

Minutes of City Housing Involvement Board
Thursday 25 July 2024, 16:30 p.m. -18.30 p.m.
Microsoft Teams

Present: Members: Name	Surname	Housing Involvement Board
Eric	Shipton	Sutton Coldfield LHIB
Dadirai	Tsopo	Harborne LHIB
Samantha	Vaughan	Perry Barr LHIB
David	Wray	Selly Oak LHIB
Arshad	Butt	Hall Green LHIB
Margaret	Ryan	Ladywood LHIB
Officers		
Louise	Fletcher	Senior Service Manager - Tenant Engagement
Dave	Ashmore	Director of Housing Management
John	Jamieson	Head of Service for Housing Management
Wayne	Davies	Service Director Asset Management
Tracy	Holsey	Head of Income Collection, Revenues & Benefits
Diane	Jones	Rent Operations Manager
Gemma	Brodrick	Housing Modernisation and Partnership Manager
Pamela	Powis	Senior Service Manager - Safer Places
Colin	Hanno	Engagement Manager
Winnie	Edwards	Change Management Officer
Jean	Campbell	RI & TMO Support Officer
Apologies		
Paul	Langford	Strategic Director of City Housing
Andrea	Leon	Hodge Hill LHIB
Guy	Chaundy	Strategic & Enabling • City Housing
Firoza	Loonat	Change Management Officer

0.1 Introduction to the Meeting and Welcome

David Wray welcomed all to the meeting.

0.2 Matters Arising

David Wray asked have the members read the minutes? The minutes were checked for accuracy. The minutes were agreed.

Wayne Davies we can confirm that the Asset Management team are arranging to visit a home that is currently empty. The teams have fitted a new bathroom and kitchen. We are extending an invite to the CHIB members to visit the property.

Void Property address: - 52 Lismore Close, Redal, Birmingham B45 0JE

I confirm the date will be Tuesday 30th July, currently we have ten people who have expressed an interest to join us on the visit.

0.3 Rent Service update by Diane Jones & Tracy Holsey

Performance 2203/2024

- £15.4m a reduction of £2.7m arrears since the start of the year 23/24 – 98.4%
- Evictions – 91%

Forecast

- Factors – Rent increase 7.7%/ Discretionary Housing Payment/ Homeless prevention fund/UC migration/53-week year.

Year Ahead 2024/2025 – Challenges

- Financial challenge for income collection a large percentage of tenants claim benefits, that would have come automatically direct to the Housing revenue account will go direct to tenants housing account.
 - Unprecedented council tax increases 10% over two years

Support

- Welfare Co-ordinators at Job Centre working closely with DWP
- Food Vouchers, Debt Advisors, Neighbourhood Advice Service - evenings/weekends

Proactive work

- Encourage payment - low level arrears
- Using Analytic data to ensure income collected is efficient and effective

For full details see presentation

David Wray said thank you to the presenters.

0.4 local Housing involvement Board updates.

Arshad Butt - I am a member of Local Housing Involvement Board which covers both Hall Green also the Acocks Green area. Local area housing managers attend the meetings, also in attendance are the contractors this helps the tenants because we are able to receive answers to the questions raised by members. The group with the Tenant Participation Officer carries out walkabouts in the Acocks Green and Hall Green area. We report issues such as fly tipping, graffiti, overgrown garden/hedges. There have been projects such as installing benches. Also, bollards installed to prevent Car parking on the grass verge. On the low-rise blocks new flooring has been installed. Improvements have been made to both low-rise and high-rise blocks in the area. We have made improvements to the garage sites. We have a recruitment campaign to attract new members to the LHIB. There are planned strategy meetings where the tenants raise issues this will help the tenants to live in a safe and comfortable environment.

Dave Ashmore asked regarding the new arrangements for the LHIB. How are they working for the members? Is there anything further the Council can do to support the local group.

Arshad Butt responded currently things are working well. The chairperson Sheila Devaney will ask the group if they have any issues or concerns to raise and will raise the issues during the LHIB meeting while the local area managers are in attendance.

Eric Shipton explained regarding Sutton Coldfield Local Housing Involvement Board. During the AGM the group elected sixteen members, we are trying to recruit more members. The BCC senior managers, the contractors' and senior managers from the repair teams attend the meetings. The group does walkabouts in the area. In the Sutton Coldfield area, there are 2000 BCC properties, which restricts the budget that the group receives towards projects. When making requests for bids on the projects we need to be able to ask the local businesses also, businesses outside of the area to make bids. In June, the LHIB group held a community day the location was the Park Court. In attendance there were sixty people plus they were the local-residents and Counsellors. The LHIB worked in conjunction with Kings Heath Park, who sold hanging baskets, flowerpots, and plans. This enabled the LHIB group to support local charities.

Dave Ashmore asked regarding the type of business investment scheme used for the projects.

Eric Shipton responded the business improvement scheme. We would prefer a scheme where we can also, employ local residents and ask for bids from local businesses.

Louise Fletcher explained regarding the updates from the Local Housing Involvement Boards, there is the opportunity to share the type of influence the tenants have in the communities and in the local groups. We look forward to hearing updates from other LHIB groups.

Louise thanked Ashad and Eric for the updates from their LHIB's.

0.5 RSH Competence & Conduct standard by Gemma Brodrick

Context

- The government is now consulting on setting a regulatory Competence and Conduct Standard (C&C standard) for all social housing staff.

Summary of Proposals

- outlining the approach to managing and developing the skills

- All in scope staff must be enrolled/working towards a qualification within 24 months of the standard coming into force

Consultation Response

- The workforce team were already looking at learning and development requirement, continuous development, talent management, inductions, training plans.
- Continue working with service areas to develop training plans.
- Begin to scope the full implications of these proposals for City Housing and the workforce.

Some of the proposal will positively support the work that we are already undertaking to invest in and support continuous development within our workforce.

For full details see presentation

David Wray said thank you to the presenters.

David Wray asked regarding the criteria and how many staff are involved. How many people who already have the required qualifications that will be acceptable.

Gemma Brodrick responded there are staff who currently have achieved the recognised qualifications, they will not need to re gain the same qualifications. Staff may have certain aspects or modules of the qualification that will partially contribute to the whole qualification. We plan to carry out a survey with the workforce to find out who holds qualifications that are valid. The staff will need to provide evidence of their qualifications. This will need to be verified by the management team.

David Wray asked regarding the restructure in City Housing will the (C&C standards) proposals change things. Will there be more problems highlighted or reduce any of the issues.

Dave Ashmore responded there needs to be a planned learning and development workforce strategy, there is a statutory element within the Competence and Conduct standard. This will be a positive investment in BCC teams/staff.

Dadirai Tsopo asked are you aware of the current level of staff qualifications. What is the financial cost to ensure within the time scale available, BCC achieves the level of staff who are competent in such aspects as required.

Gemma Brodrick responded our estimates are based on the Chartered Institute of Housing costs to deliver the training course/s to staff. Housing have allocated funding resources we anticipate this would be required. Regarding the skills gap analysis, the team need to establish as a strategy also, engage an enabling team to conduct a workforce survey. We need to Develop a competency framework against job descriptions which we can assess the current level of staff skills.

Dadirai Tsopo asked are the funds to train housing staff protected due to the savings the Council needs to make?

Wayne Davies it is important for housing staff to be well trained in all aspects of housing related work. The staff will be able to deliver high quality housing services to the residents. Staff training is a priority for City Housing this will enable the staff to provide the correct level of support to the residents.

Gemma Brodrick responded during the Social Housing Round Table meeting the query was raised on how to attract new people to the housing sector. The consensus amongst the organisation was it will make the housing sector more attractive to new applicants.

Dave Ashmore stated the aim is to raise standards, the funds will be well invested across BCC staff. Housing is a professional service, investing in the staff will ensure residents receive the best service possible, the management teams will support this.

0.6 Community & Safety Resilience by Pamela Powis

Community Safety Team

- Work in partnership with other agencies such as Network Rail, Police and Crime Commissioner and the Home Office
- There is a Review team which looks at domestic homicide reviews, offensive weapons homicide and ASB case reviews. There is a Supported Housing Accommodation team.

Type of work involved.

issues and concerns in the area. Delivery plans in place, team work together/ in partnership to resolve issues.

The teams can issue Protection Orders, Enforcement and Injunctions which can be used to restrict certain activities from taking place.

Work in communities.

The team can issue Community Protection Notices for Anti-Social Behaviour, The Building Safer Neighbourhoods Group issues such as drug and alcohol.

West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership

We carry out awareness work relating to county lines, knife crime and serious youth violence.

For full details see presentation

David Wray said thank you to the presenters.

Eric Shipton stated there are parts of Birmingham which are becoming places that we do not want to visit. These are not the types of incidents/crimes that we want to see and hear about that take place on a regular basis in our city. This is where we as residents live and bring up our children. It is not all the responsibility of the Community Safety team to monitor the crimes. Community Safety also, monitoring criminal activity in the area, is also the responsibility of the Police, the service we receive from the Police in some cases is poor.

Pamela Powis responded according to the information recorded in the crime reports relating to Anti-Social Behaviour and other types of crime. The figure shows crime and ASB are now lower than they have been in previous years. Anti-social behaviour over time will decrease then increase again. The team does not have enough resources that is needed to respond to the situations. The team work very closely with the Police.

Dave Ashmore regarding the comments raised by Eric Shipton relating to Anti-Social Behaviour. It would be helpful to hear from the residents who live in different types of housing. How BCC could respond to ASB. For example, should we deploy Housing Officers. The tenants feedback would assist the teams.

Eric Shipton stated there is a report on internet, which shows Birmingham is the worst city in the country for knife crime. This includes knives that are in use.

Pamela Powis responded part of the role of the Community Safety Team is to ensure there is accurate information relating to Birmingham. If the members wish the team can update on specific areas of information that the Community Safety Team are involved in.

Dadirai Tsopo asked regarding the volume of work that the team is responsible for, does the team have adequate members of staff to carry out the roles/work as required. One of the team members worked in the south area but is no longer employed in the same role. There will need to be investment made within your team to carry out the various functions required. There are residents in the area who associate the Community Safety Team with the Police and do not report incidents to the team. Residents in the area need to continue to engage with the team. This needs to be done sensitively because residents do not want to be seen as informing on other residents who live in the area.

Dadirai expressed thank you and best wishes to the staff of the Community Safety Team, Dadirai is employed in a third sector organisation, part of her roles involves engagement with the Community Safety Team staff.

Pamela Powis responded and stated the team appreciates all that feedback, also confirmed the team member referred to, will remain employed to work in the South area. BCC needs to make saving previously there were six local partnerships due to the saving required this has been reduced to five local partnerships. The Community Safety Team will continue to offer the best possible service to residents. The officers are trained to B Tech level 3 qualification in Anti-Social Behaviour and Community safety. I can give the members some reassurance of the team's abilities, also the staff who work in the team have the appropriate qualifications to carry out their roles. We have put forward a business case as a future operating model to allow growth in the team. Going forward the team functions will be reviewed in 2026/2027.

Dave Ashmore regarding the Housing Management redesign we plan to increase the capacity in the Neighbourhoods section. The staff will have smaller patches similar to the roles of Housing Officers. Our plan to increase capacity forms part of BCC ability to prevent Anti-Social Behaviour and work with communities on issues relating to Anti-Social Behaviour. Enforcement is a different element. Pamela stated statistically and numerically, ASB figures are going down. Information from the Tenancy Satisfaction Surveys informs the team how the residents feel relating to the work of the Housing teams. We need to include such measures in the work programme for Housing Management teams.

0.6 HRM Contract 2026 & Project Board Workshop Outcomes by Wayne

Davies

Executive Summary

- New Contract design must deliver great services to residents.
- Committed 'Partners' investing in local people, the community, and the economy.
- New Contract(s) to be the enabler to deliver long-lasting investment in the City.

What do we want to achieve: People?

- Clear service level standards, including Resident Engagement
- Social value commitments. Independent satisfaction surveys

What do we want to achieve: Properties?

- Delivery of upscaled investment programme.
- Stock condition surveys – accurate condition & hazard data.
- EPCs needed whenever fabric/heating works undertaken.

2026 Contracts

- Five Year Contracts (with extensions. Focussed, specialist delivery.
- Creates market interest and supply chain competition.

For full details see presentation

David Wray said thank you to the presenters.

Eric Shipton asked BCC may have seven different contractors. Previously BCC had multiple contractors which was not very successful. A return to larger numbers of contractors could create bigger problems for the future. When the number of contractors remained at three this smaller number proved to be successful. The question is why aim for something that was unsuccessful in the past. Currently three contractors are a successful amount.

Wayne Davies responded it was challenging for the contractors as a result there are two contractors. The design of the new contracts is fairer and more equitable which makes it attractive to the marketplace. BCC should encourage greater competition in order to allow smaller contractors as well as the national contractors to provide services for BCC. We are the biggest provider and have made investment in housing across the country. BCC needs to have a wider scope of contractors to choose from that bid for the local works and, bid for the framework.

Dadirai Tsopo stated the new design of the contracts is an ambitious plan, we understand the need to reduce the risks. The intention to reduce the number of contractors providing BCC with a service may cause problems especially if BCC need work which the general contractor may not be able to deliver, or it may cost more to deliver the required quality of work. BCC should allow greater competition in the marketplace to achieve value for money. Having considered BCC current financial difficulties, we should not incur more problems by not being fully competitive. Regarding engagement and listening to the residents who are concerned about the services that are going to be delivered. The residents will provide support for a well-constructed and delivered plan.

Wayne Davies responded the residents are aware that BCC will make changes, we intend to involve the residents and ensure we listen to the residents' opinions. The residents live in the communities and know what is best for the local community. The residents receive the services and are aware of what will work also, the residents are aware of how the service provided by BCC operates.

BCC needs to create a partnership with the contractors where it should be made clear that a robust service is essential. There is a league table, there are also KPI's. The Asset Management team monitor the performance of the contractors. The contractors should ensure their performance is to a high standard and they are not

placed at the bottom of the league table. There is competition between the contactors, this includes the need to share ideas which will drive up performance. This will ensure all the contractors are working towards the same standards.

0.7 Ratification of CHIB sub-groups Terms of Reference by Louise Fletcher

- High Rise Living tenant group.
- Tenant Scrutiny group

Louise Fletcher explained the Engagement team have produced the constitutions for both the City Housing involvement Board and the Local Housing involvement Board groups. The team have developed the terms of reference for the Tenant Scrutiny Group which is a new group. There is also the High-Rise Living group for tenants. The documents for the groups have been sent to the members. We would welcome the members feedback with any comments. The Tenant Scrutiny Group previously known as the Performance Monitoring group (PMG). In order to develop the Tenant Scrutiny, Group the Engagement team worked with the local area housing managers. The Engagement team also, worked with the members of the Tenant Scrutiny Group to develop the documents also to develop the performance reports. Thank you to the Tenant Scrutiny Group members. In response to the Social Housing Regulator there were changes made to the level of scrutiny. It has been a challenge to complete this task in a different way and ensure the task was done accurately.

Both groups are actively trying to recruit more tenants to join. We are keen to recruit tenants that live in the high-rise blocks, we are interested to hear the views and concerns of the tenants who live in high-risk buildings. We seek their involvement in the group because we need the tenants to explain their concerns about living in the tower blocks. There are 213 high-rise blocks across the city the team would like to hear from the tenants, what types of concerns they have about living in the tower blocks. The teams need to ensure the services provided by the Housing Management team are reflected in the services the tenants receive from the repair's contractors. Regarding safety there is the re-introduction of CCTV, we need to receive feedback from the tenants if they are concerned about safety issues.

There is the Leaseholder Involvement Board which we would like to encourage Leaseholders to get involved and form a group. The Sheltered Housing Involvement Board, we would also, encourage residents to join who share the same interest by forming a group. During a LHIB meeting the group discussed the BCC service redesign, it was clear from the residents comments the BCC teams need to listen to the feedback from the residents who live in the Sheltered housing scheme/

accommodation. The Engagement team will develop the documents. The documents and related information will be shared with the residents.

The Engagement team will review the response received to the request for residents to get involved in the Leaseholder Involvement Board and the Sheltered Housing Involvement Board. If there is not sufficient response, we will increase our efforts to get more people involved. We believe there are different opportunities to listen to a variety of tenants about the concerns they have such as if there are any incidents of antisocial behaviour in the local area.

David Wray said thank you to the presenters.

Dadirai Tsopo explained the LHIB group I attend are carrying out recruitment in our areas. Is there a different criteria for the Leasehold Involvement Board and the Sheltered Housing Involvement Board, or are they separate groups? Let us know what the criteria is for residents to be able to join groups.

Louise Fletcher responded the team will inform the Local Housing Involvement Boards about the intention to form a specific group. Regarding the Leasehold Involvement Board, we will share an invite also information/advertisement with all the BCC leaseholders. The plan is to encourage Leaseholders to join and form a new group.

Regarding the high-rise blocks, the team are seeking tenants who live in high-rise blocks to become Block Inspectors. If the tenants do not normally attend formal meetings, there will be other opportunities for the tenants to contact the team.

8 Any Other Business

Samantha Vaughan stated regarding the Taxi service the LHIB use to travel to the LHIB meetings, there are problems with the services provided by the Taxi company. For example, a previous LHIB meeting a members arrived half an hour late. My recent experience with the Taxi company, the Taxi was sent to the wrong address. We need a BCC Officer to contact the Taxi company and ask what their protocol is also how do they allocate the jobs. The TPO's have spoken to the Taxi company and have been informed Taxi's are sent out when a driver is free to attend. We have booked the jobs; we believe the Taxi company should send the Taxi out in good time because we are paying for the job. Please confirm a BCC Officer will contact the Taxi company.

Louise Fletcher responded, I understand TOA Taxi are used for your LHIB area, the team have experienced the same issues with some of the other LHIB groups. The team have considered using local area Taxi service providers. A local area Taxi service may be quicker than a service which covers the whole of the city. I will

investigate this matter; due to the concerns raised. Contact will be, made with TOA Taxi company an example there may have been delays due to activities such as football matches. I will consider if there are other options available.

Wayne Davies thanked Perry Barr LHIB for the invitation to attend Perry Barr LHIB. I was able to meet some of the local housing residents. I plan to visit other LHIB's in the future to meet some of the local residents.

Dave Ashmore stated on 12 September there will be an Overview & Scrutiny meeting relating to housing, the aim of the meeting is to look at tenant engagement. The team wish to hear the comments from the residents.

For a copy of the presentations please e-mail ResidentInvolvement@birmingham.gov.uk

David Wray thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

**The next meeting of the City Housing Involvement Board will be held on:
Date: Thursday, 26th September 2024: Time: 4:30pm - 6:30pm**