

JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT FOR COUNCIL – 22 SEPTEMBER 2016

1. **Joint Scrutiny Committee Meeting of 17 August 2016 (Chaired by Mark Newman – Babergh District Council)**

A summary of key items follows - for full details of all the discussions please see the reports and the minutes.

- 1.1 Pre-Scrutiny of Sheltered Housing Review:** A review is underway across the two districts and the outcome is due to be reported to Executive and Strategy Committees in the next two months.
- 1.2** The Committee heard from the Corporate Managers with regards to how the review is progressing and specific issues that had arisen. Members were also updated on the scoping of a Community Visiting Service.
- 1.3** Questions were asked relating to support from Suffolk County Council, social services interventions, voids, very sheltered housing (Babergh only), appropriate locations, decommissioning and future investment, dementia care and costs.
- 1.4** Discussion was more detailed around how this fits with the older persons housing strategy and issues relating to the integration with social care regarding people being able to stay in their own homes and/or in the area they have always lived in.
- 1.5 Planning appeals:** Following recent briefings on planning performance, there was much discussion on this item on the agenda, led by the Professional Lead.
- 1.6** Members asked why applications went to appeal, the management of appeals, costs involved, resourcing needed (both external and internal), how to improve on non-determination; and the role of members - both on the relevant Committees and in bringing items to the Committees, and in the appeal process.
- 1.7** Discussion focussed on underlying factors (such as the absence of a five year land supply for Mid Suffolk) but also the growth agenda and the balance between meeting this and effective use of resources.
- 1.8** Members asked that consideration be given to resourcing of appeals, and the associated training requirements; learnings from other councils; and engagement with stakeholders and communities to make the planning process more effective.

1.9 Next meeting: The meeting on 19th October 2016 will be held at Needham and chaired by Councillor Rachel Eburne. The agenda includes a scoping review on Assets and Public Realm and a report on how we learn from the Complaints system.

**Councillor Rachel Eburne
Joint Chair (Mid Suffolk)**