

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**



Minutes

Plymouth Community Homes  
Customer Focus Committee  
**4<sup>th</sup> November 2022, 10:15am**

**Hybrid – Board Room, Plumer House and Microsoft Teams**

**Present in person unless indicated otherwise:**

Lavinia Porfir (LP) Chair  
Debbie Roche (DR) – Virtual (part)  
Graham Clayton (GC)  
Maja Jorgensen (MJ) - Virtual  
Gaynor Southerton (GS)  
Joanne Bowden (JB)  
Jill Gregg (JG)  
Nick Lewis (NL) - Virtual

**Also in attendance:**

John Clark (JC) Chief Executive  
Angie Edwards-Jones (AEJ) Head of Customer Experience and Assurance  
Louise Jarvis (LJ) Customer Experience Manager  
Charlotte Edwards (CE) Head of Strategy, Performance and Policy (part)  
Mary O’Leary (MO) Head of Communications and Marketing  
Lucy Rickson (LR) Head of Governance  
Alice Potter (AP) Communities Team Manager – Virtual (part)  
Helen Ryan (HR) Head of Communities and Supported Housing  
Leslie Channon (LC) Campbell Tickell – Virtual (part)  
Jon Slade (JS) Campbell Tickell – Virtual (part)  
Tim Phillips (TP) Policy and Performance Manager (part)  
Andy Withey (AW) Area Repairs Manager (part)  
Nathan Cousins (NC) Asset Data Manager (part)  
Liz Phillips (LPh) Head of Income, Commercial & Home Ownership – Virtual (part)  
Mel Gallagher (MG) Resident - Observing  
Laura Moss (LM) Governance Assistant – Minutes

**Apologies:**

N/A

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions: Confirm Quorum</b>	<b>Action By</b>
01/11/22	<i>The meeting started at 10:05am</i>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

	<p>LP welcomed Committee members and attendees, and the meeting was confirmed as quorate. Following approval at the PCH Board meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022, MJ has been appointed a new member of the Committee. JG and NL were also in attendance.</p> <p>LC and JS from Campbell Tickell were also welcomed to the meeting as well as MG who was observing as part of the process to recruit more resident CFC Co-Optees.</p> <p>The Committee passed on their gratitude and commended staff for each of their reports to be delivered at the meeting.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
02/11/22	There were no apologies for absence received from Committee members.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
03/11/22	<p>The guidance provided to Committee members on declaring an interest was noted.</p> <p>LP, DR, GS and JB have standing declarations as Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) tenants however this does not relate directly to any items on the agenda.</p>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Minutes of previous meeting (5<sup>th</sup> August 2022)</b>	
04/11/22	<p>The minutes of the previous Committee meeting were discussed, and it was <b>confirmed</b> that the minutes were a correct record of the meeting and that they could be electronically signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed redactions were highlighted within the minutes for approval so that this version could be uploaded to the CFC webpage on the PCH website. Committee members agreed with the redactions marked for confidentiality or commercially sensitive reasons.</p> <p>A note further explaining the approach to the annual Pembroke Estate Management Board (PEMB) reporting to PCH through the Committee was also included. It was acknowledged that going forward the PEMB and PCH will both provide updates, as one agenda item, on performance against the Modular Management Agreement to the Committee for scrutiny and monitoring. A member of the PEMB will also be invited to attend the meeting to present their section of the report alongside the PCH staff member.</p>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Chair's Urgent Business</b>	
05/11/22	There was no Chair's urgent business.	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

<b>6</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
06/11/22	<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 two actions should now be marked as completed:</p> <p><b>CFC Independent Review Meeting (18<sup>th</sup> June 2021)</b> in relation to exploring partnership working with external agencies. A partnership project is now underway with Livewell with joint Board meetings taking place.</p> <p><b>Item 16 – Digital Customer Communications Update (5<sup>th</sup> August 2021 – minute number 66/08/21)</b> in relation to developing a ‘Find my Housing Officer’ function on the PCH website. A tender process for a new website and portal supplier went live in August 2022 which is now in the final stages. It was confirmed that the Digital &amp; IT Team have completed necessary preparation works to enable this function to be included on the new website which is anticipated to become live in early 2023.</p> <p>The Committee noted the Minute Action Log.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Decisions since last meeting</b>	
07/11/22	There have been no Urgent or Efficient Decisions since the last meeting.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Briefing Papers circulated since the last meeting</b>	
08/11/22	<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"> <li>• Virtual Resident Panel</li> <li>• Resident Scrutiny</li> <li>• PEMB (Pembroke Estate Management Board) projects and progress of governance review recommendation implementation</li> </ul> <p>There were no questions raised by Committee members on the briefing papers in advance of the meeting.</p>	
09/11/22	<i>GS joined the meeting at 10:16am</i>	
<b>9</b>	<b>Damp and Condensation Policy</b>	
10/11/22	TP, Policy and Performance Manager, and AW, Area Repairs Manager, presented the Damp and Condensation Policy to the Committee for approval.	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

	<p>In response to the Housing Ombudsman’s report, ‘Spotlight on Damp and Mould’ October 2021, PCH formed a cross-organisational project group who concluded that a standalone policy was required. The policy would set out PCH’s commitment and response, so that tenants can be clear on what can be expected from PCH should their home experience damp or condensation.</p> <p>A focus group was held with tenants and a direct survey, which engaged over 200 respondents, was conducted. The feedback was used to create the draft policy reflecting tenants’ experience and expectations. Further consultation was undertaken with the draft policy, particularly with those who had engaged early on, but also with staff, wider PCH residents, and PCH’s partner Livewell.</p> <p>An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken regarding the draft policy and no negative impacts were identified. The assessment concluded that the policy had either positive or neutral impacts for groups within the protected characteristics.</p> <p>The policy has been drafted to capture the aims and objectives of PCH’s approach. These detail the responsibilities of both tenants and PCH, as the landlord, in a partnership. The policy states that PCH will respond to all reports of damp using appropriate remedies where it is reasonable and practicable to do so.</p> <p>Part of meeting the Housing Ombudsman’s recommendations, new procedures have been developed and have commenced from September 2022 ahead of the colder weather in the Autumn. Additionally, staff have been provided with specific training and both internal and external information has been made available, including a new leaflet and animated videos.</p> <p>Raising awareness and publicity will take place following approval of the policy and will link to the PCH Winter Ready campaign.</p>	
11/11/22	<p><b>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</b></p> <p>A Committee member raised that when recently reporting damp and condensation through the MyPCH Portal and using key words as requested, a Repairs Operative attended rather than a Repairs Supervisor. It was confirmed that all reports of damp and condensation should result in an inspection being raised immediately with a Repairs Supervisor. This would be investigated and resolved to prevent further recurrences.</p>	<b>AW</b>
12/11/22	<p>There is an expectation of tenants to keep their home in good condition and to report any issues so that PCH can respond with appropriate help, advice, and remedial works. This is detailed within the Tenancy Agreement that is signed by the tenant. Campaigns to raise tenants’ awareness of seasonal issues that may be experienced along with information on the support available are publicised at relevant times of the year using the website, In Touch Magazine and social media channels.</p>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

13/11/22	The Committee were reminded that there is an ongoing action relating to a review of Tenancy Agreements and Policy which is being monitored. At present these documents are undergoing legal analysis.	
14/11/22	An Equality Impact Assessment was completed and provided to the Committee to provide assurance that the policy is consistent and fair and does not discriminate against anyone based on any relevant characteristics, including those set out in the Equalities Act 2010. There was consideration given to English not being a tenants' first language or disabilities meaning a tenant is unable to read information regarding PCH's approach to damp and condensation. As such PCH will make this policy available in other languages and formats upon request.	
15/11/22	Historic data within the repairs systems in relation to the number of damp and condensation inspections raised and repairs carried out covering the last four years was reviewed to assist with the development of the policy. It is now possible to record additional data within the repairs system which will continue to be captured to analyse the impact of the new procedure since commencing in September 2022. An audit of the new procedure has been scheduled for December 2022 which will highlight any improvements that may be required. The policy and procedure will then continue to be reviewed to ensure it remains as effective and efficient as possible.	
16/11/22	The Customer Focus Committee <b>approved</b> the Damp and Condensation Policy.	
17/11/22	<i>AW and TP left the meeting at 10:27am</i>	
<b>10</b>	<b>CFC Independent Review – Emerging Findings</b>	
18/11/22	<p>JS, Director and LC, Associate Consultant at Campbell Tickell, provided a presentation to the Committee giving an update on the progress of the CFC Independent Review on 'How PCH tackles social housing stigma'.</p> <p>The definition of Social Housing stigma was explained to be 'where a person is unfairly judged or treated differently by others due to being part of a certain group (such as where a person lives, if a person receives benefits, how the person looks). Because of this, people who experience stigma may be denied opportunities and feel disrespected by others.'</p> <p>The presentation detailed, that after conducting surveys, holding focus groups and analysing data, the emerging findings were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Of the 1,320 respondents to the resident survey, 30% (386 people) said they had experienced social housing stigma</li> <li>• The 386 respondents were then asked further questions to establish who had treated them differently, the impact this has had and how they feel about PCH</li> </ul>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
 – No redactions required on this occasion**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The demographics of the 1,320 respondents overall, and the 386 who had experienced social housing stigma, were analysed to establish the area of the city in which they lived, tenure, type of property lived in (including if newly built), members of the household, age, disability and employment status</li> <li>• Of the 386 respondents who experience social housing stigma: 35% live alone and 22% have more than 3 members of their household; 72% are aged between 30-64 years old; 37% are in employment; 40% have a long-term illness or disability and 60% consider themselves to have an invisible disability</li> </ul> <p>Similar consultations have been undertaken on a wider public sector level by other organisations, such as the University of Newcastle and Taroe Trust. Findings from these consultations will be shared with the project team for information.</p> <p>The Regulator of Social Housing’s Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), which Registered Providers must begin collating data with effect from April 2023 for, will include Tenant Perception Surveys to measure how residents feel in their homes.</p> <p>Proposed recommendations for improvement both internally and externally were provided.</p> <p>A draft report will be issued by Campbell Tickell on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2022 which will be reviewed and commented on by PCH. The final report will then be issued by Campbell Tickell ready for presentation to the Committee at its next meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023.</p> <p>The Committee were informed that the Independent Review is a topical subject at present and a leading example within the housing sector.</p>	
19/11/22	<p><b>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</b></p> <p>Of the 1,320 overall survey respondents 49% were recorded as living alone. It was queried how many tenants across all PCH properties are recorded within the housing management system as living alone to establish if the results are representative.</p>	
20/11/22	<p>The internal recommendation of ensuring that the issue of social housing stigma and PCH’s methods to address it are covered in training and coverage of company culture and values for all staff was commended. The importance of raising staff awareness of social housing stigma continually, with staff being empowered to challenge behaviour at all levels across the organisation was noted. The Committee were informed that a new staff behavioural framework is being developed which could incorporate such recommendations to ensure staff performance supports the culture and values of the organisation.</p>	<b>AP</b>
21/11/22		

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

22/11/22	<p>Further explanation of the statistic, 22% of the 386 (30%) respondents have experienced social housing stigma from PCH staff and 14% from PCH contractors should be included within the report. This could be case studies detailing what was experienced by the resident to obtain a full understanding in order to make meaningful changes. Committee members were informed that some survey respondents provided comprehensive details of the experiences they have had which could be provided.</p> <p>It was confirmed that Committee members and residents, GS and JB form part of the project team created for the review. LP also attends the regular project meetings.</p>	<b>AP</b>
23/11/22	The Customer Focus Committee <b>noted</b> the presentation on the CFC Independent Review – Emerging Findings.	
24/11/22	<i>LC, JS, LPh, AP left the meeting at 11:08am</i>	
<b>11</b>	<b>Asset Management Quarter 2 Performance Update</b>	
25/11/22	<p>NC, Asset Data Manager, presented the Asset Management Quarter 2 Performance Update to the Committee for monitoring.</p> <p>The report summarised the work completed by the Asset Management Team in Quarter 2 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>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All due fire risk assessments (FRA) were completed on time for the Quarter</li> <li>• Architrave project is progressing and on target</li> <li>• Planned maintenance completions at 433 homes</li> <li>• Roof replacements of single dwellings at circa 62</li> <li>• Integration of Delivery &amp; Design Team and Data &amp; Stock Condition Team successfully bedded in and delivering well</li> <li>• Streamlined single asset inbox implemented and successfully administered, improving internal customer communication service</li> <li>• Contract awarded to deliver Wave 1 Social Housing Decarbonisation Funded (SHDF) works for energy improvements at Alcester Close</li> <li>• Planning of the Wave 2 decarbonisation projects are well under way and an application will be ready for mid-November covering 600 properties</li> <li>• Surveying of Barne Barton properties completed for energy improvement solutions. Eligible properties (EPC D or less) to be delivered via Wave 2 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF)</li> <li>• Planned maintenance customer satisfaction 95% for the Quarter</li> </ul> <p>A further breakdown of work, carried out during the Quarter was presented, across each of the teams that contribute to Asset Management: Asset Data &amp; Stock Condition Surveying Team, Design and Delivery Team and the Fire Safety Team. The focus for the individual teams within Asset Management for 2022/23 was also included.</p> <p>It was noted that the draft Asset Management Strategy 2022-27 is scheduled to be presented to the PCH Board on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022.</p>	
26/11/22	<p><b>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</b></p>	
27/11/22	<p>The Committee were informed there are currently 4 vacancies across the teams that contribute to Asset Management. There are also some vacant management positions whose responsibilities span both the Asset Management and Repairs departments. A new Interim Head of Asset Management has been appointed and they will be working with key managers across the department to identify solutions to structure and recruitment.</p> <p>The 600 properties to be included within the Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding - Wave 2 application are a mixture of non-traditional build properties, such as Orlit and British steel frame, that have an EPC Banding D and below. These properties are geographically positioned to maximise funding and enable contracts to deliver consistent work over the next two years. These areas also do not involve leasehold properties as further clarity is being sought on funding for these</p>	



**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

	properties as well as streets with only 4 or 5 properties requiring energy rating improvement.	
28/11/22	The modernisation programme has experienced some delays due to contractors not delivering on design specifications within timeframes. Contractors that were underperforming have been appropriately managed and the three largest projects for this financial year, Notte Street, Boons Place and Alcester Close have now started. To mitigate risk and maintain momentum it has been decided to appoint a wider selection of contractors to spread out the works going forward.	
29/11/22	The Committee reiterated the importance of maintaining a balance between new development and modernisation of existing housing stock to alleviate possible social housing stigma experienced by residents living in older properties.	
30/11/22	The success of the introduction of project contractor Tenant Liaison Officers who support positive engagement with residents was acknowledged.	
31/11/22	The Customer Focus Committee <b>noted</b> the Asset Management Quarter 2 Performance Update.	
32/11/22	<i>NC left the meeting at 11:16am</i>	
<b>12</b>	<b>Digital Customer Communications Update</b>	
33/11/22	<p>MO, Head of Communications and Marketing, presented the Digital Customer Communications Update to the Committee for monitoring.</p> <p>The new Communications Strategy approved by the PCH Board in February 2022 considered how digital resources could be developed and improved for easier use for the maximum number of people, and focused on how the ‘digital by design, access by choice’ aim of PCH could best be delivered.</p> <p>This report provided an update to the Committee about PCH’s performance in Quarter 2 2022-2023 in respect of digital customer communications, as well as an oversight of work underway to grow, develop and improve the digital resources PCH employs. This work aims to improve the organisation’s digital communications for all users, and to enable PCH to engage with customers in ways that are best suited to their needs, abilities and resources.</p> <p>The fifth set of digital communications analytics (Appendix A) were presented for Quarter 2 which showed the number of active MyPCH accounts reached 7,915 by the end of September 2022, an increase of 196 new accounts, which now represents 57% of tenants. This is a step towards the target of 60% of tenants.</p> <p>Other analytics shown for Quarter 2 were:</p>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16,368 rent statement views – this was a decrease in comparison to Quarter 1 however this function continues to remain the most popular of the portal</li> <li>• 4,868 rent payments were made through MyPCH, and 8,159 online payments were made in total from MyPCH and website combined – this is 68% of all payments, showing that the majority of residents continue to choose to make rent payments online rather than over the phone</li> <li>• 728 repairs were reported through MyPCH of the 19,520 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 8% of repairs which has reduced from the previous quarters – 14% in Quarter 4 2021-22 and 10% in Quarter 1 2022-23</li> <li>• There was an increase in customer contact made through digital channels – a combined total of 33% compared to 27% of communications made digitally in the previous quarter.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee were also informed of ongoing and upcoming website enhancements, further development of MyPCH and the progress of the online tenant application portal.</p>	
34/11/22	<p><b>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</b></p> <p>Since writing the report, suppliers for both the website and portal have been selected and it is anticipated that the new services will be available from Spring 2023 as planned. The Digital and IT team are working closely with the Communications team to ensure full functionality of the new services.</p>	
35/11/22	<p>The new portal service will provide MyPCH users the opportunity to book, monitor and cancel a repair as well as track their request from start to finish. There will also be additional functions made available including access for Leaseholders.</p>	
36/11/22	<p>The new website will be user friendly and engaging with the ability for anyone accessing the website to ask questions 24/7 using a chat box facility. It was confirmed that the website will also include the Find my Housing Officer function and a garage section as these design specifications were included within the tender.</p>	
37/11/22	<p>Currently when residents report a repair using the MyPCH portal this generates an email to be sent to the Contact Centre to arrange which is confirmed with a telephone call back to the customer and a letter. It is likely that this is the reason for the decline in repairs reported digitally through the portal this quarter with residents choosing to telephone the Contact Centre instead.</p>	
38/11/22	<p>An email to the Contact Centre is generated as the repairs management system and the MyPCH portal are not integrated due to the high costs this would involve. The new portal service will resolve this, so that potentially a telephone call back is not required, which will also be cost effective.</p>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

39/11/22	It was confirmed that when evaluating suppliers for the new portal and website future-proofing was assessed to enable new functionality to be built in and new sections added for minimal additional cost in the coming years. It will also be possible to transfer the platforms to a new supplier if necessary, which can be completed quickly with no impact to the organisation.	
40/11/22	The new portal suppliers currently provide the housing management system to PCH. This supplier was selected as the systems can be integrated to provide a more streamlined service for both residents and PCH, and it aligns with the Digital and IT Strategy in respect of minimising the use of different suppliers. A full consultation process will be initiated with residents, staff and Board members, like with the website, to seek views on the new services and to ensure the functionality offered is optimised to simplify processes.	
41/11/22	It was confirmed that regular feedback will be sought from residents and staff to establish the efficiency and effectiveness of the new services and if any improvements are necessary.	
42/11/22	A campaign took place for 3 weeks on Facebook, with digital marketing (paid-for promoted posts), to target users with postcodes in Plymouth where there were PCH properties and lower numbers of residents signed up to MyPCH. This was a minimal campaign as the MyPCH Portal is not yet fully operational. When the new portal is available there will be a larger campaign which will include promotional events in the community to encourage sign up.	
43/11/22	The Customer Focus Committee <b>noted</b> the Digital Customer Communications Update.	
44/11/22	<i>DR left the meeting at 11:30am</i>	
<b>13</b>	<b>Performance Update</b>	
45/11/22	<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 30<sup>th</sup> September 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"> <li>14,776 repairs were completed during Quarter 2 of which 10,316 were completed in time, with 640 out of time. Year to date emergency repairs</li> </ul>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

	<p>completed in time is 8,576 (97.52%) and routine repairs completed in time is 11,297 (90.70%).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of properties without a valid gas safety certificate at the end of September 2022 is two outstanding both of which are with our legal team awaiting court orders.</li> <li>• The current rent arrears performance for September 2022 was within target at 1.85%. This is alongside only one eviction for rent arrears in the quarter (two in total in the year so far).</li> <li>• As at the end of September 2022, the number of tenants claiming Universal Credit (UC) was 4,928, an increase of 188 over the quarter. The Financial Inclusion Officers had 104 active cases open.</li> <li>• The average routine re-letting time for the Quarter was 36.54 days which is considerably lower than 2021/2022 average of 43.15 days.</li> </ul> <p>Previously the Performance Update report included a section on Landlord and Resident Health and Safety performance. This has now been replaced with how PCH is performing against the Regulator of Social Housing’s new Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) which were proposed in the Social Housing White Paper. The TSMs consist of Tenant Perception Measures, Complaints and ASB Measures and Building Safety Measures.</p>	
46/11/22	<p><b>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</b></p> <p>A full 12 months of data showing how PCH is performing against the finalised TSMs is now available. Registered Providers will be required to submit their results to the Regulator of Social Housing from April 2024 using data collected from 2023-24.</p>	
47/11/22	<p>Satisfaction results have decreased slightly since the last tenant satisfaction surveys were conducted in 2018 however, PCH are still within the top or second quartiles when benchmarking against other Registered Providers.</p>	
48/11/22	<p>The Tenant Perception (TP) Measures are collected by telephone surveys undertaken on our behalf by an independent company called Acuity. Should a resident answer that they are dissatisfied they will be contacted, if they have confirmed within the survey that they are happy for PCH to do so, to obtain further insight as to why. The information gathered is now being reviewed by a project team formed between Communities and Strategy, Policy and Performance. A breakdown of the dissatisfied residents’ demographics and samples of the feedback provided was requested to be included within the next report.</p>	<b>CE</b>
49/11/22	<p>The calculation for the Legionella TSM contains both communal and individual property risk assessments. At present the measure has a low score of 78.44% in September 2022 which is a result of a data error within the housing management system. The Digital and IT team are resolving this in time for when reporting of TSM results to the Regulator is required.</p>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

50/11/22	It was confirmed that PCH are part of the NHF commitment that all members would not evict or take legal proceedings against anyone has rent arrears. This is applicable to residents who work with their social housing landlord to reduce rent arrears. However, occasionally some residents refuse to pay rent and do not wish to engage with the advice and support offered by their landlord which forces the eviction procedure to commence. Additionally, as the courts are reopening following the pandemic the backlog of eviction cases are now being presented providing higher eviction numbers than normal. Assurance was given that there is no change to PCH's approach in supporting residents in financial hardship and PCH remain one of the top social housing providers with the lowest number of evictions. PCH are also in partnership with Shelter to maintain minimal evictions and provide as much support to residents as possible.	Liz Phillips
51/11/22	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 is so the Committee can understand the steps that PCH go through before reaching eviction.	
52/11/22	In August 2022, there was an issue with part of the rent collection system resulting in August's payment information becoming amalgamated with September's which meant a separate value for August (Current tenant rent arrears as a percentage of annual rent debit) could not be provided. The Committee were assured that this does not present a risk as reporting can still be undertaken for the quarter as a whole.	
53/11/22	The Customer Focus Committee <b>noted</b> the Performance Update report.	
54/11/22	<i>CE left the meeting at 11:49am</i>	
<b>14</b>	<b>Complaints Report</b>	
55/11/22	<p>LJ, Customer Experience Manager, presented the Complaints Report covering performance information for the period July to September 2022 (Quarter 2), to the Committee for monitoring.</p> <p>The Quarter 2 figures show an increase from the previous volumes recorded in Quarter 2 2021/22 and in the same Quarter of 2020/21. The three top highest grossing complaint categories were: Repairs, Contractors – Staff/Work and Various – Cross Departmental.</p> <p>This Quarter, there were 4 complaints escalated to Stage 2. From these complaints, 1 was 'upheld', 1 was 'partially upheld' and 2 were 'not upheld'.</p> <p>There were two complaints escalated to Stage 3 in Quarter 2.</p> <p>The report also included performance information tables, which displayed comparisons of 2022/23 to the previous 2 years, in the following complaint areas:</p>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
 – No redactions required on this occasion**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of upheld, not upheld and partially upheld complaints</li> <li>• The number of complaints closed within 5 days</li> <li>• The number of complaints outside of response timescales</li> <li>• The number of holding letters sent</li> <li>• Complaint source, age and gender of complainants</li> <li>• Housing Ombudsman Enquiries</li> <li>• MP Enquiries</li> <li>• Councillor Enquiries</li> </ul> <p>Complaint training continues to be delivered to all staff, with the focus and message being tailored with real examples, to show the link between the PCH Complaint Policy and the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Code. There is also a key element of considering the learning and outcomes of complaints, and how improvements can be made as a result.</p> <p>Each month all ‘upheld’ and ‘partially upheld’ complaints are reviewed in greater detail to identify what changes have been implemented following the feedback. This is to ensure data is captured for the annual report which is now a requirement to be shared with residents.</p> <p>An article has been written by the Communications team for the ‘In Touch’ magazine informing residents of complaint volumes and some of the lessons learnt which were reported to the Committee in the last annual report. This will also be followed up with an internal communication for staff, sharing some of the positive comments received after completing the customer satisfaction surveys on closed complaints from residents.</p>	
56/11/22	<p><b>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</b></p> <p>The Committee were assured that the lessons learnt from each complaint raised are examined to prevent recurrences in the future. One of the top highest grossing complaint areas for the Quarter was Contractors and, in this instance, feedback is provided to the Contractor through the relevant Contracts Supervisor.</p>	
57/11/22	<p>It was understandable that departments such as Repairs would receive a higher volume of complaints than departments that do not regularly interact with customers. The higher volumes could also be attributable to new staff members in particular areas of the organisation that have a higher staff turnover. Complaint volumes are presented and explained within the Complaint Training which is being delivered to all staff, and complaints and lessons learnt relevant to each department are reviewed at team meetings so improvements can be made.</p>	
58/11/22	<p>Board Members are required to attend Stage 3 complaint meetings to review the complaint and assist with reaching a resolution. For the Quarter, there were 2 complaints escalated to Stage 3 which is an increase from Quarter 1 (0 complaints).</p>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

	<p>It was confirmed that training is being developed for all Board Members to attend which will provide an overview of the complete complaint process including what to expect at a Stage 3 complaint meeting, information on the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Code and involvement of the Regulator of Social Housing. Board Members are also to be involved in the production of final complaint letters providing a resolution to the customer therefore this element will be included within the training.</p>	
59/11/22	<p>The report explained that a resident has provided notification that they will be progressing their Stage 3 complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. To date, PCH have not been contacted by the Housing Ombudsman.</p>	
60/11/22	<p>The importance of recording customer complaints was acknowledged as this presents the organisation with an opportunity to learn lessons and improve. The introduction of the new Complaint Code has seen an increase in the number of complaints being raised generally, including the Housing Ombudsman themselves who are currently experiencing backlogs.</p>	
61/11/22	<p>The Customer Focus Committee <b>noted</b> the Complaints Report.</p>	
<b>15</b>	<b>Complaint Follow Up Report</b>	
62/11/22	<p>LJ, Customer Experience Manager, presented the Complaint Follow Up Report covering performance information for the period July to September 2022 (Quarter 2), to the Committee for monitoring.</p> <p>In Quarter 2, after filtering out 46 ineligible complaints of the original 100 complaints raised, 54 complainants were contacted to complete the survey. This equates to 54% of the total number of 'closed' complaint cases recorded. Overall, 31 customers completed the survey which is 31% if the original sample.</p> <p>Quarter 2 has recorded an increase from Quarter 1 2022/23 in some areas of the customer satisfaction survey.</p> <p>A detailed breakdown of responses received to each question of the customer satisfaction survey was provided within the report. All negative responses were investigated with the findings also presented. Feedback is given to relevant members of staff to ensure complaints continue to be completed effectively and efficiently.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction surveys are conducted over the telephone and through postal surveys. Throughout Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 2022/23, a third phone call has been attempted when the resident cannot be reached after two calls, rather than sending postal surveys, to see if this would prompt a better response rate. Since the third call attempt has provided a slightly higher success rate than the Postal Surveys, 3 phone calls will continue to be attempted for each complaint case going forward. The 3 calls will be made on different days of the week and at different</p>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

	times to try and maximise the response rate. If there is no response after the third phone call, a paper survey will be sent through the post.	
63/11/22	<b>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</b>  Of the 31 completed customer surveys for the Quarter, 2 negative responses were received to the question, 'Were all of the questions and concerns you raised in your complaint answered?' In one instance, the customer complaint had been resolved however follow on work was required. This was not detailed within the resolution letter sent to the customer and resulted in the customer being contacted to take part in the survey prior to the follow on work being completed. Feedback was provided to the Repairs Supervisor who contacted the resident to provide an update on the follow on work which the resident was happy with.	
64/11/22	The Committee were informed that should a complaint be resolved but follow on work is required, the process is to contact the responsible Repairs Supervisor to confirm completion of any outstanding works before asking the customer to take part in the satisfaction survey.	
65/11/22	The other instance was in relation to information on the installation of a gas meter which PCH could not provide as it would be recorded by the relevant energy company. The customer was informed of this in the complaint response letter.	
66/11/22	The Customer Focus Committee <b>noted</b> the Complaint Follow Up Report.	
<b>16</b>	<b>Compliments Report</b>	
67/11/22	LJ, Customer Experience Manager, presented the Compliments Report, covering performance information for the period July to September 2022 (Quarter 2), to the Committee for monitoring.  The Quarter 2 figures showed an increase from the previous Quarter 1 figures of 2022/23.  The responsible service areas that received the highest number of compliments for Quarter 2 were Electrical - Staff, Housing Choices - Staff, Repairs – Staff and Tenancy Management – Staff. The report provided further details of some of the compliments made.  For the month of July 2022, a total of 823 positive comments were received from tenants responding to a text survey for repairs carried out in their homes. 662 positive comments were received in August 2022 and 841 in September 2022.  Monthly data volumes of the comments received via the customer satisfaction repair surveys that are sent continue to be provided. The survey responses will show if the resident is satisfied or dissatisfied. If resident feedback is identified as a compliment, this will be recorded and included within this report. Additionally, the	



**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

	<p>comments will be shared with the staff member. Some responses do not have as much detail and are therefore not recorded as a compliment.</p> <p>With the high volumes of compliments that are received, it is important for staff to know that residents take the time to tell us about the service they receive, which is published each month on Jannet.</p>	
68/11/22	<p><b>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</b></p> <p>One compliment in particular within the report was commended, in relation to the empathy a Housing with Support Officer had shown a resident who was experiencing difficulties personally. It was confirmed that the Housing with Support Officers received recognition from management for this.</p>	
69/11/22	<p>The report provided details of compliments received for staff across as many different departments of the organisation as possible. The Committee reinforced the importance of positive feedback to staff from customer compliments as well as the lessons learnt from complaints.</p>	
70/11/22	<p>The Customer Focus Committee <b>noted</b> the Compliments Report.</p>	
<b>17</b>	<p><b>Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment 2022/23</b></p>	
71/11/22	<p>AEJ, Head of Customer Experience and Assurance, presented the Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment 2022/23 to the Committee for information.</p> <p>As part of the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code launched in 2020, landlords must carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with its requirements and subsequently publish the results.</p> <p>Non-compliance could result in the Ombudsman issuing complaint handling failure orders.</p> <p>The Code acts as a guide for residents setting out what they can and should expect from their landlord when they complain. The requirements in the Code also provide residents with information about how to make a complaint and how to progress it through the landlord’s internal complaints procedure.</p> <p>The self-assessment demonstrated how PCH has complied with the Code in 2022. It has been included on the website in line with the requirement by the Housing Ombudsman to publish by the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.</p>	
72/11/22	<p><b>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</b></p> <p>This is the second self-assessment carried out by PCH to confirm compliance with the new Complaint Handling Code. In 2021, the self-assessment involved</p>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

73/11/22	<p>providing data and statistics as evidence of compliance. This year, there was a need for substantially more evidence, commentary and explanation.</p> <p>In section 4.1 of the self-assessment, the Code Requirement states ‘When a complaint is made, it must be acknowledged and logged at stage one of the complaints procedure within five days of receipt.’ It was suggested that when completing the self-assessment in 2023 that complaint acknowledgements being made within two working days, either by telephone or in person is included in this section also. The two working day acknowledgement is mentioned in section 4.2 of the self-assessment for 2022.</p>	
74/11/22	The Customer Focus Committee <b>noted</b> the Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment 2022/23.	
<b>18</b>	<b>Housing Ombudsman Complaint Determination Update</b>	
75/11/22	<p>AEJ, Head of Customer Experience and Assurance, presented the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Determination Update to the Committee for information.</p> <p>The Housing Ombudsman’s approach to investigating and determining complaints is to decide what is fair in all circumstances of the case. This is set out in the Housing Act 1996, and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme.</p> <p>The Ombudsman considers the evidence and looks to see if there has been any maladministration, for example whether the landlord has failed to keep to the law, followed proper procedure, followed good practice, or behaved in a reasonable and competent manner.</p> <p>The report gave an overview of two complaint determinations made in line with the Housing Ombudsman’s Scheme.</p>	
76/11/22	<p><b>As a result of questions and discussions the following was clarified:</b></p> <p>It was noted that since the start of PCH in 2009, no serious maladministration determinations have been received from the Housing Ombudsman.</p>	
77/11/22	It was felt that the two Housing Ombudsman determinations could potentially have been avoided if the responses to the customer had been more conciliatory because whilst both complaints could not be upheld, there were areas that PCH had learnt lessons and could make future improvements. This should have been included in the responses to the customer which the Housing Ombudsman would review.	
78/11/22	The Committee were informed of a new training package called Write Right that has been developed by the Communications Team. This training will be delivered from November 2022 by a member of the Communications Team to small staff groups who are responsible for writing or checking letters. The training will support	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

79/11/22	staff to use appropriate tone and language in their letters and to ensure the content is accurate and fully addresses the customer complaint.	
80/11/22	The quarterly Complaints Report provides the Committee with information on Housing Ombudsman enquiries. However, any future complaint determinations made in line with the Housing Ombudsman Scheme will be reported separately to the Committee going forward and all Housing Ombudsman activity will be included within the annual Customer Services report presented to the Committee every May. Any relevant updates can then be communicated to the Board through the Chair of the Committee.	
81/11/22	One of the determinations was not published by the Housing Ombudsman in the public domain as there was a belief that there was a risk of identification for the resident. In such cases, the determination will be anonymised in order to be reported to the Committee.	
82/11/22	PCH was mentioned in an article published by Inside Housing following the investigation from the Housing Ombudsman, and a statement from the Chief Executive was published in Social Housing providing an explanation.	
	It was explained that as the Housing Ombudsman determinations are published there will be unavoidable publicity. However, negative articles can be balanced with publicised responses from PCH providing an explanation and public apology as well as promoting positive stories in the media.	
83/11/22	The Customer Focus Committee <b>noted</b> the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Determination Update.	
<b>19</b>	<b>Forward Plan</b>	
84/11/22	The Forward Plan was reviewed by the Committee which detailed reports that were due to be presented at meetings in 2023.	
85/11/22	The Customer Focus Committee <b>noted</b> the Forward Plan.	
<b>20</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	
86/11/22	The next Customer Focus Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2023.  Committee members and attendees were thanked for joining the meeting.	
87/11/22	<i>The meeting ended at 12:25pm</i>	

**Redacted Minutes - Some items are redacted as they are confidential or commercially sensitive  
– No redactions required on this occasion**

Name            Lavinia Porfir

Signature        .....

Date             .....

Certified as a true copy .....

Lucy Rickson, Head of Governance

Date             .....