

Minutes



Nottingham
City Council

Housing
Services

Housing Assurance Board

Minutes of the meeting held on **4th February** at 1pm,
Committee room, Loxley House.

ATTENDEES

BM- Board Member

Tanaiya Daniel (Chair), Anne Dean (Vice -Chair), Marie Smith (BM), Victor Haven (BM), Kudzai Muganhiri (BM), Bereket Amaha (BM), Jayati Bhattacharjee (BM), Cllr Jay Hayes, Executive Member for Housing, Charlotte McGraw, Strategic Director for Housing, Mark Lowe, Assistant Director for Strategy, Lisa Dawkins, Head of Involvement, Nicola Perkins, Tenant Community Involvement Manager, Siobhan Reilly, Tenant Involvement Project Manager, Members of the Resident Influence Panel, Wayne Smalley, Head of Stock Investment, Andy Shone, Business Improvement and Performance Manager, Darrell Smith, Assistant Director for Property, Paul Spencer, Head of Customer Experience, Neville Murton, Head of Finance, Accountancy and Strategy Resources, Saz Siddique, Assistant Interim Director for Compliance, Tyla Huskinson, Repairs Service Manager/ Access Manager, Amanda Outram, Tenant Involvement Project Manager, Cherrelle Daniel, Tenant Involvement Project Manager.

APOLOGIES

No apologies noted.

Item No.	Item Detail	Actions	Action Completion Date
1	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Attendance and Apologies for Absence Attendance and apologies as noted above</p> <p>No Declaration of interests</p> <p>Previous Minutes and Actions from the meeting held on 27th November</p> <p>The Board were asked to consider their next area for a deep dive scrutiny review and the board has come to an agreement which will be shared in this meeting.</p>		

	<p>The Board requested an update on Total Mobile and as the Project lead is unavailable for the meeting today due to attended a conference, it has been agreed that Jon Peel will attend the meeting in March to provide a verbal update.</p> <p>The board asked for an outline of the process for pre-complaints and how we capture this. And also the complaints process and we have Paul Spencer, Head of Customer Experience here today to present this under item 4.</p> <p>The board requested further details on the Domestic Abuse training and this has been shared with the board by email</p> <p>The board requested performance data for damp and mould cases that fall under Awaab’s law and we have Wayne Smalley, Head of Stock Investment here to present this information under agenda item 3.</p> <p>The board requested details on the how/ when information was communicated to tenants regarding Awaab’s law and this information has now been shared with the board via email.</p>		
2	<p>DRAFT NCC Housing Services, Resident Influence Strategy 2026 – 2029</p> <p>A member of the Resident Panel opened the discussion and outlined the panels input in co-creating the Resident Influence Strategy.</p> <p>The Board commended the work of the Resident Influence Panel.</p> <p>Strategy Name Board members were asked for views on the proposed name “Resident Influence Strategy,” which had been recommended by colleagues and the Resident Influence Panel. Alternative options discussed included “Tenant and Leaseholder Influence Strategy.” Some concern was raised that the term <i>resident</i> could be interpreted broadly by Nottingham citizens who are not tenants or leaseholders. The Board suggested a possible solution was adding a clear strapline to specify that the strategy applies to tenants and leaseholders working with Housing Services. Members noted that the term “resident” is now widely used across the sector and by the Regulator, but further clarification through wording may still be helpful.</p> <p>Content of the Draft Strategy Board members provided feedback on the current draft. Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-creation, whilst the board felt this was absolutely the right approach and commended officers and the Resident Influence Panel for their contributions, 		

shared some concerns that the co-creation work overshadowed the strategy content and lacked enough qualitative and quantitative data to make it a strategy and focused heavily on the co-creation work.

- Some elements that the board expected to see—such as detailed actions, measurable objectives, and clearer “how we will get there” explanations—were not included.
- Officers clarified that these details would sit within a separate SMART Action Plan, which is currently being developed and will be co-created with tenants and colleagues.
- Officers also clarified that the strategy itself is intended to set out the overarching priorities, outcomes and strategic direction, rather than objectives, while the action plan will contain the detailed measurable activity which will be a living document, allowing fluidity.
- The SMART plan will be completed for launch alongside the strategy at the beginning of April, subject to approval.

Part 5 of the Strategy

Board members felt Part 5 appeared too lean and required strengthening. Officers agreed to review and revise this section and bring back proposed changes to the board.

Expectations of the Board

The majority of the Board expressed that:

- The strategy should clearly demonstrate how tenant voice has shaped its development.
- The document currently reads more like a set of statements than a full strategic plan.
- They would like to see more clarity on outcomes, change, and what tenants can expect to see by the end of the strategy period.
- Examples of other housing providers tenant engagement strategies were provided by the board, giving structure from other good-practice examples (such as showing barriers, solutions, existing involvement routes, and achievements so far) would be beneficial.
- Victor Haven expressed that he was in favour of the strategy and felt confident that the action plan would set out the strategic direction and how the objectives will be measured.

Officers explained that many of these elements are already intended for the action plan but acknowledged the feedback that the strategy may need more substance within its main body, and the content intended for the action plan, should be embedded within the strategy document itself. It was acknowledged that the objectives within the strategy align more with aims, and this will be reviewed.

	<p>Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers will revise Section 5. • Further consideration will be given to how much “how we will get there” detail should sit within the strategy vs. the action plan. • The updated strategy will be brought back to the board for further scrutiny. • Once the board is satisfied, the SMART Action Plan will then be completed for final approval. <p>The Board thanked the officers and Resident Influence Panel for attending.</p> <p>ACTION: Boards recommendations to be considered and strategy to return to board for review.</p>	LD	26.3.26
3	<p>Balance Scorecard Performance Data - Update on Damp and Mould cases since the implementation of Awaab’s law – December 2025.</p> <p>Wayne Smalley provided an overview of the performance data for Damp and Mould cases between October and December:</p> <p>Case Volumes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 346 emergency damp and mould cases reported and these are hazards that have to be removed within 24 hours. ○ 1,539 referrals received via the Total Mobile system which come from tenants, NCC staff, operatives and the e-form for reporting cases <p>Total cases received: approx. 1,885.</p> <p>Triage & Surveying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All referrals are triaged to determine whether a survey is required within 10 days or whether it falls out of scope. ○ Of the 10 day targets, it starts from the date the referral is received. ○ A high volume of referrals initially within first 2 months and a very short turnaround with Total Mobile to implement Awaab’s law into the system, created delays - currently at 88% of investigations were completed within target in December. <p>Actions to Improve Performance:</p>		

- Recruitment of **3 triage officers** plus extra administrative support to ensure we hit 10 day targets on our services.
- Almost 50% of cases reported are out of scope and don't meet the criteria under Awaab's law
- Review of referral criteria to reduce cases out of scope or duplicate referrals.
- Additional staff training so teams understand what constitutes an emergency and a significant damp & mould hazard and what falls outside scope.
- Increased use of remote surveys (e.g., photos/videos) to reduce unnecessary visits.

Performance Highlights (up to December) It's important to note this is the first draft of data coming from Total Mobile:

- 100% Emergency repairs investigated within 24 hours and hazards removed
- 88% of significant hazard investigations completed within 10 working days.
- 100% written findings issued within 3 working days of investigation
- 100% remedial works started within 5 working days of an investigation
- 100% Cases requiring works within **12 week period**, with some additional work still needed to complete all jobs.

Operational Improvements:

Training and e-learning rolled out to all staff. A single system now holds all damp & mould data, including before/after photos. Automated letters and specifications are issued immediately after surveys. The use of temporary "mould wipes" treatment continues to prevent further spread while full works are arranged, but these do not replace the need for proper investigation and repair where criteria are met. Triage officers recruited to make sure we are reaching 100% targets and improve process. All referrals coming across NCC Housing services which shows a pro-active approach.

Future Improvements:

A Full end-to-end audit of the process by March ready for Phase 2. Plans to reduce out-of-scope referrals through clearer communication and guidance for staff. An Increase in remote surveying - through video triaging avoiding unnecessary visits and continued cross-team and contractor involvement to ensure all hazards are identified and addressed consistently.

	<p>Bereket asked about the impact on resources for responsive repairs. It was explained that internal operatives continue to focus on day-to-day repairs, while damp and mould cases are handled by an external contractor. Stock condition surveys have also identified affected properties, allowing a proactive approach ahead of Awaab's Law.</p> <p>He also queried barriers for tenants reporting issues. It was noted that many cases are now identified by staff, reducing reliance on tenant self-reporting, and that all letters are reviewed by Communications to make them jargon-free and inclusive.</p> <p>ACTION: An example of an automated letter sent out to tenants to be shared with the board</p>	WS	26.3.26
4	<p>Tenant Satisfaction Measures Q3 update 25-26. Overview on the Complaints process.</p> <p>The Board received the Q3 Tenant Satisfaction Measures report, which shows that overall tenant satisfaction has increased to 65%, the highest level recorded since TSM reporting began. Strong performance continues in key areas such as being treated fairly and with respect (79%), being kept informed (76%), feeling safe at home (75%), and satisfaction with repairs over the last 12 months (71%). Despite these improvements, the report highlights persistent challenges. Complaints handling remains the lowest-rated area at 32%, showing a further decline this quarter, and satisfaction with how the Council listens and acts on tenant views remains comparatively low at 55%, although this has improved since Q2.</p> <p>Repairs performance has shown notable progress, particularly in the time taken to complete repairs, which has increased by 11 percentage points. Tenant feedback remains mixed, with positive comments about prompt emergency repairs and staff professionalism, but ongoing concerns about delays for routine repairs, lack of follow-up, and issues such as mould and incomplete works.</p> <p>Neighbourhood satisfaction has risen to 63%, but tenants continue to report issues around cleanliness, fly-tipping, and safety, alongside mixed views about the visibility and responsiveness of the Council.</p> <p>The approach to ASB remains broadly stable at 62%, in line with the national median. Sentiment analysis continues to show a negative overall tone, driven mainly by frustrations with repairs delays and complaints handling.</p> <p>The report also notes that tenants experiencing significant cost-of-living pressures are consistently less satisfied across most service areas. Overall, nine out of twelve TSM measures improved this quarter, indicating positive momentum, but the areas of complaints handling,</p>		

	<p>communication, and proactive maintenance continue to require focused improvement.</p> <p>The board welcomed the report and information provided.</p> <p>The Board formally confirmed they would like to commission a deep-dive scrutiny review of the Complaints service. They also requested to be involved in shaping the initial scoping brief to determine the specific areas that the review will focus on.”</p> <p>ACTION: Initial meeting to be arranged with the board and the Performance team to discuss the review.</p>	CD	26.3.26
5	<p>Update on Voids</p> <p>The board received an update on current Voids performance. In August, there were 739 properties requiring works, with some having been empty for up to five years. A decision was taken at that time to return every property to stock, recognising that housing demand in the city is amongst the highest in the country.</p> <p>As of today, the number of properties awaiting works has reduced significantly to 369. A further 220 properties are currently with the Allocations Team, with homeless families prioritised for allocation.</p> <p>Cllr Hayes and the Scrutiny Committee have committed to continuing the high level of financial investment into voids for the next financial year. The current target is to achieve a zero backlog by August 2026.</p> <p>Performance improvements have been driven by ensuring that, each week, more void properties are completed than new ones coming in. This has now been achieved consistently for 26 weeks, putting the service on track to meet the August target if this trajectory continues.</p> <p>The average cost of void repairs has increased over the last two years from £5,000 to £7,500, due to inflation and the increasingly poor condition of properties being returned. Over £1 million has been spent on clearing and returning properties to let, with some individual cases requiring significant investment.</p> <p>Concerns had previously been raised regarding subcontractor performance. These issues have now been addressed, and subcontractors are currently delivering around 10 completed properties per week.</p> <p>The Board commended the significant progress and welcomed the positive trajectory. Cllr Hayes emphasised the importance of this work, noting the savings that will be achieved by reducing reliance on temporary accommodation and hotels, as well as the wider benefits for families securing settled housing and enabling resources to be reinvested into improving services.</p>		

6

Housing Revenue Account, Budget Setting and Rent Convergence Report (Information Item)

The Strategic Director of Housing and the Head of Finance provided an overview of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the proposed budget for 2026/27. The HRA was explained as a ring-fenced account funded by tenant rents and legally restricted to activities relating to the management, maintenance, and investment of council housing. It cannot be used for General Fund activities such as homelessness, adult social care, or services not primarily for tenants.

Key pressures on the HRA were highlighted, including rising maintenance costs, compliance requirements (damp and mould, fire safety, decarbonisation), the voids backlog, an ageing tenant demographic, reduced income from Right to Buy, and wider cost-of-living impacts.

The presentation outlined the distinction between revenue (day-to-day service delivery) and capital budgets (long-term investment such as new homes, major works, and safety works).

Budget Proposals for 2026/27

- Rent increases follow the national rent standard: CPI + 1%, equating to 4.8% for 2026/27.
- A 5% increase is proposed for garage rents.
- Service charges will rise by 3.8%, with a full review of charges planned for 2026.

Investment/ Revenue Growth:

- £9.5m over four years to tackle disrepair including damp and mould, with £2.6m ongoing annually.
- £0.65m one-off funding in 2026/27 to accelerate voids work.
- £0.9m ongoing for compliance monitoring.

Capital programme:

Total investment of £334m to 2030, including:

- £15m for new council homes.
- £12m for chimney and roof replacements.
- £10.6m for major voids works.
- £6m for environmental improvements.
- £6.7m for rewiring programmes.
- £5.6m for disabled adaptations.

Other Government Announcements

	<p>The government confirmed upcoming rent convergence changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From April 2027, properties below target rent may increase by an additional £1 per week. • From April 2028, this rises to £2 per week, both on top of CPI + 1%. <p>The Board thanked the Strategic Director for Housing and Head of Finance for the presentation given.</p>		
7	<p>Housing Services Access Policy (Information Item)</p> <p>Officers provided an update on the new Access Policy.</p> <p>The Access Policy sets out the organisation’s approach, to gaining access to properties for essential statutory compliance and safety checks (e.g., gas, electrical, and other statutory obligations). The process itself has already been implemented. The policy is heavily aligned with the Vulnerable Persons policy, approved last year and ensures we are fully compliant with regulatory requirements.</p> <p>The Access Team has been created in response to long-standing difficulties in gaining entry to properties, where other processes have been exhausted, which previously caused delays for repairs and compliance checks. The new process introduces a clear, structured framework with two core elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Early engagement and support – officers will work with tenants, support agencies, tenancy sustainment teams, and patch managers to understand any underlying issues and offer appropriate support. 2. A defined escalation route – where engagement does not lead to access, a clear end-to-end process is now in place, including soft checks, vulnerability assessments, multi-agency involvement where appropriate, and ultimately legal action if required (e.g., injunctions). <p>Officers emphasised that the priority is resident safety, ensuring essential checks can be completed, particularly in blocks of flats. The new process strengthens vulnerability assessments and will link into a wider organisational project reviewing how information about vulnerable tenants</p>		

	<p>is collected, shared, and stored consistently across services. This includes work with Adult Social Care, Children’s Services, and other partners, ensuring data sharing complies with all relevant council data protection policies.</p> <p>Work is also underway to ensure that supporting systems (e.g., repairs and tenancy management systems) are aligned so that all relevant teams can view the same access-related information. This will enable more consistent decision-making and better safeguarding responses.</p> <p>Overall, the purpose of the new Access Policy and team is to create a safer, more coordinated, and consistent approach to gaining access, ensuring compliance checks can be completed while offering appropriate support to residents.</p> <p>The Board welcomed the policy and the overall approach taken. They asked how the process will be monitored to ensure that any interventions remain proportionate and sensitive to tenants’ circumstances. It was explained that an Equality Impact Statement will be applied throughout the process, and that once a case reaches the injunction stage, a full and detailed proportionality assessment will be completed. Soft checks will take place at the outset, and the approach will be gradual; by the time a case reaches the Access Team, they will have a thorough understanding of the tenant’s profile and provide the right support.</p>		
8	<p>AOB</p> <p>Update on the recruitment for the board.</p> <p>Recruitment is underway, closing date for applications has been extended to 15th February, with shortlisting to take place at the end of February.</p>		