

Berneslai Homes Customer Services Committee 14th August 2025 – Meeting Summary:

Governance Update

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the review and approval of the Customer Services Committee (CSC) Terms of Reference by Berneslai Homes Board in May 2025, the recruitment of the new Independent Tenant Committee Members, and how the changes to tenant involvement in Governance will be supported by an independent review of wider strategic tenant engagement to be undertaken by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS). The review by TPAS will consider CSC membership roles, aiming to strengthen customer involvement and diversity with additional customer members joining the Committee. Following the TPAS review, a proactive recruitment campaign will be developed for both governance and tenant engagement roles by November 2025. Committee were advised that as a result of the TPAS review, the Self-Assessment Annual Report normally presented at November CSC will be paused due to the imminent changes in Committee Members.

Committee noted the review of the CSC Terms of Reference and the Independent Tenant Committee Members recruitment update and supported the engagement of TPAS to lead a review of tenant engagement and then develop a proactive recruitment campaign to both governance and tenant engagement roles by November 2025.

Quarterly Performance Report Quarter 1 (April to June)

The Quarterly Performance report was presented and discussed. Of the 38 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), RAG (Red, Amber, Green status), including Tenant Satisfaction Measures, approximately one third of KPIs were green rated, as a result of an improvement in performance compared to last year and targets set being more realistic. The areas of strength and areas for focus were outlined. Improved performance was reported around all compliance areas, rent collection, benchmarking on Tenant Satisfaction Measures and the improvement in staff sickness levels.

The Committee reviewed the Quarter 1 2025/26 performance recognising the areas of strength, areas for improvement and the actions being taken to address these.

Neighbourhood Services Annual Report

The Committee received the Neighbourhood Services Performance Annual Report 2024/25 which provides an update and assurance to the Committee that service delivery aligns with the agreed specification standards of the Service Level Agreement with the Council's Neighbourhood Services. Key areas highlighted from the report were the increased number of void gardens and the plans implemented to help manage and improve this and the issues with fly tipping which is adding pressure to properties being completed in readiness for prospective tenants. Partnership work with the Council is ongoing to address and manage this situation.

The Committee were made aware of surveys that are currently being carried out around communal areas due to lower satisfaction in the annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures perception survey. The Committee were made aware of a restructure within the Independent Living Schemes with officers in new roles who will be more involved in communal areas including standards. Additionally, there will be a handyman role to pick up some services tailored to the scheme.

The Committee were assured that service delivery is in line with the agreed specification standards with opportunities being maximised for involving tenants and people.

Annual Report to Tenants

The Committee received the Annual Report to Tenants 2024/25. The report has been developed with the involvement of an editorial group comprising of 8 tenants and leaseholders who considered key information to be included within the report which ensured the tone and content of the report were suitable and understandable for other tenants and leaseholders. The report will be published on Berneslai Homes' website and promoted through Berneslai Homes' social media channels, bitesize news posts, and the tenants' monthly email newsletter. This will also be received by Berneslai Homes' partners and Elected Members. Committee noted there will be a campaign surrounding the launch of the publication of the Annual Report with a special event planned for October 2025.

The Committee approved the Annual Report for publication in September 2025 and thanked the editorial group of tenants and leaseholders for their positive and constructive feedback.

Quarterly Complaints Handling and Learning Report (April – June 2025 Quarter 1)

The Quarterly Performance for April – June (Quarter 1) information was presented and discussed. An overview was provided on the number of complaints received and accepted during this period noting a decrease compared to the same quarter last year. An area of strength noted was that Berneslai Homes has responded to 97% of Stage 1 complaints and 100% of Stage 2 within the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code timescales.

The Committee were assured of the continued positive progress in improving the complaint handling service, responding to complaints within timescales 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 1 on how tenants and residents have made their voices heard and influenced policy and service delivery at Berneslai Homes. Committee noted that from the scrutiny exercise which Committee Members participated in with tenants, a report will be produced and presented to a future Committee. The ongoing detailed analysis on actions responding to the tenants' voice heard via the transactional and adaptation surveys were discussed noting that the actions rising from these surveys will be included in the Quarter 2 report. 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 and Berneslai Homes' support during June of the "Love where you Live" launch week. The Committee were informed of the work that has commenced with the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) on the review of strategic engagement activities with an update to be provided at the next Committee. Committee noted the continued increase and diversity of tenants signing up to be involved and offer their views together with the positive direction of travel in respect of partnership working and community engagement.

The Committee noted the positive actions to strengthen and respond to the tenant voice, and the updates to be provided in the Quarter 2 report in respect of the action being taken to address the outcomes from the transactional and adaptation surveys and the review of strategic engagement activities with TPAS.

Damp, Mould and Condensation Update

The Committee received a comprehensive presentation on the Damp and Mould Action Plan, which highlighted trends and key actions completed and in progress together with an update on Awaab's Law. Significant preparation work is taking place throughout the organisation in readiness for the implementation of Awaab's Law. Committee were assured of the plans in place for communication to tenants which will include video training, website updates and leaflets.

The Committee noted the updates on damp and mould and were assured that Berneslai Homes will be compliant with Awaab's Law when the legislation comes into force in October 2025.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) Mid Year Results and Actions

The Committee received a report which analysed feedback from tenants who have completed the first round of the survey. The report outlined the key findings, emerging issues. Direction of travel is positive in respect of the actions being implemented to address the issues tenants raised within surveys. The second wave of surveys are scheduled for early autumn, and results will be available in early winter 2025. Once received a report will be presented to Berneslai Homes' Board ahead of submission of annual results to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH).

The Committee noted the mid year TSM results and the assurance provided to maintain good standards moving forward to help improve results.

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.