



Plymouth Community Homes
Customer Focus Committee

Venue: Plumer House/Microsoft Teams
Date: 17th October 2025
Time: 11.00am

Present in person unless stated otherwise:

Maja Jorgensen (MJ) – Chair
Joanne Bowden (JB) – Vice-Chair
Alison Simpson (AS) – PCH Board Member
Melony Gallagher (MG) – CFC Co-optee
Tracy Lowings (TL) – CFC Co-optee
Louise Webb (LW) – CFC Co-optee
Clare Stevens (CS) – CFC Co-optee

In attendance:

Michelle Dawson (MD) – Executive Director of Homes & Communities
Mary O’Leary (MO) – Head of Communication Marketing and External Engagement
Charlotte Edwards (CE) – Head of Strategy, Data and Insight
Lucy Rickson (LR) – Head of Governance
James Hancock (JH) – Risk & Assurance Manager
Benjamin Bello (BB) – Interim Head of Thriving Neighbourhoods
Dave Ryland (DR) – Head of Thriving Neighbourhoods
Jenny James (JJ) – Governance Officer
Alexia Bui (AB) – Governance Assistant (Minutes)

Apologies:

Matt Cleveland (MC) – Head of Customer Experience
Ian Howse (IH) – Head of Homes and Safety

1. Welcome and Introductions	
Confirm Quorum	
<i>The meeting started at 11.01am</i>	
MJ welcomed everyone to the meeting, including DR attending his first meeting as Head of Thriving Neighbourhoods. JB was introduced as the newly appointed Vice-Chair of CFC.	
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 and MD.	

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2. Apologies for Absence	
MC and IH sent their apologies.	
3. Declarations of Interest	
JB, MG, TL, LW, and CS have standing declarations as Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) tenants which were noted.	
4. Minutes of Previous meeting (25th July 2025)	
The minutes of the previous Committee meeting on Friday 25 th July 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 Committee thanked MG and TL's involvement in the internal Live Teams Update on Monday 13 th October. MG has also joined the Government's Social Housing Resident (MHCLG) panel.	
6. Matters Arising	
The Committee was informed that an outstanding action regarding a piece of work on understanding new EPC bandings would be brought back to the next meeting.	12/25 MD
7. Decisions since the last meeting: None	
8. Briefing papers (for information) circulated since the last meeting: None	
MJ noted that the CFC co-optees had attended an away day on 1st October to develop their committee membership skills. CFC members also attended a briefing session on Universal Credit and Welfare Reform on 19 th September.	
9. Executive Director's Report	
MD, Executive Director of Homes & Communities, presented the Executive Director's Report. This report provided CFC with a summary of key projects to improve services to PCH residents and work with partnerships within the Homes and Communities directorate. These included: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership Changes: DR has been appointed as the new Head of Thriving Neighbourhoods. Environmental Services has moved from Corporate Services to Homes and Communities. Recruitment for a new Chief People Officer has begun. An Executive Director of Place has been appointed and is starting in January.• Total Connect: The system has been built and is being tested. A new module that will improve the tracking of cases and adherence to Awaab's	

<p>Law is being evaluated. The system will be launched in January, allowing for more comprehensive training to be completed for 260 staff. Outstanding actions will go into a 3-year Service Strategy which will be brought in the report in the next update.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaab’s Law: Will be implemented from 27th October and will give stricter timescales for responding to damp and mould, and all other Housing Health and Safety Rating System hazards over the next 2-year period. PCH is ready for the implementation of the policy. • Neighbourhood Planning: An evaluation of estate inspections and walkabouts was ongoing. 	
<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>A question was raised on if there would be a noticeable difference in the repairs service for residents as staff resources are allocated to clearing the backlog of Category 1 and 2 Damp and Mould hazards before the implementation of Awaab’s Law. The Committee was assured that residents wouldn’t see a service interruption to repairs but may notice a change in performance reporting. This is because the resource is planning and managing cases so that they adhere to the new legislated time scales.</p> <p>The Committee was assured that work is being done within the new Thriving Neighbourhoods structure to improve Housing Officer visibility, neighbourhood walkabout engagement, and effective reporting. PCH is working to embed the new legislation into systems and processes and is holding itself accountable to the Board for delivering on time scales to do so.</p> <p>Discussing Total Connect, the Committee was informed that despite the setback from initial timelines, delays were taken to ensure thorough staff training and training resources were in place to not set service delivery back. Assurance was given that Total Connect is an extension of the current system and that all measures have been taken to ensure a smooth and secure transition. Residents wouldn’t notice a change in their portals for a 2-to-3-month period as it is launching as an internal change first.</p>	
<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Executive Director’s Report.</p>	
<p>10. Resident Engagement Report</p>	
<p>MO, Head of Communication Marketing and External Engagement presented the Resident Engagement Report. This report provided a strategic overview of resident engagement, communications, scrutiny, and involvement activities aligned with the Consumer Standard for Transparency, Influence and Accountability (TIA). It outlined how Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) informs and engages residents, and how their feedback has shaped services.</p> <p>Key performance highlights included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 491 residents engaged in July and August. • 50% of residents have active MyPCH portal accounts. 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28,218 logins to MyPCH and 8,217 online rent payments. • 85,041 website page views and 18,408 unique users. • 149.1 million media impressions with an AVE of £2.8 million. • 97% of newsletters distributed digitally. <p>The report also outlined improvements made following resident feedback, including stairwell cleaning, updates to the Communications Strategy, and enhanced scrutiny and consultation processes.</p>	
<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Resident Engagement Report.</p>	
<p>11. Annual Resident Engagement Strategy Report</p>	
<p>MO, Head of Communication Marketing and External Engagement, presented the Annual Engagement Strategy Report. There was Board approval of the PCH Resident Engagement Strategy 2024-2029 in Q3 2024/25, setting out the organisational ambition for ensuring decision making was influenced by resident input and feedback, as well as detailing how PCH planned to garner a wide spread of resident views to help shape and improve the quality of its services.</p> <p>This is necessary to ensure PCH’s full compliance with regulatory standards, particularly the Consumer Standard for Transparency, Influence and Accountability (TIA) and measures for customer engagement, resident scrutiny and resident involvement, as well as to ensure PCH performs well against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).</p> <p>This report was the first annual update of progress in delivering the Strategy, and it came with outcomes achieved to date in the last 12 months, attached as Appendix A. There was also a summary of resident involvement performance and achievements during the 2024-2025 financial year.</p> <p>This report explained what has changed since the Strategy was approved by the Board of PCH in July 2024, and the new approach now in place to deliver resident engagement. It outlined planned future improvements underway because of these changes, and a new approach for the Strategy moving forward following feedback from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) during the inspection in March 2025.</p>	
<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>The Committee was informed that the triennial governance external consultation was due to begin in the coming months, in which PCH has chosen to explore how resident voice sits in governance. This would be reported on after January 2026.</p> <p>The Committee was assured that revision of historic terms and metrics would take place to ensure more up to date and comprehensive reporting of disability and neurodiversity. This will help expand techniques for resident engagement but also improve service delivery. The Committee was informed that a new Neurodiverse Guidance Pack would be brought to the next RCA meeting to trial techniques that support neurodiverse accessibility within resident engagement. Updates on this work will be provided at the next CFC meeting, and the revised strategy will be brought to CFC after Q2 2026.</p>	<p>16/25 LR</p> <p>17/25 MO</p> <p>18/25 MO</p>

<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Annual Resident Engagement Strategy Report.</p>	
<p><i>MO left the meeting at 11:59</i></p>	
<p>12. Customer Experience Report</p>	
<p>MD, Executive Director of Homes & Communities, presented the Customer Experience Report. This report provided an update on performance and progress in Q2 FY2025/26, with a focus on the continued transformation of the Contact Centre and wider Customer Experience function through Project Engage.</p> <p>Key Highlights:</p> <p>Contact Centre Performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20,355 contacts handled with an 86% answer rate, up from 84% in Q1. • Performance improvements supported by enhanced reporting, forecasting, and quality assurance. <p>Service Improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of a Customer Experience Manager • Strategic rebranding of Customer Experience and complaints teams • Improved data analysis and forecasting • Introduction of call quality monitoring • Deployment of an AI-powered knowledge base • Strengthened collaboration with Tenancy Services <p>Complaints Performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 148 Stage 1 complaints (+4 vs Q1); 16 Stage 2 complaints (+5 vs Q1) • 63% upheld, a 5% decrease from Q1 • Top complaint types: Outstanding Work (23.3%), Appointments, and Communication <p>Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 determination of service failure; full compliance with HOS recommendations achieved • Disrepair Cases: • 11 cases received (↓1 vs Q1); action plan in place to improve tracking, cost analysis, and preventative measures <p>Project Engage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project recommended for formal closure following successful integration of key principles <p>Next phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of a three-year strategic plan for the Customer Experience function 	
<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>The Committee were updated that over the next 6 months, procurement for a new telephony system is taking place, with the aim of smoothing and streamlining processes for Call Centre staff, reducing call times. Further to this, the launch of Total Connect is also expected to help with repairs reporting, reducing some pressure on the Call Centre.</p>	

<p>Customer experience and complaints handling had been addressed with the Call Centre restructure and the recruitment of a new Customer Experience Manager. Call Centre service delivery quality was also being addressed with the development of a knowledge hub, specifically around Tenancy. This is being scaled to other parts of PCH where a stronger knowledge base would benefit service quality.</p> <p>The Committee were informed that an end-to-end review of the mutual exchange process was currently taking place. This review would help to understand and hopefully improve service quality.</p>	
<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Customer Experience Report.</p>	
<p><i>CE joined the meeting at 12:14</i></p>	
<p>13. Service Standards Performance Update</p>	
<p>CE, Head of Data, Strategy and Insight, presented the Service Standards Performance Update. This report presented Q2 2025/26 performance in the updated digital dashboard format.</p> <p>Due to the timing of this Quarter's meeting, performance was reported using KPIs as calculated at the end of August.</p> <p>Key Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer Satisfaction remains strong:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 87% feel treated fairly and with respect (third consecutive quarter)○ 85% are satisfied overall with PCH○ 84% satisfied their home is well maintained (third quarter of improvement)• Repairs Performance:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Emergency repairs continue to improve, with 95% completed within target in August (1,254 repairs)○ Non-emergency repairs remain challenging due to scheduling and communication issues• Rent Arrears:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Current tenant arrears at 1.34% (£1m of £75.5m), below target and better than previous years• Home Safety & Compliance:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 85% satisfied their home is safe○ Strong compliance performance: access issues being addressed through joined-up reporting and support• Damp & Mould:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Average remedial time increased to 39 days due to more thorough repairs○ New processes in place ahead of Awaab's Law implementation• Contact Centre:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Call response times improving, with calls answered within 60	

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<p>seconds nearly doubling since Q1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Volume remains high but is decreasing (stage 1 complaints per 1000 homes, across a rolling 12-month period) ○ ‘Lessons learned’ approach introduced to reduce repeat issues and improve service • Voids & Re-let Times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 92% satisfaction with condition of new homes (up from Q1) ○ High termination rates impacting re-let times and increasing voids 	
<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>The Committee was informed that both PCH and the RSH are probing into evolving how data on resident voice is gathered, to allow for more inclusion and accessibility among respondents and better captured diversity of responses.</p> <p>The Committee noted that voids turnarounds, repairs, and damp and mould had not met their targets over the last recent reporting periods. The Committee looks forward to seeing the anticipated positive impact of current improvement work in these areas.</p> <p>The Committee was assured that in relation to call response time targets, there had been resource impacts in Q1 that led to the reduced performance for the volume of calls. The Call Centre has since been restructured to address this.</p> <p>The Committee requested more information on the work being done to improve non-emergency repair targets, which the Committee was assured would be brought to the next meeting.</p> <p>The Committee were informed that the 48 properties without completed legionella risk assessments related to properties where there had been issues with access. No Access process had already been instigated for these properties and PCH have engaged a subcontractor to accelerate these assessments over September and October.</p> <p>The Committee was assured that the repairs team are reviewing the void end-to-end process. More detail will be brought to the next Executive Director Report.</p> <p>The Committee was informed that the cause of lower satisfaction around communal cleans are being addressed in the new Resident Engagement Strategy. One of the reasons being that communal cleans are resident-led and only occur when requested by residents. The Strategy will address the promotion of these.</p>	<p>19/25 MD</p> <p>20/25 MD</p>
<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Service Standards Performance Update.</p>	
<p><i>CE left the meeting at 12:30</i></p>	
<p>14. Tall Building Resident Engagement Strategy Verbal Update</p>	

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<p>MD, Executive Director of Homes & Communities, gave a verbal update on The Tall Buildings Resident Engagement Strategy.</p> <p>Following the Building Safety Regulator’s recommendation to improve the Tall Building Resident Engagement Strategy in July, the Committee was assured that PCH is working closely with the regulator to address this. The Committee was updated that the work is due to be completed in November and so the Strategy would be brought to the next meeting.</p>	<p>21/25 MD/AB</p>
<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Tall Building Resident Engagement Strategy Verbal Update.</p>	
<p>15. Pembroke TMO</p>	
<p>LR, Head of Governance presented the Pembroke TMO. This report provided an update on progress with the actions arising from the external review commissioned by PCH into the Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) known at Pembroke Street. The TMO is referred to as the Pembroke Estate Management Board (PEMB) in this report.</p> <p>The review was commissioned to ensure that there are effective governance and oversight in place between PCH and the TMO, in line with the Consumer Regulations introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) in April 2024. Feedback from the RSH inspection for PCH, published in July 2025, includes a requirement to ensure appropriate oversight of the TMO by PCH Board and demonstrate equity of outcomes for TMO residents; these requirements have been included in PCH Inspection Improvement Plan which is overseen by the Audit and Risk Committee.</p> <p>Key progress noted in this report includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-established PCH Liaison point of contact with PEMB and improved communication between PCH and PEMB • Identified key priority areas for PCH and PEMB to inform action plan for both PCH and PEMB • PEMB board meeting in September including presentation on Consumer Standards and governance role by Campbell Tickell • PEMB adoption of PCH complaints policy and revision of PEMB procedures to ensure compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Code. 	
<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>The Committee was assured that regular updates would come to future meetings to ensure service delivery meets organisational standards.</p>	<p>22/25 AB</p>
<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Pembroke TMO.</p>	
<p><i>JH joined the meeting at 12:35</i></p>	

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16. CFC Risks	
<p>JH, Risk and Assurance Manager, presented the update on the Customer Experience Strategic Risk. Since the last report in July 2025; Thriving Neighbourhoods patch sizes have been reviewed and took effect from 30th September 2025. These changes along with the revised Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) policy and new Good Neighbourhood Management Policy, approved by CFC in Q2 2025/26, will improve the efficiency and responsiveness of the housing management team.</p> <p>There have also been two key appointments; the Customer Experience Manager and the Head of Thriving Neighbourhoods. Further improvement to frontline services will follow in the next three months, including full recruitment to the Customer Care Team and a review of Housing Management structure, to improve service delivery to our residents and wider community.</p> <p>The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) also confirmed the result of the inspection carried out earlier in 2025. Although there are some areas for improvement, the awareness of the C2 rating means that PCH is compliant with the consumer standards. PCH will be working with the RSH to ensure these improvements can be implemented. The awareness of the G1 and V2 ratings also demonstrates that <i>"PCH continues to effectively manage the risk of its activities"</i>.</p>	
As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:	
<p>Assurance was given that risks for Total Connect had been comprehensively reported on, on other risk registers.</p>	
<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the CFC Risks.</p>	
<p><i>JH left the meeting at 12:42</i></p>	
17. How did we do? Did we achieve our objectives?	
<p>The Committee reflected on the meeting, considering the new committee objectives beginning in October, and agreed there was good contribution from all members.</p> <p>The Committee was informed about the newly developed Chairs' Group, which intends to have cross-committee communications to improve committee and board effectiveness.</p> <p>The Committee was informed that there would be a CIC/CFC joint meeting in 2026 to improve the Homes and Neighbourhoods Standards following the recruitment of the new Executive Director of Place.</p>	
18. Agenda Forward Plan	
<p>The Agenda Forward Plan was presented to the Committee for information.</p>	

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The Committee requested more detail on the Pembroke TMO and was assured that more detail would be provided at the next meeting.	
The Committee was assured that PCH has completed a Customer Consultation on downsizing and that a draft policy is ready. The policy will be presented in the next Q4 or Q1 meeting.	23/25 MD
19. Next Meeting: January/February 2026	
<i>The meeting closed at 12:56</i>	


Signature.....
Maja Jorgensen – Chair

Date ...13/02/2026....


Certified as a true copy
Lucy Rickson, Head of Governance

Date...13/02/2026....