



Minutes

Plymouth Community Homes
Customer Focus Committee
3rd February 2023, 10:15am

Hybrid – Board Room, Plumer House and Microsoft Teams

Present in person unless indicated otherwise:

Lavinia Porfir (LP) Chair
Debbie Roche (DR)
Graham Clayton (GC)
Maja Jorgensen (MJ)
Gaynor Southerton (GS)
Joanne Bowden (JB)
Stacey Winn (SW)
Melony Gallagher (MG)

Also in attendance:

John Clark (JC) Chief Executive
Angie Edwards-Jones (AEJ) Head of Customer Experience and Assurance
Charlotte Edwards (CE) Head of Strategy, Performance and Policy
Mary O’Leary (MO) Head of Communications and Marketing
Lucy Rickson (LR) Head of Governance - Virtual
Alice Potter (AP) Communities Team Manager
Helen Ryan (HR) Head of Communities and Supported Housing
Leigh Ferguson (LF) Communities Team Manager
Michael Williams (MW) Interim Head of Asset Management – Virtual (part)
Nathan Cousins (NC) Asset Data Manager (part)
Tina Sokhal (TS) Altair Consultancy and Advisory Services Ltd, Consultant – Virtual (Observing)
Laura Moss (LM) Governance Assistant – Minutes

Apologies:

None

		Action By
1	Welcome and Introductions: Confirm Quorum	
01/02/23	<i>The meeting started at 10:18am</i> LP welcomed Committee members and attendees, and the meeting was confirmed as quorate.	

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	<p>SW and MG, who are newly appointed resident Co-Optees to the Committee following approval of the PCH Board by Efficient Decision in December 2022, were introduced.</p> <p>TS, Altair Consultancy and Advisory Services Ltd - Consultant, who was observing the meeting as part of a Governance Review commissioned by PCH was also welcomed.</p> <p>The Committee passed on their gratitude and commended staff for each of their reports to be delivered at the meeting.</p>	
2	Apologies for Absence	
02/02/23	There were no apologies for absence received from Committee members.	
3	Declarations of Interest	
03/02/23	<p>The guidance provided to Committee members on declaring an interest was noted.</p> <p>LP, DR, GS, JB, SW and MG have standing declarations as Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) tenants however this does not relate directly to any items on the agenda.</p>	
4	Minutes of previous meeting (4th November 2022)	
04/02/23	<p>The minutes of the previous Committee meeting were discussed, and it was confirmed that the minutes were a correct record of the meeting and that they could be electronically signed by the Chair.</p> <p>On this occasion there were no proposed redactions highlighted within the minutes, for Committee approval, prior to being uploaded to the CFC webpage on the PCH website.</p>	
5	Chair's Urgent Business	
05/02/23	There was no Chair's urgent business.	
6	Matters Arising	
06/02/23	<p>A list of all on-going and completed actions from previous meetings, with updates, was uploaded to Convene ahead of the meeting for the Committee to review.</p> <p>It was agreed that the following actions had been completed:</p> <p>Item 14 - Update on Tenancy Sustainment Officers (4th February 2022 – minute number 54/02/22) in which the Committee requested case studies of younger residents that had received support from the Tenancy Sustainment</p>	

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	<p>Officers be included within the next report. A Briefing Paper was circulated to the Committee ahead of the meeting which included the requested case studies.</p> <p>Item 13 - Performance Update (4th November 2022 – minute number 51/11/22) in which the Committee requested a summary of the process followed before evicting a resident because of rent arrears, including the support that would be offered. This information was shared with the Committee by email in December 2022.</p> <p>The following update was provided:</p> <p>Item 10 – Complaints Report (6th May 2022 – minute number 20/05/22) in relation to developing a communication for residents about the Mutual Exchange process. An online consultation on a new Mutual Exchange Policy has now begun.</p> <p>The Committee noted the Minute Action Log.</p>	
7	Decisions since last meeting	
07/02/23	There have been no Urgent or Efficient Decisions since the last meeting.	
8	Briefing Papers circulated since the last meeting	
08/02/23	<p>It was confirmed that the Committee had received briefing papers, which were for information, on the following subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Tenancy Sustainment Officers • Resident Scrutiny and Review of Scrutiny Update <p>There were no questions raised by Committee members on the briefing papers in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>In regard to the Resident Scrutiny and Review of Scrutiny Update Briefing Paper, a request was made for the updated action plan of the 2021/22 scrutiny review of 'PCH Contractors interactions with residents' to be circulated to the Committee. This was actioned on 1st February 2023 through Convene.</p> <p>Additionally, it was noted that within the Resident Scrutiny and Review of Scrutiny Update Briefing Paper, Campbell Tickell had raised a potential conflict of interest with some residents being a member of both the Scrutiny Steering Group (SSG) and Customer Focus Committee (CFC). It was explained that currently at PCH the scrutiny review work is carried out by a task and finish group (whose members change depending on the topic or service being reviewed) with SSG reviewing the final report before being submitted to CFC. A conflict would only arise if the same residents were carrying out the scrutiny review as well as being members of SSG or CFC.</p>	

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	<p>The Committee were informed that an evaluation of the governance arrangements is currently being conducted by Altair which will include an assessment of how the resident voice is heard at Board and Committees and how Scrutiny operates.</p> <p>A report detailing the final proposals for Resident Scrutiny are anticipated to be presented to the Committee in May 2023.</p> <p>The Committee gave assurance that there is a high interest in the activity of Resident Scrutiny and highlighted at its meeting in August 2022 the importance of reducing the length of the process in order to follow up any recommendations.</p> <p>The Resident Involvement Strategy is currently being reviewed and updated which will be presented to the Committee and PCH Board for approval in the coming months. The Committee were assured that the level of investment in resident engagement will be maintained. It was acknowledged that there is now a requirement for increased resident consultation which will need to be considered in terms of available resources within the Communities Team going forward.</p>	
9	CFC Independent Review – Final Report	
09/02/23	<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]</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>	

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10/02/23	<p>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
11/02/23	<p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
12/02/23	<p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
13/02/23	<p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
14/02/23	<p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
15/02/23		

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16/02/23	<p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
17/02/23	<p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
18/02/23	<p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
19/02/23	<p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
10	Performance Update	
20/02/23	<p>CE, Head of Strategy, Performance and Policy, presented the Performance Update report to the Committee for monitoring.</p> <p>The report presented a suite of performance indicators most relevant to the areas of responsibility falling within the remit of the Committee, covering the period to 31st December 2022.</p> <p>Overall, the organisation continues to perform well, with most of the indicators being either within target or marginally off target. The variances were detailed in the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17,347 repairs were completed during Quarter 3 of which 12,238 were completed in time, with 674 out of time. Year to date emergency repairs completed in time were 14,134 (97.78%) and routine repairs completed in time were 17,974 (91.21%). • The number of properties without a valid gas safety certificate at the end of December 2022 is three, which are being dealt with through the court process. • The current rent arrears performance for December 2022 was within target at 1.68%. This is alongside no evictions for rent arrears in the quarter (two in total in the year so far). • As at the end of December 2022, the number of tenants claiming Universal Credit (UC) was 4,924, a decrease of 4 over the quarter. The Financial Inclusion Officers had 54 active cases open. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average routine re-letting time for the Quarter was 35.33 days which is considerably lower than 2021/2022 average of 43.15 days. <p>The report also included how PCH is performing against the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) new Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) which were finalised and released in September 2022. Data gathered from 2023/24 will be reported to the RSH in April 2024.</p> <p>It was noted that an Action Plan will be presented to the PCH Board to address some of the lower performing TSMs.</p>	
21/02/23	<i>NC joined the meeting at 11:03am</i>	
22/02/23	<p>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</p> <p>The Committee were informed the 'Proportion of homes for which all required Legionella risk assessments had been carried out' performance figure written in the report should be changed from 81.65% to 87.07%.</p>	
23/02/23	The Committee discussed the jump in figures regarding TSM TP11 (Proportion of tenants satisfied with PCH's approach to complaints handling) which has shown a reduction to 44% in the quarter within the report. It was clarified that this was due to a change to the question by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) which meant that the reporting figures were filtered down to only residents who had made a complaint. Although the figure was disappointing, it was in line with what was being experienced nationally, however this was being actively looked into by PCH to understand what issues residents were experiencing and how they could be resolved.	
24/02/23	It was explained that performance across areas of Voids and Lettings continues to remain 10% outside of target. The Committee were informed that this is being experienced nationally due to a backlog being created during the Covid pandemic. However, PCH are in the second quartile when comparing performance with other Housing Associations. The target average number of days to re-let routine void properties is 20, which was the target prior to the Covid pandemic. It was agreed that this would remain the target to aspire to.	
25/02/23	After reviewing repair data, it has ascertained that the high number of emergencies combined with booking in routine and planned jobs early in the timescale, is causing issues with scheduling, and therefore causing some of the overspill beyond PCH's published service standards. To alleviate this, Executive Management Team (EMT) have instructed the Repairs Team to reinstate the urgent category, subject to consultation, which should alleviate issues with repair scheduling and the knock on effect to service standards. It was agreed that an update of the consultation would be brought back to the Committee.	CE/MW
26/02/23	Regarding Building Safety Measures and 8 properties without asbestos survey, the Committee were given assurance that there were no concerns as some of these	

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	were no access scenarios and that work was being done with the aim to achieve 100% by the end of the year. It was agreed that the next report would include more narrative on this for clarity.	CE/MW
27/02/23	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Performance Update report.	
11	Asset Management Quarter 3 Performance Update	
28/02/23	<p>NC, Asset Data Manager, presented the Asset Management Quarter 3 Performance Update to the Committee for monitoring.</p> <p>The report summarised the work completed by the Asset Management Team in Quarter 3 2022/23. The Team's role is to ensure a data centric approach to plan and deliver investment to PCH's housing stock, whilst maintaining PCH's landlord obligations by keeping residents safe through robust fire risk management.</p> <p>Over the past quarter the achievements have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All due fire risk assessments (FRA) were completed on time for the Quarter • Fire door tagging project ready to go live • Planned maintenance completions at 189 homes • Roof replacements of single dwellings at 27 homes • Wave 2 application for SHDF funding submitted • Planned maintenance customer satisfaction 97% • Asset Management Strategy 2022-27 signed off by Board in November 2022 and published <p>A further breakdown of work, carried out during the Quarter was presented, providing information across each of the teams that contribute to Asset Management: Asset Data & Stock Condition Surveying Team, Design and Delivery Team and the Fire Safety Team. The focus for the individual teams within Asset Management for the coming year was also included.</p>	
29/02/23	As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:	
	It was clarified that the modernisation programme has progressed slower than desired in the Quarter due to a range of issues, mainly around procurement, consultation with leaseholders, design specifications and a skills shortage across the construction industry post Brexit and the Covid pandemic.	
30/02/23	It was agreed that an update regarding the Wave 2 funding from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund be circulated to the Committee when received. There is an aspiration to access £5.6M of funding to cover proposed works to 600 properties and feedback from the application is anticipated by March 2023.	NC
31/02/23	Customer Satisfaction surveys are conducted by the Delivery Team contacting residents by telephone. Postal communication with residents has been trialled	

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	previously however did not achieve an effective response rate. Telephone communication has meant that the response rate has improved. It was suggested that Tenancy Liaison Officers capturing customer satisfaction feedback be explored.	NC
32/02/23	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Asset Management Quarter 3 Performance Update.	
33/02/23	<i>NC and MW left the meeting at 11:21am</i>	
12	Digital Customer Communications Update	
34/02/23	<p>MO, Head of Communications and Marketing, presented the Digital Customer Communications Update to the Committee for monitoring.</p> <p>PCH is committed to develop and improve digital resources to meet the objectives set out in the Communications Strategy, approved by the Board in February 2022, as well as delivering the objective of ‘digital by design, access by choice’ within the organisation’s Strategic Business Plan.</p> <p>The report provided an update to the Committee about PCH’s performance in Quarter 3 2022-2023 in respect of digital customer communications, as well as an oversight of work underway. Focus remains centred on improving the organisation’s digital communications for all users, to enable PCH to engage with customers in ways that are best suited to their needs, abilities and resources.</p> <p>The digital communications analytics (Appendix A) were presented for Quarter 3 which showed the number of active MyPCH accounts reached 8,129 by the end of December 2022, an increase of 204 new accounts, which now represents 58% of tenants. This is a step closer to the target of 60% of tenants.</p> <p>Other analytics shown for Quarter 3 were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16,662 rent statement views – this was a slight increase from Quarter 2 (16,358 views) and the function continues to remain the most popular of the portal • 4,618 rent payments were made through MyPCH, and 8,092 online payments were made in total from MyPCH and website combined – this is 67% of all payments, showing that the majority of residents continue to choose to make rent payments online rather than over the phone • 1,016 repairs were reported through MyPCH of the 22,740 overall repairs reported for the quarter - if emergency, planned and minor works repairs are removed from the total repairs figure (as it is not possible to report them via the MyPCH portal), this equates to 10% of repairs which has increased from Quarter 2 (8%) • 28% of customer contact was digital, which equates to 14,342 digital contacts through email, webchat, webforms and social media – this is a 	

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	<p>larger volume than Quarter 2 however is a smaller percentage (Quarter 2: 33%) owing to increased telephone calls received during the period.</p> <p>The Committee were also informed of the progress in developing the new website, which is expected to launch in April 2023, further enhancement of MyPCH and improvement of the online tenant application portal.</p>	
35/02/23	<p>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</p> <p>It was clarified that the new website and portal was on track to be launched on 3rd April 2023 and it would be promoted through In Touch, social media and staff news stories once it has gone live. A review of the new website will be completed at 1, 3 and 6 months after launch. Feedback would also be collected through the Virtual Resident Advisors (VRA), Google analytics to compare use with the old website, surveys, and social media.</p>	
36/02/23	<p>It was noted that 58% of tenants have an active MyPCH account which is nearly reaching the target of 60%. Once the new portal solution is in operation, there will be promotion of the service including at in person resident events and advertising campaigns. A new target will then be set however this will never be 100% as it is PCH's objective to offer 'digital by design, access by choice'.</p>	
37/02/23	<p>The Customer Focus Committee noted the Digital Customer Communications Update.</p>	
13	<p>Together with Tenants Annual Update</p>	
38/02/23	<p>LF, Communities Team Manager, presented the Together with Tenants Annual Update to the Committee for monitoring.</p> <p>Together with Tenants (TWT) is a national initiative led by the National Housing Federation (NHF) that has seen Housing Associations adopt a Together with Tenants Charter. PCH adopted the Charter in March 2021 and the report provided an annual update.</p> <p>The report detailed how PCH continues to embed the principles of the Together with Tenants Charter into its processes and provided key examples of progress in delivering the six commitments of the Charter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships • Communication • Voice and Influence • Accountability • Quality • When things go wrong 	

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	The Committee were informed that the focus for 2023/24 will be to continue to promote the Charter to staff and residents, provide opportunities for residents to become engaged and contribute to NHF national developments, and support staff with incorporating the Charter into the delivery of their work.	
39/02/23	As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:	
40/02/23	<p>It was noted that there had been a decrease in agreement that PCH values suggestions and ideas from residents from the previous year, 2021-22 which mirrors a national trend. The Committee were assured that PCH are still within the top quartile when benchmarked against other housing providers however there is a need for improvement.</p> <p>A suggestion was made that PCH's commitment to Together with Tenants is more widely communicated to residents to encourage involvement which could be done by linking resident stories to the Charter within In Touch or through social media. This could include a story about Stacey Winn, new resident CFC Co-Optee, who has recently been approached by the National Housing Federation (NHF) to share best practices with another Housing Association on the Void Inspector program which involves residents assessing void properties before being re-let. It was suggested that this could also be incorporated into the work of the Virtual Resident Advisers (VRA).</p>	LF/MO
41/02/23	To give greater demonstration of PCH's work to adhere to the 'Relationships' commitment of the Together with Tenant Charter, it was agreed that a more detailed list of all resident activities and involvement would be included within the report.	LF
42/02/23	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Together with Tenants Annual Update.	
14	Feedback on Resident Engagement Health Check	
43/02/23	<p>HR, Head of Communities and Supported Housing, and AP, Communities Team Manager presented the Feedback on Resident Engagement Health Check report to the Committee for information.</p> <p>In November 2021, Campbell Tickell, an external consultancy, was procured to undertake an in-depth review of Resident Engagement across PCH. Other reviews had also been commissioned with Campbell Tickell however these focussed on individual services area. The brief of the Resident Engagement Health Check included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a desk top review of documents • focus groups with staff and residents (both involved and non-involved residents) • interviews including with Board Members and Executive Management • consultation events 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on-site visits and reality testing • mystery shopping • horizon scanning (regulation) • a series of project group meetings <p>Additionally, a review of best practice and comparison assessments, and recommendations for improvement were requested including how we could improve Resident Scrutiny. The purpose of the commissioned Health Check was to enable PCH to understand ways resident engagement could be improved. The commission ended in October 2022.</p> <p>The report detailed the recommendations made by Campbell Tickell along with PCH's proposed next steps.</p> <p>Having considered the recommendations of the Health Check together with existing service plan and corporate objectives, and with a view to delivering against additional new regulatory and other requirements of resident engagement, a themed action plan has been developed and was presented to the Committee.</p>	
44/02/23	<p>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</p> <p>It was confirmed that there has already been positive movement towards completing the recommendations made within the Resident Engagement Health Check.</p>	
45/02/23	<p>There are challenges in understanding the level of resources that are expected from Housing Associations to be committed to community development with local authorities decreasing their provision. Assessment of what is a regulatory requirement and what additional resources PCH would like to provide for their residents will need to take place.</p>	
46/02/23	<p>External grant funding will be explored to increase PCH's investment in resident engagement and community projects, including those with external partners to deliver outreach services, as well as maximise income.</p>	
47/02/23	<p>A new draft Resident Involvement Strategy will be developed and proposed to the Committee in May 2023 and then the PCH Board in July 2023 for adoption. The strategy will need to align resident engagement with organisational priorities and corporate objectives within the PCH Strategic Business Plan, service plans, and other strategies.</p>	
48/02/23	<p>Specialist resident engagement software, TP Tracker which is connected to the Housing Management system, enables PCH to monitor in real time the diversity, protected characteristics and geographical location of engaged residents. This allows PCH to target residents where there is under representation.</p>	
49/02/23		

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50/02/23	It was confirmed that there had been a variation in the courses which residents have registered for through the Learn for Free programme. Previously, during and post the Covid pandemic, residents signed up for courses associated with health and wellbeing and confidence building. Now, more residents are signing up for training related to employment. Also, more residents are becoming engaged within their community and have been signing up for treasury, minute taking and committee skills training.	HR/MO
51/02/23	Budget training modules developed by the Communities Team and the Area Housing Manager for Income Recovery and Financial Inclusion are accessible to residents at any time through the PCH website. PCH facilitates a two day Mental Health Training course which is delivered by an external organisation for free. It was requested that this is promoted on social media so residents are aware of the support available to them.	
52/02/23	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Feedback on Resident Engagement Health Check report.	
15	Forward Plan	
53/02/23	The Forward Plan was reviewed by the Committee which detailed reports that were due to be presented at meetings in 2023.	
54/02/23	The Customer Focus Committee noted the Forward Plan.	
16	Date of Next Meeting	
55/02/23	The next Customer Focus Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday 12 th May 2023. The Committee noted that Graham Clayton would be stepping down as a PCH Board Member in March 2023, so this was his last Committee meeting. Gratitude was passed on for all his support and contributions during his term of office. Committee members and attendees were thanked for joining the meeting.	
56/02/23	<i>The meeting ended at 12:03pm</i>	

Name Lavinia Porfir

Signature

Date

PCH Customer Focus Committee
03 February 2023

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Certified as a true copy

Lucy Rickson, Head of Governance

Date