

# **Council Housing Management Board**

## **Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

### **Meeting summary**

#### **Attendees:**

(CW) Councillor Christine Warner – Chair and Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning  
(ML) Councillor Martin Loftus – Shadow Member for Homes, Planning and Safer Communities  
(JW) Jo Worthington – Independent Board Member  
(AB) Allan Batty – Senior Housing Policy Officer, Cheshire West and Chester Council  
(RSH) Ria Siddall-Hardwick – Contracts Manager, Cheshire West and Chester Council  
(BMc) Brian McGaw – Tenant Board member  
(KM) Councillor Keith Miller  
(LH) Lucy Heath – Head of Housing, Cheshire West, and Chester Council  
(AS) Anthony Spurway – Vice Chair - Tenant 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  
(CS) Chloe Southall – Housing Policy Officer, Cheshire West and Chester Council

#### **Apologies:**

(GD) Gemma Davies – Director of Economy and Housing, Cheshire West and Chester Council  
(PD) Paul Doughty – Independent Board member  
(VA) Victoria Albastroiu – Tenant Board member  
(KK) Councillor Katie Kendrick

#### **1. Welcome**

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

## 2. Matters arising from last meeting.

Item arising	Update
KC to carry out a deep dive into the tenant satisfaction measures and the underlying comments under the headline findings.	<b>Completed: KC to deliver a presentation at January Council Housing Management Board.</b>
JL to seek clarification on the stock condition percentage data and let ML know of her findings.	<b>Completed: JL provided an update as to the percentage data and notified ML of the same.</b>
AB to remove the Self-Referral Update from the agenda going forward.	<b>Completed: Self-Referral has now been removed from the agenda.</b>
AB to finalise the Communal Areas Policy and send through to CW for approval.	<b>Completed: Communal Areas Policy has now been approved by Cllr Warner.</b>

## 3. Cabinet Member Update

The Chair provided an update from the last Member Transition Board, confirming that regular meetings continue to take place and that progress towards bringing the Housing Management Service back in-house by 1 April 2026 remains on track. The Chair thanked officers and partners for their work and their commitment in preparing for the transition.

The Chair also updated the Board on emerging Government announcements relating to rent convergence and future rent setting. It was noted that further national guidance is awaited and that there is sufficient time to understand the implications before any changes take effect.

## 4. Strategic Update

AB provided an update on how things were progressing in terms of the following:

### 4.1 Delivery plan

AB provided an update on the development of the Delivery Plan, informed by advice from TPAS. It was noted that further detail is required and that a draft Delivery Plan will be brought back to the Board in May 2026, setting out clear expectations for delivery during 2026–27.

**Action: AB to draft Delivery Plan for consideration by the Board**

### 4.2 Digital service offer

AB stated that a review had taken place of the current webpages with a view that new Council housing webpages have been devised and are currently being built in a

test environment ready for deployment to the live environment midnight March 31 2026. AB continued to explain that the current 19 web-based online forms on the ForHousing website has been reduced to one single online form which will be sectioned off into core areas such as: Your community for those tenants wishing to report ASB and wanting to get involved to: Your tenancy for those tenants wishing to report a tenancy issue or repair. The repair reporter will prompt the tenant to better define what their repair is using a set of bespoke scripts/questions, it is hoped this will enable a job to be raised without the need for staff to ring the tenant back.

#### **4.3 Branded leaflets**

AB showcased an example of new branded leaflets that have been designed to professionalise the new service, AS asked if all leaflets and publications would use the new branding to which AB confirmed that anything the service produces will use the new branding which will replace any reference to ForHousing.

#### **4.4 Tenant Profiling**

AB explained to the Board that the approach to tenant profiling was one of asking tenants what information they thought the Council should hold about tenants rather than the Council deciding for itself. The tenant workshop had been very useful in identifying how to deliver this exercise using existing resources making use of day-to-day operational tenant interaction with staff. AB explained that he hoped that by the end of the current financial year a new survey, guidance and approach would be developed with a view this would be rolled out middle of May 2026. CW mentioned that she is keen to start this process as a matter of urgency given this is a requirement of the new Consumer Standards regulatory framework.

#### **4.5 Leaseholder service**

AB explained that his colleague CS had been tasked with reviewing the leaseholder consultation feedback as well as looking at best practice and the upcoming new legislation. AB explained that CS was a former director of a managing agent so would lead on the implementation of the findings detailed in her report. AB continued to explain that the findings of the report was shared with the Leaseholder Officer and their manager earlier in the week and these would be shared with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning next month (February).

**Action: AB and CS to meet with CW and KK to review the recommendations to be actioned from the leaseholder consultation carried out during summer 2026.**

### **5. Tenant Satisfaction Measures Workshop**

KC presented a detailed deep dive into the latest Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), drawing on the Quarter 3 2025/26 results and supporting analysis. The Board were reminded that 12 of the TSMs are perception-based measures, collected by an independent provider, and provide insight into tenants' perception of housing services.

The Board noted that overall satisfaction has declined compared with the previous year, reflecting a wider national trend across the sector. Satisfaction with the landlord's overall service and with repairs and maintenance remains below target and, when benchmarked against peer landlords, performance sits within the lower quartiles for one measure.

Analysis of underlying survey feedback identified consistent drivers of dissatisfaction, including delays to repairs, repeat visits, poor communication, and frustration where issues are not resolved at the first visit. Damp and mould continues to feature prominently within feedback.

The Board also noted areas of relative strength within the results, including antisocial behaviour handling, respectful treatment of tenants, and strong rent collection performance. Members discussed the importance of monitoring trends over time and understanding the perception-based nature of the data.

## **6. Key performance indicators**

The Board reviewed Quarter 3 performance and noted that rent collection remains strong at over 99.5%, with gas safety compliance continuing at 100%. Members discussed the continued improvement in re-let times when compared to earlier in the year, while acknowledging that performance remains under target.

The Board recognised progress being made but emphasised the importance of sustained improvement, particularly in relation to repairs performance and appointment keeping. Members noted that these issues are also reflected within tenant feedback and Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

## **7. Stock Quality, Decency, Repairs and Maintenance and Adaptations update**

The Board considered the Quarter 3 Regulatory Compliance and Performance Board Report, which provides assurance on contract performance, statutory compliance, stock condition, repairs and maintenance, estate management, complaints, and policy position.

The Board discussed the progress being made with the stock condition survey programme and noted the importance of this work in providing a comprehensive evidence base to inform future investment planning. The Board acknowledged that surveys are identifying previously unreported issues and were reassured that any severe damp and mould cases continue to be escalated immediately for action.

The Board noted that the survey findings will support both short-term remediation and longer-term planned investment decisions, particularly in relation to maintaining decency standards.

The Board received assurance on statutory compliance across gas, fire, electrical, asbestos and legionella safety. Members discussed the challenges associated with gaining access to a small number of properties and noted the ongoing work between the Council and ForHousing to pursue appropriate enforcement routes where necessary. The Board was reassured that robust processes are in place to manage compliance risks and that progress continues to be monitored closely.

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## **8.Complaint Panel Update**

Members noted continued improvement in complaint handling performance. The Board discussed the importance of using learning from complaints to drive service improvement and improve tenant confidence

## **9.Policy and Strategy Update**

All housing policies have been reviewed and updated in preparation for the service returning in-house and are ready to go live in April 2026.

## **10.Any other business**

There were three areas as follows:

### **Regulatory Framework Self-Referral update**

The Board noted that the Regulator of Social Housing remains satisfied with progress following the Council's self-referral, and no further update is required at this time. It was agreed that this will be removed as a subject heading for the time being.

### **Board Terms of Reference**

It was agreed that the Board's Terms of Reference will be reviewed and updated to reflect the post-transfer operating model, with a revised draft to be presented to the Board in May 2026.

**Action: AB to review and develop a revised Terms of Reference reflecting post-transfer arrangements.**

### **Tenant Board Engagement**

ML asked how the tenant board members were engaging with the wider tenant base, a general discussion took place with members of the Board noting that the Board as a whole needed to better promote the work it was doing. All tenant members agreed going forward to notify their immediate tenants that happened to be their neighbours.

AB suggested that he could discuss this with the tenant board members to see how they could get the message out to the wider tenant cohort.

### **11.Next meeting**

To be held on Thursday 28 May 2026.

### **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.”