

Minutes of: HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

Date of Meeting: 28 July 2026

Present: Councillor A Arif (in the Chair)
Councillors D Green, B Ibrahim, E FitzGerald, J Roith and
M Walsh

Also in attendance: Kate Waterhouse, Executive Director (Strategy & Transformation), Boe Haslam, Head of Housing Property, Kimberley Partridge, Head of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, Claire Rogan, Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement, Kimberley Ryan-Dooner, Tenant Engagement Manager, Jackie Summerscales, Strategic Housing Manager. Jo Brown, Vice Chair, Springs TMO, Ella Crookes, Independent Member, Bryan Simpson, Independent Member and Rachel Everitt, Democratic Services

Public Attendance: No members of the public were present at the meeting.

The Chair advised members that the Regulator for Social Housing Team were observing the meeting today as part of the inspection process.

The Chair also advised members that the tenant recruitment process has been successful and two new members will be joining the Housing Advisory Board.

Training will be provided during August, September and October. The new members will observe the September meeting and formally join the Housing Advisory Board in November.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

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2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest

3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

4 ACTION TRACKER

Members noted the action tracker

5 TENANT ENGAGEMENT AND TENANT VOICE REPORT

The Board received an update from the Tenant Engagement Manager regarding the work of the Tenant Voice Forum. Key areas highlighted included:

- Positive progress continues to be made to strengthen tenant engagement
- Tenant complaint review group met last week and reviewed the current process

Members queried the training involved and was assured that this is being looked into with TPAS. There was also a query around the success of the recent recruitment and how diverse the members are. Members were advised that there are 6-8 tenants who attend with different levels of capability. The Tenant Voice Forum is currently suspended due to not being quorate but once developed, the review group may have some natural progression to the scrutiny panel.

Members noted the report.

6 DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY

The Strategic Housing Manager provided an update on the draft housing strategy highlighting the current context, vision and objectives and how the draft strategy will:

- Reposition town centres for the future
- Support people to live well and independently at home
- Prevent homelessness
- Shape a fair and safe private rented sector
- Create sustainable healthy and thriving neighbourhoods

Members were advised that there will be a consultation on the draft housing strategy with a dedicated website, accessible formats including easy read versions of the strategy. Members were encouraged to share the consultation and draft strategy with residents.

Members queried the contributions up to 2026 and whether the funds have been spent. The Strategic Housing Manager advised that we have 10 years to spend the monies and are monitoring it to ensure it does get spent. Members also queried progress being made towards net zero in our council homes and the Head of Housing Property agreed to bring an item on this back to the board in November.

Members queried the empty homes within the borough and whether they are private or council owned and what collaboration is being done with landlords. Members were advised that around 98% of empty properties are privately owned. The enforcement team are talking to landlords and attempting to find relatives and talking them through the options.

Members questioned whether the council has the capacity to deliver the new homes including the wider teams involved such as planning and were advised that most of the homes will be delivered by private registered providers. The Council

doesn't have the capacity to build properties ourselves so are working with various partners to deliver this ambitious programme.

Members noted the update.

7 ANNUAL COMPLAINT HANDLING REPORT AND SELF ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE COMPLAINT HANDLING CODE

The Head of Performance Improvement and Assurance provided an overview of the complaint handling report between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. This report is being reviewed by tenants who have their own page for listing their identified priorities.

Key highlights include:

- 190 Stage 1 complaints received
- 54 Stage 2 reviews requested
- No complaints were refused
- 71.58% of complaints were resolved at Stage 1, an improvement from 50% in the previous year
- Complaint volumes equate to approximately 25 complaints per 1,000 homes
- 61.13% of Stage 1 complaints were fully or partially upheld
- 53.70% of Stage 2 complaints were fully or partially upheld
- Compliments to the service have increased

Key complaint themes identified were:

- Failure to follow policy.
- Delays in taking action.
- Poor communication and customer service.

Members discussed the report and noted that tenants with disabilities are overrepresented within the complaints figures and whether this means other people who aren't happy with their property are not contacting us. Members were advised that a deeper dive is being carried out including doing roadshows and work on estates.

Members also noted that there were lots of complaints about ASB and whether there were any common areas that were being complained about. Members were advised it was mainly around case management and getting back to residents in a timely way and providing updates. There have been a few cases that have been escalated around noise so the team are reviewing what can be done to soundproof properties from not necessarily intentional noise.

Members noted the report.

8 DECENT HOMES AND STOCK CONDITION ASSURANCE

The Head of Property Housing provided an update on the report highlighting:

- Process for reporting issues has been revised
- Training has been put in place for stock condition surveyors
- Shift away from the monthly reactive process as it fails to provide a full view of DHS fails at the start of the new financial year, it is more reactive and is less efficient planning wise.
- Improved stock condition survey offer this year including a new booking system for tenants to book their survey

Members queried the poor condition of some returned properties and what can be done to improve this moving forwards. Members were advised that we are increasing tenancy visits to allow us to review properties, monthly walkabouts are taking place where we can be proactive about messy gardens, closed curtains. The team are also increasing their termination visits to view the property before the tenancy ends.

Members raised concerns about what happens when properties are identified as being of a low standard and whether there was enough budget to manage this. Members were advised that when properties that need work are identified, housing colleagues will provide additional support. Urgent repairs will be passed to the team and any whole house repairs added to the programme.

Members noted the report

9 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement provided an overview of the report highlighting:

- Q1 results indicate that Bury's overall tenant satisfaction remains below both organisational targets and the Housemark benchmarking median.
- The team is behind in the delivery of surveys required in 2026/27 due to capacity but should be able to make up the difference by the end of the year with full recruitment achieved this quarter and temporary agency stock condition surveyor joining the team for 6 months
- Ongoing and planned investment in energy efficiency improvements is expected to increase performance during 2026/27
- Q1 performance remains above target, with average re-let times at 54 days.
- 18 Bury Council-owned and managed properties had an overdue Landlord's Gas Safety Record (LGSR) exceeding the statutory 12-month compliance period. Of the overdue properties:
 - 11 properties are less than one month overdue.
 - 7 properties are between one and four months overdue.
- Arrears as a percentage of rent roll continue to sit below internal targets and sector benchmarks
- Q1 2026/27 routine repairs performance fell to 56.98% from 59.08% in Q4, remaining well below the 90% target due to high demand, aged repairs, capacity constraints, and complex follow-on works.

Members requested more details round repairs and maintenance figures and officers agreed to provide this moving forwards.

Officers also agreed that the Head of Service covering rent performance would be attending the September meeting to update on current performance and provide assurances.

Members noted the report.

10 REPAIRS REVIEW UPDATE

The Head of Repairs and Maintenance provided an overview of the report highlighting:

- Encouraging progress had been made during the quarter
- Recovery actions implemented by the service were beginning to have a positive impact.

Members noted the following performance against targets:

- Emergency repairs completed within target timescales: 98.48% against a target of 100%.
- Repairs completed right first time: 90.01% against a target of 85%, exceeding the target.
- Average appointable repair completion time: 21 days against a target of 20 days.
- Repairs Work in Progress (WIP): 1,585 against a target of 1,500.

The Committee was advised that a number of performance challenges remained, including:

- Non-emergency repairs completed within target timescales stood at 57%, against a target of 90%.
- Overdue repairs within the Work in Progress backlog remained high at 39.62%, compared to a target of 5%.

Members were advised that work was continuing to prepare for the implementation of Awaab's Law, including the introduction of improved systems to support compliance and case management.

Members were also advised that:

- Customer communications were improving.
- A new platform was being introduced to enhance customer engagement.
- The service had achieved a full complement of back-office staff.
- Further focus was required on the recruitment and retention of operational staff to support service delivery.

Members queried phase two of preparing for Awaab's law and were advised that the senior leadership team are working on plans for implementation to ensure it is a joint effort across all departments using learning from phase 1.

Members queried whether damp and mould was due to overcrowding or the condition of the property. Members were advised that there has been some detailed review of this and that the detail will be shared with members.

Members noted the report.

COUNCILLOR A ARIF
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 7.00 pm)