



# **WATFORD COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST TASK GROUP**

**Tuesday, 16th April, 2013**

**6.30 pm**

Publication date: 10 April 2013

# AGENDA

Membership: Councillors K Collett, J Connal, S Johnson, A Joynes and A Khan

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

To agree a Chair for the duration of the Task Group.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY)

4. SCRUTINY PROPOSAL - WATFORD COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST  
(Pages 1 - 6)

To review the scrutiny proposal put forward by Councillor Asif Khan and discuss the format for future meetings, including

- Further information considered necessary to carry out the review
- Questions to be raised with Watford Community Housing Trust
- How the Task Group wishes to gather the views of residents/tenants

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To agree the date for the next Task Group meeting

**Suggestions for topics to be scrutinised – evaluation table**

A Member, Officer or member of the public suggesting a topic for scrutiny must complete Section1 as fully as possible. Completed tables will be presented to Overview & Scrutiny for consideration.

<b>Section 1 – Scrutiny Suggestion</b>	
<b>Proposer: Councillor Asif Khan</b>	
<p><b>Topic recommended for scrutiny:</b></p> <p><i>Please include as much detail as is available about the specific such as;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>areas which should be <u>included</u> in the review.</i></li> <li>• <i>areas which should be <u>excluded</u> from the review.</i></li> <li>• <i>Whether the focus should be on past performance, future policy or both.</i></li> </ul>	<p align="center"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>The area of scrutiny is the quality of service provided by Watford Community Housing Trust to local residents. Including areas of repairs.</p> <p>Other areas that need to be looked at include the introduction of the service charges by the WCHT and its financial impact on residents and how the charges will affect the quality of service level.</p> <p>What policies are in place to improve this and the levels of control the WCHT has in place to resolve complaints.</p> <p>How does the WCHT communicate to all stakeholders, including residents, tenants, councillors and council officials.</p>
<p><b>Why have you recommended this topic for scrutiny?</b></p>	<p align="center"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>Much of my casework involves dealing with residents’ complaints about the poor level of repairs. It also includes service that is received from the WCHT. There have been a number of examples where the most vulnerable have had poor service which resulted in an anxious time for them.(for example, a pensioner on means tested benefit without heating for 4 days during the snow. A family with young children without heating or hot water for 5 days)</p>

**What are the specific outcomes you wish to see from the review?**

*Examples might include:*

- *To identify what is being done and what the potential barriers are;*
- *To review relevant performance indicators;*
- *To compare our policies with those of a similar authority;*
- *To assess the environmental/social impacts;*
- *To Benchmark current service provision;*
- *To find out community perceptions and experience;*
- *To identify the gap between provision and need*

*Give details*

To see an improvement for the quality of service provided by the WCHT on repairs.

To review the policies in place regarding vulnerable residents.

To review the ways in which The WCHT communicates with all stakeholders.

<p><b>How do you think evidence might be obtained?</b></p> <p><i>Examples might include</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires/Surveys</li> <li>• Site visits</li> <li>• Interviewing witnesses</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Performance data</li> <li>• Public hearings</li> <li>• Comparisons with other local authorities</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>Feedback from local residents.</p> <p>Interviews of tenants (some maybe willing to come to the meetings and pass on their comments)</p> <p>Check performance data.</p> <p>Feedback from survey</p>
<p><b>Does the proposed item meet the following criteria?</b></p>	
<p>It must affect a group or community of people</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>It impacts WCHT tenants and residents who live in areas where the WCHT now manages.</p>
<p>It must relate to a service, event or issue in which the council has a significant stake</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>It relates to the management of the housing stock and the areas which the WCHT now looks after which was once done by the council.</p>

<p>It must not have been a topic of scrutiny within the last 12 months</p> <p><i>There will be exceptions to this arising from notified changing circumstances. Scrutiny will also maintain an interest in the progress of recommendations and issues arising from past reports.</i></p>	<p>NA</p> <p><i>Please confirm</i></p>
<p>It must not be an issue, such as planning or licensing, which is dealt with by another council committee</p>	<p>NA</p> <p><i>Please confirm</i></p>
<p><b>Does the topic meet the council's priorities?</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Making Watford a better place to live in ✓</li> <li>2. To provide the lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth</li> <li>3. Promoting an active, cohesive and well informed Town ✓</li> <li>4. To operate the Council efficiently and effectively</li> </ol> <p><i>Please confirm which ones</i></p>

<p><b>Are you aware of any limitations of time, other constraints or risks which need to be taken into account?</b></p> <p><i>Factors to consider are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>forthcoming milestones, demands on the relevant service area and member availability:</i></li> <li>• <i>imminent policy changes either locally, regionally or nationally within the area under review.</i></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Include details</i></p> <p>There is an introduction of the WCHT service charges.  Service charges will be introduced in April 2013  Ground maintenance charges will be introduced in April 2014</p>
<p><b>Does the topic involve a Council partner or other outside body?</b></p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Include details</i></p> <p>It involves the Watford Community Housing Trust.</p>

<p>Are there likely to be any Equality implications which will need to be considered?</p> <p><i>Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Age</i></li> <li>• <i>Disability</i></li> <li>• <i>Gender reassignment</i></li> <li>• <i>Pregnancy or maternity</i></li> <li>• <i>Race</i></li> <li>• <i>Religion or belief</i></li> <li>• <i>Sex</i></li> <li>• <i>Sexual orientation</i></li> <li>• <i>Marriage or civil partnership (only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination)</i></li> </ul>	<p>An impact of quality of services and repairs needs to involve whether certain groups with protected characteristics are being affected over the other.</p>
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<p><b>Sign off</b>  <i>(It is expected that any Councillor proposing a topic agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee will participate in the Task Group)</i></p>	
<p><b>Councillor/Officer</b>  <b>Asif Khan</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b>  <b>23/01/13</b></p>