

PART A

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting: 8 March 2018
Report of: Committee and Scrutiny Officer
Title: Scrutiny proposal – Watford Community Housing

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report provides details of a new task group which has been proposed by Councillors Asif Khan and Kareen Hastrick, following contact from a member of the public.

1.2 The scrutiny committee needs to consider the proposal to review certain aspects of Watford Community Housing, attached as Appendix 1 to this report. It is proposed that the task group will commence in the new municipal year and membership will be agreed at the first meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee after Annual Council.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(Treat, tolerate, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating (the combination of severity and likelihood)
Watford Community Housing does not provide information to the task group	The task group would have limited information about performance measures the organisation may have about the work of contractors.	The Committee and Scrutiny Officer to arrange a meeting with the relevant representatives of the organisation to discuss the task group and the information that may be useful.	1	2

3.0 **Recommendations**

3.1 that Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the scrutiny proposal submitted by Councillors Asif Khan and Kareen Hastrick and decides whether to establish a new task group.

3.2 that, if the task group is agreed, it will commence in the new municipal year.

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Report approved by: Carol Chen, Head of Democracy and Governance

4.0 **Detailed proposal**

4.1 In November 2017 the chair invited a local resident to speak to Overview and Scrutiny Committee about his experience with Watford Community Housing and the reason he had contacted her about scrutinising the organisation. He had two main concerns which were 'value for money' and the performance of companies contracted to carry out work on behalf of Watford Community Housing, particularly garden maintenance and the legionella check in the tanks located in the blocks of flats.

4.2 It was agreed that a scrutiny proposal would be developed by Councillors Asif Khan and Kareen Hastrick, supported by the Committee and Scrutiny Officer.

4.3 The first draft of the scrutiny proposal was written by Councillor Asif Khan and then reviewed by Councillor Hastrick and the Committee and Scrutiny Officer. A revised proposal was circulated to the councillors for final agreement. The final version is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

4.4 It is suggested that, should the committee be minded to agree to the scrutiny proposal, as local elections are due to take place in May, there would be very little time to start a review prior to purdah, which begins on 19 March 2018. The Committee and Scrutiny Officer therefore will email all non-executive councillors after 4 May 2018 and invite expressions of interest to join the task group. The task group's membership will be reported to the first Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the new municipal year for approval.

- 4.5 The Committee and Scrutiny Officer will contact Watford Community Housing's Chief Executive to advise her of the potential scrutiny and arrange a meeting to discuss how the two organisations can work together to support the proposed task group.
- 4.6 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the attached proposal and confirm the establishment of the task group.
- 5.0 **Implications**
- 5.1 **Financial**
- 5.1.1 The Head of Finance comments that there are no direct financial implications from the recommendations in this report.
- 5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)
- 5.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications in this report
- 5.3 **Equalities/Human Rights**
- 5.3.1 Having regard to the council's obligations under s149 of the Equality Act, the task group will consider if there are any implications that may need to be addressed as they make their recommendations to Watford Community Housing.
- 5.4 **Staffing**
- 5.4.1 The administration for the task group will be carried out by Democratic Services. There are no direct staffing implications for the council.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny proposal form

Background Papers

[Overview and Scrutiny Committee minutes 23 November 2017](#)

File Reference

None