for residents to query any charges with which they disagree.

Councillor Khan enquired whether the bills clearly explained the process of how residents could raise questions about the accuracy of their bills.

Tina Barnard stated that she was unable to provide a definite answer but would make sure that the information was available to residents.

Recommendation 6 – To reduce the waiting time for residents to an ‘industry acceptable’ service. The telephone should be answered within six rings.

In response to a question about staffing arrangements for telephone calls to the Trust’s office, Tina Barnard explained that the Customer Service Centre arrangements were similar to those of the Council. There were approximately eight people who answered calls to the office. The person on the reception was rarely required to respond to external calls. This matter was one of the biggest priorities for the Trust. On Monday, at the Trust’s Executive meeting, a team of officers had given a presentation about this matter. She assured Members that it was being taken very seriously by the Trust.

Following a comment from Councillor Bell, Tina Barnard advised that residents were encouraged to use direct lines whenever possible. At this time of year a number of people experienced issues with their gas supply. When residents contacted the Trust the automated response gave a different number for gas enquiries. It was recognised that residents did not always hear this part of the message therefore officers were looking at other ways to communicate this information, for example on fridge magnets.

Councillor Johnson said that he was encouraged the Trust was taking this matter seriously. He had been surprised at the responses at the meeting with the Task Group. The main telephone number was often the first point of contact for residents and waiting times of between 10 and 13 minutes were unacceptable. On one occasion he had telephoned the Trust on a Monday morning, when someone answered his call he was told that he should not ring on a Monday as it was always busy on that day. He asked whether more staff were made available to respond to calls when it was busy.

Tina Barnard apologised if Members did not feel that she had taken the Members’ concerns seriously. She advised that she would report the Councillor’s comments to the Team. There were often peak times when more calls to the office were generated. Additional staff were available on Mondays and Tuesdays which were often busier. More support could be provided to the Customer Service centre as necessary.

Councillor Khan stated that Members were concerned as this was a front-facing element of the Trust’s service. He had noted the latest response from the Trust

indicated that the improvement plan would be delivered in Quarter 4 of 2013/14. He asked if more information could be provided.

Tina Barnard informed the Scrutiny Panel that the improvement plan was being actioned now. A number of improved changes to processes had been agreed at the Executive meeting on Monday. She explained that Quarter 4 covered the period from January to March.

In response to a question from the Chair about alternative systems, Tina Barnard advised that the Trust had a call-back system. She said that residents would be encouraged to use it. Feedback had been received that indicated people were reluctant to use it as they were unsure whether they would be called back by a member of staff. The information was published in "Gateway News".

Councillor Johnson commented that he could not see the point of a call back system as the customer still had to wait by the telephone and was unable to use it.

Tina Barnard responded that a major review was being undertaken and changes were being put in place. She assured Members that she believed in continuous improvement.

Councillor Counter asked whether there was a defined time limit within which the Trust would respond to the customer. Tina Barnard advised that she believed that the operator would call the person back after they had completed their existing call. She said she would report back to Members with definite information.

Councillor Khan stated that the recommendation had been submitted due to residents' frustration, which had been reported to Councillors. He asked whether the Chief Executive could provide a definite time frame. Tina Barnard said that she could assure Members that this matter was also frustrating for her. The team were aware of this matter and the aim was to get to the standard 'norm' as soon as possible. The speed of response was affected by the volume of calls. It had been made clear that further work needed to be done.

Councillor Bell asked whether the out of hours service was being reviewed as there were occasions when residents could not get through to someone. Tina Barnard informed the Scrutiny Committee that the Trust used an external company to provide the out of hours response. She was not aware there had been any problems with this service and asked Members to provide her with any information highlighting the matter.

Following a comment from Councillor Johnson, Tina Barnard said that it was important that people were put in contact with the right person; answering the telephone was key to this. An example of how this could be improved was by the use of direct lines. The Team had been tasked with looking at the types of call and how delays could be minimised.

Recommendation 7 – A free phone number should be introduced for residents to call the Trust.

Councillor Khan commented that it was excellent that the number was already in place but people needed to be signposted to it more. He added that the number was not available on the front page of the website. This also linked to recommendation 6. When people did not have their telephone calls answered, they became frustrated and gave up. This meant that their problem did not get resolved. He asked whether the Housing Trust kept a record of 'dropped' calls.

Tina Barnard responded that the Trust did have records of calls to the organisation. She said that she took on board the comments about signposting people to the free phone number. She advised that the number was available on the Trust's website and in "Gateway News". She acknowledged that it was not available on the front page and would ensure that this was resolved.

Recommendation 8 – The Trust website must be updated daily to ensure its contact details are current.

Councillor Aron asked whether the Chief Executive could elaborate on the 'noted' response in the update. She enquired whether the information was provided by staff or tenants or both.

Tina Barnard informed the Scrutiny Committee that the relevant contact details were available on each page of the website. A lot of information did not change. Tenants could provide information to partner organisations, for example residents' groups. The Trust could provide a link to those websites but it was the responsibility of those organisations to ensure their websites were updated.

Recommendation 10 – Staff who communicate with residents must have regular training.

The Chair congratulated the Housing Trust on its recent Investors in People Gold accreditation.

Councillor Khan said that this recommendation had arisen as a result of feedback from a tenant who had said they felt intimidated by officers. Residents needed reassurance. He asked about the processes in place to resolve complaints.

Tina Barnard responded that it depended on the individual tenant. There were occasions when a tenant might require an advocate to assist them; this could be a councillor or Social Worker. There may be occasions when another member of staff would be used. She assured Members that there were different methods that could be used to meet the needs of different tenants.

Recommendation 11 – A clear process needs to be put in place where vulnerable residents are recognised and services provided to them to meet their individual needs.

Councillor Bell stated that Members were concerned about vulnerable tenants. He asked for further information which explained how the trust tailored its service for people. In addition he enquired whether the Trust knew where vulnerable tenants were living.

Tina Barnard informed Members that the Trust had a detailed housing management system which contained as much information on tenants as possible. She advised that it was not possible to force people to give the Trust information and it had to be mindful of Data Protection rules. The Trust worked with other organisations. If a vulnerable person was registered in the system they would already have an advocate in place. She was aware that the Trust did not know all the vulnerable people in its properties. Case conferences were held about individuals where there were concerns. They also worked with the Police as necessary.

Councillor Aron asked how the Trust monitored those individuals who lived in isolated properties, i.e. properties not located in estates.

Tina Barnard explained that the Trust had 5,000 homes and a Neighbourhood Team of four. Each member of that Team was responsible for over 1,000 properties. The Trust's role was as a landlord and it had to be recognised that some tenants did not engage with the Trust. She reiterated that the Trust worked with other organisations and gave the example of the Partnership Protected Area work. She added that in some areas a tenancy audit had been carried out.

Recommendation 12 – The process to communicate with vulnerable residents must be clear. Staff should be proactive in dealing with vulnerable residents.

The Chair stated that she had been present on the Safer Streets campaign in Woodside. The team had covered four roads in the ward. During their visit they had been able to identify a number of vulnerable people. A representative from the Trust had been present. The Chair asked whether the Trust would take part in future campaigns.

Tina Barnard said that she would welcome the Trust being involved in future events. It had been labour intensive. The reason the Partnership Protected Areas worked was due to organisations working together. She would encourage other organisations to participate.

Councillor Johnson informed the meeting that the event would be taking place in Leggatts on Sunday. He hoped representatives from the Housing Trust would be present. Tina Barnard stated she would ensure that someone was present.

Recommendation 13 – Services Charges must be constantly reviewed.

Councillor Aron said that she had looked at a number of the Trust's leaflets. She asked how residents could raise concerns about the services charges and whether the Trust took their comments into account.

Tina Barnard assured Members that residents had shared their concerns and the Trust had listened and made changes. Grounds Maintenance had been delayed for one year. Originally the services charges were to be phased in over three years and this had now been changed to five years. The Trust was aware that some people had been charged for services they did not receive and this would be corrected in the new bills. Grounds maintenance had been the most controversial charge. The Trust had listened to people and the decision had been taken to not charge people if the grounds were not within the curtilage of their property.

Recommendation 14 – Services Charges should be itemised for each individual property and items clearly defined.

Councillor Khan said that residents had been confused about the service charges and did not know if they were right or wrong. Residents had approached their local Councillors to find out more information. They were not aware of the services they were being charged for and those they were not.

Tina Barnard replied that she had received numerous emails and letters about service charges. She said that she would ensure Members received a copy of the revised service charge schedule. She would arrange for a councillor briefing to be set up.

Recommendation 15 – The 'first time' satisfaction rate must be increased substantially

Gareth Lewis explained to the Scrutiny Committee that it was not always possible to complete repairs on the first visit. There were occasions when it was necessary to carry out a diagnosis on the first visit to be able to understand the problem and complete the repair on the next visit. For example, the recent bad weather had caused a number of fencing related problems. In these cases it was necessary to find out what exactly had happened before the repair could be carried out.

Councillor Johnson referred to a resident who had contacted him about the difficulties she had experienced waiting for a fault to be repaired. He was unable to provide the full details of the resident as she had asked him not to inform the Trust. Councillor Johnson said that he noted the responses referred to the top five Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and asked for further explanation.

Tina Barnard informed Members that the top five KPIs were –

- % of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided
- % of current rent arrears

- % of repairs we completed right at the first visit
- % of tenants that think the Trust listens to them
- % of tenants finding it easy to get hold of the right person.

In response to Councillor Johnson's comments about the resident's experience, Gareth Lewis advised that he would personally investigate the matter. He asked Councillor Johnson to contact the resident and give his assurance and seek her approval for him to be given her details.

Councillor Khan commented that one of the most common complaints from residents to Councillors was about repairs not being completed first time. He said that he was pleased that this was one of the five KPIs, however the target of 79% would still mean that one fifth of residents would not be satisfied. He suggested that the Trust should aim to achieve a higher target. He asked how the Trust intended to resolve this matter.

Gareth Lewis advised that the Trust was working on improving processes. He said that it was important that the repairs team was given the right information. It was sometimes necessary to visit to diagnose problems before repairs could be carried out.

In response to a further question from Councillor Khan, Tina Barnard explained that the information given to the team was often not precise enough to know the exact problem and a diagnosis would need to be carried out first. It was sometimes difficult for a lay person to provide the precise information needed. She said that this was another area which the Task Group had identified and was an area the Trust wanted to ensure was improved. The Trust recognised that the most important matters for residents were that the telephone was answered promptly and that repairs were completed. For the organisation it was important that the rent was received.

Tina Barnard said that people generally remembered bad experiences. The Trust needed to manage the repairs service better. If a repair needed more than one visits then the tenant should be informed and given an explanation for the repeat visit. The Trust needed to work on managing people's expectations. She added that the Trust took this matter very seriously and she urged Members to encourage people to contact the Trust. It was necessary to minimise service failures.

Members stated that they were encouraged by the Chief Executive's comments.

Councillor Khan outlined an experience a tenant had reported to him and their frustration that their problem had not been resolved. Small problems could develop into larger ones if they were not resolved quickly.

Tina Barnard reiterated that it was necessary to manage people's expectations. She apologised if Members felt that she had been defensive on the previous occasion. She assured them that she did take these concerns seriously.

Recommendation 16 – A much more vigorous monitoring of contractors by managers must be undertaken.

Councillor Khan said that he welcomed the Trust's updates and asked that the Trust continued to ensure reliability.

Tina Barnard stated that the Trust had learnt a great deal following the experiences with a previous gas contractor. She reminded councillors to encourage residents to tell the Trust if they experienced any difficulties with a contractor as this would enable the Trust to resolve the problems.

Recommendation 17 – Residents to be positively encouraged to return satisfaction surveys.

The Chair welcomed the Housing Trust's latest update. She felt it was good to find ways to encourage residents to respond to surveys.

Recommendation 18 – The Trust must be much more accountable to its residents and stakeholders.

Councillor Aron said that she had seen a copy of "Everyone Matters" and asked whether it would be possible for all councillors to be provided with a copy.

Tina Barnard advised that this document had previously been circulated to all councillors, however it could be circulated again. She added that a new document had recently been produced called 'Positive Impact' and she would ensure it was emailed to all councillors.

Councillor Khan commented that, when residents were experiencing difficulties, councillors were often their last 'port of call'. He said that councillors and the Trust needed to work in partnership as they had a common interest – the welfare of residents.

Tina Barnard informed Members that there was an annual stakeholders' meeting. This was a chance for the Trust to show stakeholders what had been achieved over the year. People were able to ask questions. She advised that the Trust engaged with local ward councillors and residents about new developments. She cautioned that there may be times when there was some disagreement between the various parties.

Recommendation 20 – The Trust should reaffirm its commitment that the development of 500 new homes in the areas of Watford and Three Rivers by 2016 is a main objective of its business plan.

Councillor Johnson asked how many units had been built and whether the Trust would meet its target.

Gareth Lewis advised that nearly 200 properties had either been completed, were on site, in planning or pre-application stage. He confirmed that the new units in Clarendon Road were included within that figure.

Councillor Johnson said that in his opinion the 500 new properties should be affordable homes.

Tina Barnard stated that the Trust would like to develop more properties but it was necessary to have the funds available and the sites. Types of developments, such as Clarendon Road, helped the Trust to develop and support the other properties. She informed the Scrutiny Committee that on Thursday the Trust was having a ground breaking ceremony at a site in Three Rivers. The planning application had been submitted for the Holywell development. She added that the Trust would be interested in being involved in the Health Campus development.

The Chair said that she was pleased the Trust wanted to create affordable homes. She was aware that there was a desperate need in London for affordable homes for key workers.

Councillor Khan commented that, in his opinion, the figure of 500 should be for social housing. Watford had a restricted amount of space which could be developed. He welcomed the Trust's commitment to consult with local Councillors and residents. He asked whether there was a map available which indicated where the Trust proposed to build.

Tina Barnard advised that the plan was not publicly available. The Trust's Board had been provided with the information. The objective by the end of 2015 was to ensure that the properties were in the 'pipeline'. She said that the information would be shared with Members.

Councillor Bell said that he had welcomed the consultation with Members about the new development in Holywell. The Trust had taken people's comments on board. He assured the Chief Executive that Members wanted to work with the Trust. He wished that the 500 properties could all be social housing. He added that it was necessary to work in innovative ways.

Performance indicators

The Chair noted the quarterly performance information for value for money. She asked whether the Trust had any suggestions why it might have gone down and whether there were any plans to improve it.

Tina Barnard responded that this was a challenging area and was affected by other things, for example how quickly the telephone was answered. She explained that the Housing Trust's rent was 42% of the current market rent. It was acknowledged that people found it difficult if they were earning low wages or their benefits had changed. The indicator fluctuated. For example when the new bills were issued the indicator would go down but gradually improve over time. It was likely that something had happened during quarter 3 to affect this indicator.

Councillor Greenslade referred to the changes in the benefits system. She asked whether the Trust had noticed whether vulnerable tenants were struggling to pay their rent since the changes.

Tina Barnard advised that there had been concerns that the benefit changes would have an impact. The Trust had reviewed the rent processes. The Trust had contacted people who it was thought might be affected and carried out one to one meetings. More resources had been put into the financial inclusion team. People were informed how they could maximise their money and minimise their costs. The Trust had worked with other organisations, including the Council, to look at ways to help reduce their costs. She explained the example of the external wall insulation scheme in Boundary Way which would help to reduce residents' utility costs. Some people had chosen to downsize and others had been helped to get back into work. Some tenants had applied for discretionary housing payments to help them. The work had been labour intensive but it was important to support people.

Tina Barnard informed the Scrutiny Committee that she was the Chair of Watford Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). The manager had advised her that the organisation had not seen an increase in people seeking help. She reminded Members that if people told them they were experiencing financial difficulties they should tell them to contact the Trust, CAB or Credit Union.

The Chair suggested that the Chief Executive should be invited back to the Scrutiny Committee in September to update Members on the progress of the plans highlighted in the meeting. The Scrutiny Committee agreed to this suggestion.

The Chair thanked Tina Barnard and Gareth Lewis for attending the meeting. She felt that a bond had been developed between the Trust and councillors. The Task Group had originally been set up due to residents contacting councillors with their concerns. The Task Group had made suggestions to the Trust to help it improve. She considered there was a stronger working relationship between the two organisations.

Councillor Khan said that, as Chair of the original Task Group, he wished to thank the Trust for their co-operation with the Task Group. He remarked that at Cabinet Councillor Crout, whose portfolio included housing, had asked that his thanks were conveyed to the Task Group for carrying out a thorough review. He agreed that a relationship had been developed between the Trust and Councillors.

The Chair thanked the residents for attending and listening to the discussion.

RESOLVED –

1. that Watford Community Housing Trust's update be noted.
2. that Watford Community Housing Trust be invite to Overview and Scrutiny Committee's September meeting.

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS AND QUESTIONS

The Scrutiny Committee received updates on questions and actions raised at previous meetings.

PI 37 – Performance information

The Chair asked Members to put forward suggestions on which performance areas they would like to look at in more detail. She had considered whether Members might want to scrutinise the automated telephone answering system used by the Council and monitor its progress since it had been installed.

Councillor Khan informed the Scrutiny Committee that the Audit Committee had reviewed the Council's Risk Register. One area of concern he had noted was homelessness and the potential pressures on the use of temporary bed and breakfast accommodation. He suggested that this Scrutiny Committee might wish to review that area and find out how officers were trying to mitigate the potential risk. It was agreed that officers would be approached to present a report to the next meeting.

HSC 3 – Health Scrutiny Committee Update

Councillor Khan commented on the financial position of the Health Trust and suggested that the Scrutiny Committee should become more involved in scrutinising health related matters and the practicalities.

Councillor Johnson stated that he felt mental health provision was lacking locally and needed investigating.

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer informed Members that the Health Scrutiny Committee had an extensive work programme and she would check to see if mental health was due to be scrutinised.

OS 4 – Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel

The Chair welcomed Councillor Counter, the Chair of Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel, and explained that at the Scrutiny Committee's last meeting Members had been concerned about the amount of work required of the Panel and whether it had sufficient capacity or needed some support.

Councillor Counter said that it was still early days for the Scrutiny Panel and Members had not felt overwhelmed by the amount of work involved. If required, the Panel could ask officers to arrange additional meetings when they were needed. She explained the way the Scrutiny Panel was reviewing the contracts and building up the performance data it received. Members were more interested in qualitative information rather than quantitative.

In response to a question from the Chair about training, the Committee and Scrutiny Officer informed Members that a session was going to be arranged after

the elections in May and would be open to all Councillors. The training would look at ways to scrutinise outsourced services and general questioning skills which would be useful for all councillors, especially scrutiny Members.

Members acknowledged Councillor Counter's comments. Councillor Khan suggested that Overview and Scrutiny Committee could direct work to the Panel if it was felt a particular outsourced service needed to be scrutinised.

Councillor Counter informed Members that she had extensive tendering experience in her role in the National Health Service.

RESOLVED –

1. that officers be asked to provide a report to the next meeting on homelessness and how they were trying to mitigate any potential risk.
2. that the updates be noted.

59 **EXECUTIVE DECISION PROGRESS REPORT**

The Scrutiny Committee received the latest edition of the Executive Decision Progress Report 2013/14.

RESOLVED –

that the report be noted.

60 **HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chair stated that as Councillor Martins was not present at the meeting she would ask him to provide a written update.

61 **BUDGET PANEL**

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer advised the Scrutiny Committee that Councillor Dhindsa, the Chair of Budget Panel and Councillor Rackett, the Vice-Chair, had been unable to attend the Scrutiny Committee and give a verbal update about the latest meeting. It was noted that the minutes were available on the Council's website, had been circulated separately to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and had also been circulated at the Cabinet meeting on 20 January when the budget report was considered..

The Chair asked the Committee and Scrutiny Officer to advise the Chairs of the Panels and Task Groups that, if they were unable to attend the meeting, they should forward a brief written summary.

62 **OUTSOURCED SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL**

The Scrutiny Committee was informed that there had been no meetings of the Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel since Overview and Scrutiny Committee's last meeting.

63 **COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP TASK GROUP**

Councillor Khan, the Chair of the Community Safety Partnership Task Group, referred members to the minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2013. He advised that the Task Group had reviewed the feedback on the questionnaires circulated to councillors, various organisations and the Police. He had found it interesting that some of the councillors' responses indicated that they did not know the names of their local Police officers. The Task Group had agreed that all Members should be provided with details of their local Police officers and the reporting structures.

Councillor Khan encouraged Members to attend the forthcoming Members' briefing on anti-social behaviour and Scan net. At the Task Group's next meeting they would review the briefing.

Councillor Khan reminded councillors that the Police and Crime Panel would be taking place the following evening. At a recent meeting he had met the Police and Crime Commissioner, David Lloyd, and had invited him to a future Community Safety Partnership Task Group meeting.

Councillor Khan stated that he was pleased with the Task Group's good work during the current year. It had set up a number of briefings for Members on community safety matters. The role of the task group had been to take a strategic approach rather than individual matters.

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2013 were available on the Council's website and had been circulated separately to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

64 **DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

- Thursday 6 February 2014 (For call-in only)
- Thursday 6 March 2014
- Thursday 27 March 2014

Chair

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm
and finished at 8.50 pm