

South Essex Homes Limited

Minutes of Board Meeting

Date: 24 June 2025

Start: 3.00pm End: 6.15pm Civic Centre

Present Chris March (CM) – Chair; Roger Eastwood (RE) – Vice Chair; Chris Silvey (CS) public agenda only; Keith Ducker (KD), Michael Oxley (MO); Anne Jones (AJ) left at 4.30pm; Jane Norman (JN) left at 5.50pm; Margaret Borton (MB), Sir James Duddridge (JD), Rachel Hadley (RH), Peter Potter (PP)

In attendance: Mike Gatrell (MG) – Chief Executive, Sarah Lander (SL) – Director Housing Services; Daniel Lyons (DL) – Director Finance and Corporate Services; Beverley Gallacher (BG) – Director Commercial Services, Kevin Hazlewood (KH) – Director Property Services; Carol Cooper (CC) – Board Support Officer Glyn Halksworth (GH) – Director of Regeneration, Housing & Regulatory Services SCC; left at 4.30pm, Tim Holland (TH), Head of Housing Supply, SCC; Chris Bellis-Wright (CBW), Housing Client Relationship Manager, SCC; Chris Turland (TH) – new NED from 25.7.25; Chris Harris (CH) – new NED from 25.7.25; Julia Pack (JP) – Communications Manager (joined 4.45pm), Sacha Jevans (SJ) – Chair of South Essex Property Services (from confidential items).

Tenant Observer: Majzoub Ali – Public Meeting Only

PUBLIC AGENDA		Action
1.	Welcome and Introductions	
1.1	CM welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2.	Apologies for Absence	
2.1	There were no apologies for absence.	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
3.1	AJ declared an interest as the Council’s portfolio holder for Housing – this is a standing declaration of interest.	
3.2	CS declared an interest as Community Development Officer and Trustee of Southend Community Matters.	
3.3	SL declared an interest as Trustee of Southend Community Matters.	

3.4	GH declared an interest as Trustee of Southend Community Matters and a Director of Vecteo Ltd.	
3.5	MG declared as interest as Director for South Essex Property Services (SEPS) and Vecteo Limited.	
4.	Public Draft Minutes & Matters Arising from meeting held 24.6.25	
4.1	The Minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	
5.	Chair's Remarks	
5.1	CM noted the lengthy agenda and that comments posted in Diligent would be addressed by directors whilst presenting the paper during the course of the meeting.	
5.2	Three Board members had attended the NFA Conference in May which had provided a useful insight into other issues being experienced by other organisations currently. The NFA are looking to widen the scope of the use of Boards like this and how it is generally being recognised that an independent board for local authority housing organisations provides support and improves governance.	
6.	Residents' Voice Your view	
6.1	DL referred to the paper in the pack which will be published on the website.	
7.	Governance & Stewardship Report	
7.1	DL provided an overview of the report.	
7.2	(Diligent) JD raised the point regarding the current maximum length of term of office of 9 years as most organisations have a maximum term of 6 years and suggested that the new Customer & Colleagues Committee consider whether the term of office should be altered for new non-executive directors (NED). CM noted that any alteration to the length of term of office would need to be agreed by SCC. It was agreed that DL would progress a review of the length of terms of office for NED.	DL
7.3	(Diligent) KH clarified for MB that all actions resulting from the Audit report are being actioned and monitored.	
7.4	CM suggested that the Code of Conduct be amended so that all hospitality be declared in order for Board members to be more transparent when complying with the obligations. The Board agreed and DL was requested to make the amendment.	DL
7.5	Recommendations:	
i)	The Board agreed the Audit & Risk Committee's annual report and annual governance statement.	
ii)	The Board agreed the updated Board Member Code of Conduct and Code of Governance.	
iii)	The Board discussed and agreed the appointment of Keith Ducker as Tenant Board Member to the Board for a further 3 years until 26 July 2028.	
iv)	The Board discussed and agreed the appointment of Chris Silvey as Tenant Board Member to the Board for a further 3 years until 2 October 2028.	

8.	Annual Complaints & Service Improvement Report	
8.1	DL provided an overview of the report.	
8.2	(Diligent) RH had sought clarity as to whether maladministration rates are tracked. DL confirmed that this is the case and for 2024/25 the maladministration rate is 84.8%.	
8.3	(Diligent) RE suggested whether in the Board Statement the phrase “people we serve” was appropriate and suggested “communities we serve” may be more appropriate. The Board discussed the Statement and agreed that Board Statement should be changed to “the people and communities we serve”. DL agreed to update prior to publication.	DL
8.4	(Diligent) JD sought clarity as to whether Right to Repair should be promoted. KH confirmed that Right to Repair is rarely used.	
8.5	(Diligent) RH noted a conflict of information in sections 2.1 and 12.1 of the compensation policy regarding offsetting of compensation against rent arrears. DL agreed to revise for clarity to include offsetting should not occur without resident agreement.	DL
8.6	(Diligent) JD felt the compensation process for such small amounts was overly bureaucratic and sought clarity around compensation for loss of rooms or amenities. DL confirmed that there is no statutory guidance on how to calculate compensation other than the Housing Ombudsman suggesting it should be fair and reasonable. The calculation adds consistency across cases. Claims for loss of rooms or amenities are very few.	
8.7	(Diligent) RH sought clarity as to how compensation is calculated for loss of utilities. KH confirmed it is calculated based on appliance usage and duration of loss.	
8.8	JN sought clarity regarding the number of complaints noted in the figures relating to cleaning as she thought these were low, considering she had submitted enquiries via the portal and these were not included. DL confirmed that there may be occasions when complaints relating to cleaning might have been noted under caretaking instead as it is open to interpretation. Members enquiries are not recorded within the complaints process so would not be included in these figures. DL agreed to investigate how information on Members enquiries can be reported to the Board.	DL
8.9	MB sought clarity as to how long information on complaints is stored. DL agreed to report back at next meeting.	DL
8.10	Recommendations:	
i)	The Board noted the position with regards to complaints for 2024/25.	
ii)	The Board approved the Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code.	
iii)	The Board approved this report to be published on the South Essex Homes’ (SEH) website, along with a response from the Board.	
iv)	The Board approved the Board Statement on Complaints Handling.	
v)	The Board approved the updated Complaints Policy.	
vi)	The Board approved the updated Compensation Policy.	

<p>9.</p> <p>9.1</p> <p>9.2</p> <p>9.3</p> <p>9.4</p> <p>9.5</p> <p>9.6</p> <p>9.7</p> <p>i)</p> <p>ii)</p> <p>iii)</p>	<p>Business Plan 2025-2030</p> <p>DL provided an overview of the report.</p> <p>(Diligent) JD suggested a reordering of the themes so that Strengthening Safety Measures should be prioritised and follow directly after Improving Maintenance & Repairs. The Board agreed and DL will revise the order of the Business Plan.</p> <p>(Diligent) MO requested that the Board and NED engagement have clearer recognition within the plan and DL agreed to amend the opening section and add Board engagement to the Enhancing Community Engagement and Support section</p> <p>(Diligent) MO sought clarity as to how the repairs issues had persisted under two different contractors. KH noted that this is a concern and confirmed that the issues experienced will inform future service models and service improvement plans.</p> <p>(Diligent) JD sought confirmation that the Business Plan was affordable and DL confirmed that the cost can be met within current revenue as well as reserves funding, however, if any issues were to arise then these would be raised with the Board.</p> <p>(Diligent) JD sought clarity as to whether the Repairs & Maintenance Contract Service Improvement Plan (SIP) should be referenced in the risk section. KH noted JD’s comments and DL agreed that more explicit reference can be made. DL to update</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>The Board approved the South Essex Homes’ Business Plan 2025–2030, once agreed amendments made.</p> <p>The Board agreed to the use of reserves and other funding sources as outlined in the Financial Model to support delivery of the Business Plan.</p> <p>The Board noted the alignment of the Business Plan with the Consumer Standards, Southend-on-Sea City Vision, and the Strategic Risk Register.</p>	<p></p> <p>DL</p> <p>DL</p> <p>DL</p>
<p>10.</p> <p>10.1</p> <p>10.2</p> <p>10.3</p>	<p>Management Accounts at 31 May 2025</p> <p>DL provided an overview of the report.</p> <p>(Diligent) RH sought clarity as to actions being taken to reduce agency spend. DL confirmed that the cost of agency staff is monitored closely by the Executive Management Team (EMT) and where possible staff are moved to permanent contracts. However, many of the agency staff are on short term contracts where it would not be possible to recruit permanently for short durations. A report had been prepared for the last Audit & Risk Committee meeting and enhanced reporting will be available for the Personnel & Remuneration Committee (Customer & Colleagues Committee).</p> <p>(Diligent) RH requested more information on how many Difficult Access Officers (DAO) were in post and how many outstanding cases were due to non-access. KH confirmed that there is currently 1 DAO with a newly proposed post having been agreed. In terms of non-access, currently the stock condition survey work has a 40% non-access rate. The electrical rewires programme currently sees a non-access rate of 20%. Dedicated resources are targeting elements of these programmes to ensure delivery of both of the stock condition surveys and electrical rewires.</p>	<p></p>

10.4	AJ noted that the skills of the DAO can also extend to such issues as hoarding which could cause safety problems and the personalised approach of the DAO has been very productive in terms of health and wellbeing of tenants so is a much broader theme than access for health & safety related issues. AJ and the Board noted the importance and recognised the important work the DAO role undertakes.	
10.5	(Diligent) JD requested that the use of the word ‘transfers’ be used instead of ‘virements’ in future reports. DL agreed to this for future reports.	DL
10.6	(Diligent) RH sought clarity for the justification for the cost of using Voicescape for rent arrears and noted that in one report rent collection was described as strong and in another it was described as not strong enough and requested consistency within reports so that the Board have a clear understanding. DL confirmed that the cost of Voicescape had been previously agreed by the Board following a report being presented. The rollout of Universal Credit for tenants on Housing Benefit will be very likely to see an increase in rent arrears and the Voicescape software will identify issues early on and target early to stop escalation. This should positively impact the number of tenants in arrears and, subsequently, mitigate the number of evictions. Currently, rent arrears performance is good but could be even stronger, and Voicescape will assist in this with even more targeted rent arrear collection actions.	
10.7	AJ sought clarity as to whether there the roll out of UC to tenants had started to see an adverse impact on arrears. DL confirmed that the team are starting to see an impact, but arrears have not risen dramatically, although UC claims are increasing. There is an income officer whose focus is to engage with those tenants where the roll out is taking place but currently there are no figures which confirm how many tenants have transferred and how many are left to transfer. DL agreed to provide this information at the next meeting.	DL
10.8	MB sought clarity as to the cost of Voicescape and other systems that we have to buy. DL confirmed the cost of Voicescape had been provided to the Board as part of a paper at a previous meeting however DL agreed to provide an update to the Board for the cost of individual IT systems currently in use.	DL
10.9	Recommendations:	
i)	The Board noted South Essex Homes’ financial performance based on information as of 31st May 2025.	
ii)	The Board noted the Chair’s Action to agree Reserves funding for additional resources in the Complaints team until September 2025, as set out in paragraph 5.3.	
iii)	The Board agreed the funding from Reserves for an additional Difficult Access Coordinator to assist with the electrical testing delivery as set out in paragraph 5.4.	
11.	Key Performance Indicators at 31 May 2025	
11.1	DL provided an overview of the report.	
11.2	(Diligent) RH sought clarity as to why the Decent Homes non-compliance figure is high at 1 April. KH confirmed this is due to all properties coming under the Decent Homes standard on 1 April being included at the start of the programme and the figure will reduce through the year.	
11.3	(Diligent) – JD & KD requested that there be commentary for all items where the KPI is indicated red be added to future reports. DL to action.	DL

<p>11.4</p> <p>i)</p>	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>The Board noted the performance as set out in the Key Performance Indicator Report for May 2025.</p>	
<p>12.</p> <p>12.1</p> <p>12.2</p> <p>12.4</p> <p>12.5</p> <p>12.6</p> <p>12.7</p>	<p>Health & Safety Compliance Report</p> <p>KH provided an overview of the report.</p> <p>(Diligent) JD asked which risks were the most concern relating to loss of life. KH noted that all hazards could potentially present some form of risk to life and, therefore, the management control structures are in place to mitigate such risks. The issue which is currently of most concern is non-access and KH and SL are developing strategies, including a non-access policy, to mitigate this.</p> <p>AJ sought clarity from KH as to what plans are in place to achieve the 14-day target for DMC when there are bank holidays to be covered specifically whether there was capacity within the team to ensure cover at all times. KH confirmed current staff levels provide sufficient resource. There are two Healthy Homes Advisors carrying out initial diagnosis with input from surveyors where required. There are currently some issues with meeting our own 7-day deadline but to mitigate this there is an update process on recording the schedules correctly. The team are using the quieter times of the year for DMC reports to pick up on cases which may need to be revisited to ensure intervention has been fulfilled.</p> <p>JN sought clarity as to whether the new lift contractor would lead to better communication for residents. KH confirmed that the new contractor, LES, have been informed that communication is imperative and needs to be improved following teething problems at the recent start of the contract. LES provide daily outage lists and target times for completion and this information is shared with affected residents. LES had provided an alternative intervention following the outage of the lift at a sheltered scheme where Essex County Fire & Rescue Services had damaged the lift. LES had suggested installing a stairlift whilst the lift was repaired. JN noted that communication regarding the replacement of the Cluny House lift could have been improved as tenants were unaware that this was being undertaken and had resulted in a tenant petition that was not required. Better communication would have prevented this.</p> <p>CM asked KH whether SEH had sight of the FRA for the building managed by Peabody and KH confirmed we do. There had been one remedial action from that FRA and SEH and Peabody had worked in partnership to address the issue effectively.</p> <p>CM asked when the issue with the non-compliant door in 6.9 will be resolved. KH confirmed it is anticipated that this will be resolved in August. The team are working with a contractor, Warringtons, who have developed an alternative to wired glass (piro) which means that the pane can be replaced rather than the whole door set which had been suggested by the original contractor. Once this has been replaced and tested and the compliance certificate is in place this will be used to replace broken wired glass across the city.</p> <p>KH confirmed for MB that 46 doors have been vandalised across the stock which will be replaced with piro instead of wired glass.</p>	
<p>12.8</p> <p>i)</p> <p>ii)</p>	<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>The Board noted the metrics as the Corporate Compliance Position Statement and the statements in sections 4 to 10 of this report.</p> <p>The Board noted the actions being taken to regularise positions where required.</p>	

iii)	The Board noted the information in paragraph 10.	
13.	<p>Empty Properties Report</p> <p>13.1 KH provided an overview of the report.</p> <p>13.2 KH confirmed for JN that the Voids Panel had formulated a work plan to bring empty properties back into use with a particular emphasis on the Queensway estate. The number of properties returned to use has seen a reduction in the need to house families in B&B and hostel accommodation which were the key drivers.</p> <p>13.3 Recommendations:</p> <p>i) The Board noted the contents of this report</p> <p>ii) The Board agreed to receiving a follow-on report at a subsequent Board meeting</p>	
14.	<p>Committee Terms of Reference Review Report</p> <p>14.1 DL provided an overview of the report.</p> <p>14.1 (Diligent) MO sought clarity as to which Committee would oversee the Repairs & Maintenance SIP. DL felt that the SIP should be managed by the Audit & Risk Committee in order to mitigate the risk of the repairs and maintenance service failing.</p> <p>14.2 (Diligent) JD & MO and questioned whether two members was sufficient for the Committee to be quorate.</p> <p>14.3 MO noted his Diligent comment was not so much about the number, but the Terms of Reference (ToR) were not clear whether one of the two attendees was always required to be the Chair of the Committee. JD felt it read as if the Chair was always required to be one of the two to enable quorum and he considered it essential that this is the case. DL to update the ToR to explicitly note that the Chair always be in attendance.</p> <p>14.4 (Diligent) RE suggested, given the number of reports at this meeting whether the Board should consider increasing the number of Board meetings from four to six per year. It was agreed the Board could consider this once the newly restructured Committees were in place, later in the year.</p> <p>14.5 DL confirmed that going forward, the Customer & Colleagues Committee may no longer be a joint Committee with SEPS. However, the point would need to be discussed with the SEPS' Board.</p> <p>14.6 CS noted that at a recent TPAS meeting, tenants had raised that they were unhappy at being called residents and had made it clear that legally they should be referred to as 'tenants' and not residents. CS asked the Board to consider adopting the correct legal term. MG noted the importance of using the correct terms but different people, both around the Board and tenants/residents, would have different views.</p> <p>14.6 JD noted that when discussing the names of the Committees, the group had tried to align with the Regulator who used the word 'customer' and the organisation would be mirroring RSH language. RH agreed that the use of 'customer' linked back to the Consumer Standards although it would be good for the Board to understand our residents/tenants' views. It was agreed that SL would ask the Resident Engagement team to engage the Resident Advisory Panel (RAP) to determine their views. This information should be relatively quick to obtain, and SL will report back to the Board once available.</p>	<p>DL</p> <p>DL/BG</p> <p>SL</p>

14.7	DL noted that we should be mindful that using the word 'tenant' could also lead to leaseholders feeling excluded and from experience the word 'resident' had been more widely accepted.	
14.8	KD noted that the Housing Ombudsman uses the word 'resident'.	
14.9	Recommendation:	
i)	The Board noted the contents of this report and approved the establishment of a new Customer & Colleagues Committee. Further, the Board approved Terms of Reference and Forward Plans for a Customer & Colleagues Committee, Group Commercial Committee, and Audit & Risk Committee.	
15.	Resident Engagement Strategy Report including Constituted Voluntary Community Association (CVCA) Updated	
15.1	SL provided an overview of the report.	
15.2	MB congratulated SL and team on what has been achieved for residents. SL updated that using targeted engagement with younger tenants and use of the RAP has resulted in an increase in engagement from younger residents. Work on engagement with residents from diverse backgrounds continues.	
15.3	Recommendations:	
i)	The Board noted activities undertaken by SEH and also through partnership with Achieve Thrive Flourish (ATF) to meet the commitments we have made in our 'Residents Charter – our Engagement Strategy 2022-27'.	
ii)	The Board noted the early progress of the charity 'Southend Community Matters' as a vehicle to expand our work with residents to improve their capacity and skills, contribute towards making our communities safer and more sustainable and increase resident satisfaction.	
16.	Community Safety Strategy Annual Report	
16.1	SL provided an overview of the report.	
16.2	Recommendations:	
i)	The Board noted the content of this report and its appendices.	
ii)	The Board endorsed the Housing Community Safety Strategy 2025-28.	
17.	Draft Unaudited Accounts 2024/25	
17.1	DL provided an overview of the unaudited accounts that had previously been approved by the Audit & Risk Committee. The Auditors are on site this week so it is anticipated that the Audited Accounts will be available soon.	
17.2	Recommendations:	
i)	The Board reviewed and considered South Essex Homes' financial performance based on information as at 31st March 2025.	
ii)	The Board noted the Unaudited Draft Financial Statements for 2024/25.	

18.	City Vision Update Report	
18.1	MG introduced the report and gave an overview as to how the City Vision came about following input from a variety of stakeholders, working to engage as many people as possible.	
18.2	JP presented the report and gave an overview of the powerpoint slide which had been circulated with the papers.	
18.3	JN noted the positive initiative and thanked JP for her work and believes that the City Vision will help the city to prosper.	
18.4	DL noted the Business Plan is linked to the City Vision to reinforce the importance of the work undertaken by SEH being aligned with the City Vision for Southend.	
18.5	Recommendations	
i)	The Board formally endorsed the Southend City Vision	
ii)	The Board agreed to integrate the Vision's priorities into SEH' strategic planning and operational activities	
iii)	The Board agreed to promote the Vision among staff, stakeholders, and the wider community	
iv)	The Board authorised a small budget of £10,000 to be used by the Housing Team to fund community activity specifically developed to help SEH contribute towards the achievement of the City Vision	
19.	Policies Review Update	
19.1	KH provided an overview of the report and reasons for the minor changes and noted the comments made by RH on Diligent and agreed to amend the policies to reflect the comments.	KH
19.6	Recommendation:	
i)	The Board approved the policies relating to Asbestos Management and the Health & Safety Integrated Management System	
	<i>Confidential section of the meeting commenced at 5.25pm</i>	
20.	Confidential Draft Minutes & Matters Arising from meeting 10.4.25	
20.1	The Minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	
21.	Draft Minutes from Repairs & Maintenance Service Improvement Plan Task & Finish Group meeting 12.6.25	
21.1	KH provided clarity for CT and CH as to the background for the need of the R&M SIP T&FG.	

21.2	KH noted the continued difficulties with the current contractor. A meeting has been arranged for 15 July for KH, GH and MG to meet with the Managing Director and Operations Director of Axis to discuss the current contract and the SIP. Following the meeting, recommendations will be made to Southend City Council (SCC) on possible actions to be taken.	
21.3	MO wanted to know, given the seriousness of the situation, what actions could be taken. KH noted that the T&F Group are aware of the magnitude of the situation and the decision on action rests with SCC. KH will ensure that SCC have all information detailing the legality of the contract and implications associated with any continued decline in service.	
21.4	MO felt that the basis of the main issue of dispute will be the difference in data between SEH and the contractor and suggested that it may be prudent to seek an external independent evaluation of both sets of data just in case the data becomes the basis of a legal dispute. KH agreed this would be helpful and noted that the two systems, whilst electronically linked, do not have aligned data. KH has made it clear to the contractor that he considers the data held in the NEC system to be the correct data and KH agreed that the situation could become adversarial with two conflicting sets of data.	
21.5	MG noted that one element of legal advice being acquired relates to other possible options available and confirmed the T&F Group is made up of multiple stakeholders including SCC's Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Council Officers. MG noted for the Board that the 1 July sees the end of the first year of the contract and this is a key point in considering formal action in respect of the contract.	
21.6	MB wondered, given the reputational damage already caused to SEH by the poor performance and concerns regarding compliance with Awaab's Law, how long would the potential process take. KH shared the concerns regarding both the SCC's and SEH' reputation and the effect the repairs performance is having on tenants. KH confirmed that if an early warning notice is issued and responded to by the contractor and a subsequent improvement notice is issued, there would need to be at least a 13-week period for improvements to be delivered. There is also the potential opportunity that the contractor may opt for an early break clause to be enacted after the 1-year anniversary. In that scenario, a notice period of 26-weeks would likely be agreed.	
21.7	RH noted the potential resource and delivery issues should an early warning notice be issued and requested that the Board be kept informed. The Board noted that if an early warning notice was issued and progressed the likelihood of further poor performance issues would arise. KH confirmed that there are contingency plans for this eventuality with a number of framework contractors already available and liaison has been undertaken with a DSO of another local authority who could step in under procurement rules. KH reminded the Board that the contract was set for 3 years in order to gradually progress consideration of a migration towards a direct service within the organisation.	
21.8	The Board noted that if an additional Board meeting were required, they would be happy to assist in decision making if necessary. KH confirmed for JN that there are no quick outcomes to whatever decision is made with the winding down of the contract likely to have a 26-week period.	
21.9	CM reiterated to the Board that the decision ultimately lies with SCC and CM reassured the Board that KH is working hard to develop contingency plans for whatever the outcome.	

21.10	KD confirmed that he and other residents meet the contractor and challenge data every month and have done so from the start of the contract. KD believes that the data provided by the contractor is not correct. From speaking to residents SEH reputation has definitely been affected due to the poor performance of the contractor.	
21.11	The Board noted the Minutes.	
22.	Draft Minutes from Audit & Risk Committee meeting 22.5.25	
22.1	JD provided an overview of the Minutes and updated that DL's development of the Risk Register provided better structure. The Committee had noted the vulnerability of the principal banker following operational problems and the team are reviewing this. The Committee are spending more time on risk than financial performance.	
22.2	The Board noted the Minutes.	
23.	Group Commercial Subsidiaries' Financial Assurance Report including New Business Update.	
23.1	SJ noted the good progress being made and that profit is ahead of forecast. SJ confirmed the healthy working relationship with SCC which is reflected in the opportunities and directly awarded contracts being seen and felt that the SEH Board should be reassured by this.	
23.2	BG provided an overview of the report.	
23.3	A new business line relating to pest control and hoarding is being considered and if it were assessed as being a viable option, it would be brought to the Group Commercial Committee for consideration.	
23.4	CM congratulated BG on success and resulting profit of SEPS. CM sought clarity as to why the SCC's fire door servicing contract had been placed elsewhere. BG confirmed that there had been a small increase in price and SCC had decided to go to market to seek value for money. Given the small cost of the contract, this had not needed to go through the SCC's Procurement Team but was managed by the SCC's Facilities Management team itself. It is understood that the new contractor will provide a £1500 saving to SCC over a 2-year period. The decision had been disappointing as it will mean that any profit resulting from SEPS undertaking the contract could not be kept within the family by way of the annual dividend payment. SEPS will tender for the contract when it next comes to market and it is possible that time it may be directly awarded.	
23.5	MB sought clarity as to whether the contract had been awarded to a local contractor however BG was not aware of which contractor had been awarded the contract.	
23.6	Recommendation:	
i)	The Board noted the progress made in respect of new business opportunities and the update on those business lines progressing	
24.	Consumer Standards Improvement Plan Update	
24.1	SL provided an overview of the report.	
24.2	MB sought confirmation as to how the result of the Inspection would be communicated to the Board. MG confirmed that communication from the Regulator will be made through SCC's Chief Executive and Director of Housing, who will be contacted by the RSH. SCC will be responsible for sharing the information once the determination is received.	

<p>24.3</p> <p>i)</p>	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>The Board noted the content of this report and progress in delivering actions set out in the Consumer Standards Improvement Plan</p>	
<p>25.</p> <p>25.1</p> <p>25.2</p> <p>25.3</p> <p>i)</p>	<p>Safeguarding Children & Adults at risk of abuse or neglect update</p> <p>SL provided an overview of the report.</p> <p>SL confirmed that DAHA accreditation is due for renewal early in 2026, and work to achieve this is progressing well.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>The Board noted the information provided in Appendix One.</p>	
<p>Date of next meeting 4 November 2025 at 3.00pm Civic Centre, Committee Room 3</p>		