

Council Housing Management Board

Thursday 7th August 2025

Meeting summary

Attendees:

(CW) Councillor Christine Warner – Chair and Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning

(KM) Councillor Keith Miller

(AB) Allan Batty – Senior Housing Policy Officer, Cheshire West and Chester Council

(RSH) Ria Siddall-Hardwick – Contracts Manager, Cheshire West and Chester Council

(LH) Lucy Heath – Head of Housing, Cheshire West, and Chester Council

(AS) Anthony Spurway – Vice Chair - Tenant Board member

(BMc) Brian McGaw – Tenant Board member

(PD) Paul Doughty – Independent Board member

(JL) Janet Lawton – ForHousing, Head of Housing Management Contracts

(KC) Karen Craig – ForHousing, Performance Lead, Housing Management Contracts

(HS) Holly Southern – Contract and Compliance Inspector, Cheshire West, and Chester Council

(NH) Nigel Hickmott – Tenant Board member

(SE) Stuart Ellis – Finance Manager, Cheshire West, and Chester Council

Apologies:

(ML) Councillor Martin Loftus – Shadow Member for Homes, Planning and Safer Communities

(KK) Councillor Katie Kendrick

(VA) Victoria Albastroiu – Tenant Board member

Gemma Davies

Jo Worthington

1. Welcome

The seventh Council Housing Management Board took place with Board members being welcomed by the Chair Councillor Christine Warner, Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning.

CW welcomed everyone and noted the following apologies: Councillor Martin Loftus – Shadow Member for Homes, Planning and Safer Communities, Councillor Katie Kendrick, Victoria Albastroiu – Tenant Board member, Gemma Davies, Director of Economy and Housing, Jo Worthington – Independent Board member.

2. Matters arising from last meeting.

The Board discussed the matters arising from the last meeting with updates provided as follows:

Item arising	Update
Following Board approval for Councillor Millar and Antony Spurway to represent council tenants on the Wates led task and finish group, Janet Lawton was to go back and speak to Wates and discuss with them their plans in this regard to see if these plans included CWAC representatives.	Completed: Janet informed the Board at the April Board meeting that she had spoken to Wates who confirmed that CWAC wasn't to be included in the task and finish group however, the Council and its tenants would benefit from the work being done by the group.
Janet Lawton to set a target for: % reduction complaints where the customer has not been kept informed. Janet to come back to the Board with the number they could realistically achieve.	Completed: All complaints will be responded to in line with the Housing Ombudsman Code of Guidance. To help ForHousing in this regard, the Council asked ForHousing to prepare a business case for extra staff resource to bring the number of staff within the Complaints Team up to the sector norm. The Council for its part has approved two extra Complaints Officers and have given permission for ForHousing to recruit to these additional posts. The additional two posts will bring the Council's complaints handling team in line with ForHousing's own complaints handling team.
Karen Craig to capture all changes to working practices etc as a consequence of complaints. At the last Board, it was explained that a detailed record has been developed however, a shortened version is now needed to help summarise the work being done in this regard.	Update: Due to conflicting demands i.e. dealing with the backlog of complaints etc, this hasn't been progressed however, now there is the additional resource in this area, Karen will be able to revisit this and come up with a way of recording the data in a way that is meaningful for the Board.

3. Cabinet Member Update

CW mentioned that following the email sent to the Board on Monday 4 August explaining that an Emergency Cabinet Meeting would take place on Tuesday 12 August asking Cabinet to approve that the housing management service is brought back in-house 1 April 2026, she is proposing a separate Board meeting take place on 18 August. This meeting would allow all members of the Board to talk freely about any concerns that may have and officers from the Council would be able to provide reassurance accordingly. All Board members noted the need to make

themselves available for the meeting on 18 August. CW asked that AB organise an online meeting and send out invites accordingly.

Action: All Board members to note the time and date of the next Board Meeting to be held on Monday 18 August.

Action: AB to organise an online Board meeting for Monday 18 August and send out invites to all members of the Board.

CW continued to explain that a new Transition Board will be set up and meet for the first time in September. This new Board will comprise of Members with officers reporting to them on the progress being made in bringing all the housing management service back in-house for 1 April 2025. CW explained that AS had suggested that a tenant Board member could be part of the Transition Board which CW agreed. CW explained that this Board would have no powers as such nor would it advise, it would purely be informed about progress. CW asked that the Tenant board members agree between them who they would like to present them on the Transition Board and let AB know by close of play Thursday 14 August 2025.

Action: All Tenant Board members to decide who they wish to nominate the as their tenant representative on the Transition Board.




4. Anti-Social Behaviour Workshop

Paula Bagnall, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer gave a presentation on how ForHousing manage anti-social behaviour (ASB) and detailed the partnership working that takes place between the Police and the Council. Paula explained that there are many reasons for ASB with the most common reportable ASB type being noise nuisance. Paula provided three examples of where ASB had been caused and the actions that she had taken to address the same. KM, CW, NH and PD all passed comments on how informative the session had been and all the Board thanked Paula for the hard work that she is doing in this area.

Regulatory Compliance and Performance Board Report covering:

- Contract Performance**




KC took the Board through the yearend performance and confirmed that 8 Key Performance Indicators (KPI) had met target, 3 were out of target but within tolerance and 2 were out of target and tolerance.

 On target	 Out of target but within tolerance	 Out of target and tolerance	Other (Baselining, Data Only, Annual target)
8	3	2	

KC mentioned that notable successes were around rent collection, tenant engagement and repair response times with the final yearend rent collection figure

being in the top quartile performance for the country. KC did however, ask the Board to note that KPI PMF02 is likely to change due to revised data.

KC then went through the Q1 performance and confirmed that currently 6 were on target, 1 was out of target but within tolerance and 4 were out of target and tolerance.

 On target	 Out of target but within tolerance	 Out of target and tolerance	Other (Baselining, Data Only, Annual target)
6	1	4	2

KC noted that rent collection continued to outperform however, she mentioned that the KPIs for 2025/26 haven't been agreed currently so it was agreed with the Council that the targets from financial year 2024/25 would be carried over. Of notable concern was the void relet days however, KC mentioned this was reflected across the sector and the current performance is considered good. A number of operational questions had been raised by AS for which it was agreed that KC would provide answers to these questions outside of the Board given that they were operational in their nature.

- **Stock Quality, Decency, Repairs and Maintenance and Adaptations update**

AB briefly provided an update on the latest performance in relation to the Stock Condition Surveying that was currently being undertaken. AB confirmed that around 50% of the stock had been surveyed to date and this was on track for completion by yearend. AB continued to explain that using the data gained from the stock condition surveys it had been identified that around £12m of compliance works had been identified however, some of this was already planned for. KC confirmed that following advice from Gareth Frankland, Assets Manager, currently the Council is compliant and its stock is decent but 8 properties are not decent and works have been raised to address the same.

5. Complaint Panel Update

KM provided an update to the Board regarding the Complaint Panel with notable findings from the Panel being that complaints continue to identify key themes around planning of works, not keeping the tenant informed of the latest developments and significant issues around damp and mould. The Complaints Panel will meet next week and will review the latest sample of complaints cases from Q1. KM also explained that following the new way the Panel is now working, he had been given an Exceptions Report which the Panel will use to drill down further to ensure that complaint themes are being dealt with and lessons are being learnt.

6. Policy and Strategy Update

AB explained that he was pleased to announce that all the seven building safety policies had now been approved and an email sent to Sue Dunphy, Director of Building Safety at ForHousing asking that ForHousing now formally action their roles and responsibilities set out in each building safety policy. AB also explained that the Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy would be going to Cabinet in September for approval with a key action identified in the strategy of the need to carry out tenant profiling. AB explained that he had met with Karen Craig and Andrew Rooke from ForHousing to discuss tenant profiling in terms of how this would work with a further scoping session taking place end of August 2025. AB mentioned that it was hoped that a face-to-face meeting would take place with a representative tenant cohort in October which would ask them what information they thought the Council needed to know about them as their landlord.

7. Regulatory Framework Self-Referral update

LH gave an update to the Board following the Council making a Self-Referral to the Regulator of Social Housing on the grounds of potential non-compliance with the Safety and Quality Standard back in February this year. LH reminded the Board that the Regulator was satisfied that there were reasons for concern however, they wished to be updated in three and six months' time. LH confirmed that back in May a three month update was provided to the Regulator who followed this up with some further clarification questions all of which had been subsequently signed off and dealt with. LH mentioned that there is now a need to provide the six month update and she was meeting with officers from the Council and ForHousing Thursday 14 August to discuss this further. LH thanked all staff involved for their help in this matter. AB confirmed that once the update report had been finalised this would be approved by CW on the Boards behalf.

Action: LH to keep the Board fully informed of any further developments regarding the self-referral and seek Board sign off relating to the updates on performance provided to the Regulator.

8. Any other business

There was one item as follows:

Board Away Day – CW mentioned that a provisional date had been identified as Thursday 25 September 2025 for the annual Board Away Day. CW asked that should any members of the Board have any specific items they wanted to cover during the day then they should let AB know.

9. Next meeting

Is to be held on Monday 18 August 2025.

Our council housing vision

“We aim to provide affordable homes of the right type and quality to meet the housing needs of those who are unable to meet their own needs in the housing market now and in the future. We will work in partnership to support our tenants to prosper and improve their wellbeing and ensure neighbourhoods and communities are sustainable, safe, and pleasant.”