

**Cannock Chase Council**  
**Minutes of the Housing Board**  
**Held on Wednesday 5 November 2025 at 10:00am**  
**In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Present:**

**Board Members:**

**Councillors:**

S. Thornley	Leader of the Council and Chair of the Housing Board
S.J. Thornley	Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader
P. Haden	Housing and Corporate Assets Shadow Portfolio Leader

**Tenant and Leasehold Members:**

N. Howells	Council tenant and Income Management Assistant, CCDC
B. Murphy	Council tenant
G. Pace	Council tenant

**Independent Members:**

L. Cunnett	Homes Manager, Tamworth Borough Council
S. Johnson	Director of Governance and Legal, Walsall Housing Group

**Also Present:**

**Officers:**

T. Clegg	Chief Executive
G. Stott	Deputy Chief Executive-Place
C. Forrester	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer
N Samrai	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets
R. Frumenzi	Housing Maintenance Manager
C. Hawkins	Housing Property Services Manager
J. Morgan	Assistant Housing Services Manager
M. Berry	Democratic Services Team Leader

**21. Apologies**

Apologies were noted for:

- A. Kenny - Independent Member.
- Louise Tandy - Housing Services Manager.
- Howard Campbell - Tenancy Services Manager.

**22. Previous Minutes and Action Tracker**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 August 2025 were agreed and the action tracker noted.

### **23. Housing Services Improvement Plan**

A tenant member thanked the Assistant Housing Services Manager for keeping the Board updated with the information on SharePoint.

The updated improvement plan for quarter 2 2025/26 was noted.

### **24. Key Performance Indicators**

#### ***Key Performance Indicators - Quarter 2 2025-26***

In response to a query from an Independent member as to how the 'percentage of dwellings that are vacant and available for let (at period end)' was measured, the Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that the Housemark definition was used.

In response to a query from a Member regarding the 'average re-let time for Voids (calendar days),' the Assistant Housing Services Manager confirmed that the position had improved during quarter 2. The Housing Maintenance Manager further advised that for September, minor works averaged 17 days completion (which was below the 30 days target) and for major works, 5 out of 10 were under target, but had been affected by issues with two specific properties. It was expected that from December onwards, the overall figure would improve further.

#### ***Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) - Quarter 2 2025-26***

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to why the 2024/25 target for 'percentage of non-emergency repairs completed within provider timescales' was only 65% when the service was performing well above that level, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that this related to some concerns with the NEC system. The figures were not real-time as the system did not allow for completions to be recorded, so a lot of manual recordings were having to be done and then the system updated. The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets noted the target may be too low and so could be reviewed ready for April next year. The Assistant Housing Services Manager further advised that the proposed indicators for 2026/27 were due to be considered at the January 2026 Board meeting.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to how information on the TSMs was provided to residents, the Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that the data was published on the Council's website and also included in the tenants' newsletter (delivered to all tenants) for those without internet access. Benchmarking data was also published.

In response to a Member as to whether much feedback was received from residents, the Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that limited feedback was received, and this was a historic issue. More information was being published than previously, but the service was doing the best it could and did rely on tenants' engagement. An update on engagement was provided later in the agenda.

A Tenant Member raised that it was more likely people wanted to give negative rather than positive feedback, so this perhaps skewed the data available.

Another Tenant Member noted this matter went back to historic issues of residents feeling that raising issues with the Council was a waste of time, specifically due to poor communication when there was a problem, and the information not always being passed on.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised the service could track back to find out what happened in the specific issues raised by the Tenant Member, noting it was disappointed the tenant concerned had had a negative experience. Some parts of the Housing service now had telephone recording in place, and whilst the aim was to have it rolled out across the whole service, there was a cost implication for doing so.

Another Tenant Member then provided their own anecdotal experiences of communications issues.

An Independent Member noted that perception was very important, particularly in respect of the TSMs as half of the measures reported against related to it, the importance of it could not be underestimated.

A Tenant Member raised the Council should be working to put out more positive messaging online and via social media to counteract negative posts put out by the public.

An Independent Member noted that the work of councils was so broad and often being done by under-resources teams, so it only took one negative post to tar everyone with the same brush, with a lot of time being spent having to try and defend officers' work. The Council had taken some great steps on social media and with its communications. Consistency was key to putting positive messages out there, with this Board being part of that positivity.

A Tenant Member noted that when the Council was doing a good job, the perception from residents was that the Council was just doing the job expected of it, but this was not the case when it was a negative position.

### ***Housemark Presentation - TSMs and Performance Feedback***

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to what work the Council had done about anti-social behaviour (ASB) and tenants' perceptions, the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that the District had historically low levels of ASB until the last year or two. The Council had a corporate community safety team in place, but there was no dedicated ASB officers in the Housing department and it often felt that the Police expected the Council to carry out some of their duties on ASB matters. There was an interim legal enforcement officer in place working with the Council's legal services department, and a discussion had been held with the S151 Officer about creating a budget to support this work further with the additional resource for a specific Housing legal enforcement officer being agreed.

The Independent Member noted it may be worthwhile putting out regular messaging on social media about the role of the Police in respect of ASB matters and that residents should contact them rather than the Council if they had any ASB issues. More work could also be done with the community safety partnership on diversionary tactics.

## **25. Compliance Update**

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to whether water hygiene works were carried out in-house or by contractors, the Housing Property Services Manager advised the checks were done in house via two operatives and annual checks were carried out by an external contractor.

An Independent Member noted that 100% of housing stock dwellings (excluding tenant refusals) receiving an annual gas safety check was excellent and queried whether residents were taken to court for non-compliance. In response, the Housing Property Services Manager advised that this had not been the case, but conversations were happening at the moment about how non-compliance issues were dealt with.

In response to a query from an Independent Member about how the damp and mould works team were getting on, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised they had been working for seven months now and it was going well overall. The NEC system had been built to support their work to ensure compliance with damp and mould works. A meeting was due to take place soon to set benchmark targets based on information from the NEC system. The team had gone above and beyond the minimum expectation of getting the works done and a 10-day inspection process was built into the timescales to always stay compliant.

In response to a query from a Member as to what demand there was on the damp and mould team, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that information was available online about the different types of mould that residents could experience in their properties. The quarterly breakdown showed that over 800 reports of damp and mould had been received between April 2024 and end of September 2025 (the 18-month period prior to date).

An Independent Member noted that based on the quarterly figures, communications could be targeted accordingly to reflect specific peaks and troughs in demand.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets noted that for the period outlined, the team had not had to decant any residents, which was a positive story.

An Independent Member then referred to the following questions submitted in advance by another Independent Member (A. Kenny):

#### *Building Safety*

- The CORGI audits, what were the results and findings of the Q1 & Q2 audits, the number of audits actively conducted, and how is this figure agreed on?

*The Housing Property Services Manager advised that all the audits carried out by CORGI were absolutely fine. If any significant issues occurred, then they get called out to site to be rectified at the time. 35 audits were conducted in quarter 2, with generally only 120 CORGI audits done per year at the moment.*

- The procurement of the other external audits. Do we have a timeline for this please and I have the importance of this in the last two meetings.

*The Housing Property Services Manager advised that a proper procurement exercise needed to be done for gas servicing, as well as electrics and asbestos. The 120 audits referred to in the previous answer were a small amount, so we will look to increase this number once the procurement exercise is done. In-house audits were also being done and handover reviews by gas officers.*

*There was a lot of outstanding procurements to get done. A procurement programme and delivery plan is being compiled to address them, although not likely to start the majority of procurements until the new financial year.*

#### *Fire Safety*

- There does not appear to be much movement in the actions from Q1 to Q2. Do we have a timescale for rectification and a priority timescale for the remaining 136?

*The Housing Property Services Manager advised the timescales would be published on the Board's SharePoint page for ease of reference moving forward.*

- In relation to the Lighting Conductors to each building - this is usually a default approach with FRAs and only is required if the building in question is the tallest in height within a certain geographical area.

*The Housing Property Services Manager advised that he agreed with this view. Because we have asked for a fire risk assessment to be undertaken, we are leaving ourselves at additional risk if we do not carry out this work. It will be prioritised accordingly.*

## 26. Housing Revenue Account - Position Statement

The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer delivered a presentation on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) that covered:

- Looking backwards.
- Current position
- Challenges
- Decisions

Board Members raised the following comments/queries during the course of the presentation which were responded to by officers as necessary:

1. Would a change in direction regarding income generation / service charges require an update to the tenancy agreements?

*The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that the agreements had recently been updated and included provision for charging to be adopted if decided to do so.*

*The Deputy Chief Executive-Place further advised that if service charging was to be adopted, there would be a need to look at what services residents would get*

2. What would the HRA be paying out in real terms on loans taken out to support investment in the housing stock?

*The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer advised that the Council's borrowing was linked to the Government (via the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB)) rather than commercial markets and it was hoped that going forward borrowing would stabilise. As a 30-year HRA Business Plan was being developed, the level of risk was being factored in for the full plan period.*

*A sustainable level of borrowing would be taken on and if all stock condition works were done successfully then this should reduce the ongoing costs in respect of repairs and maintenance works.*

3. The caveat of local government reorganisation (LGR) - would this be considered as part of developing the 30-year business plan?

*The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer advised that the position being taken was the HRA was a standalone, sovereign entity that would not be linked to the Council's General Fund and needed to be solvent and successful. The onus was on the Council to get this right before LGR came into being, with the risk being that the new authority might take a different view of the sustainability of the housing stock if it was not seen as successful.*

*The Chief Executive advised that in the context of LGR, if the housing stock was to be maintained rather than being managed in a different way then the Council had to get its house in order and ensure the service was sustainable for the future, with some decisions in the past perhaps not having helped long-term planning. The hope was that the successor council would make positive decisions about how social housing was delivered and provided in the area.*

4. Was there any feeling for how much income concessionary charges could bring in?

*The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer advised it could potentially be a few hundred thousand pounds per year over the 30-year plan period.*

5. What percentage of tenants were in receipt of benefits?

*The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised it was currently around two-thirds.*

6. Difficult decisions had got to be made, and support was given to the proposals set out in the presentation as the Council was quite tied on what it could do. The Council probably needed to look at ways of working smarter and also the need to manage the messaging of any proposed changes / charges, as well as selling to tenants what improvements had been made.
7. There was a need to explain to tenants what services they currently received, what they could receive in future if charges were brought in and what the future would look like if those services could not be offered.
8. This was an incredible leap forward for the Council and would be a very different way for tenancies to operate in future if service charges were adopted.
9. As tenant members, a lot of information had been provided which still had to be assimilated and understood. As the Board role was still quite new for them it was a learning process and so there was concern about whether the information was being read in the correct way. Thanks were given to the officers for the presentation and information provided.

*The Chair advised that one-to-one meetings could be offered with the Head of Service and Cabinet member to help understand the role further if that was of help.*

10. It may be worthwhile having an agenda item at the January 2026 meeting on LGR and the future implications for the HRA.
11. Rent increases and service charges were definitely needed, particularly given the disparity on rental charges when compared to other local authorities and social landlords.
12. Everything needed to be futureproofed in respect of LGR to ensure the District was left in the best position possible for the new authority.

The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer advised that as the Board indicated its support with the proposals set out in the presentation, then several reports and policy documents would come forward separately for the Board's information and assurance.

**The Board indicated its support for the proposals outlined in the 'decisions' section of the presentation for further information and reports back to the Board.**

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that the independent living schemes had not been factored in, particularly looking at redesign and use of redundant spaces. Action needed on communal blocks in respect of upgrades, decorating of flats communal areas and bin storage. There were some empty garage sites that could be disposed of or chosen for small scale developments. Decent homes phase two also had to be dealt with, the costs of which were unknown at this stage. Some extra savings had been achieved in the carbon reduction programme which could be put toward loft insulation measures.

## **27. Resident Engagement Update**

The Assistant Housing Services Manager provided an update on resident engagement matters that covered:

- Historic resident engagement in Cannock Chase.
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.
- Resident engagement at the Council since 2024/25 onwards.

- Resident Involvement Strategy - Framework and options for involvement.
- Update on activities.
- Resident satisfaction.
- Measuring engagement with tenants.

## **28. Forward Agenda**

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

- KPIs / performance update (standing item)
- Proposed KPIs for 2026/27
- Housing Services Improvement Plan (standing item)
- Damp and Mould - Awaab's Law - response and initial findings.
- Local Government Reorganisation - potential impact on the HRA.

## **29. Any Other Business**

The Chair raised he would discuss with officers whether a change of Board Chair was necessary owing to the fact he was married to the Board member who was the Housing Portfolio Leader.

Board Members advised they had no issues with the Chair remaining in position.

## **30. Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026, 10am, Esperance Room, CCDC.

The meeting closed at 11:52am.