

**6 April 2017**

**Discussion on engagement with social housing providers**

**Ward(s)** All

**Portfolios:** Cllr L. Jeavons – Deputy Leader and Regeneration  
Cllr D. Coughlan – Social Care and Health

**Report**

Whg previously attended a meeting of Corporate and Public Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 25 November, 2015 to discuss potential changes to their governance arrangements. As a result of scrutiny's involvement whg agreed to increase the level of local and customer knowledge required by its board of directors.

The matter was then considered by Council at its meeting held on 11 January 2016. Council agreed to the proposals to amend whgs governance arrangements and reduce the number of elected members on the Board. During consultation on the proposed changes, whg made a commitment to provide an opportunity for a nominated panel of Councillors to meet with senior colleagues from whg to monitor performance and review complaints handling arrangements. Whg have since sought the Council's view as to how it would like this engagement to be delivered.

The current position is that the Corporate and Public Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the remit to hold whg to account. In addition to this whg continues to engage with other committees, working groups and Area Panels on issues of local importance. Engagement at all of these committees is on an ad hoc basis as and when issues arise or when a specific request for attendance is made.

Further to the request from whg to consider future arrangements, Group Leaders were consulted for their views. As a result of the consultation it is suggested whg be invited to attend the Corporate & Public Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee each year to present their annual report. The annual report, published in September each year, will provide Members with a suite of data which can be used to question whg, hold them to account and potentially identify further areas for scrutiny/referral.

This report is submitted to Members to gain further views on the following:-

- The suggestion that the Committee considers whg's annual report and holds the organisation to account each year;
- Whether this or any alternative approach should be considered. For

example, should the invitation be extended to other housing providers to afford them the opportunity to attend scrutiny to discuss their annual reports;

- Whether it would be beneficial to consult all 60 members of the council prior to the debate at scrutiny to invite questions and identify key lines of enquiry for the meeting. (Issues identified could be shared with housing providers in advance of the meeting to ensure that full responses can be provided at the meeting).

## **Recommendation**

**That the Committee considers how it wishes to engage with social housing providers.**

### **Author**

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