

Berneslai Homes Customer Services Committee 13th November 2025 – Meeting Summary:

BMBC Contact Centre update – 6 monthly

Committee received a report on Contact Centre performance for June to September 2025, which provided an update on improved performance and improvements that have been made through joint working with Berneslai Homes. Key improvements included a dedicated team approach, with dedicated trained staff dealing with certain lines; introduction of a dedicated damp and mould telephone line and a digital resource tool has been introduced which filters tenants calls to the correctly skilled person. The length of the lead-in message that is delivered before calls are answered by the Contact Centre will be reviewed by Berneslai Homes officers and tenants to consider if this can be shortened.

The Committee were pleased with the Contact Centre improved performance and the improvements that have been made.

Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 2

The July – September 2025 performance information was presented, which informed Committee of Berneslai Homes' performance with a focus on the Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Of the 26 TSM KPIs just under 50% were met or exceeded the target. Key areas of strength were noted in respect of building safety compliance, complaints, complaints responded to in target timescales and the proportion of emergency and non-emergency repairs completed in target. A key area of focus is non-Decent Homes, with information provided on the actions to improve compliance in this area.

The Committee reviewed the Quarter 2 performance report recognising the areas of strength and the actions being taken in key areas to improve performance and were assured on the plans in place to strengthen compliance on non-Decent Homes

Quarterly Complaint Report – Quarter 2

The Committee received a report which summarised the complaint handling and learning for July – September 2025. The reduction in Stage 1 and 2 complaints compared to the same period last year was highlighted noting that the winter months approaching and the implementation of Awaab's Law may impact on future complaint volumes. 97% of Stage 1 complaints and 100% of Stage 2 complaints have been responded to in timescales. Following analysis of 2024/ 25 complaints, an action plan has been developed to further improve complaint handling across the organisation, reduce complaints, improve tenants' experiences and increase overall satisfaction. The Housing Ombudsman Services (HOS) Landlord Performance Report 2024/25 indicates that Berneslai Homes' performance exceeds both national and peer benchmarks. Confirmation and positive feedback has also been received from the HOS regarding the submission of the annual self-assessment with further action is required.

Committee were assured of the continued positive progress in improving the complaint handling service, responding to complaints within timescale and the strengthened governance oversight of complaint handling and learning.

Hearing Tenants – Involvement and Influence Update

The Committee received a report which provided an update as at the end of Quarter 2 (July – September 2025) on how tenants and residents have made their voices heard and influenced policy and service delivery at Berneslai Homes. Committee noted the opportunities for residents to provide feedback through a range of transactional surveys which has demonstrated so far that the organisation is on track to meet their strategic objective of hearing from 50% of tenants annually. Committee noted that further analysis of the transactional surveys will be included in the Quarter 3 report. Three summaries were provided which demonstrated the impact of the tenant voice in terms of actions that have been completed, are ongoing and planned. Over the last quarter the organisation has continued to engage with tenants, residents and leaseholders in a range of ways, delivering positive outcomes and extending the size and diversity of our actively engaged tenants by recruiting 2 more tenants. An update on the key community engagement and development activities for the quarter was provided which included the links made with the Community Shop network, the positive range of activities and ongoing success of Love Where You Live and the launch and success of the revamped damp and mould tenants training course. The positive progress made with Tenant Participation Advisory Service review was noted.

The Committee noted the positive actions to strengthen and respond to the tenant voice, and the updates to be provided in the Quarter 3 report in respect of further analysis of the transactional surveys together with the increase in partnership working and the positive effects on capturing the tenants' voice.

Update from the Building Safety Resident Engagement Panel – 6 monthly

Committee received a presentation which provided an update on the resident engagement panel meetings that have taken place that have focussed on discussions around ongoing bin chutes and bin collection issues; communication with tenants; neighbourhood management; unauthorised parking on match days and managing anti-social behaviour (ASB). A member of the panel has also attended two of the Building Safety Project Board meetings held in June and October 2025. A summary of the building safety works that is taking place at Sheffield Road Tower Blocks was presented together with project indicative timelines.

The Committee noted the update from the Building Safety Resident Engagement Panel.

Awaab's Law Update

Committee received a report which provided information on the work that had taken place in preparation for the implementation of Awaab's Law on the 27th October 2025. There has been a positive start with 100% compliance in respect of the timeframes that have come into force for responding to reports of damp and mould in order to comply with Awaab's Law. In respect of Tenants Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) there are 5 additional Key Performance Indicators to be measured and reported to HouseMark. Data collected will give an insight of comparison with others within the sector which Committee felt would be useful and will be reported on at a future meeting of the Committee. Once final changes have been made to the damp and mould online reporting system, tenants will also be encouraged to update their details including any health related issues. Once this has been rolled out Committee will be kept up to date on progress of this in terms of data currently held and any gaps that have been identified.

The Committee noted the progress and key milestones achieved, including staff training and system refinement and acknowledged the need for ongoing oversight.

Tenant Scrutiny Report – Communal Areas

Committee received a report which gave the findings of the Scrutiny Panel following their assessment of customer satisfaction gathered from direct contact with tenants who pay the service charge for communal areas. The doorstep and postal exercise was undertaken as a result of an identified decrease in customer satisfaction in communal areas. The Action Plan developed with recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel were considered by Committee and a report will be tabled at a future Committee to monitor progress.

The Committee noted the content of the Tenant Scrutiny Report and that an update will be provided on the progress of the Action Plan at a future meeting.

Lettings Policy Review – findings and recommendations

Committee received a report on the insight and analysis of the Lettings Policy following revision of the Policy in April 2024. The review has concluded that the majority of the key principles have been met resulting in a positive impact in delivering and managing the supply and demand for council housing and rehousing those in need. Continued monitoring of the positive impact will be carried out for the remainder of 2025/26 with further analysis being undertaken in early 2026/27 jointly with BMBC to establish if any changes are required to the policy.

The Committee noted the positive impact of the revised Lettings Policy and confirmed they were able to provide assurance to Barnsley Council that that the Lettings Policy is operating in such a way as to meet the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards

Tenant Participation Advisory Services (TPAS) Review of Engagement Structure

Committee received a report which highlighted the positive outcome from the TPAS review together with recommendations. The review had been undertaken by TPAS and involved tenants. The proposed structure, terms of reference and code of conduct were noted together with the communication and recruitment campaign that has been developed for the new Customer Services Committee roles and the tenant engagement opportunities.

The Committee thanked TPAS and involved tenants for their work on the review and endorsed the proposed structure, terms of reference, code of conduct and noted the communication and recruitment campaign. Committee noted that updates on recommendations from the review will be provided at the next meeting.

Any Other Business – Empty Property Gardens

The Committee expressed concern regarding vacant properties where unwanted items are being left in gardens. These items are subsequently being removed by individuals, which has led to incidents of fly tipping. It was agreed that the Head of Neighbourhoods and Sustainability will engage with the relevant member to discuss this matter in further detail.

