



Plymouth Community Homes
Customer Focus Committee

Venue: Plumer House/Microsoft Teams

Date: 25 July 2025

Time: 10.00am

Present in person unless stated otherwise:

Maja Jorgensen (MJ) – Chair
Joanne Bowden (JB) – PCH Board Member
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
Lucy Rickson (LR) – Head of Governance
Matt Cleveland (MC) – Head of Customer Experience
Mary O’Leary (MO) – Head of Communication Marketing and External Engagement
Nicola Kingston (NK) – Head of Rent and Lettings Support
Andrew Brettle (AB) – Area Housing Manager
Phil Burgoyne (PB) – Senior Specialist Housing Manager
Benjamin Bello (BB) – Interim Head of Thriving Neighbourhoods
James Hancock (JH) – Risk & Assurance Manager
Jenny James (JJ) – Governance Officer (Minutes)

Apologies:

N/A

1. Welcome and Introductions	
Confirm Quorum	
<i>The meeting started at 10.00am</i>	
MJ welcomed everyone to the meeting, including AS who joined as a PCH Board member to ensure the meeting was quorate, and BB, attending his first meeting as Interim Head of Thriving Neighbourhoods.	
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.	

2. Apologies for Absence	
There were no apologies for absence.	
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 (9th May 2025)	
The minutes of the previous Committee meeting on Friday 9 th May were discussed, and it was agreed that the minutes were a correct record of the meeting and could be electronically signed by the Chair. There were no proposed redactions to the minutes.	
5. Chair's Urgent Business - None	
6. Matters Arising	
There were no matters arising.	
7. Decisions since the last meeting: Tenancy Allocation Policy	
8. Briefing papers (for information) circulated since the last meeting: Grenfell Inquiry Update	
9. Executive Director's Report	
MD, Executive Director of Homes & Communities, presented the report which contained a summary of key projects to improve services to PCH residents and work with partnerships within the Homes and Communities directorate. Some of the points included updates on:	
• Strategic Improvement Projects including Total Connect, updates to the Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSMs) action plan, internal recruitment updates and updates on Pembroke Street Estate Management Board (PSEMB). • Strategic Partnerships • Resident Engagement on Asset Management and Development projects • Directorate updates	
As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:	

[REDACTED]	
The Committee were updated that a wider exercise was taking place within the Homes & Communities Directorate to review its working and processes, including a review of patch sizes. Updates of this would be included in the Executive Director's Report in October.	8/25 MD 9/25 MD
The Customer Focus Committee noted the Executive Director's Report.	
10. Policies for Approval - ASB, Good Neighbourhood Management, CCTV, Domestic Abuse	
PB, Senior Specialist Housing Manager, and AB, Area Housing Manager, presented the Housing Management policy updates. Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) directly affects the quality of life, safety, and sense of belonging for residents. ASB includes a wide range of behaviours - from noise nuisance and vandalism to harassment and hate crime – that can erode community trust and lead to long-term social and economic cost. This report outlined a series of updates to policies relating to Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) delivery of resident services in handling reports of ASB and promoting safe communities. PCH's approach to ASB is shaped by key regulatory standards: • Regulator of Social Housing (RSH): The updated Consumer Standards (2024) require landlords to ensure homes are safe and that ASB is addressed proactively and fairly. • Housing Ombudsman Code: Stresses the importance of clear communication, timely responses, and putting the customer at the heart of complaint handling. • TSMs: Include indicators on how well ASB is managed, directly influencing our performance ratings and reputation.	

During FY2024/25 the Neighbourhood team conducted a review of our approach to ASB, the review used feedback from the perception survey, sector insight and resident consultation on proposed changes to policies. The review also considered lessons learnt from a Housing Ombudsman determination (received January 2024). A TSM action plan was presented to CFC in January 2025 detailing key activities to improve resident satisfaction in how PCH handle ASB cases. This report outlined the key changes to 3 policies, following resident consultation, which were presented to CFC for approval. • ASB – previously updated in April 2022 • Domestic Abuse – previously updated September 2022 • CCTV – previously updated March 2023 In addition, CFC were asked to approve a new policy, Good Neighbourhood Management. This was being introduced as a response to the Housing Ombudsman spotlight report on Noise Complaints (October 2022) which provided critical insights into how landlords manage neighbourhood issues, particularly noise, and its intersection with ASB policies.	
As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: Committee noted that it was useful to receive these relevant policies brought together for approval. Before publishing, revisions would be made to the policies based on feedback from Committee members raised prior to the meeting on Convene.	
The Customer Focus Committee approved the changes to the ASB, CCTV and Domestic Abuse policies and approved the new Good Neighbourhood Management policy.	
11. Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report and Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Code	
MC, Head of Customer Experience, presented the FY 2024/25 Annual Complaints and Service Improvement report and self-assessment in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) Complaint Code, which became a statutory requirement on 1st April 2024. The report provided a summary of complaint performance and detailed learnings from complaints received in the financial year 2024-25. In FY 2024-25 PCH received a total of 631 complaints, averaging 53 complaints per month. This is a 22% increase from FY 2023/34. Of the 631 complaints, 33 were escalated to Stage 2 in line with PCH complaints policy. 47% of LCRA residents who reported a complaint were satisfied with PCH approach to the handling of their complaint, this is an increase of 7% from FY 2023/24.	

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A more accessible version of the report will be published for residents. The self-assessment is PCH's analysis of compliance with the HO Complaint Code. Once approved by CFC, this would be submitted to the HOS, along with the required evidence in line with the deadline of 30th September 2025.	
As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: Committee confirmed that they wish to see clear improvements from the HOS complaints. To provide wider context and comparative information on HOS maladministration determinations across the sector, the Committee were alerted of information of this nature published on the HOS website which is available to view here.	
The Customer Focus Committee approved the FY 2024/25 Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report and the Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Code.	
11.1 PCH Complaint and Comment Policy	
MC presented the PCH Complaint and Comment Policy for CFC approval. PCH's currently customer complaints policy was approved by CFC in November 2024 and is next in line for review in November 2027. In the last 6 months there had been a number of new changes and updates that required the policy to be updated to enhance compliance with the Complaint Handling Code. Once approved, the policy changes would be reflected on PCH's website. Changes included: 1. Paragraph added into section 3.15 giving a definition of how we deal with ASB complaints 2. New paragraph 3.17 added to bring all information related to Building Safety Complaints into the same place 3. New paragraph 3.18 added for Heat Network Supplier complaints in line with new legislation relating to PCH responsibilities around supplying heat to some resident homes 4. New section added to 3.4 providing contact details for the Energy Ombudsman in relation to Heat Network Supplier complaints 5. Added 2 new paragraphs into section 11 with reference to outlining the roles and responsibilities of MRC (Member Responsible for Complaints) following feedback from internal Beevers and Struthers complaint handling audit.	
The Customer Focus Committee approved the changes within the Complaints and Comments Policy.	
<i>PB & AL left the meeting at 10.54am.</i>	

12. Committee Effectiveness	
LR, Head of Governance, presented the Committee Effectiveness report. In April 2024 the Board refocused its committees and agreed to carry out a review of the committee's effectiveness after 12 months. This review covered committee operations, terms of reference, accountability, composition, arrangements, and committee objectives. Feedback was gathered from the Board, governance team, SMT, and EMT. The Chairs met in early July to discuss the review and Board's preference is to move some of the 'heavy lifting' to committees. They also discussed communication between Board, Committees and stakeholders (an update will be provided within the Committee Effectiveness Board report). This report was presented to CFC to discuss and recommend an approach for Board approval. The key considerations (as noted in the report) were: • General improvement - hold pre-meet with time for members to discuss reports with staff • TOR – include oversight of Tenant Management Organisation and leaseholder and shared owners, approve customer facing policies, and bring additional landlord services assurance (as noted from inspection experience) • Membership – recruit a customer service expert from the private sector as an additional independent committee member and appoint Alison Simpson (also ensures we have a quorum of 3 Board members) • Proposed objectives for 2025/26 There were many comments on room for improvement, which can start to be addressed by the planned resident CFC Co-optee training and the staff report author training.	
As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: The Committee discussed areas for improvements which included training on roles and responsibilities, raising questions and enhancing the readability of reports. These comments were noted and would be incorporated into future training and development of the Committee and its members. The Committee agreed to trial alternative methods of reviewing policies which would allow Committee members the opportunities to review them before a final version is formally presented at a meeting for approval. This would be utilised for upcoming policies due to be reviewed by CFC. Committee agreed to pull the improvement related draft objectives into one overarching objective that the Chair would sign off.	10/25 LR/MJ

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The Customer Focus Committee discussed and agreed the recommendations to Board.	
13. Customer Insight Report	
MO, Head of Communication Marketing and External Engagement, presented the Customer Insight Report. This report was designed to provide the Customer Focus Committee with a strategic overview of activity delivered to ensure compliance with the Consumer Standard for Transparency, Influence and Accountability (TIA), focusing specifically on customer engagement, communications (primarily digital communications), resident scrutiny and resident involvement. The report aimed to demonstrate both how we inform residents about services and engage with residents, as well as how residents have been able to shape services, summarising changes made as a result of resident feedback through consultations, groups and scrutiny processes. The report included an update on digital customer communications for Q1 2025-2026, including analytics for the period to show use of digital customer channels, as well as updates on the improvements made to PCH's digital communication channels including the website, MyPCH resident portal and other online channels. There was also a summary of resident engagement activity including consultations and scrutiny, and updates on changes made as a resident of resident involvement. The report would continue to evolve over the coming months with feedback from CFC members on relevant information they would find helpful to receive updates about.	
As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: It was agreed that work would be done to understand how the report could include more quantitative and qualitative analysis of resident engagement.	11/25 MO
The Customer Focus Committee noted the Customer Insight Report.	
14. Customer Experience Report	
MC presented the Customer Experience Report which provided an update on performance and progress with Project Engage to improve the Contact Centre and overall customer experience in Q1 FY2025/26. Key highlights outlined in the report included: • Contact Centre Performance -20,842 contacts handled with a 78% answer rate, down from 87% in Q1 FY24/25. Recruitment gaps impacted performance but have since been resolved. • Service Improvements progressed to improve contact handling included:	

• Improved forecasting using contact pattern analysis. • Development of agent performance dashboards. • IVR simplification to three core options. • Testing of an AI-powered knowledge base. • Upgrades to Repairs Finder and rollout of Omfax diagnostic tool. • Approval of Content Guru telephony system for Q4 implementation. • Complaints Performance -144 Stage 1 complaints (↓17% from Q4); 11 Stage 2 complaints (↑1). 68% upheld (↓12%). Top complaint types include Outstanding Work (24.1%), Appointments, and Staff conduct. • Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) - 1 case of severe maladministration and service failure. Executive leadership issued a personal apology. • Disrepair Cases 12 cases received in Q1 (↓4 from previous quarter). Action plan in place to improve tracking, cost analysis, and proactive prevention measures underway. • Project Engage progress: • Team co-location completed. • BI dashboards implemented. • Weekly CX management meetings established. • Complaint system (Pentana) enhanced. • Repairs journey review completed with external consultancy. • Knowledgebase and text messaging improvements in progress.	
As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: Assurance was given that work was being done to identify improvements systems, PCH processes and resourcing to help reach performance targets.	
The Customer Focus Committee noted the Customer Experience Report.	
15. Supporting Residents (Welfare Reform)	
NK, Head of Rent and Lettings Support, presented the Supporting Residents (Welfare Reform) report which provided an update on rent arrears performance and how PCH is 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 and to protect PCH income. Key performance highlights as of 30 June 2025: Universal Credit (UC):	

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Welfare Reform Impact: • The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) continued the managed migration from legacy benefits to UC, e.g. Income Support to Universal Credit. • The Income & Welfare Team have analysed the potential impact on arrears and prioritised resources to mitigate risks and support affected residents. Financial Inclusion Support: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Benefit Cap & Bedroom Tax: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] • We continue to assist these residents with Discretionary Housing Payment applications and downsizing options Evictions: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Eviction remains a last resort, and we are committed to supporting tenants willing to work with us to sustain their tenancy.	
As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: Committee received confirmation that the Financial Support Fund would be spent fully this year. It was noted that the Downsizing Policy had been through consultation and would be circulated for CFC to review in due course.	
The Customer Focus Committee noted the Supporting Residents (Welfare Reform) Report.	
16. CFC Performance Report	
MD presented the CFC Performance Report for Q1 2025/26, including the new digital dashboard based on PCH's service standards which were shaped by residents and	

agreed by the CFC in late 2024. This dashboard was created in-house by the Business Insight Team, specifically Ben Pascoe Business Insight Analyst. There was an overview session ran for Board members and co-optees on 16th July 2025 and the recording can be located here to view how to navigate the report. The report has been designed following Board feedback at the April Away Day, and we have made it clearer on where we are performing well and can celebrate success along with where we need to do more and what the next steps are to address underperformance. Key highlights: - Customer perception scores improved across all areas, apart from complaint handling and after a challenging 12 months, our overall customer satisfaction with PCH has increased back to 85% and is back on target. - Performance in repairs has improved during the quarter. Non-emergency repair performance has remained broadly the same at 80% within timeframe, but the year-to-date position for emergency repairs is 95%, which is an improvement since the last quarter. - For compliance, we have 48 homes which did not meet the full requirements for gas safety – 45 are these are in two blocks which are affected by the laundries not having the correct certification in place at the end of the quarter. These have since been completed and we have three outstanding. - 92% of damp and mould inspections are being carried out within 14 days as per our policy. We are working through the required timelines and recording systems for Awaab’s Law, which also comes into effect in October 2025, and we have increased our target for all emergency repairs to be completed within 24hours. - Whilst it does not form part of CFC’s reporting suite, we are also highlighting that the percentage non-decent homes increased to 1.23% which equates to 175 homes, all of which have category one failures under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System and are being addressed through a strategic and operational group, along with partners where we have complex issues relating to property condition arising from the resident’s vulnerabilities.	
As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:	

larification around Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) of the Energy Performance Certificates would be brought back to the Committee to understand if this would impact data and improvement progress.	12/25 MD
The Customer Focus Committee noted CFC Performance Report.	
17. Resident Satisfaction Low-Cost Home Ownership FY2024/25	
NK presented the 2025 Low-Cost Homeownership Survey Results. In Q4 FY2024/25 Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) commissioned Acuity Research and Practice to conduct its first independent perception survey of leaseholders and shared owners. The aim was to establish a baseline for satisfaction, benchmark performance, and identify areas for service improvement. This report outlines the findings of survey and the improvement areas. PCH have 409 shared owners and 1715 leaseholders. Key Findings: Overall Satisfaction & Benchmarking • Overall satisfaction with PCH as a landlord is 51%, placing PCH in the 3rd quartile. • Shared owners report lower satisfaction (49%) than leaseholders (58%). • Net Promoter Score is +26, with 51% of respondents unlikely to recommend PCH. Service Areas of Concern • Value for Money (VFM): 35% feel service charges offer good VFM. • Repairs & Maintenance: • 50% satisfied with planned works; 41% with communal repairs. • Concerns include delays, poor communication, and inconsistent quality. • Complaint Handling: 30% satisfied; over a third are very dissatisfied. Of the 631 complaints raised in FY2024/25 5% were from shared owners or leaseholders • Listening & Acting: 43% feel their views are heard and acted upon. Positive Indicators • Ease of Contact: 76% find PCH easy to reach. • Building Safety: 71% feel their home is safe—the highest-rated area. • Information & Respect: 64% feel well-informed; 59% feel treated fairly. Engagement & Communication • 54% feel they have opportunities to shape services. • 72% are aware of the leaseholder forum, but shared owners are currently excluded. • Feedback highlights a need for: • Faster and clearer communication.	

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• Greater transparency on service charges. • More visible presence and accountability from PCH staff. The Head of Rent, Leasehold and Lettings Support will lead work to implement service improvements, these will form part of the overarching service plan for this area. The aim is increasing overall satisfaction by 10% in the next 18 months.	
As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified: Assurance was given that an action plan had been put together to address the issues identified in the survey and this was currently being worked through. It was noted that repair obligations for shared owners differed from tenants and some new build homes would still be under a defect period (1 year) where the repair obligation would be on the developer and not PCH. Further analysis of the data would be carried out to understand the homes under a defect period, as well as geography of homes and updates included in the Executive Director's report, with an annual updated added to the forward plan.	13/25 MD/JJ
The Customer Focus Committee noted report and the Low-Cost Homeownership survey results.	
18. CFC Risks	
JH, Risk and Assurance Manager, presented the report which provided an update on the Customer Experience Strategic Risk, which remained within tolerable levels of associated risk appetite. Actions continued to be implemented to improve service delivery, focusing on improving customer interactions and using data to deliver equitable outcomes based on the diverse needs of customers. Key actions within the Customer Experience Strategic Risk to note included: • Recruitment of an Interim Head of Thriving Neighbourhoods with permanent recruitment to be completed during Q2 2025/2026 • Further work on customer insight reporting which is being developed in line with planned actions for enhancing customer data by December 2025. • Beevers & Struthers completing an Internal Audit during Q3 2025/26 <i>to provide assurance around PCH's controls to ensure the resident voice is heard and how PCH manages its estates services.</i> Other actions which were included in other Strategic Risk which were not reported to the Committee but should be informed of included: • Under the Reputational Strategic Risk there is a communications plan in place following the Housing Ombudsman Severe Maladministration Determination which focuses on the message that PCH committed to addressing all	

complaints fully and ensuring residents are treated respectfully and agreed improvements are made	
Under the Data Integrity Strategic Risk work continued on the Data Quality project to ensure that we know the data required for each customer, and what is required to ensure that systems and processes will ensure customer data is captured and managed appropriately in the future. This will include a one-off data capture exercise which will provide every customer with the opportunity to update their records (inc. contact preferences and support needs (vulnerabilities). This will enable PCH to tailor communications and service delivery to ensure customers are regularly asked to confirm and update their data going forward. This is a major project and will be delivered in Q4 2025/26. No new emerging risks were identified, and the risk remains 'unlikely (2)'. However, this was pending the results of from the Regulator of Social Housing inspection which will provide PCH with its first Grading on the delivery of the new Consumer Standards Rating, which would validate PCH's approach to managing the risk.	
The Customer Focus Committee noted the CFC Risks.	
19. How did we do? Did we achieve our objectives?	
The Committee reflected on the meeting and agreed there was good contribution from all members and although some topic strayed into operational detail, there was a good level of discussion, debate, challenges and assurance given. It was noted that CFC would be working towards its new objectives at the next meeting in October.	
20. Agenda Forward Plan	
The Agenda Forward Plan was presented to the Committee for information. It was noted that the Review of Tenancy Agreements would be delayed and therefore removed from the forward plan for October, to be rescheduled in 2026. The Executive Director's report would include updates on the action plans discussed in this meeting – BSR Compliance Notices and Resident Satisfaction in Low-Cost Home Ownership.	14/25 JJ 15/25 MD
21. Next Meeting: 17th October 2025	
<i>The meeting closed at 12.10pm.</i>	



Signature.....

Maja Jorgensen – Chair

Date 17/10/2025



Certified as a true copy

Lucy Rickson, Head of Governance

Date 17/10/2025