



Customer scrutiny team business meeting

Wednesday 22 October 2025 10:30 – 13:00
Selwood Housing office, Trowbridge

Members present:

Sandie Smith (SS) – chairperson
Roy Derrick (RD) – vice chairperson
Asma Bakali-Laughton (ABL)
Mary Firth (MF)
Hazel Brooks (HB)
Jenni Jones (JJ)
Merfyn Jones (MJ)
Dave Tarsnane (DT)

In attendance:

Laura Pictor (LP) – Group customer involvement manager
Jasmine Dickson (JD) – Customer involvement coordinator
Paul Walsh (PW) – Group development director
Miles Tilling (MT) - Head of compliance, M&E and operations administration

1.	<u>Welcome, introductions and apologies</u> SS welcomed attendees and noted apologies from Stuart. SS welcomed DT back and welcomed new members, JJ and MJ to the team.	SS
2.	<u>Q2 business meeting minutes</u> All scrutiny members in attendance gave their approval on last quarter's minutes.	SS

3.	<p><u>Executive business update</u></p> <p>The Board of Directors, executive team, and staff members involved in the caretaking service review wish to thank the scrutiny team for their time and effort in shaping the service.</p> <p>Social housing sector update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PW highlighted the significance of the upcoming government budget in late November, noting its potential impact on housing policy and funding. Government support for housing has been strong, but we are still waiting on more policy decisions. - The Decent Homes Standard is being updated with a major focus on improving energy performance. There is a new target energy target beyond EPC C. which is very challenging to get to especially for older properties without additional funding. - The competence and conduct standard introduced in response to the Grenfell tragedy. This standard will be phased in from October 2026. <p>Selwood Housing business update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awaab's Law will be in place from Monday 27 October. - The consultation for our asset management strategy has closed. The group operations director, Verena, is reviewing all feedback from our customers. - Dynamics (new housing management system) will go live with the next phase in November. No difference to customer experience when contacting us, but systems may be slower during the integration. - Customer annual report for 2024/2025 is now published on our website. <p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PW provided an overview on current and planned developments for this financial year (2025-2026) and next (2026-2027). On target to have between 160-170 homes built by March 2026. Our target is 200 homes for 2026-27. 	PW
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	<p>PW gave a full list of sites in development, all of which are within 1 hour's drive from our Trowbridge office. ABL enquired about the criteria for selecting development sites. PW explained we prioritise locations with good transport links or significant housing needs. Limiting sites within one hour's drive helps to maintain service quality for our customers.</p> <p>Scrutiny team requested more time in next meeting for further updates on development plans. JD to assign in next agenda.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Awaab's Law</u></p> <p>MT presented an overview of Awaab's Law, outlining the new legal requirements for addressing damp, mould and other hazards in social housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective from Monday 27 October - Strict timeframes for investigating and resolving significant damp and mould hazards and all emergency hazards. This law was introduced following the unfortunate death of Awaab Ishak caused by prolonged exposure to black mould. <p>RD queried about the relevant training given to staff. MT confirmed all staff have received mandatory training, including toolbox talks and staff briefings. Operatives are instructed not to assume customers have reported issues and to proactively report any hazards they observe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MT noted that staff are trained to handle sensitive conversations with customers about damp and mould, and that the organisation is collecting feedback from customer consultations to refine its approach. The process will be reviewed and adapted over the next 3-6 months based on operational experience and feedback. <p>MF proposed, and the team agreed, to schedule a review of Selwood Housing's performance against Awaab's Law for late 2026, allowing time to assess the effectiveness of new processes and identify any areas of improvement. LP noted the feedback from the recent customer focus group into Awaab's Law will be reviewed in 6 months' time and fed to the Scrutiny team.</p>	MT

5.	<p><u>Together with tenants (TWT)</u></p> <p>LP gave an overview on the Together with tenants charter and how the team monitor and assess our progress in the action plan. The latest version of this action plan is published on the Selwood Housing website on our 'Together with tenants' webpage, this includes comments from the scrutiny team.</p> <p>RD enquired about the priority neighbourhood events and how they are advertised, and proposed Scrutiny members attended the events. LP explained what the priority neighbourhood projects are and how the neighbourhood team are focusing on areas in Trowbridge, except for Studley Green as this was focused on in 2021-2022.</p> <p>LP queried about the format for TWT and how the scrutiny team review this charter and action plan. MF proposed the team annually change commitments, all of which agreed. SS to inform all members of change of commitments.</p> <p>Overview of whole action plan, Sandie Relationships, Merfyn Communication, Stuart Voice & Influence, Jennie Accountability, Roy Quality, Hazel When things go wrong, Dave Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, Asma</p> <p>MF proposed, and the team agreed, to review the complaints handling process and work in partnership with the customer complaints forum. LP noted this process will be reviewed by the regulator of social housing in their inspection as it some under the new Transparency, Influence and Accountability consumer standard. LP gave the team an anecdote from a recent customer focus group where a customer raised an issue about a repair, but after a</p>	Scrutiny team
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	supervisor checked it, they weren't aware they could also raise a complaint as still not satisfied.	
6.	<p><u>Service review planning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The team requested the involvement and communities team create a summary report which gives customers a shorter and easy-to-read version of their full written report. All members present gave their approval. JD to publish on website and review how this webpage is formatted to prevent too many click throughs for customers. - All members present approved the voids service as their next service review. Plans in place to meet with the group operations director and the voids team in early November. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Look at options for customer engagement, for example, hearing from customers who have moved into an empty property within the last 12 months. 	SS
7.	<p><u>Any other business (AOB)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Microsoft Teams and SharePoint training on Wednesday 26th November - ABL noted chair/vice chair elections due next April. - MF gave her apologies for the next business meeting in February 2026. - Thank-you coffee & cake on Tuesday 11 November - Scrutiny team Christmas meal on Friday 12 December - Next business meeting on Wednesday 4 February 10:30 – 13:00 	SS