

HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of meeting on Tuesday 3rd February 2026, 17:00 – 19:00, Committee Room 3

No.	Item	Lead
1a.	<p>Welcome, introductions and apologies</p> <p>Board Members in attendance: Councillor Jean Innes (Chair – Cllr I), Councillor Keith Miles (Cllr M), Councillor Stuart Yates (Cllr Y), Chris Sanderson (Tenant - CS), Phil Simpson (Tenant - PS), Janice Bather (Tenant - JB), Christine Durrant (Executive Director - CD), Jane Davies (Service Director - Housing - JD)</p> <p>Officers in attendance: Ryan Armitage (Housing Safety and Compliance Manager – RA), Graeme Young (Head of Housing Management – GY), Carl Griffiths (Head of Statutory Housing Solutions – CG)</p> <p>Apologies received: Councillor Glenys Falconer (Cllr F), Darrell Price (Tenant - DPr)</p>	
1b.	<p>Matters arising from previous meeting</p> <p>The minutes were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record.</p> <p><u>Update on matters arising:</u></p> <p>JC has corrected complaints performance data as discussed at previous meeting.</p>	
2.	<p>Customer Feedback Action Plan updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GY presented an action plan that has been developed to respond to tenant feedback (complaints, satisfaction surveys and tenant engagement activity), and an overview of progress made so far. • Sessions have been held with housing management staff on the basics of good communication – for example being courteous, giving their name, wearing an ID badge, getting back to people and having clear out of office arrangements. These will form the basis of a new standard to be agreed with tenants. • Tenant Board Members fed back that language is important and we should use ‘tenant’ not ‘customer’ and avoid the use of ‘charter’ which sounds too formal. • Various sessions have been held with tenants and other partner agencies to discuss ASB and more are planned. Another word to be avoided is ‘forum’ as this could confuse people about the purpose of the group. • GY also explained how we are trying to make housing staff more visible to tenants, for example new livery on council vans, new hi-vis tabards and regular articles on the website telling people about ‘a day in the life’ of different roles within the housing management team. • Improvements have been made to the IT system for asset management and investment planning, and Cllr M requested that Members be provided 	<p style="text-align: center;">GY/JC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GY</p>

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	<p>with a summary of work to be carried out in their ward for the coming year. VW-H to look at what information can be provided and feedback at the next meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants want more notice of internal work so they can plan better and avoid wasting money on decorating etc. VW-H to explain the process at the next meeting. • Good progress is being made with the new repairs IT system (Total Mobile). The repairs service will use an automated message so tenants know their email requests have been received, and all standard letters are being reviewed to see where improvements can be made. • The repairs service has also introduced new appointment slots on Friday afternoons, evenings and weekends to offer more flexibility for tenants. 	<p>VW-H</p> <p>VW-H</p>
3.	<p>Housing Improvement Plan update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JD presented the quarter 3 update report on the Housing Improvement Plan and each of the nine objectives were discussed. • Good progress has been made in all areas, but more work to do on repairs (completing the IT project and the restructure) and voids. • Some Board members felt that the external contractor appointed to help with void numbers last year should have been retained for longer, however JD explained that this would have breached budget and contract duration rules. All services are working closely together to avoid numbers going up. • With regards to the WhatsApp channel, CS explained that some tenants may not realise that clicking on the link will allow them to join and may instead be expecting to see an app. JC to ensure it is made clear how to sign up to the channel. 	<p>JC</p>
4.	<p>Quarter 3 performance update</p> <p>JD presented the performance report for quarter 3 with the following points noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of Right to Buys reduced to 18 (half of the amount during the previous quarter) and 9 new council homes have been completed. • The number of repairs carried out increased and the percentage of urgent repairs completed on time was 97.68%. • Tenant satisfaction with the quality of the repair had increased to 90.6%, but there was a slight drop on satisfaction with communication during the repair (82.3% compared to 83.8% in quarter 2). • 51 new disrepair claims were made, bringing the total number of live cases at the end of the quarter up to 96. • The overall number of voids was 350 (compared to 455 at the same time last year). • The number of ASB cases has fallen – 108 compared to 132 at the same time last year. One of the new cases raised during quarter 3 related to hate crime. • Complaint handling timescales have improved. 	

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5.	<p>Compliance report – December 2025</p> <p>RY provided a detailed overview of safety and compliance performance during December. Most areas are at 100%.</p> <p>Domestic EICRs (electrical safety checks in tenants’ homes) were at 95.61% and the service is working with different contractors to improve performance.</p> <p>Fire risk assessments are at 100% and there are 3 level 1 safety actions overdue. 2 of these are currently being dealt with and will be completed imminently and one requires further clarification from Savills.</p> <p>CS had received a confusing letter regarding Damp and Mould and RA will work with the tenant engagement team to improve the content.</p>	<p>Lead</p> <p>RA</p>
6.	<p>Housing Ombudsman cases and decisions</p> <p>JD gave an overview of Housing Ombudsman investigations during quarter 3. At the end of quarter 3 there were 26 open cases, 10 of which are being fully investigated and two detailed reports had been issued.</p> <p>The first related to our handling of an ASB and noise nuisance complaint. The Ombudsman noted that our communication with the tenant was excellent, with regular contact and honest and proactive updates. However the response was sent to the tenant one day late which is a minor service failure and we were instructed to apologise to the tenant. The lesson learned was to remind managers of the importance of achieving response timescales.</p> <p>The second related to a complaint about the information we gave about asbestos in a tenant’s home and how we handled the tenant’s complaint, and the Ombudsman determined maladministration on both counts. The Ombudsman instructed us to carry out a new asbestos survey and share this with the tenant, apologise, and pay compensation. The lessons learned were to grant access to asbestos survey information to more staff, including call centre staff, and provide training on how to read and explain surveys to tenants, also to ensure our asbestos surveyors use clear and consistent terminology to avoid confusion.</p> <p>Board members will receive regular updates on Housing Ombudsman cases rather than waiting for the year-end report.</p>	
7.	<p>Statutory Housing Solutions update on Housing Register and Homelessness in Chesterfield</p> <p>CG delivered a presentation on homelessness, emphasising that the Council will always offer help and advice and anyone concerned about becoming homeless should contact the homelessness team. The service focuses on preventing homeless and CG explained the rules and regulations regarding eligibility and the different type of help available.</p>	

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	<p>Housing Needs Assessments are completed for all people wanting to access a council home, this determines the applicant's priority level and CG described the allocation process in detail (please see slides for more information). If an applicant believes they are in the wrong priority band they can request a review.</p> <p>Cllr I noted that mutual exchanges can be a quicker way for existing tenants to move to a more suitable home.</p>	
8.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>It was requested that tree maintenance be added as a future agenda item. Trees future item</p>	JC
9.	<p>Next meeting – 5th May 2026</p> <p>Topics to be discussed include voids and Total Mobile.</p>	

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