



Minutes

Plymouth Community Homes
Customer Focus Committee
4th February 2022, 10:00am
Microsoft Teams

Present:

Lavinia Porfir (LP) Chair
Maddi Bridgeman (MB)
Graham Clayton (GC)
Ian Tuffin (IT)
Joanne Bowden (JB)
Gaynor Southerton (GS)
Nick Lewis (NL) - Observing

Also in attendance:

Carl Brazier (CB) Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods
Angie Edwards-Jones (AEJ) Head of Customer Experience and Assurance
Angie Scott (AS) Head of Communications & Marketing
Charlotte Edwards (CE) Head of Strategy, Performance and Policy
Jonathan Quinn (JQ) Asset Manager
Ian Frazer (IF) Head of Asset Management
Lucy Rickson (LR) Head of Governance
Andrew Brettle (AB) Area Housing Manager
Laura Moss (LM) Governance Assistant – Minutes

Apologies:

Debbie Roche (DR)

1	Welcome and Introductions: Confirm Quorum	Action By
01/02/22	<i>The meeting started at 09:58am</i> LP welcomed Committee members and attendees, and the meeting was confirmed as quorate. It was acknowledged that MB and IT have now joined the Committee following approval of the Committee Effectiveness Review report by the PCH Board on 25 th November 2021.	

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	<p>Each of the attendees also introduced themselves to JB and GS who are newly appointed resident Co-Optees to the Committee following approval of the PCH Board by Efficient Decision in December 2021.</p> <p>The Committee passed on their gratitude and commended staff for each of their reports to be delivered at the meeting.</p>	
2	Apologies for Absence	
02/02/22	Apologies for absence had been received from DR.	
3	Declarations of Interest	
03/02/22	<p>The guidance provided to Committee members on declaring an interest was noted.</p> <p>LP, GS and JB have standing declarations as Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) tenants however this does not relate directly to any items on the agenda.</p>	
4	Minutes of previous meeting (4th November 2021)	
04/02/22	<p>The minutes of the previous Committee meeting were discussed, and it was confirmed that the minutes were a correct record of the meeting and that they could be electronically signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed redactions were also highlighted within the minutes for approval so that this version could be uploaded to the CFC webpage on the PCH website. Committee members agreed with the redactions marked for confidentially or commercially sensitive reasons.</p>	
5	Chair's Urgent Business	
05/02/22	There was no Chair's urgent business.	
6	Matters Arising	
06/02/22	<p>A list of all on-going and completed actions from previous meetings, with updates, was uploaded to Boardpacks ahead of the meeting for the Committee to review.</p> <p>In relation to an action raised at the November 2021 Committee meeting (minute number 10/11/21) regarding a review of Tenancy Agreements and</p>	

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	<p>the Tenancy Management Policy, an update was provided explaining that anticipated timescales for the review process will be available by the next meeting in May 2022. At present the Tenancy Agreements have been passed for legal analysis.</p> <p>The Committee noted the Minute Action Log.</p>	
7	Decisions since last meeting	
07/02/22	There have been no Urgent or Efficient Decisions since the last meeting.	
8	Briefing Papers circulated since the last meeting	
08/02/22	<p>It was confirmed that the Committee had received briefing papers, which were for information, on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keyham Update• Update on the Domestic Abuse (DAHA) Accreditation• No Access Procedure Overview <p>Appreciation was passed to CE and IF for the provision of the No Access Procedure Overview which was requested by the Committee at its meeting in May 2021.</p> <p>There were no questions raised by Committee members on the briefing papers in advance of the meeting and it was noted that the information presented was very comprehensive.</p> <p>The Committee were informed that there would be no further Keyham updates, however should any additional information require reporting this will be communicated.</p>	
9	Compliance with RSH Consumer Standards	
09/02/22	<p>LR presented the Compliance with RSH (Regulator of Social Housing) Consumer Standards report to the Committee for decision.</p> <p>As a housing association PCH is regulated by the RSH. The PCH Board is responsible for ensuring that the regulatory standards are met and is required to certify compliance within the annual accounts.</p> <p>The report provided assurance to the Committee on how PCH complies with the Consumer Standards and is part of a wider framework of assurance on compliance with the Consumer and Economic Standards.</p>	

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	<p>The Committee were also updated on the annual RSH Consumer Regulation Review and the proposed changes to consumer regulation that were noted in the Social Housing White Paper.</p> <p>To provide additional assurance, Independent Health Checks have been commissioned to assess PCH's performance and delivery against the Consumer Standards, which, when completed, will enable an action plan to be produced for any areas of improvement that may be required to ensure PCH are "Best in Class".</p>	
10/02/22	<p>As a result of questions the following was clarified:</p> <p>It was queried how PCH meets one of the outcomes that consumer regulation should deliver which is 'tenants have access to information to hold their landlords to account'. This information is published on the PCH website and social media such as the annual report which includes results of the yearly assessment of compliance with the Consumer and Economic Standards. Additionally, as PCH have elected to be digital by choice residents are able to request such information in various other ways, such as in person with any member of staff either in the home, in the neighbourhood or in a PCH office, over the telephone and in writing.</p>	
11/02/22	<p>The Committee were assured that PCH are always open to exploring alternative communication opportunities to ensure they are fully accessible for all residents especially those with vulnerabilities.</p>	
12/02/22	<p>Within Appendix B – Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard Compliance - Customer Service, choice and complaints section, it was suggested that the requirement to contact residents within 48 hours of raising a complaint, as detailed in the PCH Complaints Policy, be highlighted to provide further assurance.</p>	LR/AEJ
13/02/22	<p>It was also requested that the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy be included within the list of leaflets and documents available on the website and in hard copy.</p>	LR
14/02/22	<p>Within Appendix B – Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard Compliance - Involvement and empowerment section, it was proposed that following be incorporated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Customer Service Excellence accreditation • the update to the Customer Focus Committee's (CFC) terms of reference to increase the number of resident Co-Optee positions • the development of the CFC webpage 	LR

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15/02/22	Within Appendix C – Tenancy Standard Compliance, it was suggested that details of how PCH adapted their way of working during the Covid-19 pandemic and how PCH supported its residents be included.	LR
16/02/22	The RSH Consumer Regulation Review 2020-21, published in September 2021, detailed the number of referrals received that were reporting potential breaches of the Consumer Standards. It was queried whether any referrals had been made to the RSH regarding PCH’s compliance with the Consumer Standards since stock transfer in 2009. This will be investigated and included within the Compliance with Governance and Financial Viability report to be presented to the PCH Board later in the year.	LR
17/02/22	<p>The Customer Focus Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Scrutinised the Consumer Standard compliance information contained in appendices A to D of the report. 2) Confirmed that they are able to recommend to the Board that there is sufficient assurance that PCH complies with the RSH consumer standards. 	
10	Tenant Satisfaction Measures – Regulatory Consultation	
18/02/22	<p>CE presented the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) – Regulatory Consultation report to the Committee for information.</p> <p>A summary of the Regulator’s proposal to introduce a suite of TSMs was provided to the Committee which will become part of the mandatory data submissions to the Regulator.</p> <p>These TSMs would be used to inform the Regulator about a provider’s performance on a range of issues that directly impact on tenants (and shared owners, but not leaseholders) and are aligned to the themes in the Social Housing White Paper, which was issued in November 2020.</p> <p>Assuming that primary legislation is passed to enhance the Regulator’s powers during 2022, the TSMs will come into effect from the financial year commencing April 2023 and providers will be required to submit data for that year after March 2024.</p> <p>The consultation document covers the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the new regulatory standard - the TSMs 	

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	<p>- technicalities of data collection</p> <p>PCH is planning to submit two responses, one from the organisation and another with the resident voice so that a fully rounded view can be provided.</p> <p>The deadline for submission is 3rd March 2022 and views from the Customer Focus Committee were also welcomed.</p>	
19/02/22	<p>As a result of questions the following was clarified:</p> <p>It was confirmed that following an initial assessment PCH already collect the required data to report performance against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). The most significant change will be to amend the current suite of STAR survey questions to align them to the new measures, however PCH's external market research partner is already using the prescribed methodology to collect perception survey data.</p>	
20/02/22	<p>PCH will begin collecting data using the TSMs from Quarter 1 2022 so that a complete years' worth of information will be available to analyse in advance of the Regulator's specified commencement date of Quarter 1 2023. As with previous surveys, PCH will continue to contact residents that have answered any questions with a negative response to gain a further understanding and provide assistance where possible.</p>	
21/02/22	<p>When reviewing benchmarking results across the sector it is evident that housing providers have experienced reduced performance in some service areas such as repairs and voids as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Should the data collected from April 2022 using the TSMs show that PCH's performance continues to be affected in these areas it is expected that this would be the same across other peer housing providers.</p>	
22/02/22	<p>It was suggested that an additional measure within the Respectful and Helpful Engagement Theme be proposed to the Regulator in the consultation response so that residents are asked if they are aware of the different ways, they can become involved and have their voices heard by the landlord.</p>	CE
23/02/22	<p>The Committee were also informed that the consultation response will be including a request to reconsider the measure 'Proportion of respondents who report that they are very or fairly satisfied that their landlord listens to views and acts upon them.' This is because when this question has been asked previously and further information has been gathered from the resident, some responses were in relation to a service that wasn't received as opposed to resident involvement therefore the data being captured is not providing the desired insight into the performance of the housing provider.</p>	

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24/02/22	Committee members were encouraged to provide any further suggestions by 17 th February 2022 to be included in the consultation response.	
25/02/22	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Tenant Satisfaction Measures – Regulatory Consultation report and commented on the proposed TSMs.	
11	Q3 Performance Update including Landlord Health and Safety Metrics and Welfare Reform	
26/02/22	<p>CE presented the Quarter 3 Performance Update to the Committee for monitoring.</p> <p>The Performance Indicator report presented a suite of performance measures most relevant to the areas of responsibility falling within the remit of the Committee, covering the period to 31st December 2021. The report also included the Landlord and Resident Health and Safety performance measures for the quarter.</p> <p>Overall, the organisation continues to perform well, with most of the indicators being either within target or marginally off target. The variances were detailed in the report.</p> <p>Asset Management (Repairs and Regeneration) – 4 performance indicators were outside of target but within 10% and 6 performance indicators were on target. 1 performance indicator was more than 10% outside of target which was the ‘average number of weeks to deliver minor adaptations (in month)’. The target is an average of 4 weeks, however November 2021 reached 11.28 weeks and December 2021 reached 8.3 weeks. The main reason for this delay is because orders for handrails take longer than four weeks to manufacture and install as each handrail is bespoke.</p> <p>Housing Management – 2 performance indicators were on target and 1 was outside of target but within 10%.</p> <p>Voids and Lettings – 1 performance indicator was on target and 12 performance indicators were more than 10% outside of target (these 12 indicators take into account the current Covid-19 situation and have been marked under the agreed new ‘pale’ version of the red target).</p> <p>There has been a continued improving position in void letting times with a reduction of days taken to re-let empty homes, with the average turnaround for the quarter standing at 42.93 days. This is against an interim internal target of 40 days.</p>	

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	<p>PCH are in the process of completing a voids review to improve performance. At present the tenancy termination process is a focus, in particular transfers, ensuring PCH work with tenants at the earliest stage possible through the termination process to reduce void loss and improve turnaround times. The lettings process has also formed part of the review.</p>	
27/02/22	<p>As a result of questions the following was clarified:</p> <p>The Committee were assured that at the end of the quarter all passenger lifts were compliant. There were six lifts which had an outstanding service in November 2021, however these have since been completed.</p>	
28/02/22	<p>It was confirmed that the two properties included within the 'Fire Safety – properties with overdue actions' performance measure that were awaiting doors to be fitted have now been completed. Delays were experienced with the contractor supplying the doors that were required.</p>	
29/02/22	<p>Within the Landlord and Resident Health and Safety performance measures, it was reported that 322 properties are without a valid 5 year electrical test of which 113 properties are no access cases. The Committee requested further narrative on the no access cases be included in the next report.</p>	CE
30/02/22	<p>It was explained that by adhering to the electrical safety regulations, which are guidance and not legislation, it is suggested that residential properties are tested every 10 years. However, as good practice for landlords it is recommended that electrical testing is undertaken every 5 years or at every change of tenancy. At stock transfer in 2009, electrical testing was undertaken every 10 years but upon completion of the decent homes program, which included upgrading fuse boards across the housing stock such as installing safety features, electrical testing is now undertaken every 5 years.</p>	
31/02/22	<p>During the Covid-19 pandemic, following a consultation with Womble Bond Dickinson it was assessed that electrical testing was not essential and would require operatives to access every room within the property and touch multiple surfaces, therefore the programme was paused. Work is now underway to complete the postponed electrical testing and it is anticipated that this will be achieved by the end of the financial year.</p>	
32/02/22	<p>It was noted that due to the Covid-19 pandemic this has generated a rise in the number of no access cases which could affect progress with electrical testing. There has also been a recent turnover of electricians, however work has been subcontracted to resolve this.</p>	

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33/02/22	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Quarter 3 Performance Update.	
34/02/22	<i>CE left at 10:52am</i>	
12	Asset Management Q3 Update	
35/02/22	<p>JQ presented the Asset Management Quarter 3 Update to the Committee for monitoring.</p> <p>The report provided visibility as to how the team is delivering against the targets, which were set out in the Asset Management Update to the PCH Board on 29th July 2021, which reviewed performance in 2020/21 and highlighted the work to be undertaken in 2021/22. The targets link back to the Asset Management Strategy 2017-2022.</p> <p>The Asset Management Team have continued to deliver investment into residents' homes and enhanced their understanding of the performance of PCH homes. During the past 90 days, there have been some significant highlights for the team including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completing first block for Asset Tagging to help manage our communal fire doors• Moving on to exploring the performance of our SAP E energy rated homes• Reaching Practical Completion on the Mount Wise Towers Project• Removing and replacing the ACM through Phase 1 of Marlborough House, within the timeframes required by Homes England. <p>A breakdown of the work carried out during Quarter 3 of 2021-22 was presented along with areas of focus for each of the teams that contribute to Asset Management: Asset Data team, Surveying team, Fire Safety team and the Programme Delivery team.</p>	
36/02/22	<p>As a result of questions the following was clarified:</p> <p>The Data Team are collaborating with Housing Management to gain access to six of the F and G EPC rated properties as the Surveying Team are experiencing difficulties in engaging with the residents. Various communication channels have been attempted including letters to explain the reason for access and the benefit this will have to the resident's energy costs. It was explained that gaining access to perform EPC surveys cannot be enforced as the requirement for properties to hold an EPC rating of E or</p>	

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37/02/22	higher applies only to the private sector rental properties at present and not social housing.	
	The Committee were provided with a brief explanation of the Promaster Mobile system that is currently being trialled. Promaster is the software that is used to record the condition of building elements such as roofs and windows following surveys that are undertaken. The dates that the various elements will require replacing is also recorded. Promaster Mobile now enables surveyors to record the results of a survey directly into the main system whilst at a property using a tablet. The Data Team will then use the information within Promaster when devising future asset investment plans.	
38/02/22	There were 4 residents, out of 550, that were dissatisfied with Planned Programme and Planned Programme Plus works following customer satisfaction surveys upon completion of projects. A breakdown of the reasons for dissatisfaction was provided:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 resident commented that they could not see the benefit of the works carried out • 1 resident was unhappy with the condition their home was left in following completion of the works • 2 residents were dissatisfied with the length of time it took to complete the works 	
39/02/22	It was confirmed that the two residents who were dissatisfied with the length of time taken to complete the works were neighbours within the same street undergoing refurbishment and the project did exceed the timescales that were communicated to the residents.	
40/02/22	When analysing and calculating customer satisfaction from the surveys undertaken, in accordance with HouseMark guidance, any question with a resident response of 'neither satisfied or dissatisfied' would be categorised as dissatisfied rather than the response being discarded.	
41/02/22	The Committee were informed that JQ will be leaving the organisation in March 2022 and appreciation for his contribution over the years was passed on.	
42/02/22	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Asset Management Quarter 3 Update.	
13	Digital Customer Communications Update	

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43/02/22	<p>AS presented the Digital Customer Communications Update to the Committee for monitoring.</p> <p>The Committee were provided with the third set of digital communication analytics (Appendix A) which gave a visual dashboard sharing take-up and use of PCH's digital customer channels. This report builds on the previous quarter's information to help gradually build a picture of behaviours. Once there is a good understanding of how residents are interacting with PCH, there will be an opportunity to look at improvements and how potentially more transactions can be made available on-line for those able and willing.</p> <p>For Quarter 3 2021/22, there were 7,248 residents with active MyPCH accounts up to the end of December 2021, which represents 51% of tenants, showing there has been a small increase from the last quarter. The target of 60% of tenants is still being strived for.</p> <p>Some of the analytics shown for Quarter 3 within the report were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 25,389 rent statement views – this has increased slightly since last quarter and shows that individuals are viewing their rent statement on multiple occasions each quarter• 72.1% of payment transactions took place online which means the number of residents making payments online continues to outweigh those using calls as their contact method of choice – this is has increased from the last quarter (67.7%)• 1,226 repairs were reported – if emergency, planned and minor works repairs are removed from the total repairs figure (as it is not possible to report them via the MyPCH portal), this equates to 14.3% of repairs. This is down by around 3% from Quarter 2, as the overall volume of repairs increased for the quarter. There is significant room for growth in this area. <p>The 'soft rollout' of the on-line tenant application portal continues with more Housing Choices Officers to be trained over the coming months. Each will choose tenants to complete the application process via the portal, increasing the number of on-line applications in Quarter 4. Feedback will continue to be gathered from both customers and staff to ensure the application portal is functioning correctly.</p> <p>The Committee were also informed of several website enhancements and further developments to MyPCH anticipated over the next 12 months.</p>	
44/02/22	As a result of questions the following was clarified:	

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	<p>Committee members were invited to provide feedback on the presentation of Appendix A – Digital Communications Dashboard going forward as each quarter more services are becoming available meaning additional data is being included within the report.</p>	
45/02/22	<p>At the August 2021 Committee meeting, an action was raised to explore the development of a ‘Find my Housing Officer’ facility on the website and MyPCH portal and an update on this was requested. Enquiries have been made with the website provider and it is possible. However, the Digital and IT team now need to establish how to ensure the Housing Officer details that are shared with the website and MyPCH portal will be accurate and can be updated regularly to take into account Housing Officer movement between the various areas of the city and staff turnover. It is hoped that a further update to this ongoing action will be provided by the next Committee meeting.</p>	
46/02/22	<p>Within the function of ‘Find my Housing Officer’, it was proposed that there could also be ‘hints and tips’ to assist residents in answering their enquiry as they may not need to speak directly with a Housing Officer such as ‘How to report Anti-Social Behaviour’.</p>	
47/02/22	<p>A further suggestion was if residents are required to enter their postcode to find Housing Officer details, information about external organisations and groups available in the area could also be included. This could be an aspiration for the digital services offered in the future; however, the data source that supplies the information to the website and portal would need to be accurate and kept up to date. In the meantime, Neighbourhood Plans for each area could be made available through the ‘Find my Housing Officer’ function which would inform residents of what is happening in their area as this information is owned and maintained by PCH.</p>	
48/02/22	<p>Residents should continue be informed of who their Housing Officers are and any changes by letter to ensure those that are not using digital services have access to this information. It was put forward that Housing Officer details could also be published in the quarterly In Touch magazines posted to residents or on rent statements.</p>	
49/02/22	<p>The addition of an affordability calculator to the MyPCH portal over the next 12 months will be specific to PCH properties and will enable residents to enter their individual financial circumstances to establish if a property is affordable prior to bidding.</p>	
50/02/22	<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Digital Customer Communications Update.</p>	

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14	Update on Tenancy Sustainment Officers	
51/02/22	<p>AB presented the Update on Tenancy Sustainment Officers (TSOs) to the Committee for information. Updates had been reported to the Committee previously in November 2018, February 2020 and February 2021.</p> <p>The Committee were reminded that TSOs have been in post since April 2018 and provide intensive Housing Management with practical support and guidance. TSOs work with Housing Officers and Assistant Housing Officers to provide a service to customers at risk of tenancy failure by assessing and co-ordinating internal and external services to meet individual needs.</p> <p>Another temporary TSO role was created specifically to support residents at the Mount Wise tower blocks in March 2019 whilst works were being undertaken. This post was then integrated into the TSO structure, so there are currently three TSO's in total, two in the South part of the city and one in the North. It has now been agreed that PCH will add a further two TSO roles to the structure and recruitment will begin shortly.</p> <p>The report gave an update on the progress of the service and listed the external agencies that TSOs are engaged with in order to support customers through a multi-agency approach. The TSOs will deal with numerous categories of vulnerabilities, and specific training has been provided. They attend the annual National Hoarding Conference where this complex issue is focused on and have completed Level 2 Hoarding Awareness for Professional Practitioners training which is provided by Hoarding Disorders UK.</p> <p>Summaries of live and closed TSO cases were provided in the report and broken down by vulnerability and area.</p> <p>Two anonymised case studies were also shared with the Committee detailing the individuals' circumstances and the support the TSOs are providing.</p>	
52/02/22	<p>As a result of questions the following was clarified:</p> <p>The Committee praised the insightfulness of the report and commended the work of the TSOs. It was requested that thanks be passed onto the team.</p>	LM/AB
53/02/22	<p>The report shows there are 50 live cases within the South part of the city, however there are 119 live outcomes because 1 live case may have a number of outcomes or objectives to resolve the case. Some outcomes of</p>	

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54/02/22	<p>a case are achieved before being closed and some are not, as this is very much dependent on the engagement of the resident with the TSOs.</p> <p>The age range of residents being supported by residents is from 21 years to 80 years with the average age being 53 years. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] It was requested that a case study of a younger resident be included in the next report where possible to see if there are any differences in the outcomes.</p>	AB/SF
55/02/22	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Update on Tenancy Sustainment Officers.	
15	Forward Plan	
56/02/22	The Forward Plan was reviewed by the Committee which detailed items that were due to be reported to meetings in 2022.	
	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Forward Plan.	
16	Date of Next Meeting	
57/02/22	<p>The next Customer Focus Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday 6th May 2022.</p> <p>Committee members and attendees were thanked for joining the meeting.</p> <p>Gratitude was passed to AS and JQ for their valuable contributions as both will be leaving PCH in the coming months.</p>	
58/02/22	<i>The meeting ended at 11:51am</i>	

Name Lavinia Porfir

Signature

Date

Certified as a true copy

Lucy Rickson, Head of Governance

Date