

Housing Improvement Programme Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting:	Housing Improvement Programme Board (HIPB)
Venue:	Committee Room 1 (and hybrid via Teams as required/agreed)
Date:	23 rd July 2026
Time:	16:30-18:00

Member Attendees: Cllr Rob Lillis (Cllr RL) – Chair & Programme Member Sponsor, Cllr Dave Blackwell (Cllr DB) Leader of the Council and Board Member, Cllr Warren Gibson (Cllr WG) – Vice Chair & Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllr Jamie Huntman (Cllr JH) – Board Member

Officer Attendees: Angela Hutchings (AH) – Project Sponsor, Angela Law (AL) - Monitoring Officer

Guests: Steve Colk (SC) - Interim Head of Housing Technical Services, Michael Lerpiniere (ML) - Interim Head of Housing Management, Hannah McNally (HM) – Project Manager, Linda Curtis (LC) Compliance Manager, Leigh Donegan (LD) – Administrator, Rebecca Outram (RO) – Policy Officer, Jennie Doveaston (JD) - Tenant & Leaseholder Panel representative (observer)

Apologies: Cllr Kate Knott (Cllr KK) – Board Member, Cllr Grace Watson (Cllr GW) – Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Ian Butt (IB) - Project Sponsor, Chris Stratford (CS) Programme Director, Becky Hennessey (BH) - Senior Leasehold and Customer Relations Officer, Damian Roche (DR) – HQN, Lance Wosko (LW) - Section 151 Officer

Ref	Item	Lead
1.	Welcome & Introductions & Declaration of Interests Apologies received (Introduction to Jenny (Tenant & Leaseholder Panel representative)	Chair
2.	TSM's and comparative performance - Repairs satisfaction scores dropped from 69% in Wave 2 25/26 to 53% in Quarter 1 26/27. The drop in satisfaction is partly due to the transition from the previous contractor however the results for Q1 26/27 are based on scores from 80 tenants. Members raised concerns about the statistical soundness of the quarterly sample size but the benefits of collecting satisfaction scores on a quarterly basis provides the Council with the opportunity to address dissatisfaction earlier. It was highlighted that the TSM for repairs satisfaction is not the only methodology for collecting and understanding satisfaction with the repairs service. The contractor also collects data via transactional surveys and reports these to the authority on a weekly basis. - It is understood that benchmarking data is not reliable with a sample size of 80. Officers will seek to approach authorities that are performing well to improve learning. ACTION: Contextualise TSM data with supplementary commentary including sample sizes and relevant caveats in future reports. ACTION: Investigate top-quartile organisations and arrange visits/calls to understand best practices.	RO RO
3.	Housing Improvement Programme update Housing Management System update The new programme team is fully recruited with the majority of officers in place. The Data Specialist will commence in post on the 4 September due to current contractual notice period. The existing Data Specialist (on a part-time contract) will provide continuity in the interim.	

- The original timelines for HMS Phase 2 modules were based on the limited resources in place at the time of drafting. The timeline will be rebaselined and reported once the full implementation team is in place.
- Lessons learnt from Phase 1 of the HMS programme have been documented and will be actioned in Phase 2. E-learning training modules are being built for all relevant MRI system modules as a result of this learning.

ACTION: Share Phase 2 timeline of HMS modules once redone by new programme team.

DECISION: HMS Programme Manager to attend HIPB in September 2026.

SC
Chair

Resident Engagement update

- The Tenant & Leaseholder Panel (TLP) has been established. The Board welcomes the observation of the HIPB meeting by a tenant representative from this Panel.
- The TLP are meeting with officers from the communications team to discuss a regular tenant voice space in the housing newsletter 'Your Housing'.
- Seeking to understand barriers with recruitment insight with support from Tpas via independently run focus groups in September and October.
- Monthly drop-in sessions are continuing in 8 sheltered schemes with repairs contractor Wates and CAVS in attendance.
- A Big Community Door Knock was conducted on the 29 June. As a result of this engagement 98 tenant profiles were updated and 12 repair jobs were raised directly from doorstep conversations.
- A report is to be drafted detailing outcomes from the Big Community Door Knock, including emerging themes and recurring topics, and will utilise information gathered to identify ASB/crime hotspots to develop a joined-up approach with police and community safety partners.
- The next Big Community Door Knock is scheduled for 23 September. Cllr Lillis and Cllr Blackwell expressed interest in joining.
- The complaints scrutiny task and finish group is nearing completion. Engaged tenants will write a report on recommendations as a result of this scrutiny which will be presented to HIPB once completed.

ACTION: Draft a report detailing outcomes from the Big Community Door Knock, including emerging themes and recurring topics, and share with HIPB and tenants to close the feedback loop.

ML

Compliance update

- The transition of the gas/heating contract from Sure Serve to T Brown went smoothly.
- In June, asbestos compliance dropped from 100% to 38% due to scheduling issues between contractors. Members expressed concern over this significant drop in compliance. Asbestos across the Borough is low or very low risk and is managed on a risk-based approach not statutory management. The Compliance Manager is working closely with the contractor to schedule asbestos assessments and aims to be complete by the end of July.
- Members expressed concern that asbestos compliance was reported at 100% to Cabinet in July. Due to the governance sign off process, the HIP update report to Cabinet was drafted prior to this drop in compliance. Officers will ensure that any drop in compliance between the reports being published and Cabinet meetings are reported verbally.
- Members expressed concern that Wates are conducting post-inspections but are not consistently hitting the 10% target. This has been addressed by the contractor, and more staff have been mobilised to meet the demand. CPBC surveyors will also conduct post inspections.
- Members also expressed concern with the appointments kept rate at 78%. The volume of jobs has increased significantly beyond initial estimates and the work in progress (WIP) rates are substantially higher than anticipated. Engagement and increased visibility are generating more jobs and Wates are mobilising more staff to meet the demand.
- There remain 21 CAT 1 HHSRS actions open. There are no life threatening or urgent concerns within this number.

Staff Away day feedback

- Generally positive event. Cllr Gibson expressed his dissatisfaction with an anonymous comment regarding "the culture of the rest of the council". Members supported this

	concern and viewed the comment as being out of place, potentially divisive, and not compatible with feedback from the staff survey. Apologies were made. Competence and Conduct Standard • Awaiting final standard outline from the Regulator of Social Housing but preparation work has commenced using guidance provided by HQN. • A staff Code of Conduct has been drafted and to be discussed with officers in HR. • A skills/knowledge matrix and professional qualification requirements are being mapped. • Member training is expected to emerge as part of this standard and is to be discussed with officers in Democratic Services.	
4.	Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) update • Officers continue to meet with the Regulator monthly. The most recent meeting was positive and constructive. • There was indication from Regulator that they are speaking with the enforcement team working with Southend for potential merging of improvement journeys in the context of LGR.	
5.	AOB • Cllr Blackwell expressed concern that the average re-let time has increased from 67 days in May to 123.45 days in June. There are 3 stages a property goes through between becoming a void and being occupied. It was agreed that this KPI would be split into 3 sections to better understand and monitor which stage of the void process is causing delays. ACTION: Split average re-let time KPI into 3 stages for clearer reporting of void turnaround times, including long-term voids. This should be ready for the September board meeting. Next meeting 24th September 2026	SC ALL