



Plymouth Community Homes
Customer Focus Committee

Venue: Plumer House/Microsoft Teams
Date: 13th February 2026
Time: 11.00am

Present in person unless stated otherwise:

Maja Jorgensen (MJ) – Chair
Alison Simpson (AS) – PCH Board Member
Louise Webb (LW) – PCH Resident Board Member
Melony Gallagher (MG) – CFC Co-optee
Tracy Lowings (TL) – CFC Co-optee
Clare Stevens (CS) – CFC Co-optee
Cathy Wood (CW) – CFC Co-optee

In attendance:

Michelle Dawson (MD) – Executive Director of Homes & Communities
Charlotte Edwards (CE) – Head of Strategy, Data and Insight
Benjamin Bello (BB) – Interim Head of Thriving Neighbourhoods
Dave Ryland (DR) – Head of Thriving Neighbourhoods
Matt Cleveland (MC) – Head of Customer Experience
Ian Howse (IH) – Head of Homes and Safety
James Hancock (JH) – Risk & Assurance Manager
Ashima Sawhney (ASa) - Building Safety Manager
Nicola Kingston (NK) – Head of Rent, Homeownership & Letting
Phil Burgoyne (PB) – Head of Supported Housing and Safeguarding
Richard Lunn (RL) – Senior Resident Involvement Co-ordinator
Jenny James (JJ) – Governance Officer
Alexia Bui (AB) – Governance Assistant (Minutes)

Apologies:

Joanne Bowden (JB) – Vice-Chair
Mary O’Leary (MO) – Head of Communication Marketing and External Engagement

1. Welcome and Introductions	
Confirm Quorum	
<i>The meeting started at 11.01am</i>	
MJ welcomed everyone to the meeting, including CW attending her first Customer Focus Committee as a Co-optee, and LW attending her first meeting as a Board Member. MJ informed the Committee that JB was attending a Board Leadership Conference in London.	

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<p>Committee members were given the opportunity to ask questions on the papers prior to the meeting. These questions were asked and answered through Convene and made available for all members to view. There was also a 45-minute pre-meeting between Co-optee Members, Head of Supported Housing & Safeguarding and Executive Director of Homes & Communities.</p>	
2. Apologies for Absence	
JB and MO sent their apologies.	
3. Declarations of Interest	
JB, MG, TL, LW, CW, and CS have standing declarations as Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) tenants which were noted.	
4. Minutes of Previous meeting (17th October 2025)	
The minutes of the previous Committee meeting on Friday 17 th October were discussed, and it was agreed that the minutes were a correct record of the meeting and could be electronically signed by the Chair. The proposed redactions were also approved, and these would be uploaded to the PCH website following the meeting.	
5. Chair's Urgent Business	
The Chair informed the Committee that a Governance Review was currently underway. The outcome of which would determine the recruitment of an independent member with customer service expertise to Customer Focus Committee.	
6. Matters Arising	
The Committee was informed on two ongoing actions relating to the Governance Review and the revision of historic terms and metrics would take place to ensure more up to date and comprehensive reporting of disability and neurodiversity.	16/25 LR 17/25 MO/CE
<i>CW joined the meeting at 11.05am</i>	
7. Decisions since the last meeting: 1 Solid Fuel Appliance Policy	
8. Briefing papers (for information) circulated since the last meeting: 2 1. Internal Audit - Voids Allocations and Lettings 2. English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill	
MJ noted that the CFC members had attended a briefing session on Risk on 30 th January.	
9. Safeguarding Annual Report	

<p>PB, Head of Supported Housing and Safeguarding, presented the Safeguarding Annual Report. This Safeguarding Annual Report provided assurance to the Board that Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) continued to meet its safeguarding responsibilities across Supported Housing, General Needs, Housing With Support (HWS), and wider community services. During the period of April 24 and March 25 PCH has seen continued demand, particularly in cases linked to self-neglect, hoarding, and domestic abuse.</p> <p>With the recent introduction of a Head of Supported Housing and Safeguarding, PCH has aligned its approach to industry best practice with a senior designated lead for safeguarding. Future improvements included a full review of the safeguarding policy, key focus on training for all staff across the organisation recognising their role in safeguarding, proposed introduction of safeguarding champions across the organisation, full review of end to end processes around identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns, stronger partnership working with both statutory bodies and key strategic partners, clearer and improved reporting and data collection, and clearer processes and plans for concerns which don't meet statutory thresholds.</p> <p>Several case studies were highlighted demonstrating how multi agency collaboration and tenancy focused interventions have directly improved resident safety and wellbeing.</p>	
<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>A question was raised about the total reported safeguarding concerns raised over 2024-25, and if there was scope to further increase awareness and reduce the potential for missed opportunities. Assurance was given that PCH's numbers were consistent with other Housing Associations through the Housing Quality Network (HQN) Safeguarding and Housing Best Practice Group. Other initiatives like Safeguarding Champions who would receive enhanced training, would help to improve identification of safeguarding concerns. The Committee was informed that the preventative work of the Tenant Sustainment Officers wasn't highlighted in the report, and that their involvement may have impacted the total reported of safeguarding concerns. Work would be done to include the caseload of Tenant Sustainment Officers in future reports.</p> <p>Assurance was given that all safeguarding cases were risk assessed and audited as a failsafe, and that there were internal processes that evaluated cases on an individual basis. The Committee was also informed that reviews by the Adult Safeguarding Board acted as another failsafe.</p> <p>It was requested that the next annual report also display the previous year's data for comparison.</p> <p>In response to a question on PCH's capacity to provide increased complex need support, the Committee was informed that PCH is looking to participate in an exercise with other Housing Associations, to evidence how increased vulnerability support is impacting service delivery in terms of costs and resourcing.</p>	<p>01/26 MD/PB</p> <p>02/26 PB</p>

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The Customer Focus Committee approved the Safeguarding Annual Report.	
10. Customer Consultation on Downsizing Draft Policy	
<p>NK, Head of Rent, Homeownership & Letting, presented the Customer Consultation on Downsizing Draft Policy. This report sought approval from the Customer Focus Committee for the new Downsizing Incentive Policy, developed in response to a significant level of under occupation across PCH homes and ongoing shortages of larger family properties.</p> <p>More than 1,096 households have been under occupying and a further 200 PCH residents have already registered on Devon Home Choice to downsize. The policy has been shaped through two comprehensive resident consultations totalling 641 responses. Residents highlighted both the motivations to downsize—such as improved accessibility and reduced living costs—and the practical and financial barriers that currently prevent them from moving. Consultation responses showed a clear preference for a tiered Gold/Silver/Bronze incentive model offering a blend of financial support and practical assistance.</p> <p>An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed, and the policy is designed to ensure fair and accessible support, particularly for older and disabled residents. The Committee is asked to approve the Downsizing Policy and endorse the recommended incentive model for implementation on 6 April 2026.</p>	
The Customer Focus Committee approved the Customer Consultation on Downsizing Draft Policy.	
11. Executive Director’s Report	
<p>MD, Executive Director of Homes & Communities, presented the Executive Director’s Report. This report provides an overview of key regulatory, strategic and operational developments across Homes and Communities, outlining progress, risks and areas requiring continued oversight. It offers assurance to CFC on how these activities are improving resident safety, service quality and overall customer experience. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislative and regulatory updates rent convergence: The Government announced on the 28th January the intention to introduce convergence at £1 per week from FY 27/28 and £2 per week from FY 28/29. PCH would look at the implications of this for its c.5900 homes below formula rent.• Standard Assessment Process (SAP): Following the Government’s consultation on the Decent Home Standard, PCH has been working on its decarbonisation plan to get all its homes to an EPC rating of C by 2030. PCH’s Asset team have been working with Savills on PCH’s asset information to prepare for the government’s new energy efficiency definitions. This work would be overseen by Capital Investment Committee.• Regulatory Improvement Plan: An update was given on the Regulatory Improvement Plan as part of its Customer Outcomes. The Regulatory Improvement Plan was approved by	

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<p>Board in November 2025 following the inspection that took place in March 2025 that awarded PCH a C2 against the Consumer Standards. PCH has been working with the Regulator on areas for improvement and the work has been overseen by Audit and Risk Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer Service Strategy and Service Standards: What previously has been a 3-year Service Plan, would now be put into the Customer Service Strategy alongside a Target Operating Model to scope how PCH delivers its services going forward over an expanding area and with the most efficient use of technology. Assurance was given that work was being done to provide a comprehensive overarching Customer Service Strategy, as part of the development of PCH’s Corporate Strategy. This work would include consulting residents. The Corporate Strategy would be presented to the Board in April, and an update would come to the next CFC.• Review of Service Standards: Work was being done to revisit PCH’s Service Standards to better articulate and represent measures that matter to residents.	
<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: Assurance was given that the implementation of Total Connect was progressing well, with the go live date still scheduled for Quarter 4.</p> <p>A question was raised concerning the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) Hazards 10-day inspections at 87% Year to Date (YTD). The Committee was informed that staff sickness absences, consecutive storms, sourcing new contractors over the Christmas period, and Call Centre triage faults, had contributed to this.</p>	
<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Executive Director’s Report.</p>	
<p><i>NK left at 11:59.</i> <i>CW left at 12:00.</i> <i>NK joined at 12:01.</i> <i>CW joined at 12:01.</i> <i>CW left at 12:05.</i></p>	
<p>12. Service Standards Performance Update</p>	
<p>CE, Head of Strategy, Data & Insight, presented the Service Standards Performance Update. This report provided an update on the Q3 performance against PCH published Service Standards and the actions underway to return below standard areas to target.</p> <p>Overall performance was stable with incremental improvement in several measures; however, performance remains below standard in Repairs, Building Safety (10-day inspections), Customer Contact, Re-lets, and parts of Your Tenancy, with targeted recovery plans in train.</p>	
<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: Data on PCH’s Handyperson Service was requested for the next meeting, to better understand its scale and if it affected PCH’s Repairs service metrics.</p>	<p>03/26 CE</p>

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<p>Data on Repairs' Out of Hours call handling was requested to better understand resident opinion on the Out of Hours service. This would be brought back in the next Customer Experience Report.</p> <p>Clarification was requested regarding the recording of repairs if a job needed to be completed more than once and if this affected the complaints data. The Committee was informed that this was recorded as two jobs. Assurance was given that this had not affected the quality-of-service delivery as 5.6% of total complaints YTD were related to 'poor quality of work'. The Committee was further assured that in cases of Follow On Jobs; measures were in place to ensure that the right training could be provided to contact centre and repair staff. The Committee was informed that a Post Complaint Action Tracker report was sent out weekly so that PCH could undertake any relevant actions related to complaints to improve its service delivery.</p>	<p>04/26 MC</p>
<p>It was requested that a quarterly breakdown of aborted visits/no access be provided in the next Service Standards Performance Report. The Committee was informed that there was a working group evaluating PCH processes and communications to reduce the no access rate.</p> <p>Following discussion about Contact Centre call response time, the Committee was informed that the Contact Centre had been receiving more emotionally complex calls, and this trend had been reflected across the sector; and PCH had been working on providing self-service options to reduce the demand on the Contact Centre. It was noted that PCH's 80% in 60 seconds call response target was higher than the 2-minute sector standard for a high performing contact centre, and 5-minute sector standard for a high demand contact centre. The Committee was informed that improving this metric would involve increasing resource which would incur significant cost to PCH. There had also not been material dissatisfaction expressed by residents with queue times.</p>	<p>05/26 CE</p>
<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Service Standards Performance Update.</p>	
<p><i>DR left at 12:25.</i> <i>DR joined at 12:26.</i></p>	
<p>13. Customer Experience Report</p>	
<p>MC, Head of Customer Experience, presented the Customer Experience Report. This report outlined performance during Q3 against the key customer experience metrics. In Q3, customer demand, complaint volumes and call complexity all increased, reflecting the same pressures seen nationally across the housing sector. Despite this, PCH continued to perform strongly in many areas, with effective complaint handling, improving operational controls, and targeted improvement work underway. However, several key performance measures remained off track, particularly Contact Centre answer rates, rising Stage 2 complaints, and increasing levels of compensation—requiring continued oversight from the CFC.</p> <p>The Housing Ombudsman reported sustained high complaint levels nationally, driven by repairs, communication issues and increased case complexity. Stage 2</p>	

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<p>escalations and communication related complaints have been rising across the sector, a trend mirrored at PCH this quarter. Contact centres across housing faced higher volumes and more emotionally complex contacts, contributing to service pressure.</p> <p>PCH has been responding proactively to rising demand and sector pressures. Key KPIs remain challenged, but targeted improvements, stronger governance and a clear programme of work led by the Head of Customer Experience provided confidence that performance would continue to stabilise and improve into Q4 and beyond.</p>	
<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: The Committee was assured that the increasing complaints was a trend that had been observed across the sector.</p> <p>A new 'Putting it Right' framework would standardise compensation from 2026/27. An update would be brought to the next meeting.</p> <p>The Committee was provided assurance that 88% of Stage 1 complaints were resolved and have not progressed to Stage 2.</p> <p>It was requested that a comparison of PCH's total complaints caused by repairs to the rest of the sector be brought back to the next meeting.</p>	<p>06/26 MC</p> <p>07/26 MC</p>
<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Customer Experience Report.</p>	
<p>14. Supporting Residents</p>	
<p>NK, Head of Rent, Homeownership & Letting, presented the Supporting Residents Report. This report provided CFC an update on rent arrears performance and how PCH has been supporting residents to sustain their tenancies. The report highlighted measures to mitigate the impact of welfare reforms for PCH residents in receipt of Government benefits.</p>	
<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: A question was raised about the Financial Support Fund's budget and the team's capacity for anticipated additional applications. The Committee was informed that work was being done to include a Contact Form on the PCH website. This would shorten the application process and make it more accessible. It was requested that the budget spend against the budget for each quarter be presented to the Committee. Assurance was provided that PCH was on target to spend the budget, and that the budget would remain the same for FY 2026-27 pending PCH Board consideration to increase when the FY2026/27 budget is presented for approval.</p> <p>It was requested that the Contact Form include a question on where the resident heard about the Financial Support Fund and what they needed it for, to give PCH a better understanding of where residents need support.</p>	<p>08/26 NK</p> <p>09/26 NK</p>
<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Supporting Residents Report.</p>	
<p><i>RL joined at 12:35.</i></p>	

15. Resident Engagement Report	
<p>RL, Senior Resident Involvement Co-ordinator, presented the Resident Engagement Report. This report provided a strategic overview of resident engagement, communications, digital engagement, scrutiny, and involvement activities carried out in Q3 2025-2026 which were aligned with the Consumer Standard for Transparency, Influence and Accountability (TIA).</p> <p>It outlined how Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) informed and engaged residents about things which mattered to them, and how the organisation used their feedback to shape and improve services.</p> <p>The report also outlined improvements made in the quarter following resident feedback, showing what has changed following resident engagement, including communal area works planned for a Plymouth community, and major changes to rent and service charge communications, and updates on ongoing resident involvement processes such as scrutiny alongside the roll out of planned improvements to resident engagement work.</p>	
<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: It was noted that resident engagement had improved since the Resident Involvement Team had merged with the Communications and Marketing Team. This included engagement for the next Resident Review on 'How PCH supports residents with vulnerabilities'.</p>	
<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Resident Engagement Report.</p>	
<p><i>RL left at 12:43.</i> <i>ASa joined at 12:43.</i></p>	
16. Tall Building Resident Engagement Strategy Update	
<p>ASa, Building Safety Manager, presented the Tall Building Resident Engagement Strategy Update. This report provided an update on resident engagement activity across Plymouth Community Homes' six high-rise buildings (HRBs), outlining progress made in meeting statutory duties under the Building Safety Act 2022 and responding to regulatory requirements set by the Building Safety Regulator (BSR).</p>	
<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: A question was raised on the amount and diversity of residents that engaged with the Tall Building Safety monthly drop-in sessions. The Committee was informed that an average of 10 residents attended the monthly Tall Building Safety drop-in sessions. Assurance was provided that PCH enabled opportunities for residents to raise concerns around building safety, notwithstanding attendance and diversity of resident engagement. Assurance was given that PCH also complied with the legislation on building safety for high-rise buildings, and that all residents were engaged with through the Tenancy Management Team, by post, email and text, and with TV screens in communal areas, and that this wasn't represented in the report. It was requested that data on the total proportion of residents of each Tall Building that engaged with these sessions would be provided in the next report.</p>	<p>10/26 MD/ASa</p>

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The Customer Focus Committee noted the Tall Building Resident Engagement Strategy Update.	
<i>JH joined at 12:45. ASa left at 12:51.</i>	
17. CFC Risks	
JH, Risk & Assurance Manager presented the CFC Risk Register. This report provided an update on the Customer Experience Strategic Risk. This sought to reduce the chance that Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) failed to deliver the right Customer Experience which would not only meet the expectations and requirements of PCH's customers but also the Regulator of Social housing (RSH), Housing Ombudsman and other partners.	
As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: Clarification was requested on why the Data Management Risk Category had changed from Green to Amber. The Committee was informed that PCH had received external assurance from a Data Maturity Consultancy by 3C Consultants that was undertaken in December 2025, and following this, PCH would take a more cautious approach with using its data until it could be confident that the data it held was accurate.	
The Customer Focus Committee noted the CFC Risks.	
<i>JH left at 13:00.</i>	
18. How did we do? Did we achieve our objectives?	
The Committee reviewed their objectives post meeting, and it was generally agreed that most of the objectives had been met, with some areas needing improvement i.e diversity and customer satisfaction.	
19. Agenda Forward Plan	
The Agenda Forward Plan was presented to the Committee for information.	
20. Next Meeting: 8th May 2026	
<i>The meeting closed at 13.05.</i>	



Signature.....

Maja Jorgensen – Chair

Date ...08/05/2026...

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Handwritten signature of Leanne Eastwood in cursive script.

Certified as a true copy

Leanne Eastwood, Acting Head of Governance

Date...08/05/2026...