



Plymouth Community Homes Board
Board Room, Plumer House and Microsoft Teams
23rd November 2023 at 5:00pm

Present in person unless otherwise stated:

Valerie Lee (VL) – Chair
Peter Nourse (PN) – Vice Chair
Debbie Roche (DR)
Lavinia Porfir (LP)
Liz Nicolls (LN)
Emma Lovett (EL)
Julie White (JW)
Maja Jorgensen (MJ)
Tasawar Nawaz (TN)
Jill Gregg (JG) (Virtual)
Sally Haydon (SH)
Zoe Reilly (ZR)(Virtual)- Part

In attendance:

Nick Jackson (NJ) – Director of Business Services & Development
Gill Martin (GM) – Director of Corporate Service
Tracey Gray (TG) – Interim Director of Homes & Neighbourhoods (Virtual)
Jonathan Cowie (JC) – Chief Executive
Andrew Lawrie (AL) – Head of Development
Charlotte Edwards (CE) – Head of Strategy, Policy & Insight
Helen Ryan (HR) – Head of Communities and Supported Housing
John Rees (JR) – Head of Finance
Graham Rothwell (GR) – Head of Strategic Procurement (Virtual)- part
Dylan Chipp (DC) – Interim Head of Repairs & Compliance (Virtual)- part
Laura Haynes (LH) – Head of Asset Strategy & Delivery
Ian Howse (IH) – Head of Repairs, Voids & Compliance- part
Lucy Rickson (LR) – Head of Governance
Leanne Eastwood (LE) – Governance Officer (Minutes)
Joanne Bowden (JB) Observing. – part

Apologies:

None

	<i>The meeting started at 5.00pm</i>	
1. 01/11/23	Welcome and Introductions- Confirm Quorum- VL welcomed everyone to the meeting including those who were attending for the first time, which was confirmed as quorate.	

Confidential – Some items redacted as Confidential or Commercially sensitive.

	All Board members had been given the opportunity to ask questions in advance with responses being circulated to all members ahead of this meeting and attached as an appendix to these minutes.	
2. 02/11/23	Apologies for Absence - There were no apologies for absence.	
3. 03/11/23	Declarations of Interest - <i>The guidance on declaring an interest was noted.</i> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-top: 5px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-top: 5px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-top: 5px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	
4. 04/11/23	Minutes of Previous meeting (27th July 2023) The minutes of the previous meeting on the 27 th of July were discussed. It was confirmed that the minutes were a correct record of the meeting and that they could be electronically signed by the Chair.	
5. 05/11/23	Matters Arising- There were no matters arising	
6. 06/11/23	Minute Action Log The Minute Action Log was reviewed – while all actions were in date some had moved from the original completion date and it was agreed this information would be included moving forward.	LE
7. 07/11/23	Efficient decisions since last meeting: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board Member Appointment – <i>August 2023</i> 2. Shareholder Application – <i>August 2023</i> 3. Review of Business Continuity Policy & Strategy – <i>November 2023</i> 4. Review of Risk & Opportunity Management Strategy – <i>November 2023</i> 5. Governance Framework updates – Board Pay & Performance – <i>November 2023</i> 6. Authorised Signatories – <i>November 2023</i> 	
8. 08/11/23	Items for information/monitoring circulated ahead of meeting as briefings: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environmental Strategy – Annual monitoring review 2. Development Update & KPI's 3. EMT Declarations of interest 	
9. 09/11/23	There was no Chair's Urgent Business	
10. 10/11/23	Committee Minutes Circulated: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PCH Energy Board 24th July 2. Customer Focus Committee 4th August 3. PCH Regeneration Board 25th July 	

Confidential – Some items redacted as Confidential or Commercially sensitive.

	<p>4. Audit and Risk Committee 10th October 5. Development Committee October 6. Remuneration & Nomination Committee 28th September</p>	
11.	Audit & Risk Committee meeting 10th July – Chair’s Update	
11/11/23	<p>LN as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) provided the Board with an update on the meeting that took place on 10th July 2023 which had been circulated ahead of the meeting. Of particular note were the Risk Appetite review and the Asset and liability register which the Committee had carefully considered and was recommending for approval as board today.</p>	
11.1	Risk Appetite Review	
12/11/23	<p>GM, Director of Corporate Services, presented the Risk Appetite Review to the Board for approval. It was explained that this was amalgamation of the outcomes of the Risk Appetite session of the September Board away day facilitated by the consultant at House of Risk and the work that ARC had undertaken as part of the annual review and the methodology used for the ‘Risk Appetite Matrix’.</p> <p>The changes included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Moving from ‘Business Drivers to ‘Risk Categories’. b) Increasing levels of Risk Appetite from four (Averse, Cautious, Open/Optimistic & Significant) to five (Averse, Cautious, Balance, Open & Hungry). c) A new emphasis on tailored examples of behaviour which can be expected when making decisions based on the level of Risk Appetite. <p>At its meeting on the 10th October ARC reviewed and evaluated the current ‘Risk Appetite Matrix’ and the proposed Risk Universe and considered the outputs of the Board Risk Appetite session.</p> <p>Based on the report, ARC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed that the report was an accurate reflection of the Risk Appetite session on 21st September 2023. • Agreed to recommend to the PCH Board that PCH move to the proposed Risk Appetite format, which will include publishing the examples of Proposed ‘Risk Appetite Level Behaviours’ expected when making decisions. <p>The report also put forward eleven Risk Categories with the proposed level of risk appetite. These proposals were based on the risk survey scores collated before the Board Risk Session, discussion during the session and recommendation from EMT. ARC agreed to recommend to the PCH Board the level of Risk appetite for each Risk Category.</p> <p>Since ARC, the examples of for the ‘Data Quality’ and ‘Data Security’ Risk categories had been amended. The ‘Data Quality’ had also been renamed to ‘Data Management’. This reflected that data quality is dependent on data management principles including collection, analysis and reporting.</p> <p>If approved, consideration would be given on how to present the PCH Risk Universe in a way which was understandable and accessible to all stakeholders. This will include publishing the examples of behaviours which</p>	

Confidential – Some items redacted as Confidential or Commercially sensitive.

	<p>can be expected when making decisions, along with further guidance in the form of 'guide rails' for decision makers. This will be presented to ARC on 23rd January 2024 for approval.</p> <p>There would also be a review on how Risk Appetite can be used by the Board moving forward and applied in a practical way. This will include updating the current Board Report Template to include the new Risk Categories and Levels of Risk Appetite.</p>	
14/11/23	<p>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</p> <p>The board discussed that this report reflected the conversations and work that had been undertaken at the away day and that further guidance in the form of "guiderails" for decision makers would be developed and brought back to ARC in January. This revision would also incorporate any changes to working that had been raised by the Board.</p>	
15/11/23	<p>The PCH Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Agreed that PCH move to the proposed Risk Appetite format. This would include publishing the examples of behaviours which can be expected when making decisions.2. Agreed the level of Risk Appetite for each Risk Category set out in the report.	
11.2	<p>Recovery Plan – Asset & Liability Register- Redacted as Confidential</p>	
16/11/23	<p>[Redacted content]</p>	

17/11/23	<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>The Board felt that this paper clearly set out the potential risks and helped them to understand the impact of the mitigations that they would need to consider should this need to be put into practice.</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
18/11/23	<p>The PCH Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approved the updates to the Recovery Plan. 2. Approved the latest Asset and Liabilities Register. 	
12.	Remuneration and Nomination Committee 28th September – Chair’s Update	
19/11/23	<p>PN as Chair of the Remuneration & Nomination Committee provided the Board with an update on the meeting that took place on 28th September 2023 which had been circulated in advance.</p> <p>This included the approval of the Remuneration policy which the board were asked to approve today. As this also considered CEO remuneration JC left the room which this was discussed.</p>	
5:21pm	JC left the room	
12.1	Remuneration Policy- redacted as Confidential	
20/11/23	<p>PN, Chair of the Remuneration and Nomination (R&N) Committee, presented the Remuneration Policy, which was discussed at the R&N meeting on the 28th September 2023.</p>	

The remuneration policy for staff was last approved by board in March 2020 and the revised version incorporated the recommendations made by the PCH Board in March 2023 when the staff pay award 2023/24 was agreed.

[Redacted text block]

21/11/23


As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:

[Redacted text block]

Confidential – Some items redacted as Confidential or Commercially sensitive.

16.	Quarterly Performance Update	
26/11/23	<p>CE, Head of Strategy, Performance & Insight, presented the Q2 2023/24 Performance Update to Board – this included.</p> <p>For TSM measures PCH remained in the top quartile across most measures compared to others. This comparison benchmarking was drawn from Housemark’s annual benchmarking, who have just completed the mid-term exercise which would be presented in the next update. The team continued to review data received from surveys to identify trends and help understand why residents have expressed dissatisfaction where apparent.</p> <p>A reduction in repair performance during Q2 was noted, with a reduction to 87.63% overall for jobs being completed within this timeframe due to a demand for plumbers and carpenters. However, satisfaction had increased in these areas.</p> <p>Complaints were increasing and there were 5 complaints which were out of date. This has been investigated and were due to the sign off letters a process which has now been smoothed out. There had been an increase in ASB cases, and the new Interim Head of Neighbourhoods is considering the data to understand this.</p> <p>Proportions of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out stood at 99.93% at the end of Q2 which represents ten properties overdue- this has now come down to two.</p> <p>The KPI for legionella showed that just over 88% of homes had a risk assessment, which was a further improvement on the previous quarter. PCH are still reporting on the previous definition and having attended the House mark seminar this week it was found that most other HA’s are doing the same. They have offered support to define what this should be so this will be brought back later.</p> <p>In Q2 there were two blocks which had a passenger lift awaiting outstanding safety checks to be completed this has now been resolved.</p> <p>There will be a KPI included for Damp & mould in the next update as we start to see cases increase as we come into the winter months.</p> <p>The voids turn around has improved in Q2 to 32.78 average days with the in month figure down to 22.6days.</p>	
27/11/23	<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>It was explained to the board that now that there would be a refresh of the performance dashboards which would include more details around repairs- In particular around VFM , volume and performance.</p> <p>The Pet Policy was currently in draft format and out for consultation with residents- the board were keen to understand how we would manage the impact on those residents who have XL Bully’s which are going onto the dangerous Dogs list from 31 December 2023. Guidance was being put</p>	

Confidential – Some items redacted as Confidential or Commercially sensitive.

	<p>together to support staff and residents and signposting them to the government registration scheme to make the dogs legitimate. The overarching focus of the policy was to promote responsible dog ownership across all breeds.</p> <p>There were a small number of properties which did not meet PCH's decent homes standard and this related to wooden front doors on acquired stock.</p> <p>Increasing numbers of complaints was discussed and the reasons behind it. It was explained that there wasn't one particular cause however it had become apparent that complaints would escalate if every element of the original complaint was not deal with the first time so this is being rectified. Within the sector complaints were increasing on of the reason could be the advertising on social media, TV and in newspapers by the government on how to raise a complaint against your RP. This has been a driver in raising awareness for residents and increasing the volume. Outside of the sector the UK CSI customer service data shows an increase a 15-20% increase in complaints nationally.</p> <p>Work was also being undertaken to understand the complaints that we are receiving as to if PCH are at fault or if the complaint is unjustified. i.e something that we are unable to do as an organisation -so that we can get to the root cause of the issue.</p> <p>There will be a consultation on the current complaint code where we may look to move from a three to a two stage complaint process – this would see the stage 1 complaints being treated as seriously as a stage 3 so we can get it right first time.</p> 	
28/11/23	<p>Questions had been raised ahead of the meeting on lift safety and the board asked for detail of the SLA that we have with the lift company which would be provided outside of the meeting.</p>	IH
29/11/23	<p>An explicit measure for damp and mould was discussed so that residents have an available set of started and time scales available to them in the same way as they do for repairs. This was in the process of being put together.</p> <p>A review has taken place of our stock to identify any properties which had been built with RACC. The historical data relating our properties has been</p>	IH

Confidential – Some items redacted as Confidential or Commercially sensitive.

	<p>reviewed (some going back to 1948) and there haven't been any homes identified that were constructed in this way. There might potential be some commercial units which are affected and this was currently being investigated. If they are RACC constructed, then they will be of very low numbers.</p> <p>Sickness absence has improved and currently stood at 7.87% this was lower than the sector average of 8.41%.</p>	
30/11/23	The Board noted the performance outturns for Q2 2023/24.	
31/11/23	<p>Item 19 Repair strategy update was presented next. Followed by a break. DC & IH left the meeting. JB left the meeting</p> <p>Items 20 Supply Chain strategy was presented next and then GR left the meeting.</p> <p>This was then followed by the Item 21 CEO update.</p> <p>The running order remained unchanged after this.</p>	
17.	Quarterly Management Accounts- redacted as confidential	
32/11/23	<p>JR, Head of Finance, presented the quarterly management accounts demonstrating the year to date and forecast outturn position to 31st March 2024.</p> <p>[Redacted content]</p>	

	<p>[Redacted content]</p>	
33/11/23	<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>Rent arrears were discussed and while the level was low the board wanted to understand what that actually meant for our customers as the roll out of universal credit (UC) continued in Plymouth with 2500 more people moving over in January 2024.</p> <p>To support this it was agreed that alongside information of rent arrears the board would receive information on the rollout of UC over the next 24 months, uptake of our support services and any changes in the volume of residents on payment plans or requests for food bank referrals . It was felt that these indicators would provide further insight to how our residents were being impacted.</p>	NK
34/11/23	<p>The Board noted the year-to-date position and forecast outturn to the end of March 2024.</p>	
18.	<p>Quarterly Treasury Update – redacted as Confidential</p>	

35/11/23	<p>JR, Head of Finance presented the Treasury Update</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
01/11/23	<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
36/11/23	<p>The Board:</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	

	<p>[Redacted]</p>	
18.1	Treasury Policy update – Redacted as Confidential	
37/11/23	<p>JR, Head of Finance presented the Treasury Policy for approval following changes to funders financial covenants and Golden Rules. Treasury Policies set out the detailed controls over borrowing and cash holding, providing a control framework.</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] <p>[Redacted]</p>	
38/11/23	The PCH Board Approved the Treasury Policy.	
19.	Repairs Update	
39/11/23	<p>DC, Interim Head of Repairs & Compliance, presented the Repairs Update which provided an update on the current financial status of responsive, voids, and planned repairs budgets,</p> <p>The escalated forecast overspends, had risen from £1.5m to £2.275m, based on the management accounts as of 31 October 2023 and increase by £0.735m between August and October 2023, mainly due to additional costs in damp and mould repairs, day-to-day repairs, reduced cost recovery from PCC, increased gas breakdown costs, and higher repairs management costs. However, there was an underspend in voids.</p>	

Confidential – Some items redacted as Confidential or Commercially sensitive.

	<p>Steps were being taken to mitigate further overspend and improve efficiency which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Day-to-day repairs: A revised policy had been adopted without altering core aspects. Efforts included publishing responsibility tables, reducing contractor spending, and incorporating policy updates into operational processes. - Voids: Adoption of a new standard had helped reduce average void costs, with further strategies in place to maintain this trend. October's outlier would be investigated. - Damp and mould: Dedicated supervisors and a controlled approach had led to a significant reduction in weekly spend, and this was expected to remain stable. 	
40/11/23	<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>The per unit costs had increased during October due to a run of fixed costs- including parking permits, vehicle hire and operatives salaries that should have moved to a different budget code. These additional fix costs combined with low unit numbers had caused the cost to increase.</p>	
41/11/23	The Board noted the Repairs Update.	
42/11/23	IH & DC left the meeting.	
20.	Supply Chain Strategy	
43/11/23	<p>GR, Head of Strategic Procurement, presented the Supply Chain Strategy which sought approval for the 2023-2028 draft strategy.</p> <p>The strategy set out the objectives of delivering value for money, in an efficient and effective way, whilst seeking sustainable sources and innovative solutions. The supply chain objectives would be achieved through the use of modern technology, streamlining processes, and improving the skills and knowledge to secure optimal balance of cost and quality and ensure optimal supplier performance.</p> <p>It sets out the approach to sustainability when making contractor decisions and the aspects of supplier behaviours that should be considered.</p> <p>The strategy looked to embrace resident participation in tender processes and supplier selection, and the team will work with resident forums to encourage such participation.</p> <p>PCH will actively seek to increase local SME participation in contracting opportunities by introducing less onerous qualification criteria and providing support and advise to local suppliers where appropriate.</p>	
44/11/23	<p>As a result of questions and discussion the following was clarified:</p> <p>One of the questions raised before the meetings asked if the actions and measures of success could be more specific (i.e. SMART) in terms of quantification and timescales to enable the Board to monitor progress – and it was agreed this would be actioned.</p>	GR

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted]	
47/11/23	<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
48/11/23	<p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	■
49/11/23	The Board noted the CEO Update.	
22.	Key Financial Principles 2024/25- redacted as Confidential	
50/11/23	<p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	

	<p>[Redacted text block]</p>	
51/11/23	<p>As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:</p> <p>[Redacted text block]</p>	

	[REDACTED]	
52/11/23	The Board noted the Key Financial Principles 2024/25.	
23.	[REDACTED] Redacted as Confidential	
53/11/23	[REDACTED]	
54/11/23	As a result of questions, the following was discussed and clarified:	

	<p>[Redacted content]</p>	
55/11/23	<p>The PCH Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">[Redacted list item]	
24.	Governance Report	

Confidential – Some items redacted as Confidential or Commercially sensitive.

56/11/23	<p>LR, Head of Governance, presented the Governance Report which provided updates and proposals relating to several governance activities.</p> <p>Governance Review Task and Finish Group The Group, consisting of Committee and Subsidiary Board Chairs, and the Vice Chair met in September and October. The Group has been working on delivering the Altair Governance Review recommendations by refocusing Board and Committees, clarifying delegations, and ensuring the customer voice is heard within governance.</p> <p>The outline proposals in 1.10 of the report provided an approach that helps focus on strategic discussions, a better understanding of the customer voice and ensuring discussions take place at the most appropriate forum with suitably skilled members.</p> <p>The Task and Finish Group acknowledge that the proposals need working up into clear Terms of Reference and forward plans for efficiency and to avoid duplication. The Board was requested to consider the proposals, and if approved, the governance team will work with stakeholders on behalf of the Board to clarify changes by developing TOR and forward plans, ready for a decision at February PCH Board and implementation by April 2024.</p> <p>Governance Improvement Plan The Governance Improvement Plan was updated to incorporate the Task and Finish Group proposals (Appendix A). There were 33 actions with 6 delayed (to be completed by March 2023), 2 to be rolled over to 2024/25.</p> <p>ARC and CFC Chairs Due to the Committee changes proposed by Task and Finish Group, the Board was requested to extend the current ARC and CFC Chairs' tenures to 31st March 2024; new Chair recruitment will be in February 2024 with appointments starting 1st April 2024.</p> <p>Board Appraisal PCH Board member appraisals took place in September and October; they included an element of 360 feedback. The key themes of objectives set and the feedback on the appraisal process were included within the report. The Learning and Development Plan will be brought back to R&N Committee in early 2024.</p> <p>New Board Member Zoe Reilly joined the Board in September, and it was recommended that Zoe take up the vacancy on CFC.</p>	
57/11/23	<p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (1.24) approved the proposals and timetable for reviewing Committees • (2.2) noted the updated Governance Improvement Plan • (3.3) approved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The extension of Lavinia Porfir as CFC Chair and Liz Nicolls as ARC Chair until 31 March 2024 ○ Recruitment of new CFC and ARC Chairs in February 2024, ready for appointment from 1 April 2024 • (4.5) noted the Board appraisal outcomes 	

Confidential – Some items redacted as Confidential or Commercially sensitive.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (5.2) approved the appointment of Zoe Reilly to the Customer Focus Committee with effect from 1 December 2023. 	
25.	Board away day notes and Chair’s Challenge decision	
58/11/23	<p>LR presented the Board Away Day Notes and Chair’s Challenge Decision.</p> <p>The purpose of the September Board away day were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Session one – review and clarify risk appetite descriptions and definitions Session two – review progress and prioritise the Strategic Business Plan objectives Session three – remind Board about the Chair’s challenge and agree a clear action plan with timescales and outcome to include in next year’s ESG report. <p>As part of the away day discussion, the Board wished to sign up to the Chair’s Challenge and use its six commitments as the ESG actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use NHF EDI Data Tool to understand current make-up of staff and Board members, and measure future success Run a Board workshop to co-create a vision Prioritise diversity in succession planning and apply the Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit Read NHF Succession Planning for Inclusion report and considering an associate Board member programme Request EDI be included in annual appraisal Signup to Challenge NHF website as a public commitment to take PCH Board on a journey to understand how diverse and inclusive PCH is now and develop a future vision. <p>There are close links to the EDI strategy actions, which are subject to a separate Board update due in March 2024.</p>	
59/11/23	<p>The Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Noted the Board away day notes 21 September 2023 Approved signing up to the Chair’s Challenge 	
26.	Next meeting: 8 th February 2024	
60/11/23	<i>The meeting closed at 8:25pm</i>	

Signature.....
Valerie Lee – Chair

Date

Certified as a true copy
Lucy Rickson, Head of Governance

Confidential – Some items redacted as Confidential or Commercially sensitive.

Date.....

N.B – remember for Dol to also include this against the item where it is being discussed.