

**Minutes of the Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee
13 January 2026**

Present:

Councillor S.M. Doran (Chair)

Councillors:

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| M. Arnold | M. Buck | K.M. Grant |
| C. Bateson | S.A. Dunn | |
| M. Bing Dong | R.V. Geach | |

Apologies: Councillors M.M. Attewell, M. Beecher and J.R. Boughtflower

1/26 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2025 were agreed as a correct record of proceedings.

2/26 Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

3/26 Questions from members of the Public

There were none.

4/26 Update from the Environmental Health Department on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

The Committee received an update from the Environmental Health Department on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Following a rise in applications for HMOs within the borough and allegations of unlicensed HMOs, an action plan was being developed to address the control and oversight of HMOs within the borough. A cross-departmental project team was established to review powers, increase resourcing where needed, and coordinate action to deal with unlicensed and unlawful HMOs and address anti-social behaviour issues arising from those properties. Future steps include robust enforcement action against non-compliant landlords, work to

clear the backlog of HMO licence applications, the formation of a Landlords Forum, and a proposed supplementary planning document.

Some members of the Committee expressed concern over the amount of information required for enforcement action to take place, but it was noted that not all issues arising from properties fell within the Council's remit to address. The Committee acknowledged the backlog of work and resourcing challenges. Timelines to address the backlog were suggested, however this was difficult to provide due to the difference in time needed to deal with each case.

The Committee **resolved** to note progress with ongoing work to deal with HMOs and the planned next steps.

5/26 Annual Grant Awards 2026/27

The Committee considered recommending that Council agree the recommendations of the Grants Panel regarding the proposed recipients of the 2026/2027 community grants. The grants budget had been significantly reduced from previous years due to a projected budget gap, and there was an underspend from 2025/2026 that the Grants Panel recommended be split between two charities as it could not be carried forward.

The Committee noted that though the grants budget had been reduced, councillors had the option to utilise their Better Neighbourhood Grants towards charities. The Committee recommended that councillors with leftover Better Neighbourhood Grants be contacted and advised of charities that their grants could go towards. Some members of the Committee expressed concern over the reduction in grant budget, and were advised that the amount was in line with grants budgets at other Surrey authorities, and the reduction met the Best Value Directions to ensure the Council's future financial sustainability.

The Committee **resolved** to:

1. Recommend to Council to agree to the recommendations of the Grants Panel regarding the proposed recipients of the 2026/2027 community grants
2. Note the significant decrease in grant budget for 2026/2027
3. Note the other support that Spelthorne Borough Council provides to the voluntary/charity sector
4. Note that any underspend from the Council Grants budget and Better Neighbourhood Grants will not be carried forward to the next financial year
5. Note that the Panel have recommended that there will be no award to sport and art agencies due to the budget cut
6. Recommend that the underspend of £3,400 in 2025/2026 is awarded in 2025/2026 to a charity offering mental health support to young people, and that £2,000 is awarded to a charity providing a river based social activity for those with disabilities.

In accordance with Standing Order 21.6, Councillor Buck requested his vote against all the recommendations be recorded. Councillors Bateson and Doran abstained from the vote as they both were members of the Grants Panel.

6/26 WITHDRAWN - Community Wellbeing & Housing - Budget, Fees and Charges, and Capital Programme for 2026/27

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

7/26 Forward Plan

The Committee received the forward plan for future Committee business.

Councillor Bateson proposed that “Eclipse Leisure Centre Monitoring” be added as a regular item on the committee’s agenda for the Committee to receive progress updates. The Committee agreed this proposal.

The Committee **resolved** to note the forward plan, subject to the inclusion of the proposed item.

8/26 Exclusion of Public and Press (Exempt Business)

As the remainder of the items of the agenda had been withdraw, the public and press did not need to be excluded.

9/26 WITHDRAWN - Service Plans

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

10/26 Leisure and Community Development Service Plan

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

11/26 Housing Benefits Service Plan

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

12/26 Housing Options Service Plan

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

13/26 Independent Living Service Plan

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

14/26 Environmental Health Service Plan

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

15/26 Harper House/White House Service Plan

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.