

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Housing Board
Held on Wednesday 27 May 2026 at 10:00am
In the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

Present:

Board Members:

Councillors:

P. Jones Leader of the Council and Chair of the Housing Board

Tenant and Leasehold Members:

N. Howells Council tenant

B. Murphy Council tenant

G. Pace Council tenant

Independent Members:

S. Johnson Director of Governance and Legal, whg

A. Kenny Former Executive Director of Property, Housing Plus

Also Present:

Officers:

T. Clegg Chief Executive

C. Forrester Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer

N Samrai Head of Housing and Corporate Assets

R. Frumenzi Housing Maintenance Manager

L. Tandy Housing Services Manager

E. Norwood Assistant Housing Property Services Manager

B. Wildey Assistant Tenancy Services Manager

J. Morgan Assistant Housing Services Manager

M. Berry Democratic Services Team Leader

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted for:

- Councillor R. Mandry, Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader and Vice-Chair of the Board.
- G. Stott – Deputy Chief Executive-Place
- H. Campbell – Tenancy Services Manager
- C. Hawkins – Housing Property Services Manager
- L. Cunnett - Homes Manager, Tamworth Borough Council (Independent Member)

2. Previous Minutes and Action Tracker

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 January 2026 were agreed and the action tracker noted.

3. Housing Services Improvement Plan – Quarter 4 / Year End for 2025/26

An Independent Member requested that for the next meeting, an update be provided on all items on the action tracker not marked as completed (*Clarification – uncompleted actions from the 25/26 Plan will move onto 26/27 Plan where not superseded or not prioritised. 26/27 Plan is on agenda for next meeting.*) The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets informed that the 25/26 Plan had been very ambitious and resources had not allowed for the completion of all items, therefore some prioritisation of actions has had to be done.

The Board subsequently went through in turn each of the actions marked with a red cross, with specific updates and comments/questions raised as follows:

- Item 3 – ‘develop a rolling programme of planned improvements from the stock condition survey data and report on progress to the Housing Board.’

The Assistant Housing Property Services Manager advised that the properties not surveyed by the external consultants due to non-access were now being dealt with in-house and it was aimed for the full survey to be completed by the Autumn 2026, although hopefully sooner. A data officer was in place to review the survey results received so far and input them into the system on a daily basis.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to whether ‘data cloning’ would be used for those properties where access could not be gained, the Assistant Housing Property Services Manager advised this would not be the case as the opportunity was being taken to bolt-on to gas safety checks that had to be done on all properties to ensure access could be gained.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets further advised that having spoken with the Council’s legal services team, in instances where access had been refused when gas safety and other checks were required, the Council would potentially look at seeking injunctions to gain access but had not got to that stage yet.

- Item 4 iii) – ‘data governance policy/data strategy’

An Independent Member raised concern about non-compliance with meeting regulatory standards in this regard and the non-appointment of the staff post. The Housing Services Manager advised that work on this would continue to be covered by the interim arrangements in place.

- Item 4 iv) – ‘performance reporting framework; and KPI definition document’

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that the associated post had been recruited to and so it was hoped this action could be progressed moving forwards (Clarification – the KPI definition document was completed and presented to Board at the previous meeting; the PRF is still to be completed).

- Item 5 i) – ‘review and develop written procedures for existing process in the HRA, including commercial properties (HRA shops)’.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that there were 22 or 23 commercial units beneath flatted lets. The leases of these units had been reviewed and required update as they were quite antiquated. Work had been going on with shop owners over the last year to get compliance checks done and records updated.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to whether the shop owners had engaged with the Council, the Assistant Housing Property Services Manager advised that engagement had been mixed, with some raising concern about power to their properties being switched off. The legal requirements of the checks being done were however explained to them and so it had been a successful project overall.

The Independent Member then asked that it be checked if gas safety checks undertaken on the residential flats had picked up any issues for the commercial units.

In response to a query from a Tenant Member as to whether tenants were liable for damage to the commercial units from issues within their own properties, the Assistant Housing Property Services Manager confirmed that this was the case, hence why the ownership of the commercial units had been transferred to the Housing service.

- Item 5 ii) – ‘ensure NEC system holds records of information and ability to report on performance against the process’.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that the NEC system was currently being reviewed with the interim team leader looking to see how officers could get the best out of the system.

- Item 5 iii) – ‘programme of inspections to be established and completed’.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that this linked to the work undertaken for item 5.i).

- Item 7 – ‘review of HRA reserves to fund planned maintenance, compliance and works arising from the stock condition survey’.

The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources advised that substantial work had been done on developing the new 30-year business plan, with the first draft received from Savills and populated with the required information. Furthermore, the 2025/26 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) outturn was being worked on presently, so once all the relevant data had been pulled together it was hoped to have the final plan in place later this year.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to whether there were any concerns from the data so far, the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources advised that the main concerns were sector-wide issues such as ageing stock, lack of funding etc.

- Item 10 ii) – ‘incorporate into capital programme of upgrade work and develop KPIs to add to performance’.

The Assistant Housing Property Services Manager advised that officers were identifying opportunities to provide properties with loft insulation, solar panels, new heating systems etc., specifically looking to do such works on properties at the same time. Furthermore, Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) would also be produced for properties where they had expired or were due within the next two years.

- Item 17 iii) (amber triangle rated) – ‘explore external audit of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) management performance information’.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to whether any data validation would be done before the deadline, the Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that it would be unlikely for this year due to the timescale (required by 30 June) but certainly intended for next year.

- Item 19 i) – ‘reduce average re-let times for empty properties’.

The Housing Maintenance Manager advised that last year had been challenging for voids works as a large number had involved major works investment and also impacted by the

condition that some properties were being returned in. Minor works had been kept a hold of, and whilst the year-end figure was slightly above target, the quarter four figure was below it. An average of ten voids were now held at any one time which would allow more focus to be given on major works.

Lots of major works still had to be done, but the team was looking at how to manage these better to stop target times getting out of control. Additionally, some works in the previous quarter had been impacted by waiting for external contractors to come in and do works.

- Item 20 i) – ‘review existing contract with grounds maintenance team’.

The Assistant Tenancy Services Manager advised that the new specification was now completed and so the Streetscene Manager just needed to complete their required element of the work, with a meeting scheduled next week to discuss.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets further advised that the budget set was a historical one for the in-house team and they were not necessarily looking for a reduction because they were being told the costs were out of date and had not been increased. The consultants found that the specification was ok, but not the resources within the team to deliver it, so that was the issue being picked up with the Streetscene Manager.

A Tenant Member noted that the perception from residents was around the quality of the works undertaken rather than the costs, so they would notice if the quality went down.

- Item 20 ii) – ‘complete joint estate inspections, to cover...’.

The Assistant Tenancy Services Manager advised that the neighbourhood teams carried out estate walks and invited the tree officer along to record what works needed doing on trees on the estates. There was a five-year tree survey on housing land which it was understood would be reviewed this year (Clarification – bin stores was the only outstanding element of the inspections to resolve).

- Item 22 iii) – ‘hold an initial community day’.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that this was for the Carfax estate, with the Housing Property Services (HPS) and Tenancy Services teams tasked with holding a community clean-up day with partners. However, a number of repairs had been identified on the estate which needed doing before the community day could happen.

In response to a query from the Chair as to whether communication happened with tenants there, the Assistant Tenancy Services Manager advised that they were looking to do a residents’ survey in conjunction with the HPS team to see what tenants wanted.

4. Key Performance Indicators 2025/26

The Housing Maintenance Manager referred to his answer given in the previous agenda item regarding the re-let time for void properties, noting that for April 2026, the average re-let time had reduced to 20.83 days for minor works and 42 days for major works, with the focus being on maintaining that performance going forward. The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets caveated that there were two long-standing void properties carried over from last year that required a lot of work to be done so this would affect the overall figures.

An Independent Member asked if two sets of figures could be reported that showed the long-term voids separately so as not to negatively skew the overall figures. The Housing Maintenance Manager advised that this was already done in the background so would be easy to include in future reports. (ACTION)

In respect of the TSM of ‘percentage of non-emergency repairs completed within provider timescales’ being set at 75%, an Independent Member raised that this seemed extremely low and asked if officers were comfortable with a 25% failure rate. In response, the Housing

Maintenance Manager advised that this target could be reviewed if it was considered to be too low. The Assistant Housing Services Manager further advised that the 2026/27 targets were discussed at the previous meeting and so would check if this specific target score had been changed (*Clarification – target set at 80% for 26/27, so has been increased*).

5. Compliance Update

The Assistant Housing Property Services Manager updated the Board on compliance work in respect of the following:

- Gas servicing
- Alternative Heating Services
- Electrical Testing
- Lifting equipment
- Asbestos

A Tenant Member raised that following 'asbestos management surveys' for properties being mentioned at the previous meeting, one specific property had received four different asbestos surveys within the past six weeks for four separate reasons, and so queried what the cost had been to the Council over the past year for these audits being done as they were completed by an external contractor, and what was the trigger for an audit being requested in the first place?

In response, the Assistant Housing Property Services Manager advised that in the scenario described, it sounded like there had been a duplication of work with a mix of planned and day-to-day maintenance going on. In terms of requiring a survey for the specific works required, it was likely that the property concerned did not have a high enough level of detail available on record and therefore new surveys were necessary. If no information was available, then the surveys had to be done so as not to put tenants or staff at risk.

- Water Hygiene

In response to a query from the Chair as to whether all information in this regard was documented as it should be, the Assistant Housing Property Services Manager confirmed that this was the case, with a full audit trail in place.

- Fire Safety

In response to a query from the Chair regarding reviews of the communal blocks, the Assistant Tenancy Services Manager advised that reviews were undertaken on a weekly basis.

An Independent Member noted that the direction of travel on completing associated actions did not seem to have really moved since the last audit was completed – a fuller explanation on the outstanding actions to be provided for the next meeting. (ACTION)

- Building Safety Audits

In response to a query from an Independent Member regarding timescales for completion of these audits, the Assistant Housing Property Services Manager advised he did not have a definitive date to hand but could check and report back separately. (ACTION)

The Housing Maintenance Manager then reported on the compliance update for damp and mould works.

A Tenant Member raised concern about the different types of asbestos in tenants' properties and so asked if different types of treatments were used depending on the issue being dealt

with. In response, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that the scope of works required would be decided by the surveyor who visited the properties to assess the issues and what types of works were needed.

Another Tenant Member raised concern about the number of damp and mould complaints received and asked how many were repeat complaints. In response, the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that the Council took a proactive approach as a landlord by directly asking tenants if they had any damp and mould in their properties, along with undertaking a social media campaign and putting livery on the side of the Council's vehicles to promote reporting of such issues. Under Awaab's law, the Council had to encourage reporting, and whilst the size of the respective team had not increased in number, a specialist team leader was in place for this work. The Assistant Property Services Manager further advised that it had to be borne in mind that further issues may come forward from the remaining stock condition surveys.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to whether the figure for the total number of remaining live cases and the percentage of completed Awaab's law cases contradicted one another, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that the first point was perhaps not worded correctly, but the figure for Awaab's law related to follow-on inspections of completed jobs, live cases are those not yet attended due to access.

6. Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards Self-Assessment

The Housing Services Manager advised that all housing managers had undertaken the self-assessment exercise and whilst some strengths had been identified, other areas required some work. A 'critical friend' would be appointed to further assess any identified strengths and weaknesses to help prepare for a future inspection by the regulator.

An Independent Member raised that it was pleasing to see the self-assessment work reported to the Board, but the way the information was presented had caused some confusion about what the Council's actual position was. In response, the Housing Services Manager advised that it was possibly not quite compliant, with the self-assessment exercise proving useful for managers, but having the critical friend come in would be a big help.

The Independent Member further raised that reassurance was sought about compliance, so it would hoped that the third-party input would help with this.

7. Housing Complaints Policy and Housing Ombudsman Review

The Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that the Housing Ombudsman had reviewed all local authority social housing landlords' complaints procedures following 2024/25 self-assessment returns. As a result of this work, the Council's own corporate policy was found to be non-compliant. The team had already been working on a separate Housing policy and that work had now been completed, with the new version published on the website. The Ombudsman had since confirmed that the new policy was compliant.

Raised by Lucy Cunnett, Independent Member prior to the meeting: *In relation to the 'culture of complaints', could the board be given some reassurance that the updated information is provided to all customer facing staff not only managers as these staff members are often dealing on front end of the complaints process where this information to be able to advise customers correctly can be given.*

Response – We can confirm all customer facing staff will be provided the information. A briefing session to all managers and complaint responding officers will initially be held and then information will be filtered down. All staff will need to understand the new policy/procedure and filter service requests/complaints to the correct place.

8. Tenant Satisfaction Measures 2025/26 Survey Results

The Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that the full results had been provided to the Board in their agenda pack, but the overall results showed that all bar two of the reported Tenant Satisfaction Measures had improved when compared with 2024/25.

In response to an Independent Member as to whether the Council was going to publicise to tenants what actions would be taken to improve the lower scoring measures, the Assistant Housing Services Manager confirmed this would be the case and the relevant information published on the website.

9. Review of the Housing Board's Performance and Fulfilment of Terms of Reference

The following feedback was provided:

Tenant Members

- Felt that tenant members had not achieved what they wanted to in the role.
- Initially, no outline was provided about what the Board would do or how it would work, so consideration was needed as to what adjustments could be made, such as having smaller meetings with only people the Board definitely needed to see being present.
- A TPAS representative attended the first meeting to help guide the work of the Board and advised that the original membership was not set in stone and could evolve. Therefore, could the Board look at how other similar bodies operated?

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that attendance at Board meetings by service managers had been requested by an Independent Member to answer specific questions, but this could be reviewed. Southwark Council was leading on a piece of work about housing boards and 17 other councils were part of that group, so the suggestion of seeing how others worked could be raised with them.

- Having pre-meetings with the Assistant Housing Services Manager had been helpful.
- Still a lack of clarity about what the Board wanted from tenant members, specifically around their role and what was expected of them.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised this would be discussed separately with officers, but it was expected tenant members would ask questions about performance improvement etc (Clarification – Assistant Housing Services Manager will send Tenant Board members some further information and they can discuss at their next pre-meeting).

Independent Members

- As an overall observation, starting a new Board from scratch meant that it took time to get used to knowing how things ran, what information was being presented, how the Council performed and operated and how it delivered its housing services.
- Looking ahead, there would be the challenge of the terms of office of the current Independent and Tenant Members all ending at the same time, so thought needed giving to succession planning.
- Had been able to influence what information was presented to the Board, and officers were responsive when additional information was being asked for.
- It would be interesting to know what officers thought about how the Board had worked and a gap analysis undertaken of the terms of reference. (ACTION)

- Regular monitoring of the housing improvement plan and performance reports had been helpful, whereas today's meeting was the really the first one at which compliance with the regulatory standards had been considered.
- As per the terms of reference, consider whether fair and equitable outcomes were being achieved for all tenants and prospective tenants, in accordance with the Council's equality and diversity policy.
- More thought needed to ensure outcomes were being achieved, perhaps by doing a short review at the end of each meeting.
- Challenging to prepare for meetings because of the limited technology the Council had available (i.e., no management system for Board papers). It was felt that better use should be made of adding comments to shared PDF documents as it was appreciated the Council could not necessarily purchase a full software system. *(Clarification – members permissions on SharePoint to be upgraded to 'edit' so they can all add comments to documents).*
- It felt like several items listed in the terms of reference had not been done, but this was difficult to achieve when the Board only quarterly.
- Whilst it was not being suggested to have more meetings, thought should be given to the timings of items and dealing with clarification points outside of the meeting.

The Chief Executive raised that the Board meetings had been very valuable and it had been difficult to start with an entirely new Board where the representatives did not know each other, but attendance had been good and input positive.

Having three different Chairs in the space of five meetings also had to be considered, and the impact that had through a lack of continuity and relationship with the rest of the Board and the Cabinet. As such, thought may be needed about how to get key messages across and feedback from the Cabinet about what they had found useful.

It may be helpful a future meeting to look ahead twelve months for what the Board wanted to focus on, what was most valuable and how to balance discussion on those items with what officers wanted to present. The Board also needed to keep in mind that a regulatory inspection would happen in due course.

- The terms of reference also noted that two extra meetings were expected to be held each year for the purposes of team building, learning and development etc. *(Clarification – Away day would be arranged in between meetings if possible. Gap analysis between ToR could be looked at in more detail).*
- When thinking in terms of timeframes rather than number of meetings, the Board had achieved a lot so far.
- Would like to see other colleagues attend to understand what they did.
- Did not necessarily want to wait until the next quarter for updates on specific items.

Raised by Lucy Cunnett, Independent Member prior to the meeting:

- *Although we are an 'advisory' board only, if there are policies/ decisions to be reviewed that comments from the board can be added to these in a more formal way. We are consulted as a board and are provided with a wealth of information, however I would find it even more fulfilling if my/ the boards comments were recorded on reports then sent onto cabinet. This may mean fewer agenda items for our sessions and a way of either recording individual board member comments or a collect comment decided upon via a vote, but I do feel this will allow members to see that onward purpose of the board.*

- *Moving forward suggest we should be more focused on areas which are flagging from the KPI's for example void turnaround times and options presented to the board for consideration with an action plan agreed at the meeting. This can then be reviewed in summary at future meetings. This way, the board can focus time on the areas which, through improvement, will improve the overall service to tenants. A more targeted session with the aim of understanding and making suggestions to improve those areas of lower performance.*

10. Forward Agenda

The main agenda items for the next meeting were agreed as follows:

- KPIs / Performance (standing item)
- Housing Services Delivery Plan (standing item)
- Annual Complaints Performance Report
- Tenant Engagement Update

It was noted that other items may come from the additional 'away day' meeting.

11. Any Other Business

A Tenant Member raised an issue with a wet-room refurbishment that was now into its third week and still not resolved. As such there was concern this may also be happening in other properties with the same contractor involved. Officers advised they would look into this issue outside of the meeting.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 26th August 2026, 10am, Esperance Room, CCDC.

The meeting closed at 12:10pm.