

Minutes
Plymouth Community Homes
Customer Focus Committee

Venue: Microsoft Teams/Plumer House
Date: 2nd February 2024
Time: 10:15am

Present in person unless indicated otherwise:

Lavinia Porfir (LP) – Chair
Maja Jorgensen (MJ) – PCH Board Member
Zoe Reilly (ZR) – PCH Board Member
Gaynor Southerton (GS) – CFC Co-optee
Joanne Bowden (JB) – CFC Co-optee
Melony Gallagher (MG) – CFC Co-optee
Tracy Lowings (TL) – CFC Co-optee

In attendance:

Laura Haynes (LH) – Head of Asset Strategy & Delivery
Angie Edwards-Jones (AEJ) – Head of Customer Experience & Assurance
Alice Potter (AP) – Communities Team Manager
Charlotte Edwards (CE) – Head of Strategy, Performance & Insight
Lucy Rickson (LR) – Head of Governance
Mary O’Leary (MO) – Head of Communications & Marketing
Leigh Ferguson (LF) – Communities Worker
Tracey Gray (TG) – Interim Head of Homes and Communities (Virtual)
Phil Burgoyne (PB) – Interim Head of Neighbourhoods
Ian Howse (IH) – Head of Repairs, Voids & Compliance
Helen Ryan (HR) – Head of Communities & Housing with Support (Virtual)
Jenny James (JJ) – Governance Assistant (Minutes)
Louise Webb (LW) – Observer
Clare Stevens (CS) - Observer

Apologies:

None

1.	Welcome and Introductions Confirm Quorum	
	<i>The meeting started at 10:15am</i>	
01/02/24	LP welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was confirmed as quorate.	

02/02/24	The Committee welcomed CS & LW as observers to the meeting and ZR, IH and PB to their first CFC meeting.	
2.	Apologies for Absence	
03/02/24	There were no apologies for absence.	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
04/02/24	LP, GS, JB, MG, and TL have standing declarations as Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) tenants however this does not relate to any items on the agenda.	
4.	Minutes of Previous meeting (3rd November 2024)	
05/02/24	The minutes (inc redactions) of the previous Committee meeting were discussed, and it was agreed that the minutes were a correct record of the meeting and could be electronically signed by the Chair.	
06/02/24	The redacted minutes would be uploaded to the PCH Website.	
5.	Chair's Urgent Business	
07/02/24	LP informed the Committee of the recent appointment of the new Director of Homes and Communities, Tracy Smith. Tracy will be joining PCH in March, taking over from TG. LP thanked TG for all her help and contribution to CFC.	
08/02/24	The Committee congratulated JB on their recent appointment as tenant Board member.	
09/02/24	LP also informed the Committee that the new terms of references would be going to Board next week for approval. LR confirmed that the next meeting of the CFC would be under the new terms of reference and that time would be set aside at the beginning to discuss the changes as well as the content and levels of details the Committee would like to see within reports.	
6.	Matters Arising	
10/02/24	A list of on-going and completed actions from previous meetings, with updates, was uploaded to Convene ahead of the meeting for the Committee to review.	
7.	Decisions since the last meeting: None	

8.	Briefing Papers (for information) circulated since the last meeting:	
11/02/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stigma Review Update <p>The Committee were given assurance that the actions and recommendations from the report would continue to be followed up through monitoring of the Strategic Plan. A copy of the final report would be made available to view on Convene.</p>	JJ
12/02/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates on actions from CFC Minute Action Log <p>It was confirmed that adaptations were being made to decoration packs to include things like damp and mould paint.</p>	
9.	Performance Update	
13/02/24	CE, Head of Strategy, Performance and Insight, presented the Performance Update for Q3 2023/24 to the Customer Focus Committee.	
	The purpose of this report was to present a suite of performance indicators most relevant to the area of responsibility falling within the remit of the Customer Focus Committee. As regulation changes within the sector, the report would evolve to focus more on the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures and how PCH is performing against these metrics.	
14/02/24	Overall, the organisation continued to perform well, and most of the indicators were either within target or marginally off target. Variance were detailed within the report.	
	As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:	
15/02/24	Regarding customer complaints it was confirmed that work would begin next month to survey dissatisfied residents and that details, including lessons learned would be included in the end of year report.	
16/02/24	The Committee discussed the small increase in evictions, and it was agreed some case studies of the eviction cases would be included as an appendix with the next report.	CE
17/02/24	It was confirmed that more work was being done to make the process of diagnosing the types of repairs (i.e. urgent or emergency) more efficient.	
18/02/24	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Performance Update	
10.	Asset Management Q3 Performance Update	

19/02/24	LH, Head of Asset Strategy & Delivery, & IH, Head of Repairs, Voids & Compliance, presented the 2023/23 Q3 Asset Management Performance Update. The report provided an update on repairs and voids, a review of the new void standard and an overall update on major capital and programmed work.	
20/02/24	Overall response times had improved across 'non-emergency repairs' which had been attributed to filling more vacant posts and ongoing collaboration between supervisory staff and repairs assistants.	
21/02/24	Emergency response time completions has increased marginally in the quarter. The external out of hours call centre performance had contributed to the downturn in performance due to delayed dispatching of works to on call staff.	
22/02/24	Overall routine turnaround times for voids continued to improve. Average routine void turnaround time year to date was now at 29.31, an improvement from 36.56 at the start of the year.	
23/02/24	There had been a positive reduction in outstanding 5-year electrical test since Q2 however out of the remaining 261, 102 were being managed through the no access process and 159 had been appointed over the next 2 months.	
24/02/24	Regarding damp, mould and condensation, the average time to complete an inspection in Q3 was 10 days, an improvement of -1day from Q2 however below on the PCH measure of 7 days.	
	As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:	
25/02/24	It was agreed that more detail around why some properties were inspected more than once for damp, mould and condensation would be included within the next report.	IH
26/02/24	The Committee discussed the evolution of this report and what they would like to see included within the report going forward, this included more feedback from residents.	
27/02/24	The Committee also discussed benchmarking with other housing associations regarding damp and mould and although it may be challenging to get comparative data with similar stock and properties it was agreed that there would be value in trying to collate some benchmarking data.	IH/CE
28/02/24	Regarding customer needs for urgent new window replacements, it was	

	confirmed that all windows were due to be replaced by March but more details should be included in the next report to understand the types of properties requiring new windows.	LH
29/02/24	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Asset Management Q3 Performance Update.	
11.	Damp and Mould Scrutiny Update/Service Standards	
30/02/24	IH, Head of Repairs, Voids & Compliance, & AP, Communities Team Manager, presented the Damp and Mould Scrutiny update. A task and finish group of twelve residents, working collaboratively with PCH staff, are undertaking a Resident Review of Damp and Mould services. This is the first Resident Review using the new scrutiny process approved by CFC at their May 2023 meeting. The resident members of the Review Team presented their interim report and recommendations to CFC at their meeting in November 2023. This report provided an update on the progress made against those recommendations.	
31/02/24	During the November 2023 meeting, it was agreed that the timeframe to carry out the scrutiny review would be extended. Since then, the Review Team had continued to undertake the activities originally outlined to allow for thorough and robust investigation of PCH Damp and Mould services. The resident members of the Review Team had also progressed with revising the scrutiny process in order to improve future Resident Reviews.	
32/02/24	There are still several activities the Review Team wish to expand upon or undertake: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing information from surveys submitted. • Reviewing the ‘front-end’ work done by the Contact Centre to understand the ‘customer experience’ of PCH residents. • Mapping the residents’ journey through PCHs’ Damp and Mould services An update will be provided at the next CFC meeting.	
33/02/24	The resident members of the Review Team had also progressed with revising the scrutiny process in order to improve future Resident Reviews.	
34/02/24	As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: It was confirmed that work was underway to create a bespoke script to allow the contact centre to diagnose issues related to damp and mould. This script would provide residents calling in with more information on timescales and remedial actions and allow PCH to understand the correct resources to allocate to the issue.	

35/02/24	It was agreed that there would be a review of the timescales for inspections and follow on work, this would be reported in future performance reports.	
36/02/24	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Damp and Mould Scrutiny Update/Service Standards.	
12.	Service Standard Update – Verbal Update	
37/02/24	TG updated the Committee that a review of the service standards for residents was underway. Initial drafts were currently being worked on and it was expected that these would be ready to be presented to the Committee at its next meeting in May.	
38/02/24	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Service Standard Update	
13.	Pets Policy	
39/02/24	PB, Interim Head of Neighbourhoods, presented the Pet Policy Review report which set out the proposed changes to the PCH Pet Policy following extensive consultation and feedback from residents. PCH’s Pet Policy was introduced in 2012, however following the Government announcement regarding private landlords having to consider allowing pets and the extended period since the last review of the policy, a full review and update had been completed. The wellbeing of residents sits at the heart of all PCH policies and aims offer a fair and clear approach encouraging responsible pet ownership and providing consent for the ownership of pets where possible.	
40/02/24	Feedback from front line staff within tenancy management found that they were finding it difficult to manage ‘Unauthorised Pets’ and the current Pets Policy was not conducive to providing residents with the level of choice you would expect for them to feel safe and enjoy their homes and the environment in which they live.	
41/02/24	Consultation was carried out with residents and staff that had excellent levels engagement. The results showed that the change was welcome and on the whole supported, with the general feedback from residents saying that the changes to the policy were clear and fair. The guidance had been developed as part of the consultation to cover most aspects of pet ownership.	
	As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:	
42/02/24	It was clarified that residents could be checked for a history of animal neglect through PCH’s tenancy management systems if it took place	

	during a tenancy however, work would be done to see if there could be engagement with other agencies to check for historic animal neglect offences.	PB
43/02/24	The Committee discussed the Pet Ownership Guidance, which was still in draft form, and asked officers to consider the inclusion of advice about pet food banks, links to services that can help in domestic abuse situations, and clearer wording surrounding Government guidelines on pet ID. It was agreed that the wording and tone of the guidance would be reviewed to ensure it was appropriate for residents.	PB
44/02/24	The Committee also discussed service standards for the policy and asked for clear guidance to be given on how long residents can expect the application process to be completed.	
45/02/24	It was acknowledged that there was a very extended time for the pet policy to not be reviewed however, work was being done to put a process in place to ensure policies were reviewed every 3 years.	
46/02/24	It was agreed that a review of the policy would take place in 12 months, this review would come back to CFC and where possible include feedback.	PB/JJ
47/02/24	The Customer Focus Committee, subject to amendments to the guidance being made and a review of the policy in 12 months, agreed the policy changes.	
14.	Annual Together with Tenants Update	
48/02/24	AP, Communities Team Manager, & LF, Communities Worker, presented the Annual Together with Tenants Update. Together with Tenants is a national initiative led by the National Housing Federation (NHF) that has seen Housing Associations adopt the Together with Tenants Charter. PCH adopted the Charter in March 2021, and this report was provided CFC as an annual update.	
49/02/24	PCH's Resident Involvement Strategy 2019-2022 describes how PCH will meet its aspiration of delivering high quality services driven by residents' voice. In 2023 we started to consult residents and staff on the next iteration of the Strategy, which will continue to enable PCH to meet regulatory standards and maintains PCH's status as sector leaders, achieving Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) National Landlord Accreditation. In October 2022, PCH was shortlisted for national TPAS award for Outstanding Tenant Engagement, the award nomination put PCH in the top 6 for the country. Teams across the organisation support and deliver elements of the Resident Involvement Strategy, evidenced through the introduction of 'Resident Ready' to the Board Report	

	template, further embedding residents voice in service change and improvement.	
	As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:	
50/02/24	It was clarified that once the new Resident Strategy was in place, more work would be done to promote resident engagement on the PCH website.	
51/02/24	The Committee discussed promotion of local, non PCH engagement opportunities and it was clarified that when made aware of them by other team members, the Communications team will promote local events through PCH social media channels.	
52/02/24	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Annual Together with Tenants Update.	
15.	Digital Customer Communications Update	
53/02/24	MO, Head of Communications & Marketing, presented the Digital Customer Communications Update on digital customer communications works from Q3 2023-2024, this included analytics for the period to show use of digital customer channels, as well as an update on the development of PCH's digital communications agenda including work to deliver an improved website with increased functionality, and a more responsive tenant portal service.	
54/02/24	There were 6,823 residents with active MyPCH accounts during Q3, with 62 new accounts created in the period, meaning 49% of all PCH residents are using the portal. There were 20,733 log ins to MyPCH during the second quarter – a marginal drop on the 20,747 who accessed the portal in Q2 2023-24.	
55/02/24	The new MyPCH was due to go live in January, replacing the previous system, including the applications section. There was also a new App for mobile devices which went live at the same time. All existing MyPCH users will be transferred automatically to the new portal, which uses the same URL.	
56/02/24	The portal will be trialled and updated as needed during the first two months, with the Virtual Resident Advisor panel being asked to act as 'mystery shoppers' and road test the portal to feedback on any changes needed.	
57/02/24	We continue to offer residents the choice to receive the newsletter by email or in printed form, and a database is held on the tenancy management system to record preferences for new and existing	

	residents, updated on a weekly basis.	
	As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:	
58/02/24	The Committee were updated that after the report was written there was a delay in launching the portal and app, which went live yesterday (1 st February) at lunchtime. All residents that were already signed up will receive an email, and all that was required was for them to change their password. Since going live, 1000 residents had reset their passwords and had started using the new MyPCH portal.	
59/02/24	The app was also complete and live however would not be available on the App Store for 2 weeks, this was due to stipulations made by the app store.	
60/02/24	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Digital Customer Communications Update.	
61/02/24	Following the meeting, the Committee were updated that the app would be called 'MyPCH' with the PCH logo and clear branding as well as a description that it is for ' <i>Plymouth Community Homes customer to manage their homes</i> '.	
16.	Forward Plan	
62/02/24	The Forward Plan was presented to the Customer Focus Committee for information.	
63/02/24	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Forward Plan.	
	TG informed the Committee that the E-cigarette policy that came to CFC had been removed from the website as it was felt it should be incorporated into a larger fire safety policy which would be brought back to the appropriate Committee later this year.	
64/02/24	LP informed the Committee that this would be her last meeting as Chair, as she is stepping down from the role but remaining on the Board until the end of her tenure. The Committee thanked LP for her contribution to CFC	
17.	Date of next meeting: 10 th May 2024.	
	<i>The meeting closed at: 11:41am.</i>	



Signature

Lavinia Porfir – Chair

Date 10/05/2024



Certified as a true copy

Lucy Rickson, Head of Governance

Date 10/05/2024