

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 23 JULY 2025

Present:

Councillor Michael Durrant (Chair) (in the Chair)
Councillor Graham Baxter MBE (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Richard Beech
Councillor Pam Jones
Councillor Tony Lacey

Councillor Stephen Clough
Councillor Carol Lacey
Councillor Jessica Stokes

Also Present:

J Hayden	Senior Scrutiny Officer
D Thompson	Assistant Director of Planning
A Smith	Legal Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
T Fuller	Governance Officer

CSC/ Apologies for Absence

1/25-

26 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Windley.

CSC/ Declarations of Interest

2/25-

26 There were no declarations of interest.

CSC/ Minutes of Last Meeting

3/25-

26 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 14 May 2025 were approved and signed by the Chair.

CSC/ Planning Enforcement - General Overview including Developer Powers

4/25-

26 Committee received a presentation which gave an overview of the work of the Planning Enforcement Team. The presentation included a detailing of the makeup of the NEDDC Planning Enforcement Team, an overview of what constitutes a breach of planning control and how breaches are dealt with, details on Notices that can be served, common resolutions and a summary of the priorities for the team moving forward. The Presentation also included a breakdown of the statistics underpinning the performance of the team over the last few years.

Committee considered the presentation. Some Members suggested that larger developers find it easier to breach planning conditions without repercussion. Members heard that the scale of development isn't a factor in determining whether enforcement action is needed but degree of harm is. Committee discussed the perception issue that Planning Enforcement has due to a large amount of work being conducted behind closed doors. It was suggested that more information be made available to the public, potentially through reports at

Planning Committee. In this context, Members heard that the Enforcement Plan was being reviewed and would be sent for public consultation.

Some Members queried whether Planning Enforcement team's capacity had increased in line with workload. Committee heard that capacity had not increased in recent times but there was an intention to bring in an additional part time officer on a temporary basis. Additionally, the team were looking to review the Section 106 (S106) monitoring charge which could provide the funds for additional resources. Members discussed the S106 monitoring charge, it was felt that the Planning Enforcement team's workload would only increase, as such the possibility of increasing capacity should be considered.

Committee also discussed the cost to the Council of enforcement actions, the working relationship between the Planning Authority and consultees and the impact that breaches have on communities.

Committee considered the motion, submitted at full Council on 25 November 2024, that had resulted in Communities Scrutiny Committee considering Planning Enforcement. In this context, Members considered how to take forward the topic. It was agreed that a Working Group be set up to understand the obstacles that the Planning Enforcement team faces and understand what can be done to enhance the service.

RESOLVED –

1. That Committee noted the presentation.
2. That a Working Group be created to consider Planning Enforcement and Developer Powers.

CSC/ Cabinet Business

**5/25-
26**

The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented a digest of Cabinet decisions taken since the last Committee meeting in May 2025. The digest set out key information for each decision.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer also presented Members with the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions for the period up to 15 July 2025.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

CSC/ Policy Development

**6/25-
26**

The Senior Scrutiny Officer informed the Committee that there were no major policies for Members to consider.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

CSC/ 'Horizon Scanning'

**7/25-
26**

The Senior Scrutiny Officer updated Members on potential significant changes in

the Council's operating environment, including changes to national legislation and regulation.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer explained that there was nothing to bring to the attention of Members.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

CSC/ Work Programme

**8/25-
26**

The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented the draft Work Programme 2025/26 for the Committee to consider.

Members discussed the invite to a voluntary sector organisation in May 2026, and suggested inviting DUWC. The Senior Scrutiny Officer advised that she would invite them to the meeting.

Other items the Members have suggested for the Work Programme include the Five Year Housing Land Supply, Full Adaptations Review and Access to GP Surgeries.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Work Programme 2025/26 be approved.

CSC/ Additional Urgent Items

**9/25-
26**

None.

CSC/ Date of Next Meeting

10/2

5-26

The next meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place on 10 September 2025 at 10.00 am.