

HOUSING LIAISON BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Housing Liaison Board of the Bolsover District Council held in Committee Room 1, The Arc, Clowne on Monday, 20th April 2026 at 10:30 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Vicky Waplington in the Chair

Tenants:- Mr. Steve Bramley, Mr. Kevin Kavaliunas, Mrs. Doreen Potts and Mrs. Angela Sharpe.

Officers:- Lesley Botham (Customer Service, Standards and Complaints Manager), Victoria Dawson (Assistant Director of Housing Management), Deborah Whallett (Housing Services Manager), Andy Clarke (Head of Property (Repairs and Maintenance), Jordan Kyle (Housing Performance Manager), Alice Willoughby (Customer Standards and Complaints Officer), Jo Wilson (Housing Strategy and Development Officer), Jane Calladine (Tenant Engagement Officer) and Matthew Kerry (Governance and Civic Officer).

Also in attendance at the meeting, observing, was Mr. Graham Scutt.

HLB42-25/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Phil Smith and Ashley Taylor, and Tenants Mrs. Janice Payne and Ms. Jackie Taylor.

HLB43-25/26 MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Steve Bramley and seconded by Mrs. Angela Sharpe

RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Housing Liaison Board held on 27th January 2026 be approved as a true and correct record.

HLB44-25/26 INSPECTION IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Director of Housing Management provided a verbal update to the Group.

The Council was one of the first to be inspected under the new inspection regime and had received a C2 Grading (C1 the highest achievable, C4 the lowest).

The Council had recently met with the Regulator on 4th February 2026 to discuss each individual standard to meet.

The Director of Housing Management, Housing Services Manager and Head of Property (Repairs and Maintenance) had met to discuss the above and the Council's "C1 Journey", but meetings with officers on the ground and tenants would be additionally held.

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A session with tenants was proposed for before the Board's next meeting to discuss specific areas around available performance information and how to make it more accessible.

A Tenant voiced that the Council's website was not user friendly and proved hard to navigate. The Housing Services Manager noted that while the Housing Team had little say over the Council's main website, Housing's own pages were regularly updated / improved and should be reviewed on its own merits.

HLB45-25/26 TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES

The Housing Strategy and Development Officer presented the report to the Board.

The Quarter 4 2025/26 data for the 10 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) was attached at Appendix1.

Performance was generally on track and comparable to Quarter 4 2024/25.

The number of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) cases had been amended for Quarter 1 2025/26 and Quarter 2 2025/26 following a review of data – now lower than previously reported.

Complaint numbers were lower compared with the same period 2024/25, but as the Council's stock figure had decreased the rate would correlate.

Following a change to the data management system, the Council's compliance with the Decent Homes Standard was currently being calculated from revised stock quality analysis.

2025/26's survey had commenced 28th November 2025 – the Council required a minimum 536 valid responses to meet quota which it accomplished – the final figure was 571 valid responses.

The Council had sent 5,027 emails and posted 2,015 paper copies, but the profile responses received were not representative of the Council's stock / tenant profile – the Council would need to apply a weighted calculation to the final figures to generate representative data.

The data attached at Appendix 2 was the final unweighted data. Final analysis was taking place and it was reiterated the submission to the Regulator would be weighted due to the higher number of responses from those in the category 'Housing for older people'.

The Quarter 4 2025/26 data listed as pending was updated at the meeting (e.g., for BS01, "Gas safety checks", 20 properties could not be accessed resulting in a final figure of 99.5%). It was noted the other figures pending had met their targets.

For the TSMs TP01 – TP12 (that represented tenant satisfaction), these would need to be reviewed but would still meet targets.

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Moved by Mrs. Angela Sharpe and seconded by Mrs. Doreen Potts

RESOLVED that: 1) the performance for the Management Information Measures Quarter 4 2025/26 is reviewed and acknowledged (Appendix 1);

2) the approach for the 2025/26 survey be acknowledged; and,

3) the provisional performance for the Perception Measures 2025/26 is acknowledged (Appendix 2).

HLB46-25/26 CUSTOMER SERVICE COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS AND STANDARDS HOUSING AND REPAIRS QUARTER 4 2025/26 & ANNUAL SUMMARY

The Customer Standards and Complaints Officer presented the report to the Board.

20 Compliments had been received in Quarter 4 2025/26 (1st January 2026 to 31st March 2026) – Housing Repairs and Maintenance) had received the most Compliments, followed by Housing Allocations.

As shown throughout 2025/26, whilst Housing Repairs and Maintenance had also featured under Complaints, a tenant's personal experience of the service appeared to influence their bias in their response to the Council.

Compliments for Housing Repairs and Maintenance involved:

- Friendly, polite and approachable behaviour from operatives;
- Professionalism consistently demonstrated;
- Operatives going above and beyond to support residents / delivering excellent work;
- Clear explanations and helpful communication;
- Clean and tidy working practices;
- Care taken with customers' homes and belongings; and,
- Positive experiences across multiple operatives and repairs.

Compliment themes for Housing Allocations included:

- Exceptional or outstanding service;
- Professionalism;
- Support provided during stressful or difficult situations; and,
- Kind, caring and supportive behaviour.

5 Comments had been received in the same period – 100% were acknowledged and passed to their respective department within the target time of 5 working days.

Comments were split equally between Housing Repairs and Maintenance, Property Services and Tenancy Management – no themes could be derived from this data.

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4 M.P. Enquiries had been received in the same period. It was believed information provided to the M.P.'s Office had led to a reduction in M.P. Enquiries overall as constituents were being appropriately advised of the action required (and dealt with) through other Council processes (i.e. as a service request / first enquiry).

Enquires were split equally between Housing Allocations, Housing Options, Housing Repairs and Maintenance, and Tenancy Management – no themes could be derived from this data.

18 Stage 1 Complaints were recorded in the same period, with 100% responded to within the Council's customer standard and the Housing Ombudsman Code of 10 working days

Housing Repairs and Maintenance had received the most Stage 1 Complaints, followed by Grounds Maintenance and Housing Allocations.

Complaint themes for Housing Repairs and Maintenance included:

- Dissatisfaction with repair work;
- Delays and outstanding repairs;
- Poor communication about repairs;
- Reports of damp and mould;
- Concerns about overall property condition.

For Housing Allocations, most Complaints related to the handling of housing cases / applications when instances of damp and mould were present. Grounds Maintenance themes included overgrown / poorly maintained areas and a lack of action to tackle issues.

3 Stage 2 Complaints were recorded in the same period, with all responded to within the Council's customer service standard and the Housing Ombudsman Code of 20 working days.

Most Stage 2 Complaints were for Housing Repairs and Maintenance, with the only themes derived related to damp and mould and housing applications to relocate.

No Ombudsman Complaints were reviewed during this period.

Service improvements included:

1. Going forward, staff would ensure that if a call needed to be terminated, the caller was clearly informed of the reason and was given a warning before the call ended;
2. In the future, the Repairs Admin team would liaise with the Finance department to ensure a cancellation invoice was sent from either department; and,
3. The Street Scene Co-ordinator had added a shrubbed area of the communal garden to their maintenance schedules to ensure work was carried out annually.

The Council would continue reviewing the data at the Department Service Reviews to explore themes and discuss any improvements which might not have been reported.

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Most Compliments were made via telephone, followed by post. Stage 1 Complaints were mostly made via email followed by telephone, while Stage 2 Complaints were only made via email.

Analysis of method of contact over the past year had shown a shift to telephone / email over the more long-standing use of post / letter.

It was found that tenants had submitted 100% of the Compliments, Comments, Complaints and M.P. Enquiries for Quarter 4 2025/26, with no submissions received from residents – a result from a change in reporting practice introduced at the start of 2025/26.

It was noted only tenancy-related cases would now be included to align the Council's reporting with Housing Ombudsman expectations – non-tenancy housing enquiries or wider resident contact would be counted in the dataset.

Quarter 4 2025/26 data showed a slight reduction in overall customer contact compared with Quarter 4 2024/25, with small decreases across all categories – overall the dataset indicated a stable pattern of engagement, with a marginally lower volume of customer interactions while maintaining consistent service trends.

Customer contact remained broadly consistent across all Quarters of 2025/26 – further details were provided in the report.

It was noted Quarter 4 2025/26 Compliment themes for Housing Repairs and Maintenance and Housing Allocations were consistent with Quarters 1 – 3 of 2025/26: professionalism, helpfulness, communication, and positive customer experience.

Complaint themes in Quarter 4 2025/26 were also consistent with Quarters 1 – 3 of 2025/26, particularly for Housing Repairs and Maintenance: delays, communication concerns, damp and mould, and repair quality.

Examples of Compliments and Complaints were detailed in the report.

The Board was additionally informed that on the 19th March 2026, the Council had received its first policy review from the Housing Ombudsman – 9 recommendations had been identified.

The Housing Ombudsman would review the Council's response to recommendations through the next annual submission deadline – 30th September 2026.

Examples included:

1. For the Policy to be clearer so that if the landlord decided not to accept a Complaint, the resident would be informed of their right to take the decision to the Ombudsman;
2. For the Policy to be clearer that when a Complaint response would fall outside of extended timescales, the landlord would agree suitable intervals with the resident for being updated on their complaint; and,
3. Ensure exclusions were fair and reasonable and consider additional wording around the outcome of HR involvement not being shared.

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A Tenant reiterated a recommendation from a previous meeting that different representative graphs be utilised to help identify trends between quarters and highlight circumstances such as Housing Repairs and Maintenance receiving both the most Compliments and Complaints (being a forward facing service). The Customer Service, Standards and Complaints Manager noted this could be reviewed. The Customer Standards and Complaints Officer informed the Senior Repairs Co-Ordinator had stated this might prove difficult but it continued further investigation.

Moved by Mr. Steve Bramley and seconded by Mr. Kevin Kavaliunas

RESOLVED that members of the Board review the overall performance on Compliments, Comments and Complaints handling performance as detailed in the report.

The Customer Service, Standards and Complaints Manager and Customer Standards and Complaints Officer left the meeting at 11:03 hours.

HLB47-25/26 HOUSING KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Housing Strategy and Development Officer presented the report to the Board.

The Council's Plan "The Future 2024 - 2028" had outlined the provision and delivery of essential key services.

The Council's Housing Service had developed a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that showed its contribution to these ambitions. Attached at Appendix 1 was a summary of current performance for 2025/26.

A significant amount of performance related information (Complaints information, the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, the Council's own KPIs, etc.) were produced by the Council's Housing Management Team – the Council wanted to ensure tenants were provided with useful and informative data to ensure accountability.

Following the recent refresh of the Council's website, a specific page for performance information had now been developed – [Our Service Performance](#).

Moving forward, the quarterly performance posters would be included in the [Bolsover Homes Newsletter Tenant Participation](#).

Apologies were expressed for some of the Quarter 4 2025/26 data that had been listed as pending at the time of writing the report. The available figures provided at the meeting included:

1. "Proportion of rent collected as a % of rent due in the financial year" – 96% (above target of 92%);
2. "Percentage of rent lost through LA dwellings becoming vacant (void rent low)" – 2.64% (better than target);
3. "Former tenants arrears as a % of rent due in the financial year" – 2.25% (better than target); and,
4. "Current tenants arrears as a % of rent due in the financial year" – 3.46% (better than target).

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The following data sets that were still pending included:

5. "Allocations – from Dragonfly handover to relet – 14 working days (average)";
10. "Lifeline customers satisfied with the way their alarm call was dealt with – to be measured monthly dip test of 10 calls"; and,
11. "95% falls responded to within 30 minutes".

Later in the meeting, a discussion was held on the performance poster for Contact Centres.

The current Tenant chosen indicators were still found to be meaningful and fit for purpose. However, the following amendments were agreed:

- "Engagement" would be replaced with "Empty Properties" to record rent loss due to vacant dwellings (and the percentage of empty properties at the end of each quarter); and,
- The Council would reword the total number of "Void Properties" to say total number of "Relet Properties".

Furthermore, a new addition on changes to rent collected would also be added.

Moved by Mr. Steve Bramley and seconded by Mrs. Angela Sharpe

RESOLVED that: 1) the performance documented in the attached reports is reviewed and acknowledged; and,

- 2) members review the figures in the Q3 and Q4 performance poster and the above changes made.

HLB48-25/26 COMMUNAL AREAS POLICY AND MOBILITY SCOOTER POLICY REVIEW

The Housing Services Manager provided a verbal update to the Group.

The Board was informed of the Mobility Scooter Policy (the 'Policy') was under review.

A successful meeting to discuss the Policy was held on 9th April 2026 with 6 tenants. Few changes had been made though it was felt tenants should receive more guidance on what was appropriate. Permissions had also been discussed.

For the Communal Areas Policy, it was noted some guidance would be needed on the new food waste caddies – some tenants were keeping these new bins outside their doors in Communal Areas.

HLB49-25/26 UPDATE ON THE TENANT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

The Tenant Engagement Officer presented the report to the Group.

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Details of the current Tenant Engagement Action Plan 2023–2026's progress was attached at Appendix 1 and a track-change document was available online.

Housing Service Standards had been developed and approved at the Board's July 2025 meeting– 3 further service standards had been developed (Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse and Equality, and Diversity and Inclusion).

It was noted 4 locality group session had been arranged during March 2026 and April 2026. It was noted one had been held on an evening, though no tenants had attended.

A joint tenant event with Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council's affiliate Rykneld Homes would be held September 2026 – Tenants of the Board were more than welcome to attend.

The Board was informed the tenants in attendance at the inhouse training provided by Tpas on 26th March 2026 had rated the session as 100% excellent.

The proposed Tenant Engagement Strategy 2026-2029 (the 'Strategy') had been presented to the Board at its January 2026 meeting and the draft Strategy document was circulated at the meeting.

Following the January 2026 meeting, the draft Strategy was shared with tenants through Locality Group sessions to enable review and gather feedback.

Discussions at these sessions had focused on:

- Tenant perceptions of good tenant engagement;
- The importance and value of tenant involvement;
- A brief overview of the history of tenant engagement at Bolsover; and,
- The proposed Tenant Engagement Strategy.

Tenants were asked to identify which existing engagement activities should stop / continue and suggest any new approaches they would like to see introduced.

All tenant feedback and suggestions would be used to develop the Tenant Engagement Action Plan 2026–2029.

All responses would be considered before the final version of the Strategy was presented to the Customer Service Scrutiny Committee and Executive.

Moved by Mrs. Angela Sharpe and seconded by Mr. Kevin Kavaliunas

RESOLVED that: 1) progress against the action plan, as stated, is reviewed and members provide feedback on current activity; and

- 2) members of the Board note tenant feedback on the Proposed Tenant Engagement Strategy.

HLB50-25/26 COMMUNICATIONS

The Tenant Engagement Officer presented the report to the Group.

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The Regulator for Social Housing Consumer Standards had been updated with effect from 1st April 2024 and designed to protect tenants to ensure they received high quality services.

An easy read draft Tenancy Agreement was presented to the Group at its January 2026 meeting. It was a shorter, simplified version of the tenancy agreement with photographs which would assist tenants with additional needs, literacy issues and non-readers to understand the terms of their tenancy agreement (a Polish translated version would also be available).

The final version of the Easy Read Tenancy Agreement was attached at Appendix 1 (a Polish language version was being finished – the second main spoken language in the District).

The Board noted the prohibition on ponds could be updated for tenants to have water features.

Images had been tweaked or updated following tenant feedback – to help better explain what was permitted and what was not.

The Board had approved the introduction of Housing Service Standards at its July 2025 meeting and included:

- General;
- Rent Collection;
- Allocations;
- Tenancy Management;
- Repairs and Maintenance;
- Tenant Involvement;
- Managing your Estate;
- Compliment, Comments and Complaints;
- Performance;

and the Board had agreed 3 additional standards to be introduced:

- Anti-social Behaviour;
- Domestic Abuse; and,
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

These had been drafted and a leaflet produced – attached at Appendix 2.

Some of the specific wording used was discussed.

An additional safe place for vulnerable tenants who sought assistance at Contact Centres could also be provided in circumstances of Domestic Abuse.

The Challenge and Change group were undertaking a review on Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).

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The draft ASB service standard had been written by the Challenge and Change group – attached at Appendix 3 – and would need to be approved at Customer Services Scrutiny Committee on completion of the review.

Once approved the ASB service standard would be included in the Service Standards leaflet.

Moved by Mr. Kevin Kavaliunas and seconded by Mr. Steve Bramley

RESOLVED that: 1) members of the Board note the final version of the Easy Read Tenancy Agreement; and,

- 2) members of the Board confirm their agreement to the 3 additional service standards.

HLB51-25/26 BOLSOVER HOMES - TENANT MAGAZINE AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The Tenant Engagement Officer presented the report to the Group.

A priority of the current Tenant Engagement Strategy was to “*Publish and promote... [the Council's] tenant magazine and encourage tenants to become actively involved in its production*”.

This milestone had been reviewed to be able to involve tenants in the contents / style of the newsletter. To deliver this, a survey on the previous newsletter (issue 11) was created. In March 2026, the survey was sent to 50 tenants who had registered an interest in communications – 13 responses had been received with their findings detailed in the report.

A working group had been established to review and shape the design and content of future newsletter editions.

A new template had been developed and would include the following 8 main sections:

- Contents and Welcome – located on the inside cover, including a welcome article;
- Tenants Talk;
- Influence and Engagement;
- Performance;
- Safety and Quality;
- Newsround;
- Team Spotlight; and,
- Supporting You.

The articles for issue 12, which would be out in May 2026, were detailed in the attached Appendix 1.

It was aimed that a standard format and topics be adopted for future releases.

A tenant representative was also sought to join the working group and help shape and agree the content of future editions.

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It had been agreed to rename the publication to newsletter (from magazine) as this had been preferred by tenants.

Feedback had been received for void properties – if tenants left their properties in a tidy fashion, the Council would be able to bring them to a lettable standard more quickly.

A proposed topic was managing damp and mould under Safety and Quality.

The experience of tenants regarding external contractors was discussed.

Moved by Mr. Kevin Kavaliunas and seconded by Mrs. Angela Sharpe

RESOLVED that: 1) members of the Board review the contents of the report and comments received; and,

2) members of the Board review the contents of the report and comments received.

HLB52-25/26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Board's next meeting was proposed to take place in Committee Room 1, The Arc, Clowne at 10:30 hours on:

- Tuesday, 28th July 2026.

The Chair thanked all those in attendance.

The meeting concluded at 12:23 hours.