

Appendix 4 - Chair of the BCP Homes Advisory Board Report

1. Purpose of this report

I am pleased to provide this report as Chair of the BCP Homes Advisory Board. It sets out the work the Board has undertaken over the last six months and, importantly, the resident priorities that have shaped our scrutiny, challenge and advice. Our role is to support strong oversight of the landlord service, seek assurance on performance, compliance and risk, and make sure that residents' experiences remain firmly at the centre of how BCP Homes plans, delivers and improves its services.

2. Board activity over the last six months

Over the last six months, the Advisory Board has considered a wide range of issues that matter to tenants and leaseholders. These have included service performance, property compliance, risk management, resident engagement, governance improvement, the BCP Homes improvement plan, the new housing management system, the restructure of BCP Homes and the preparations for strengthened regulatory requirements. In each of these areas, the Board has sought to understand not just what is being done, but whether it is making a real and visible difference for residents.

A key part of our work has been to look carefully at how performance information is being used to drive assurance and improvement. We have reviewed quarterly scorecard information covering areas such as lettings, responsive repairs, rent collection, complaint handling, call handling, information governance and anti-social behaviour. We have also considered property compliance reporting in detail, including assurance around statutory safety checks, damp and mould, disrepair and wider health and safety responsibilities.

The Board has also had an important role in supporting stronger governance following the BCP Homes governance review. I welcome the clearer routes now being developed so that resident feedback can flow through resident panels, the Residents Committee, the Advisory Board and formal council decision-making. The move towards more regular performance reporting to Cabinet and the Corporate Strategy Board is also welcome, as it will give members stronger visibility of performance, regulatory compliance, risk and improvement activity.

3. Resident priorities considered by the Board

The priorities residents raise with us are clear and consistent. They want repairs to be carried out in a timely and reliable way. They want to feel safe in their homes and neighbourhoods. They want effective action on damp and mould, better communication, responsive complaint handling, clean and well-maintained communal areas, action on anti-social behaviour and meaningful opportunities to influence the services they receive. These are practical issues that affect people's daily lives, and they have rightly shaped the Board's discussions and forward work.

Repairs and maintenance remain central to residents' experience of their landlord. As a Board, we have continued to seek assurance that improvements are being sustained, that feedback from tenants is being acted on, and that the new housing management system and revised operating model will improve visibility, consistency and follow-up. We also recognise that residents need clear and honest communication about progress, particularly where improvements take time to deliver.

Complaint handling and anti-social behaviour have also been significant areas of concern for residents, and therefore important areas of focus for the Board. We have looked for assurance that the additional capacity being created through the restructure, alongside improved performance reporting and clearer service ownership, will lead to a better resident experience, stronger learning from complaints and more visible action when residents report problems in their homes or communities.

4. Resident engagement and influence

Over the last six months, the Board has seen continued progress in delivering the Resident Engagement and Communications Strategy. This has included clearer service standards, a resident communications plan, themed communication campaigns and greater use of digital engagement. Residents have helped shape priorities for communication activity, including anti-social behaviour and community safety, damp and mould, access for safety and compliance checks, fire and high-rise building safety, and the promotion of new digital engagement opportunities.

I particularly welcome the commitment to strengthen the “golden thread” between resident voice and decision-making. Residents should be able to see how their feedback influences priorities, service standards, investment decisions and improvement activity. The Board will continue to ask for evidence that engagement is inclusive, accessible and representative of the communities served by BCP Homes, including those groups where satisfaction or engagement may currently be lower.

5. Assurance, challenge and next steps

My view is that the Advisory Board has provided constructive challenge and assurance during a period of significant change for BCP Homes. We have welcomed the positive C1 judgement from the Regulator of Social Housing, while remaining clear that this must be a foundation for continued improvement rather than a reason to stand still. The regulatory inspection, the new housing management system and the restructure have all placed considerable demands on the service, but they also provide an important opportunity to strengthen assurance and improve outcomes for residents.

The Advisory Board held its annual away day in July, which provided a valuable opportunity to step back from the routine cycle of meetings and reflect on the Board's evolving role. The session allowed Board members to consider how we can continue to add value in the context of strengthened regulatory expectations, the governance review, resident engagement arrangements and more regular member oversight. It also helped us to reaffirm the areas where the Board can have the greatest impact: constructive challenge, resident insight and assurance on performance, compliance, risk and improvement activity.

Over the next six months, the Board will continue to focus on the issues that matter most to residents: repairs, safety, damp and mould, complaint handling, anti-social behaviour, communication and neighbourhood standards. We will also monitor delivery of the governance review actions, the resident engagement strategy, the BCP Homes improvement plan and the benefits expected from the new structure and housing management system. Above all, I want the Board's work to remain evidence-based, resident-led and firmly focused on continuous improvement.

Cllr Kieron Wilson

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Protection and Chair of BCP Homes
Advisory Board**