

Minutes



Nottingham
City Council

Housing
Services

Housing Assurance Board

Minutes of the meeting held on **27th March** at 6pm via Microsoft Teams.

ATTENDEES

BM- Board Member

Tanaiya Daniel (Chair), Anne Dean (acting as Vice -Chair), Marie Smith (BM), Victor Haven (BM), Linda Chamberlain (BM), Kudzai Muganhiri (BM), Chereece Jenkins (BM), Sharon Guest (Interim Director for Housing), Will Morrith (Head of Tenancy & Estate Management) Sam Whitworth (Head of Marketing & Communications)

APOLOGIES

Apologies from Cllr Jay Hayes (Executive Member for Housing), Geraldine Chesta (BM), Lisa Dawkins (Head of Involvement), Cherrelle Daniel (Tenant Involvement Project Manager)

ABSENT

Jessica Moyo (BM), Jayati Bhattacharjee (BM), Bereket Amaha (BM)

Item No.	Item Detail	Actions	Action Completion Date
1	Welcome & Introductions		
2	Attendance and Apologies for Absence Attendance and apologies as noted above.		
3	Declaration of interest – None		
4	Previous Minutes and Actions The Chair approved the minutes for the meeting on 31 st January as a correct record. Matters Arising from Previous minutes:		

	<p>1) Vulnerable Person’s Policy Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board acknowledged the response to their recommendations put forward in January. While it was clear their feedback had been considered, they expressed concerns with the overall robustness of the policy, the data used to form the content of the policy and insufficient tenant consultation before drafting the policy. • Although the need for the policy was acknowledged—given the regulatory requirement and need to address the gap of not having a policy in place—the Board emphasised that better engagement with affected tenants was needed. • The Board agreed to approve the policy on the condition that a thorough review, including tenant consultation, will take place within 12 months. <p>2) Presentation of Performance Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board felt they received a large volume of data with minimal context, making it difficult to interpret. • A suggestion was made for Board members to review performance data in advance and submit questions, with service leads providing context at future meetings. • The board queried the delay in receiving performance data and it was clarified that performance data is compiled over the first two weeks in the month, reviewed in the third week by Senior Managers and then shared once signed off. It is hoped that IT improvements will aim to shorten this timescale. 		
5	<p>Overview of the HPM role - Will Morrith, Head of Tenancy & Estate Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A presentation was delivered on the HPM role and the Tenancy & Estate Management structure. The service currently employs around 80 staff with improved stability following a period of high turnover. • A university-led review identified workload challenges; in response, caseloads in complex areas were reduced to around 400 properties, with the average remaining at approximately 470–750. <p>Key HPM Functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing complex tenancy issues (e.g. domestic abuse, safeguarding, antisocial behaviour). • Supporting vulnerable tenants. 		

- Working closely with Adult Social Care and enforcement agencies.
- Ensuring properties are safe through inspections and preventative measures.

Operational Updates:

- Concerns were raised about reduced tenant access to HPMs after removal of direct contact numbers. Calls are now handled through a central Customer Service Centre (CSC) to ensure calls are logged and tenants are signposted to the right services.
- A new housing management system is being trialled to better monitor workloads for staff and updates given at monthly team meetings.

Visibility and Communication:

- Tenants feel the HPM role is not visible or well-understood. It was agreed that better communication needs to be done to improve awareness and clarity, including sharing monthly updates of work that has been achieved by HPM, it was acknowledged that some work is of sensitive nature and therefore cannot be shared.
- Board queried HPM KPIs and were given an overview of how performance is monitored.

Neighbourhood Engagement:

- It was noted that while HPMs and Neighbourhood Reps collaborate on estates, stronger relationships are needed.
- Questions were raised about fly-tipping and the respective roles of NCCHS, NCC, and HPMs. It was noted that challenges remain due to land ownership - NCC land and HRA Land. Regular coordination meetings are held to address this.

Staffing and Resourcing:

- A proposal to hire 10 additional HPMs was discussed, aiming to reduce caseloads. The Board queried consultation with current HPMs, especially considering sickness and turnover—it was advised that monthly team meetings do cover workload discussions.
- Costs of agency vs. full-time staff were queried.
- Estate Management Assistants recruited to identify and resolve routine estate issues and minimise health & safety risks e.g. slips and trips and have more of a presence in the community.

	<p>Resident Engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns were raised about limited visibility of tenant surgeries. Only one is currently active in St Ann's. Plans to review and refresh the approach are underway, including making surgery information easier to find and create more awareness. It was suggested that this is an additional channel to contact a HPM, alongside the usual channels in place. A resident service improvement group will be set up to review the Tenancy and Estate Management service standards. 		
6	<p>Proposal for Tenant Conference in July 2025 – Sam Whitworth, Head of Marketing & Communications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A proposal was shared for a Tenant Conference at the Council House (6–8pm) to boost attendance. Around 110 tenants to be invited, including HAB, involved tenants, Neighbourhood Reps, with a view to extending the invite to the tenants not currently involved. Tenants will be able to speak directly with subject matter experts, reviewing Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), the Improvement Plan and specific service areas. The Board was asked for feedback on format and delivery. Questions included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event costs and travel arrangements for tenants with disabilities – funded by HRA. Why the event targets already-involved tenants and a response was given that a broader engagement plan will follow to reach those tenants. The Return on Investment (ROI) and use of tenant feedback and it was advised that this will feed into service improvement plans and help inform future engagement. Consideration of alternative formats (e.g. roadshows or hybrid events) to ensure that those tenants not hand picked for the event would be given an opportunity to interact with housing colleagues. It was advised that other engagement channels/ events will be considered. The Board asked whether best practices from other housing providers will be reviewed to understand what approach they take to hosting 		

	<p>large tenant engagement events. It was advised that this would be taken into account.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite some concerns raised, some board members were in favour of the event, stating that it providing a good opportunity for tenants to speak with housing colleagues and with the absence of such events for over 2 years. • The feedback from the board will be considered and an update provided. 	LP/PK/ML	29/05
7	<p>Grounds Maintenance – Scrutiny Proposal (Sharon Guest – Interim Director for Housing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A proposal was presented to initiate a scrutiny review of grounds maintenance, involving both the Performance team and tenants to form a scrutiny panel. • The review will address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Low satisfaction with current services. ○ Poor condition of estates in some areas. ○ Clarification of existing service standards and VFM (value for money). ○ Use of GIS mapping to define HR boundaries and service coverage. • The review is expected to last 3–6 months. • A recent survey of the garden assistance scheme, which is a free service, also showed low satisfaction, particularly from vulnerable tenants. • The Board were in favour to support commissioning the review to be undertaken and an update to be provided to the board on the progress of this review. 	SG	29/05
8	<p>Balance scorecard - Performance Data (February 2025)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February's Balance scorecard Performance Data presented to the board. • The Board were presented with the data to review and submitted questions in advance. Some were addressed during the meeting, others followed up by email. These are in summary below: <p>Damp & Mould cases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to damp and mould concerns, it was noted that issues are typically 50/50 between lifestyle and structural problems. Regulatory bodies now expect all cases with significant damp or mould to be thoroughly investigated regardless of presumed cause. • Support includes: 		

- Tenant advice/training sessions on prevention.
- Website resources and NHS guidance links.
- Referrals to the Sustainable Energy Team for energy advice.
- Support via British Gas Household Scheme and NCC Vouchers (limited and eligibility-dependent).
- Collaboration with agencies like AGE UK and initiatives like ASK Lion and Fuel Poverty Strategy Group.
- Fuel poverty referrals have decreased over the past two years.

Voids and Lettings Coordination

- The Voids and Lettings teams operate cohesively under the same service. Although a restructure may see the Voids team move to Property Services, strong inter-team collaboration will remain a priority.
- The allocations policy is under review, with prioritisation of vulnerable tenants being a key consideration.

Emergency Repairs Performance

- Emergency repairs still operate under the “within 24 hours” attendance model without time-specific appointments. Access issues or delays in closing completed repairs in the system may affect performance indicators. Efforts are made to accommodate working tenants or vulnerable tenants where possible.

Contractors (Lovells/United Living)

- Contracts are distributed based on type of work and value for money, not by geography.
- A short-term duplication of work, with the two different contractors visiting the same property occurred due to backlog handover, this has now been resolved.
- Contractors may sub-contract work; subcontractors are declared and held to the same standards.
- Contractor performance is monitored via spot-checks, complaints and contract meetings; underperformance is addressed directly.
- Stock condition surveys are ongoing.

Decent Homes Standard and Process

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A non-decent home fails to meet one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Free from Category 1 hazards (under HHSRS). ○ Reasonable state of repair. ○ Reasonably modern facilities/services. ○ Adequate thermal comfort (heating/insulation). • Properties failing this standard are added to the capital investment programme for remedial works. 		
10	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Improvement Plan will be shared with the Board after 4th April. • The Board requested a future session with Cllr Hayes (Executive Member for Housing) to understand the scope and limitations of his role within housing. • The Chair agreed to explore additional ways to enhance the Board's engagement. • Pre-meeting sessions will continue but will be brought forward so that specific questions around the performance data can be shared with the subject matter lead in advance of the board meeting. <p>Vice-Chair Appointment: The Board majority supported the permanent appointment of Anne as Vice-Chair, recognising her dedication and consistent contributions.</p>	<p>CD</p> <p>CD</p>	<p>15/04</p> <p>29/05</p>
11	Meeting concluded 20:14pm		