

Minutes of City Housing Involvement Board
Thursday 26 September 2024, 16:30 p.m. -18.30 p.m.
Microsoft Teams

Present: Members: Name	Surname	Housing Involvement Board
Dadirai	Tsopo	Harborne LHIB
Samantha	Vaughan	Perry Barr LHIB
David	Wray	Selly Oak LHIB
Theresa	O'Leary	Yardley LHIB
Andrea	Leon	Hodge Hill LHIB
Maria	Rawlins	Kingstanding LHIB
Ron	Lees	Northfield LHIB
Officers		
Dave	Ashmore	Director of Housing Management
Helen	Shervington	Senior Modernisation and & Strategy Manager
Wayne	Davies	Service Director Asset Management
Natalie	Smith	Head of Service Housing Management
Rishi	Spolia	Interim Head of Housing Service
Ben	Brotherton	Housing Modernisation and & Strategy Manager
Salim	Miah	Senior Service Manager
Colin	Hanno	Engagement Manager
Winnie	Edwards	Change Management Officer
Firoza	Loonat	Change Management Officer
Jean	Campbell	RI & TMO Support Officer
Amanda	Spurrier	Tenant Participation Officer
Jennifer	Carter	Tenant Participation Officer
Munasif	Mohammed	Tenant Participation Officer
Apologies		
Paul	Langford	Strategic Director of City Housing
Arshad	Butt	Hall Green LHIB
Anne-Marie	Adler	Selly Oak LHIB
Sheila	Devaney	Hall Green LHIB
Guy	Chaundy	Strategic & Enabling • City Housing
Sheila	Devaney	Hall Green LHIB
Louise	Fletcher	Senior Service Manager - Tenant Engagement
John	Jamieson	Head of Service for Housing Management

0.1 Introduction to the Meeting and Welcome

David Wray welcomed all to the meeting.

0.2 Matters Arising

David Wray asked has the members read the CHIB minutes?

The minutes were checked for accuracy some changes were required.

The visit by the Asset Management team. The correct location should read Rednal.

The minutes were agreed.

0.3 Chairs Comments

Regarding the presentations which the reps should receive before the CHIB meeting this will allow the reps to read the details, before the meeting and have a better understanding of the content of the presentations. This will allow the CHIB reps to fully take part in the CHIB meeting. The tenants have been given the opportunity to have a voice. We should make the most of this opportunity by attending the CHIB meetings. If the tenant rep is unable to attend the meeting, the rep should send their apologies. The deputy should be asked to attend the meeting, The CHIB Agenda should also include items from the tenant reps. I am planning to visit the local Housing Involvement Boards.

0.4 local Housing involvement Board updates.

Perry Barr Local Housing Involvement Board by Samantha Vaughan

The Perry Barr LHIB covers eight wards, The LHIB areas have increased. The Senior Service manager Carla Bates attends the LHIB meetings. Also in attendance are representatives from the contractors Equans.

Wayne Davies has attended Perry Barr LHIB; an overview was given on the service provided by the Asset Management Team.

Helen Shervington from the Community Regeneration & Partnership Team gave an update on the Local Lettings team Plan – Perry Barr Plot 9.

The LHIB plan to invite the local Councillors to share ward information regarding the issue in their specific wards.

Regarding the walkabouts there have been issues relating to fly tipping, The Mobile Household Waste Centre (MHWCC) have visited various locations which has helped to remove household waste.

Projects Environmental LHIB budgets

There has been the completion of various projects for example:

Community Bench project. Also, the installation of padlocks on gated entrances to reduce anti-social behaviour.

Social Partnership project.

Perry Barr Allotment plots. This involved the tidy up and upgrade of the green space.

Recruitment

We aim to recruit more LHIB members during 2024.

For full details see presentation

David Wray said thank for you for the LHIB update.

Northfield Local Housing Involvement Board by Ron Lees

The Northfield Local Housing Involvement Board meets bi-monthly at Millfield Sheltered Scheme in Northfield. Danny Kilbride the Housing Manager attends the meeting. The local housing managers will provide a report for the meeting.

Walkabouts

The group undertakes walkabouts each month. Issues are identified through the walkabouts such as damaged fencing, fly tipping and abandoned property which we report to the appropriate agency.

Community Budget 2024-25 financial Year and Projects

There have been a number of aesthetic improvements around the wards. The residents who use the communal garden agreed to revamp the communal garden making it low maintenance. The groups aim to engage more young people to join the group. We plan to recruit more new members during the walkabouts the LHIB reps try to engage residents as they look for issues during the walkabouts.

We work in partnership with Fortem, who are currently pursuing work in Frankley, the Balaam's wood area. Their work will include local schools and eighteen volunteers: to clear the area in an orchard the purpose to install benches. The Kings Norton Ward apprentices carried out garden work which helped to improve the environment.

There have been site visits to various sheltered schemes such Grizedale in Frankley to tidy up the trip rails around the properties and communal gardens.

In the Weoley, area Tower Blocks have benefitted from internal redecorations to compliment the new door entry systems.

The Northfield group ensure that the budget is spent widely across each area and the work is often visible for the community to see what is being achieved. A record is kept of the achievements the group have made.

For full details see presentation

David Wray said thank for you for the LHIB update.

Dave Ashmore asked in your opinion how do you consider the new LHI boards are progressing. Also, the progress of recruiting more members?

Ron Lees responded we have spoken to residents from the Weoley and Frankly areas, we have informed them what is involved in becoming a member of the LHIB group. Some residents have agreed to attend the next walkabout.

Dave Ashmore asked during the Scrutiny Committee we discussed the new engagement model compared to the previous engagement model. The team plan to carry out a review. Please explain your views.

Samantha Vaughan responded the number of wards covered has increased, as a result we have extended the LHIB meeting time. During a recent meeting we were not able to fully cover Any Other Business, which is when the residents raise their issues. The time allocation plus the numbers of people who attend the meetings is of concern. The LHIB group meets bi-monthly which has always been the way in Perry Barr and continues to work well. The group can carry out actions before the next meeting takes place.

David Wray stated holding the LHIB meeting every two months this is not often enough for the residents. The Selly Oak LHIB/residents need time to bring up their issues.

Dave Ashmore comments members have provided helpful feedback. Each group will know what works in their local area. We need to ensure we get the best outcomes for each LHIB group.

0.5 Homeless and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy by Ben Brotherton

Why Do We Need a Homelessness Prevention Strategy?

- Section 1(1) of the Homelessness Act 2002 legislates Local Authorities **should carry out a homelessness review** for their district and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review.
- Section 1(4) requires Local Authorities to publish a new homelessness strategy, based on the results of a further homelessness review within the period of 5 years beginning from the day on which their last homelessness strategy was published.
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Common Themes Identified

- Removing the barrier to support (accessibility of services, digital exclusion, local connection

- Better joined up work between services: (prevent stigma, remove mistrust) plus, greater ability to provide feedback/complaints and more consideration of geographical placement.

Vision

- We will commit to tackling the enablers of homelessness throughout society, as well as in strategies, policy, and practise, utilising key initiatives such as the Early Intervention & Prevention program and by collaborating on the work of the regional Homelessness Taskforce. We will also track the prevalence of homelessness both nationally and locally, working with partners to design interventions that will make homelessness a rare occurrence in our city.

Now

- The strategy and delivery plan have been finalised and Approved by Cabinet.
- Delivery plan actions have been assigned to internal and external action owners, who are now responsible for their actions.
- Any actions risks or issues will be discussed at the board, so that all partners are aware and can lend support where required.

For full details see presentation

David Wray said thank you for the presentation.

Dadirai Tsopo asked regarding the migrant groups I work in this sector and have identified a problem. There is a disconnection between the Local Authorities. Birmingham City Council the services which are provided for the refugee asylum seeker, the strategy is unable to tackle homelessness. People are left in an uncertain state/condition. The people who are homeless are not being helped by the Local Authority. This strategy does it cover the migrant community? Who does the strategy cover?

Ben Brotherton responded the Homeless strategy covers immigration. BCC work with partners from Adult Social Care, who are the action owners. An important move forward is the creation of an Immigration Board whereby the Council is working with various stakeholders to make sure action is being taken between those organisations. There is more regular conversation between the partners.

Dadirai Tsopo asked the people who are affected by the strategy, will the timeline hold the strategy to account? Let us know the timeline for the strategy. It is a good document, but it must be a document that makes things move forward. Also, where are we on the timelines from now?

Ben Brotherton responded It is a five-year strategy which is currently in place. The action plan itself is designed as being a live document, we can make sure that if things need to be changed, we can change the timelines. The teams understand that

things must change and the need to be flexible. We have timelines for each action plan which is monitored every two to three months.

Cabinet has approved the strategy, there will be a partnership board meeting in October 2024. This will include the first reports on how the partners actions have progressed.

Dave Ashmore comments the issue relating to migration and homelessness also, co-ordinating the Home Office, the Department for Work and Pensions, as well as three hundred plus Local Authorities is a tall order. We are unable to foresee some of the policy announcements. There will be a budget later in 2024, which may include information on homelessness. Regarding BCC's ability to respond, we have a good framework.

0.6 Perry Barr Residential Scheme – Local Lettings Plan by Helen Shervington

BACKGROUND

- The development of brand-new homes being built on the former Birmingham City University (BCU) Teaching Campus at Aldridge Road.
- The first 968 homes, which were built over four plots.
The council has taken the decision to retain 213 homes for council housing use.

PBRs Council Homes

- Plot 9 is made up of 1- and 2-bedroom homes, across four low rise blocks.

What is a Local Lettings Plan

- Birmingham City Council must allocate properties in line with our Allocations Policy.
- Local Lettings Plan will be time limited and area or scheme specific.

DEMAND

- There are currently nearly 24,000 households on the Housing Register.
- Even if no new applicants applied, it would take many years to clear the current housing register.

DEMAND – Local Lettings Plan

- **50%** (107 properties) will be open to all, in line with our main Allocations policy.
- These will be advertised on Birmingham Home Choice
- All eligible households with a live Housing Application can bid where they are eligible based upon bedroom need (1- & 2-bedroom properties available only) and area not excluded.

- All properties will be advertised on Choice Based Lettings as per the usual process, with those properties that have restrictions clearly defined on the advert.

NEED FOR LARGER FAMILY HOMES

- All council properties are in great demand however houses are in greater demand than flats.
- By enabling a downsizer to move to a 1- or 2-bedroom flat in PBRs, this makes available - 3,4,5 or 6 bed homes.

For full details see presentation

David Wray said thank you for the presentation.

David Wray asked regarding the high number of properties that have been built in the Perry Barr Residential Scheme. There are less than a quarter reserved for Birmingham City Council for Social Housing. None of the properties are three-, four- or five-bedroom properties. Explain the reason for this.

Helen Shervington responded BCC have an affordable housing plan where the team will make the best use of the stock we have. The reason our aim is to target people who want to downsize. This scheme is one or two-bedroom properties which there is demand for in the city. We need people to be appropriately housed in the one- or two-bedroom properties this will make available the larger homes.

David Wray expressed concerns regarding the low numbers of properties BCC have reserved for the social housing.

Helen Shervington responded the Perry Barr Residential scheme, there are, financial pressures on the Council. During August, 2024, the remainder of the scheme will be sold and open to investors to purchase. BCC retained 213 properties to address the social housing need in the City. There will be further information from the team that are dealing with the Perry Barr Residential scheme. The website shown on the presentation will provide further details. The link will also provide the latest information on the scheme.

Regarding future development there are still plots of land which will be developed

Dadirai Tsopo asked from the 213 properties available for social housing. There are 50% of properties allocated for tenants to place their bids on. The Local Authority inform the tenants there are pressures on the Housing Register. The local lettings plan should reflect and be responsive to the needs of the residents. This is of concern to the residents of Birmingham. BCC's statistics have shown the Housing Register is not moving. Despite promises from BCC and Housing Management that there will be improvements.

Helen Shervington responded the 213 properties that are coming into City Housing as Birmingham City Council properties, all 100% will be advertised by Choice Based Lettings, which will be accessible to the residents in Birmingham. The local lettings plan is a separate approved plan, when used appropriately will allow for the larger family homes BCC need to become available. To be able to place a bid the tenants must currently be on the housing waiting list and eligible for one- or two-bedroom property. The other 50% the team plan to target tenants who need to downsize because they are not appropriately housed. This will also make available the larger properties.

Theresa O'Leary asked in the Birmingham area there are many properties/houses that are empty. They appear to be Council houses which have been boarded up. No one looks at these properties. Could these houses be let to people? In some areas there are people who sell drugs on streets.

Dave Ashmore regarding the allocation of social housing in the Perry Barr area. BCC is aware that there is a need to build more social housing, there are financial realities to be considered. There was a unique situation because of the Commonwealth Games. There are also, changes to planning permission and the Grey Belt. Regarding void properties we do not want to see empty homes, the team need a quick turnaround of void properties. If the CHIB members know of any specific addresses, where properties appear to be empty, please bring this to our attention. A BCC Officer will follow this up.

Natalie Smith responded we are constantly striving to ensure that void properties are turned around. The team are doing some targeted work. Some of the empty properties are linked to private rented owners. We would need the addresses of the properties. There is also the Private Tenancy team who can identify such properties. Generally, there are properties which are being repaired and worked through, there are also further reasons. There is not specifically a huge number of void properties considering the levels of housing stock.

0.7 Personal Effects & Mobility Scooters Policy Introduction by Natalie Smith

Why do we need to make changes?

- New & revised Fire and Building Safety legislation requires us to manage fire & structural risk, **clear duties, responsibilities, and accountabilities**.
- It places legal duties on Responsible Person (Landlord) in control of these premises to undertake and record a fire risk assessment and put in place and maintain general fire precautions.

Fire Risk Assessments

- We have to make sure **effective fire evacuation arrangements are in place**. It is important that communal areas are kept clear so that if there is a fire, there is nothing that could:
- prevent people escaping from the building.

Personal Effects

- Where items are continually left in communal areas after several Tort Notices are issued, more proportionate legal remedies should be used such as using breach of Conditions of Tenancy warning letters and subsequently Notice to Seek Possession or an injunction.

Communication of Policy/Procedure

- Poster displayed (June 2024) & Generic Tort Notice (TBA)
- Letter to all low & high-rise through Comms Module advising the 'advanced notice' of introduction of policy/procedure (August 2024)

For full details see presentation

David Wray said thank you for the presentation.

David Wray asked for a Copy of the mobility Scooter video, send to Holly Rise.

Natalie Smith responded a team member will despatch a copy to you at Holly Rise

Dadirai Tsopo stated residents do not know who or where to report items that have been left in communal areas. We will need a named person/officer to contact/phone number to report items that have been left in communal areas.

Natalie Smith responded items placed in the communal areas the residents should use the standard contact numbers, in the block there should be a list of phone numbers. There are general housing officers phone numbers, or the main contact centre phone number. The resident can inform the local Caretakers. The BCC staff have received training.

The fire risk assessments are alerting the team to objects placed in the communal areas. The team also carry-out regular monthly block inspections. There are policies in place which explain about communal areas. There are also enforcement measures which can be used by the team.

0.8 Anti-Social Behaviour Policy update by - Rishi Spolia & Salim Miah

- The service standards are for dealing with Anti-social Behaviour incidents.

- Birmingham City Council residents
- Clarity on what residents should expect when ASB incidents reported.
- work in partnership with Police & other statutory agencies to identify/resolve issues of ASB in your area.

When you report ASB

- Assess level of risk vulnerability. Categorise case for investigation.
- If team unable to help, will provide signpost to other agencies, offer advice.
- Provide named investigating officer. Assigned officer provide action plan. Monitor, review progress of case.
- Identify complex needs/provide support to prevent further ASB.

Progress of ASB cases

- Consider full range of legal powers, partnerships available.
- Collaborate with partner agencies to gather evidence e.g. Police, Social Services
- Offer initiatives to help prevent/improve ASB incidents, where you live for a safer/cleaner space.
- Committed to working with partners, supporting campaigns that help residents/victims/witnesses of domestic abuse & hate crime.
- Review standards based on feedback, complaints & complements.

For full details see presentation

David Wray said thank you for the presentation.

Dadirai Tsopo asked regarding Anti-Social Behaviour Performance report and raised concerns relating to the 2023/2024 target set at 50%. ASB is a growing problem in the area, we understand the need to be realistic but consider the target level aimed for is low. The residents were concerned at this low-level target.

Rishi Spolia responded to achieve the service standards and make progression in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures to improve the team performance, we have decided to set some milestones, we aim to achieve 50% then to make progress from that point. The team provide a reactive service, the officers work in the locality, there are designated officers with individual patches, also the officers have their own individual targets to achieve. The team do not want to set unrealistic targets, which is the reason for setting some milestone targets we aim to achieve each set target milestone.

Dadirai Tsopo asked regarding Tenant Satisfaction Measures are they sent to every Tenant in the city or to specific tenants. Does the numbers who receive the TSM affect the target level set.

Salim Miah responded an important factor to consider relating to the Tenant Satisfaction Measures these are designed as perception surveys. They give results of how tenants feel about their areas. When tenants think about anti-social behaviour, there is a wider perspective of their neighbourhood/s there could be

factors why tenants feel unsafe in their local communities. There could be a specific place where tenants need to walk past quite frequently. The surveys are done through an automated survey. A random sample is selected. Also, there is a telephone survey which is done by an independent organisation. This is how the tenant satisfaction measures are organised/produced.

Samantha Vaughan explained regarding her experience with anti-social behaviour from an elderly neighbour. Samantha considered the resident had health issues also hearing loss issues and was not able to hear the officer talking to her on phone. The focus of concern the incident was dealt with by telephone only by the BCC Officer. There was no visit made to the resident in person.

Samantha asked how the Anti-Social Behaviour team officers engage with elderly residents. The resident did not have access to the Internet.

Rishi Spolia responded the team are going through a new procurement process for the mediation service. As a part of the tender document, the new service will include BCC officers to carry out face to face interviews. During the face to face interviews the staff will be able to look at how the resident lives, what the individual circumstances are. The Officer will try to identify from the resident's body language and the face-to-face conversation the reasons that are causing the action/s.

Dave Ashmore comments there have been focus groups relating to the Anti-Social Behaviour standards. Because the Anti-Social Behaviour standard have been publicised there is more awareness. How safe we want our neighbourhoods to be. The Perception surveys hold key to residents' opinions. We need to invest in our properties also in our neighbourhoods which will make a difference. The Housing redesign outlined to CHIB members also to the Focus group will give details relating to BCC officers working and being visible on the estates. This will build stronger relationships also the ability to take enforcement actions will be done more quickly where it is appropriate. The residents can hold BCC to account as this is within the policy.

David Wray asked regarding the timelines, which are to be arranged. Will the timelines be affected by the restructure/redesign?

Rishi Spolia responded there has been a launch of the service redesign consultation. We will roll out the training now for the Officers which has been commissioned from Resolve the sector leaders in Anti-Social behaviour. The ASB team, work with the Community Safety partnership team. We will pilot the first set of training with 40 BCC officers, the work will form part of their roles. We have asked the 40 BCC officers, to ensure the training meets the required standards. The training will be rolled out to the remainder of the staff from December and during 2025.

0.9 Feedback from RSH regarding Compliance by Wayne Davies

Voluntary Undertaking- Re-profiled timescales

- Fire, asbestos and lift programmes to be fully completed (including overdue remedials) by December 2024.
- Gas, including CO2 and smoke detection programme to be completed by December 2024, with any remedial work to be completed by March 2025

Landlord Health & Safety - Key Messages

- LRA contractor has been procured and mobilised at the end of August 2024, undertaking LRAs in all relevant properties to support the development of a future programme.

Damp & Mould

- service of 91% in 2024 compared to 79% in 2023 through the improved targeted approach.

Tenant Engagement

- Improved position around complaints, building resilience for the winter period and improving future levels of satisfaction.

For full details see presentation

David Wray said thank you for the presentation.

David Wray asked regarding Damp and mould conditions in Holly Rise blocks of flats. The Officers have informed us it is not damp and mould conditions the cause is condensation. The Officers have closed the case after their findings. The tenant/s reports the issue of water running down the walls. This condition is reported on warm, sunny day months after Holly Rise has raised the complaint. The condition is also reported after there has been rain fall. The Officers use a machine which is then pressed into the wall the reading on the machine does not confirm damp & mould. Holly Rise reports this issue/s regarding the flats each year.

Wayne Davies responded the condensation can create damp and mould if it is left untreated. The quality and condition of the external fabric of the property needs to be considered. As a future CHIB meeting agenda topic, the issues of condensation, damp & mould can be explained in more detail. Also, information on BCC officers' findings, including the process for BCC to deal with such issues. There will need to be wider investment in the housing stock.

Dadirai Tsopo stated BCC are improving the quality of housing in the arears. Regarding district budgets the LHIB's are aware the value of the money that is allocated to our districts is being spent quickly because BCC uses specific contractors to do the work the LHIB's need to be done in the local area. The LHIB has asked can the work be put through a tender quotation process this will ensure

value for money. BCC contractors have quoted higher charges/prices. The board members have asked is it possible for the board members to decide on the firms/contractors to carry out the work required. This would ensure we receive better value for money.

Wayne Davies responded my understanding the LHIB are being directed by the BCC teams who provide information on how to spend money on the estate. The funds need to be spent with the contractors Fortum or Equans. The contractors carry out a high volume of work for BCC. Consideration needs to be given to the type of work required by the LHIB members. Also, to the level of health & safety if the board members choose to use local contractors. BCC contractors need to offer value for money. Wayne asked for examples of the type of work the LHIB require.

Theresa O'Leary stated I was informed by contractors' Equans, solar panels would be installed on my property. Scaffolding was put up outside the property for three weeks. The scaffolding was removed by the contractors. No solar panels were installed on the property.

Wayne Davies responded there is grant funding for number of homes around the city to install solar panels on the property. Wayne asked Theresa to provide her address for the team to look at the reasons why no actual work was done. Wayne explained normally, the CHIB reps' reports issues on behalf of other residents who have experienced similar issues.

Dadirai Tsopo stated in the new district LHIB a rep from Fortem explained because of GDPR they will work with the LHIB in a different way. During previous LHIB meetings a Technical Officer from Fortem took/noted the members queries which Fortem followed up. The members have been informed there has been a change in the way Fortem work with the LHIB members because of GDPR. Could an explanation be given as the LHIB board does not understand the reasons for the change.

Wayne Davies responded the instructions which have been given to Fortem is for closer working with the LHIB's and residents. The local residents are the eyes and ears on the ground/estates. The team will need a contact name of the officer from Fortem who attends the LHIB meetings and provide the information.

Wayne Davies explained the team will set up a Task and Finish groups to cover the design of the new contracts. We are asking CHIB members to volunteer to be part of the group who look at the design of the new procurement contracts.

Wayne Davies said thank you to the CHIB members who were involved in the visit to view the void property, where the members were shown the new kitchens and

bathrooms. The team have received good feedback. The team have made some amendments to the specifications used in the property.

10 Any Other Business

Dadirai Tsopo explained the LHIB have been informed under the new model Edgbaston North will shortly join the LHIB group. The size of the group will be extremely large. Currently there is not enough time to get through all the items on the agenda. An increase in numbers attending the meeting, the result will be less questions will be asked by the members during the meeting. The LHIB need BCC to review the potential larger size of the LHIB group. There are BCC managers who attend the meetings and give presentations which takes up the groups time. This is our LHIB the members are volunteers, who have other commitments, and some members are employed. This is our LHIB, we have increased the LHIB meeting time by half an hour each meeting. When Edgbaston North join the group, we will need to increase the meeting time further. A Review is requested.

Dave Ashmore responded we have a commitment to review the LHIB's. The point has been previously raised today. The matter will be raised with John Jamison and Louise Fletcher. The team are keen to receive the evidence stated also to hear residents' views. If the LHIB is not working well, there is a need to make the LHIB more manageable and easier for all the members.

David Wray asked for the logo previously used by City Housing Liaison Board to be removed from the current documents.

Colin Hanno responded the Engagement team will ensure the logo is removed.

Dadirai Tsopo informed the board members' The Arch Conference will take place on Thursday, 3rd October 2024. There will be a delegation of LHIB members who will attend the Conference. The LHIB members will provide a report to the CHIB members during the next meeting.

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, 28th November 2024: Time: 4:30pm - 6:30pm**