



**Minutes of Slough Resident Board Performance Meeting**  
**Tuesday 11 February 2025**  
**Online Microsoft Teams Meeting**

**Attendees:**

**Resident Board Present:**

Tim Blanc - Independent Chair (TB)  
Ishaq Fazal (IF)  
Christine Griffin (CG)  
Dinah McGarry (DM)  
Tanieque Noel-George (TNG)  
Trevor Pollard (TP)  
Bushra Raj (BR)  
Dave Shaw (DS)

**Officers: In alphabetical order:**

Debashis Ghosh, Resident Involvement Assistant (DG)  
Sean Hughes, Regulatory Inspection Lead (SH)  
Mohammad Ishtiaq, Customer Service Operations Manager (MI)  
Anita Jan, Resident Involvement & Information Manager (AJ)  
Lisa Keating, Director of Housing (LK)  
Paul Kelly, Councillor (PK)  
Alison Kennedy, Head of Customer Services (AK)  
Adam Minogue, Cardo (AM)  
Ian Stone, Asset Programme Manager (IS)  
Tony Turnbull, Neighbourhood Manager (TS)  
Yamini Velupillai, Inspection Support Officer (Minute Taker - YV)

**Social housing regulator**

Tanya King (TK)  
Jane Medforth (JM)  
Phil Sweet (PS)

Number	Item	Action
<b>1.</b>	<b>Previous Minutes &amp; Action Log Review</b>	
<b>1.0</b>	The Chair welcomed all participants, and attendees introduced themselves.	
<b>1.1.</b>	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed with the consent of all members. It was agreed that the minutes of the current meeting would be recorded with members' consent.	

Number	Item	Action
1.2.	<p>Action log reviewed with four main themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customer journey mapping: AJ reported that while different events will be arranged throughout the year for customer engagement, no concrete planning has been finalised yet</li> <li>Away day – postponed till after the inspection</li> <li>Social value – further discussion with Cardo planned to move forward</li> <li>AOB items: AJ provided an update on recruitment, noting that administrator is in post on a temporary basis. Internal interviews are underway for two Resident Involvement posts.</li> </ul> <p><b>1. ACTION: Regulator to meet with Board members in April.</b>  <i>Note✓ Completed (Meeting scheduled 27 March)</i></p> <p><b>2. ACTION: Annual Board member feedback surveys have been completed - Results to be shared with Board members to ensure continuous improvement based on responses by 30 March 2025.</b></p>	AJ
2.	<b>Directors Priorities and Housing Service Update (LK)</b>	
2.0	<p>LK reported on the significant housing challenges facing Slough:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highest number of homeless outside London with approximately 1,500 homeless as of January</li> <li>669 people in assessment phase</li> <li>3,000 people registered for housing</li> <li>Staff resources have remained the same despite doubled demand over the past two years</li> <li>Approximately 500 people placed in Slough by London Boroughs, putting pressure on the council due to higher rental amounts</li> <li>Approximately 50-60 families currently in temporary accommodation</li> <li>Total of 1,400 people living in temporary accommodation, 145 in B&amp;B</li> <li>Council housing stock of approximately 6,500 homes is insufficient</li> <li>Demand has doubled while subsidy remains below costs</li> </ul> <p>TB enquired about the number of families in TA, to which LK responded that 50-60 families are currently in temporary accommodation.</p> <p>LK highlighted the importance of the need to assess housing assets, right-size the budget, and increase prevention activity. Councillor Kelly is providing good support for resources in this area.</p> <p><b>3. ACTION: Housing Demand – Number of families and children currently in Temporary Accommodation has been provided please advise number of days in TA at the April meeting.</b></p>	MP
2.1.	<p><b>Voids and Allocations</b></p> <p>LK emphasised the importance of making best use of void properties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approximately 40 homes allocated monthly but only 25 sign-ups</li> <li>Many applicants refuse properties</li> <li>75% of offers don't result in a sign-up</li> <li>Refusal reasons include being particular about the property or location being unsuitable</li> <li>Policy is generally one chance only, with exceptions in appropriate circumstances</li> </ul> <p>DS raised a question about excessive charging. LK explained this can happen depending on agreements with landlords, particularly if tenants move out and landlords aren't informed quickly enough. LK advised the teams need to improve recovery processes and monitor charges.</p>	

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	<p>TB asked whether Slough has sufficient void properties with 1/2/3 rooms for housing needs.</p> <p>LK indicated a shortage of larger properties and some of our properties are designed specifically for older people. In some cases we have to rent more than one/two rooms, which increases costs.</p>	
2.2	<p><b>Staffing challenges</b></p> <p>LK noted recruitment challenges for the team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty competing with other local authorities paying higher salaries</li> <li>• Recruitment campaign underway</li> </ul> <p>Areas of improvement include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empty Homes Task Force to improve void management</li> <li>• New Allocations Manager appointed</li> <li>• Increasing TA workforce to match demand</li> <li>• Data cleansing needs to take place by liaising with Housing Benefit colleagues.</li> </ul>	
2.3	<p><b>Housing Inspection/Tenant Satisfaction Measure</b></p> <p>LK reported that in January 2025, the council was notified by the Regulator of Social Housing about an upcoming inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspection will focus on four standards</li> <li>• Regulator will meet officers on 1-3 April</li> <li>• LK provided an overview of the inspection process, timescales, and assessment criteria</li> </ul> <p>TP asked about expected grading, and LK suggested the council might be in the middle range with some areas of good performance.</p> <p>Regarding Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Results show residents are not happy</li> <li>• Satisfaction with repairs has dropped</li> <li>• Two surveys have been conducted but a full assessment is needed</li> </ul> <p><b>4. ACTION: Benchmarking of 2024-2025 TSM's against peers once results are published in autumn (September 2025)</b></p> <p><b>5. ACTION: TSM results update to be provided at the next meeting (April 2025)</b></p>	LK
2.4	<p><b>Empty Homes Task Force</b></p> <p>LK reported on the Empty Homes Task Force launched in August 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of empty homes has decreased from 127 days at Q2 to 78 days at Q3</li> <li>• Expected to continue decreasing in Q4 towards the 30-day target</li> <li>• Allocations Manager appointed in December 2024</li> <li>• Weekly Dashboard developed, continuing to develop BI reports</li> <li>• Working closely with Cardo for efficient communication</li> <li>• 7 houses need to be demolished</li> <li>• Expected reduction in void numbers in Q4</li> </ul>	
2.5	<p><b>Complaints</b></p> <p>LK discussed issues with complaint handling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only 25% of complaints were answered within the timeframe</li> <li>• Housing Ombudsman issued a complaint handling failure due to not completing the yearly self-assessment in 2023-2024 in a timely manner, the assessment shows we are non-compliant.</li> <li>• Workshop held in December and task force formed in January</li> </ul>	LK

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main focus has been answering within time limits, learning from complaints to be worked on</li> <li>• Plan to involve Cardo in the complaints task force to understand Cardo's complaints</li> <li>• Deep dive to be carried out to address the root causes of complaints and their resolution-</li> </ul> <p>TB proposed conducting case studies about complaints received and their resolution.</p> <p><b>6. ACTION: Review complaints and case studies to be shared with board 13/05/25</b></p> <p><i>Note: Issues identified include split complaints administration between different housing service areas, leading to inconsistent service levels. Update to be provided at the next meeting.</i></p>	
2.6	<p><b>Repairs and Maintenance</b></p> <p>LK mentioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing tracking and monitoring of compliance with the "Big 6" areas</li> <li>• Production of a roadmap for Fire, Electric, Gas, Lifts, Asbestos, and Water</li> <li>• Joint working with Cardo Managing Director to review current performance and agree a joint action plan for 2025/2026</li> </ul>	
2.7	<p><b>Business Plan and Risk Register</b></p> <p>LK reported that the Council is working on a 30-year business plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term planning for funding is essential.</li> <li>• Carbon reduction planning is underway.</li> <li>• As a council under Section 114, Housing as a capital programme requires thorough planning.</li> <li>• Two years of detailed programme planning secured for funding.</li> <li>• New stock condition survey being conducted (previous one was 4-5 years ago)</li> <li>• Strategic planning requires engagement with the resident board to prioritise actions</li> </ul> <p>CG asked about utilisation of Right to Buy money held by the treasury.</p> <p>LK noted that given the changes with Right to Buy discount – council had a large influx of applications have decreased significantly.</p> <p><b>7. ACTION: Right To Buy income update to be provided at next meeting</b></p> <p>TB asked about the Housing strategy for Slough and service improvement board.</p> <p>LK indicated these are under review and more details will be shared.</p> <p>TP noted that risk and risk assessments should be in the plan, along with the top 5 risks, remedial actions, and completion dates, requesting more detailed information than a broad-brush approach.</p> <p><b>8. ACTION: Provide clarity on status of 30-year business plan 30/04/25</b></p> <p><b>9. ACTION: LK to share the H&amp;S risk register with the board 30/04/25</b></p> <p><b>10. ACTION: Housing Strategy - Draft Strategy for resident board and wider consultation end Q1 2025/2026.</b></p> <p><i>Note: Post meeting note: TB queried if we will consult with other social landlords and HA's and PRS.</i></p>	LK

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2.8	<p><b>Lightning Reach</b></p> <p>LK reported on Lightning Reach, a government initiative trial to support residents in need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SBC signed up to the trial in December 2024</li> <li>• Promoted in January through newsletters and through staff</li> <li>• Transforms access to support, enabling providers to save time and money</li> <li>• Current statistics: 76 profiles completed, 46 found support, 46 direct engagements, 32 reports received</li> </ul> <p>TB enquired whether profiles included ethnic and other demographic details. TT and LK were unsure.</p> <p><b>11. ACTION: Lightning Reach - Investigate if demographic profile information can be captured by 28/02/2025</b></p>	TT
3.	<b>Compliance Update (IS)</b>	
3.0	<p>IS reported that the six main areas of compliance (Fire, Gas, Water, Asbestos, Lifts, Electrics) are all in a good position:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire risk prevention is up to date in communal spaces</li> <li>• Works arising from 3,000 block surveys are in a programme of works</li> <li>• Under Section 20, plans include leaseholder front door replacement, loft compartmentation, bin store segregation, and opening blocked escape routes</li> <li>• Asbestos dwelling surveys continue to be carried out</li> </ul>	
3.1	<p><b>Lift Maintenance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replacement scheduled for February at Kennedy House</li> <li>• Plan to replace lifts at Allington in May-June</li> <li>• All other lifts are compliant</li> </ul>	
3.2	<p><b>Electric Compliance</b></p> <p>IS noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 43 HRA properties don't have Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR)</li> <li>• Properties with no certificates down to 51, less than 1% of stock</li> </ul> <p>PK asked about issues gaining access to the homes where residents are resisting inspection. IS explained that in case of an electrical fire, responsibility would fall on the council. Resistance may be from people without the right to occupy or who have made unauthorised adjustments. Electrical inspections are more time-consuming than gas checks, and legal action may be needed after 4-5 years of resistance.</p> <p><b>12. ACTION: Plan to tackle access issues to be completed by 30/03/2025</b></p>	IS
3.3	<p><b>Gas Servicing</b></p> <p>IS reported few issues with gas servicing, mainly related to gaining access. Gas surveys were conducted but certificates were not distributed. CG requested attention to the delay in delivering gas certificates to residents.</p> <p><b>13. ACTION: Gas Certificate Process to be reviewed by 30/03/2025.</b></p> <p>✓ <i>Completed Note: IS advised there was a slight delay but everything is now up to date - board to be updated via email - 28 Feb. IS sent another certificate to CG to ensure receipt - no further action required.</i></p>	IS
4.	<b>Cardo Update (AM)</b>	

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4.0	<p>Cardo's performance data for Q3 was missing due to an administration error. AM gave an update on resident engagement plans to ensure service improvement.</p> <p><b>14. ACTION: Q4 paperwork to be sent to the board after the meeting</b></p> <p>✓ <i>Completed Note: AJ resent the paperwork – no further action</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process of improving resident engagement and performance in Slough</li> <li>• Implementation expected over 2-4 years</li> <li>• Staff will be sent in groups of 2-3 to talk to residents regarding contractors and other issues</li> <li>• First session scheduled for next month</li> <li>• Steering group to meet 2-4 times yearly to better understand services and gather feedback.</li> </ul> <p>DS enquired about planned customer calls regarding damp and mould as well as general repairs. AM explained that the initiative was discontinued due to resource constraints, but someone has recently been hired to call and engage with customers.</p> <p><b>15. ACTION: Cardo to update on progress of call backs at April meeting</b></p> <p><b>16. ACTION : TB and SBC to meet with Cardo to clarify our expectations around customer journey and recruitment being a targeted approach.</b></p> <p>Note: Meeting arranged 28 March</p>	<p>14. AJ</p> <p>15. AM</p> <p>16: AJ</p>
5.	<b>Estate Inspections (TT)</b>	
5.0	<p>TT reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing estate inspections</li> <li>• Continuing work with teams on improvements</li> <li>• Focus over the last six months on fire risk assessment</li> <li>• Outstanding actions reduced from 1,536 in September 2024 to 146 by the end of January</li> </ul> <p>Future plan to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and agree a programme of inspections for each quarter in partnership with residents.</li> <li>• Set targets for SNOs to include numbers and regularity of inspections</li> <li>• Work with Cardo and DSO on inspection outcomes to ensure timely service delivery.</li> <li>• Arrange joint visits with residents and include Cardo and DSO.</li> <li>• Publicise inspections in blocks of flats, Housing Highlights, and website.</li> <li>• Start using the Photobook app for estate inspection (have just got the go ahead)</li> </ul> <p>TT was asked about the app for inspections but indicated he was not as familiar with its functionality as other members of his staff.</p> <p><b>17. ACTION: Estate Inspections - Share map of process with the Board, including how long each process/step takes at next meeting.</b></p>	TT
6.	<b>Customer Service Update (AK)</b>	
6.0	<p>AK and MI reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of calls answered up to July: approximately 75%</li> <li>• Average time to answer calls: less than 8 minutes</li> <li>• MI noted 78.7% of calls were answered against an overall target of 80%</li> <li>• Abandoned calls (Housing services) in Q3: 294</li> <li>• Neighbourhood services: 484 calls abandoned</li> <li>• Overall drop in calls for housing and homelessness in December</li> <li>• Engage with residents directly face-to-face to improve service.</li> </ul>	<p>18. MI</p> <p>19. AK</p> <p>AJ</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The possible closure of libraries will have an impact on access for residents</li> </ul> <p>AK was pleased to have welcome board members CG and BR to visit the call centre – the offer is open to others if they wish to come along</p> <p>CG and BR both gave positive feedback on their visit</p> <p><b>18. ACTION: Monitor impact of potential library closures on customer hubs, report going to cabinet - AK to ensure feedback to board by 30/06/2025</b></p> <p><b>19. ACTION: Provide clarity on status of customer access strategy at next performance meeting in May</b></p> <p>Note : There is no customer access strategy, corporate teams are working on the Target operating Model has a customer access / digital front door work stream as part of it. The Transformation Team are leading on it with my team feeding in. <b>New Action : Hamish Dibley (Director of Transformation) to be invited to May meeting.</b></p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
<b>7.0</b>	TB closed the meeting, thanking everyone for attending. The next meeting is scheduled for 8 April 2025 at Hawker House (in person).	

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> April – 18.00 – 20.00**

**Location: Hawkers House Heron Drive Langley Slough SL3 8XP**