

# Cheltenham Borough Council

## Cabinet – 11 June 2024

### Housing Transition Governance Arrangements

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**Accountable member:**

Councillor Flo Clucas, Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services

**Accountable officer:**

Claire Hughes, Director of Governance and Customer Services (Monitoring Officer)

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

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**Key Decision:** No

**Executive summary:**

The Cabinet decision in October 2023 to wind-up Cheltenham Borough Homes and to re-integrate housing services under Cheltenham Borough Council set a clear change in direction to the future delivery of housing services in Cheltenham. The decision was taken for following key reasons:

- To deliver efficiencies across the HRA and General Fund to help protect services and respond to the challenging financial environment created by austerity, the Covid-19 pandemic and an inflation-driven cost of living crisis.
- To drive greater delivery of homes to meet the challenge of a national housing crisis.
- To respond to changes in housing regulations.
- To harness opportunities to improve services to our residents by looking at ways in which we can be more joined up and deliver an improved tenure neutral offer to everyone.

Central to the proposals to wind-up CBH was a clear pledge to place the voice of tenants and leaseholders at the heart of our housing service. Ensuring that our tenants, leaseholders and shared ownership owners can have oversight of, and influence the service they receive will not just meet the test of the regulator but it underlines the administration's earlier commitment to put residents at the centre of our housing offer.

This paper sets out the proposals for the new governance arrangements to reflect the return of

housing management to CBC, which will take effect from 1 July 2024. While the detail of these proposals is vital to establishing effective and robust governance, it has a wider importance in setting a framework that will help to facilitate and create ways in which our residents can play an essential part in helping to shape CBC's housing service.

The structure seeks to ensure effective engagement with tenants, leaseholders and shared ownership owners and provide members with the required level of oversight needed.

**Recommendations: That Cabinet:**

- 1. Approves the governance arrangements, including tenant panel and leaseholder/shared ownership panel**
- 2. Establishes the Housing Cabinet Committee as set out in the terms of reference at Appendix 4**
- 3. Agrees arrangements for tenant representatives on the Housing Cabinet Committee as set out in Paragraph 5.4 of this report**
- 4. Delegates to Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services in consultation with the Leader, the appointment of leaseholders and shared ownership owners on the Housing Cabinet Committee and Leaseholder/Shared Ownership Panel**
- 5. Notes the appointments set out in part 10 of this report**
- 6. Recommends that Council delegates the appointment of members to the Housing Cabinet Committee to Group Leaders**
- 7. Recommends that Council approves the consequential amendments to the constitution to reflect the new governance arrangements**

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## **1. Implications**

### **1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications**

No direct financial or property implications resulting from these recommendations.

**Signed off by:** Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets [gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk).

### **1.2 Legal implications**

None arising directly from this report. The proposals will ensure the effective governance and democratic accountability of key strategic and operational housing functions, services and priorities for the Council.

**Signed off by:** [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk)

### **1.3 Environmental and climate change implications**

The proposed governance arrangements do not mention how the effects on environment and climate change will be accounted for. As CBH is brought back into the Council, consideration needs to be given to how the CBH climate action plan and footprint will be incorporated with the

broader approach being adopted by CBC. Particularly given that to bring the existing housing stock in line with net zero would require circa 4 times the current budget for CBH, which will alter the trajectory to achieving net zero by 2030. To this end, it is envisaged that the CBH decisions also be made subject to Climate Impact Assessment Tool following on from the transfer, to effectively identify and mitigate negative environmental implications.

**Signed off by:** Maizy McCann, Climate Emergency Officer, [Maizy.mccann@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:Maizy.mccann@cheltenham.gov.uk)

## 1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities

This report contributes to the following Corporate Plan Priorities:

- Increasing the number of affordable homes through our £180m housing investment plan
- Ensuring residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity
- Being a more modern, efficient and financially sustainable council

## 1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

An equalities impact assessment screening questionnaire has been completed and is attached at Appendix 2.

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## 2 Background

2.1 In October 2023 a Cabinet decision was taken that authorised the Chief Executive, Executive Director for Finance, Assets and Regeneration, the Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer, and the Housing Partnership Manager to undertake the required review to support the Leader in deciding to wind-up Cheltenham Borough Homes (CBH).

2.2 The decision to re-integrate housing services under Cheltenham Borough Council set a clear change in direction to the future delivery of housing services. The decision was taken for the following key reasons:

- To deliver efficiencies across the HRA and General Fund to help protect services and respond to the challenging financial environment created by austerity, the Covid-19 pandemic and an inflation-driven cost of living crisis.
- To drive greater delivery of homes to meet the challenge of a national housing crisis.
- To respond to changes in housing regulations.
- To harness opportunities to improve services to our residents by looking at ways in which we can be more joined up and deliver an improved tenure neutral offer to everyone.

2.3 Central to the proposals to wind-up CBH was a clear pledge to place the voice of tenants and leaseholders at the heart of our housing service. Ensuring that our tenants and leaseholders can have oversight of, and influence the service they receive will not just meet

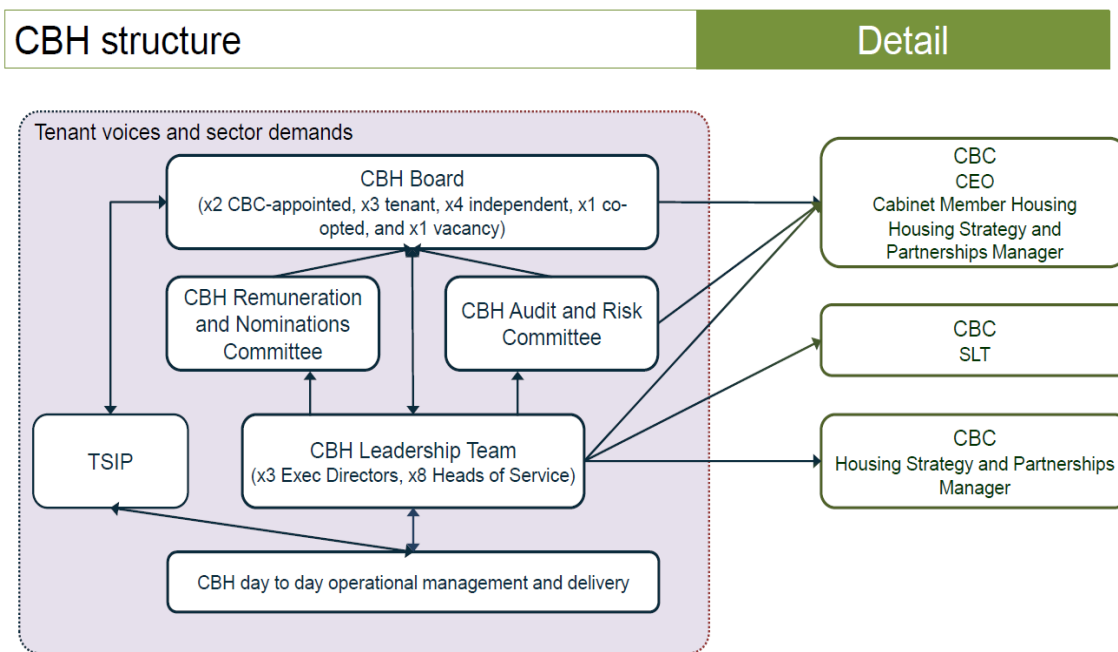
the test of the regulator but it underlines the administration’s earlier commitment to put residents at the centre of our housing offer.

2.4 In addition, the new regulation and regulatory process will require strong governance and understanding by elected members, in practice functioning as a management board. Members will be required to have, and be able to demonstrate they have, clear sight of the operation of the housing service. Therefore, as part of the transition it is necessary for the Council to consider what those governance arrangements should be.

2.5 This paper sets out proposals for the transition governance arrangements, which will take effect from 1 July 2024. While the detail of these proposals is vital to establishing effective and robust governance, it has a wider important in setting a framework that will help to facilitate and create ways in which our residents can play an essential part in helping to shape CBC’s housing service.

### 3 Existing Structure in CBH

3.1 The governance arrangements in CBH are currently as follows:



### 4 Tenant Involvement and Engagement

4.1 It is clear that one of the fundamental shifts in housing services is the need for housing providers to hear the voices of their tenants and to hear those voices loudly. Therefore, it is essential that the Council ensures that tenant involvement and engagement is one of the fundamental principles within its new governance arrangements. Too often tenants are only heard once things have gone wrong or when the Landlord needs them to engage. This is not something that we can allow to happen at CBC.

4.2 How we work must ensure that everyone will have the opportunity to have their voice heard, which means that we must recognise diversity and explore ways to engage with those where the more traditional routes may present barriers or not meet preferences. Therefore, we

need to look beyond traditional methods of engagement to reach those quieter and / or unheard voices. This is something that will be picked up as part of the ongoing tenant voice workstream. In particular, this workstream will take account of feedback from our recent consultation with tenants and leaseholders, as well as ensuring that CBC is compliant with the Regulator of Social Housing's recently updated Consumer Standards. In particular, The Regulator's new Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard sets out requirements for greater emphasis on fairness and respect, understanding the diverse needs of our tenants and leaseholders and ensuring those with protected characteristics have equitable outcomes. It also sets out requirements for greater transparency with our tenants and leaseholders about our housing services and our performance.

4.3 Alongside that work, we need to develop the more formal part of tenant engagement. A space where involved tenants, who are highly informed and empowered, work with the Council to develop our plans, priorities and policies.

4.4 These involved tenants should be our scrutineers and critical friends. Not only to oversee the journey of the tenant voice, but to check and challenge performance and monitor and confirm compliance with the Regulators consumer standards. We want them to help strengthen our governance arrangements. The options below provide consideration of how we can develop this area.

## **5 Governance Framework**

5.1 The return of housing services to CBC is a significant change of direction for the Council and as referenced above is something that will require strong governance and understanding by elected members, who will in practice function as a management board. Therefore, we need to consider the options available for creating that governance framework.

### **5.2 Councillors**

5.2.1 There are a number of options available within the current governance framework of the Council which can be utilised to develop that 'management board', most notably the use of sub-committees or setting up a new committee.

5.2.2 Examples could include setting up a sub-committee of Audit, Compliance and Governance or Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or a separate Housing Committee. However, probably the most effective approach would be to establish a Housing Cabinet Committee, due to the fact that the management responsibility will sit with the Cabinet Member for Housing and ultimately Cabinet in our Executive model of Governance.

5.2.3 This approach would also ensure that the Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee remained available to oversee any specific Audit recommendations and that Overview and Scrutiny Committee could retain a clear scrutiny role.

5.2.4 Draft terms of reference for the Housing Cabinet Committee have been prepared and are attached at Appendix 4.

### **5.3 Officers**

Sitting alongside the member Housing Cabinet Committee will be an officer Compliance Performance Monitoring Group whose role will be to ensure there is a clear understanding of the compliance position in relation to the 'big 6' (i.e. Gas, Fire, Electrical Safety, Water Hygiene, Asbestos and Lift Safety) and the Damp & Mould conditions within our social housing stock. This group, although chaired by the Cabinet Member for Housing, will be made up of officers and will meet quarterly to review compliance performance and identify any risks to the Council.

### **5.4 Tenants**

5.4.1 At present CBH operate a Tenant Scrutiny Improvement Panel (TSIP) which enables tenants to scrutinise and improve the way their housing service is run. Its aim is to ensure that tenants are at the heart of CBH through the scrutiny of services. The panel continue to be influential in making changes and improvements to the business by working closely with CBH staff, the CBH Board and tenants whilst being accountable to all residents and leaseholders.

5.4.2 Whilst this has been largely successful the Council are keen to develop it even further, ensuring that strong links are forged between the tenants and the Housing Cabinet Committee and that feedback received during the consultation and Campbell Tickell's workshop with TSIP is built into the future arrangements.

5.4.3 The current proposal is that TSIP continues to exist as the renamed Tenant Panel. Existing members of TSIP were consulted on this proposal on 19 April, all of whom were supportive and keen to retain their engagement.

### **5.5 Leaseholders**

5.5.1 There are currently limited opportunities for leaseholders to engage with CBH as they are not members of TSIP and the leaseholder place on the board is vacant. This gap was evident in some of the feedback to the consultation.

5.5.2 As a council we are keen to strengthen the opportunities for engagement with both leaseholders and shared owners and this was discussed with TSIP on 19 April. TSIP felt that given the different levels of services available to tenants and leaseholders and the differences between the issues generally raised that it would not be appropriate to have a combined tenant and leaseholder panel. As such, a recommendation was made to give consideration to the creating of a separate leaseholder panel.

5.5.3 Subsequent conversations between officers concluded that a leaseholder panel would be a good addition to the proposed governance framework and may assist in addressing some of issues raised by leaseholders in the recent consultation as well as enhancing our engagement and our compliance with the consumer standards.

## **6 Governance of the Housing Cabinet Committee**

6.1 The committee will comply with the Council's Constitution, including the Council Procedure Rules and Access to Information Procedure Rules. The meetings will be serviced by the Council's Democratic Services Team, who will ensure all the necessary legal requirements for convening meetings are met.

6.2 The Committee will be a non-decision making advisory committee appointed under Section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

6.3 Meetings will be held on a regular agreed basis throughout the year, at least 6 times annually in the municipal year. Dates of meetings will be scheduled to be included in the Council's annual timetable of meetings.

6.4 All meetings will be in person and will, in the same way as any other Council committee meetings, be open to the public to attend and observe proceedings (unless business that is 'confidential' or 'exempt' for the purposes of the Access to Information Procedure Rules is being considered).

6.5 The meetings will be attended by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing but will be chaired by another member.

6.6 The meeting quorum will be four members and must include a mix of both Elected Members and Tenant Representatives to ensure balance.

### **6.7 Terms of Reference**

The recommended Terms of Reference are set out in Appendix 4.

Any future proposed changes to the Committee's terms of reference will be presented to Cabinet for approval.

### **6.8 Appointment of Elected Members to the Committee**

In accordance with the proposed terms of reference it is requested that the Council appoint four elected members of the Council to the Committee, one of whom should be appointed as Chair.

The Committee will be subject to political balance rules.

### **6.9 Appointment of Tenant/Leaseholder Representatives**

6.9.1 The Committee will co-opt at least two tenant representatives, one leaseholder representative and one shared ownership representative. However, in the event that it is not possible to fill the shared ownership position this can be filled by another tenant or leaseholder.

6.9.2 To facilitate some consistency and to start strengthening the link between the Committee and the tenant panel it is recommended that the two tenant representatives initially consist of one of the existing tenant representatives on the CBH Board and one member of TSIP.

6.9.3 There are no existing leaseholders or shared ownership representatives on the CBH board, therefore these will need to be recruited. The council will undertake a targeted campaign, using the role profile at Appendix 5. The campaign will include digital and traditional methods targeting. It is intended that the leaseholder representative will also sit on the leaseholder panel.

## **7 Governance of the Tenant Panel**

7.1 At this stage it is intended that the tenant panel adopt similar terms of reference to those that exist for TSIP. These are set out at Appendix 6.

## **8 Governance of the Leaseholder/Shared Ownership Panel**

8.1 It is intended that the leaseholder/shared ownership panel adopt the terms of reference as set out in Appendix 7.

## **9 Feedback from Scrutiny Task Group**

9.1 The proposals were presented to the Scrutiny Task Group on 22 March who were in support of the proposed way forward.

## **10 Statutory Appointments**

10.1 As part of the consumer standards and the Housing Ombudsman Code of Practice the council is also required to nominate various officers and members who will have overall responsibility for the following areas:

- Health and Safety
- Consumer Standards and Complaints
- Member with responsibility for complaints

10.2 It is therefore recommended that the following appointments are made:

- Officer with responsibility for Health and Safety - Paul Jones, Deputy Chief Executive
- Officer with responsibility for Consumer Standards and Complaints – Claire Hughes, Director of Governance and Customer Services
- Member with responsibility for complaints – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing and Customer Services

## **11 Key risks**

11.1 Key risks are identified in the risk register attached at Appendix 1



**Report author:**

Claire Hughes, Director of Governance and Customer Services –  
[claire.hughes@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:claire.hughes@cheltenham.gov.uk)

**Appendices:**

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Equality Impact Assessment
- iii. Proposed Governance Structure
- iv. Terms of Reference – Housing Cabinet Committee
- v. Role Profile
- vi. Terms of Reference – Tenant Panel
- vii. Terms of Reference – Leaseholder/Shared Ownership Panel

**Background information:**

[Cabinet Report October 2023](#)

**Appendix 1: Risk Assessment**

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
1	If the council does not have a governance structure that is fit for purpose, then it may not fulfill its statutory requirements in relation to the Housing Regulations	Director of Governance & Customer Service	4	4	16	Reduce	Implement an effective and fit for purpose governance structure.  Review the structure after 12 months of operation	Director of Governance & Customer Service	July 2024  July 2025
2	If the council does not have a governance structure that provides input from tenants, leaseholder and shared ownership owners then it may fail to meet the requirements of the consumer standards	Director of Governance & Customer Service	4	4	16	Reduce	Implement an effective and fit for purpose governance structure.  Review the structure after 12 months of operation	Director of Governance & Customer Service	July 2024  July 2025
3	If the council does not have a governance structure that is fit for purpose then it may result in an inability to identify areas of failure and areas of improvement	Director of Governance & Customer Service	4	4	16	Reduce	Implement an effective and fit for purpose governance structure.  Review the structure after 12 months of operation	Director of Governance & Customer Service	July 2024  July 2025

## Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment (Screening)

### 1. Identify the policy, project, function or service change

#### a. Person responsible for this Equality Impact Assessment

Officer responsible: Claire Hughes	Service Area: Governance and Customer Services
Title: Housing Governance Arrangements	Date of assessment: 13 May 2024
Signature: C.Hughes	

#### b. Is this a policy, function, strategy, service change or project?

Other

If other, please specify: Update to Councils Governance arrangements

#### c. Name of the policy, function, strategy, service change or project

Update to Councils Governance arrangements

Is this new or existing?

**New or proposed**

**Please specify reason for change or development of policy, function, strategy, service change or project**

To reflect the return of the management of the councils housing stock to CBC

#### d. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes and who is likely to benefit from it?

Aims:

- To ensure compliance with housing regulations and consumer standards
- Continually improve housing services
- Have a governance structure that is fit-for-purpose and facilitates the ability to identify areas of improvement
- Provide clear lines of accountability for housing services, particularly in the areas of compliance

Objectives:	To demonstrate our commitment to ensure full compliance with all legal, regulatory and statutory requirements.
Outcomes:	This structure will ensure that employees and members are aware of their roles and responsibilities with the governance framework and facilitate engagement with tenants, leaseholders and share ownership owners.
Benefits:	Demonstrating compliance with the councils legal and statutory responsibilities as a Landlord.

**e. What are the expected impacts?**

Are there any aspects, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could have an impact on the lives of people, including employees and customers.	<b>Yes</b>
Do you expect the impacts to be positive or negative?	<b>Positive</b>

Please provide an explanation for your answer:

This governance structure may have potential positive impacts but at the current time this is unknown.

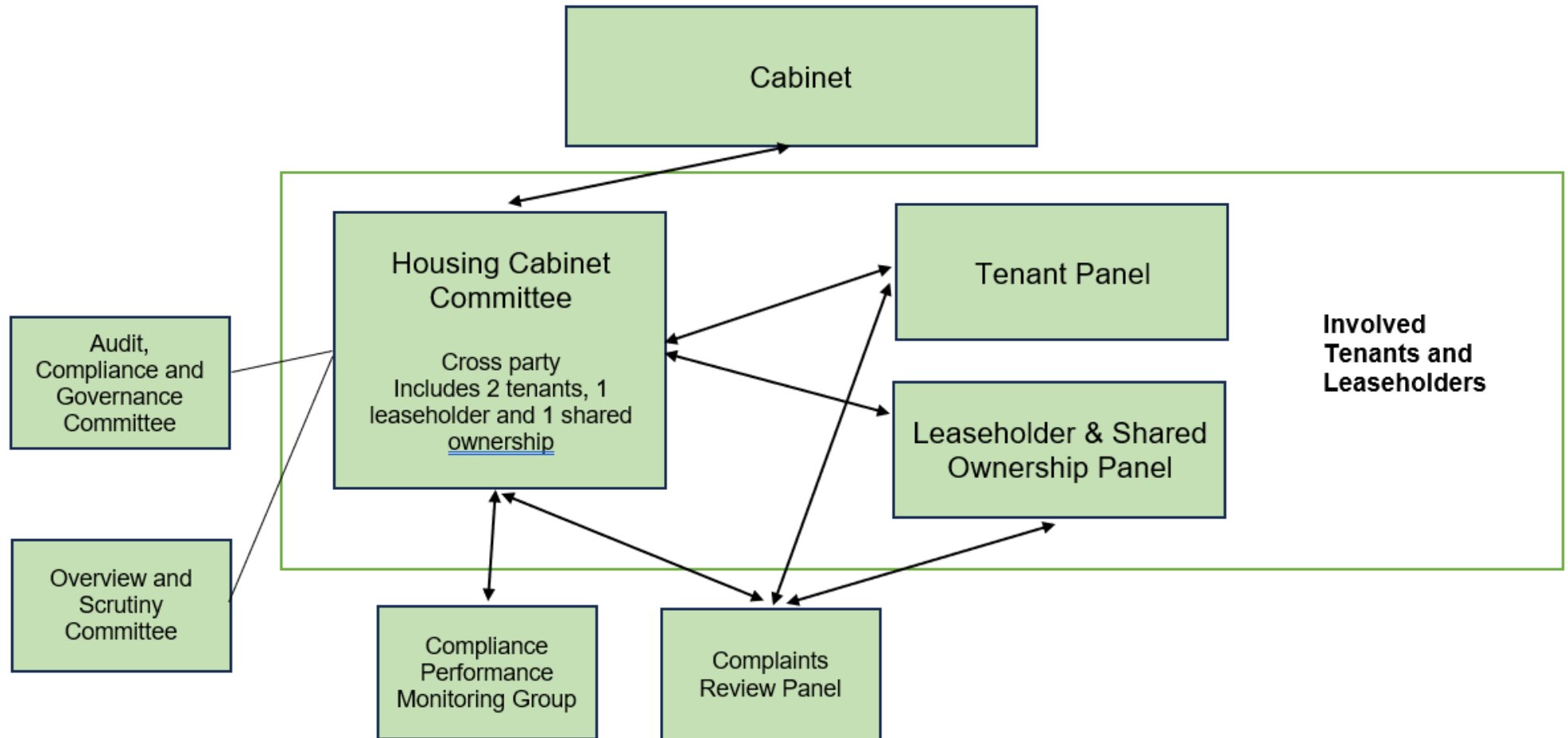
**If your answer to question e identified potential positive or negative impacts, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.**

**f. Identify next steps as appropriate**

Stage Two required	<b>No</b>
Owner of Stage Two assessment	
Completion date for Stage Two assessment	

Please move on to Stage 2 if required ([intranet link](#)).

**Appendix 3: Proposed Structure**



## **Appendix 4: Draft Terms of Reference for Housing Cabinet Committee**

**Purpose:** The Committee is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the housing services to the Council's housing stock. This includes the reviewing of the performance of all housing functions and the engagement of residents in the effective delivery of services.

As an advisory committee it has no decision-making powers of its own but may make recommendations to the Cabinet or Council on matters relating to the discharge of their housing functions, insofar as those functions relate to the Council's housing stock.

### **Membership**

The Committee will be composed of:

- five elected councillors - The Committee will be attended by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing and from the remaining four elected councillors one will be Chair, appointed in accordance with the Council's appointments process.
- four co-opted residents from the Council's housing stock, consisting of two tenants, one leaseholder and one shared ownership representative - Residents will be appointed to the Committee by the Cabinet. Resident appointees are expected to serve a minimum two-year term. In the event that it is not possible to fill the shared ownership position this will be filled by another tenant or leaseholder.

The committee will be subject to political balance rules.

### **Arrangements**

Meetings will be held on a regular agreed basis throughout the year, at least 6 times annually. Dates of meetings will be scheduled to be included in the Council's annual timetable of meetings.

All meetings will be in person.

The meetings will be serviced by the Council's Democratic Services Team.

Meeting Quorum is four and must include a mix of both elected members and resident representatives to ensure balance.

Training will be arranged for Members so that they can contribute fully to the governance and oversight of services and provide appropriate challenge where necessary.

The Committee will be subject to the Council's Constitution, including the Council Procedure Rules and the Access to Information Procedure Rules, in line with other Council committees.

All Committee Members must sign and adhere to the Member Code of Conduct as adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council.

## **General**

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis at the start of the municipal year and if any changes are required, they will be taken back to Cabinet for approval.

## **Committee Responsibilities**

Within its remit the committee will:

- Monitor performance and delivery of the consumer standard including the new tenancy satisfaction measures.
- Promote equalities and the diverse interest of residents and leaseholders.
- Monitor the impacts of investment in ensuring the Council maintains decent homes, fire and building safety and customer satisfaction.
- Provide reports to the Council's Cabinet and to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee (as required)
- Review draft reports on significant decisions to be taken by the Council in relation to the housing function.
- Be consulted on and advise on key changes to strategy, key policies, significant service changes and development proposals.
- Have sight of any scrutiny reports that are produced from any service audits or reviews that are carried out.
- Provide oversight of the savings to the Housing Revenue Account projected by virtue of the transfer of the service back to the council.
- Receive and consider complaints data to inform service delivery.
- Have oversight of the risk register for housing services.
- Provide strong and effective connectivity between the Council and the Tenant Panel.
- Act in accordance with the Council's powers and responsibilities and its Constitution

## **Appendix 5: Role Profile of Tenant, Leaseholder and Shared Ownership Representatives**

### **Purpose of the Housing Cabinet Committee:**

The Committee is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the housing services to the Council's housing stock. This includes the reviewing of the performance of all housing functions and the engagement of residents in the effective delivery of services.

As an advisory committee it has no decision-making powers of its own but may make recommendations to the Cabinet or Council on matters relating to the discharge of their housing functions, insofar as those functions relate to the Council's housing stock.

**Role:** Committee Members for Housing Cabinet Committee

**Tenants and Residents Payments:** This is a voluntary position however reasonable travel expenses to attend the meetings will be reimbursed.

**Time Commitment:** The appointment will be for an initial two-year term. Committee members will be expected to attend six committee meetings per municipal year.

**Training and Development Opportunities:** Cheltenham Borough Council will provide training and development opportunities to support committee members in their role.

**Key Areas of Responsibilities:** The Housing Cabinet Committee will have no decision-making powers of its own but will make recommendations to the Cabinet and Council on matters relating to the housing service.

Key areas of responsibility for committee members are:

- Review performance and delivery of the consumer standard (Residents' Charter) including the new satisfaction measures.
- Promote equalities and the diverse interest of residents and leaseholders.
- Review the impacts of investment in ensuring the Council maintains decent homes, fire and building safety and customer satisfaction.
- Provide reports to the Council's Cabinet and to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee (as required)
- Review draft reports on significant decisions to be taken by the Council in relation to the housing function.
- Be consulted on and advise on key changes to strategy, key policies, significant service changes and development proposals.
- Have sight of any scrutiny reports that are produced from any service audits or reviews that are carried out.
- Provide oversight of the savings to the Housing Revenue Account projected by virtue of the transfer of the service back to the council.
- Receive and consider complaints data to inform service delivery.
- Have oversight of the risk register for housing services.
- Provided strong and effective connectivity between the Council and the Tenant Panel.
- Act in accordance with the Council's powers and responsibilities and its Constitution



**Personal Qualities, Knowledge and Experience:** The following characteristics, knowledge, and/or experiences (or commitment to gain them) would be advantageous to the role of a Committee Member:

- Understanding of the needs and aspirations of the communities in Cheltenham
- Understanding of the housing delivery service and its aims and objectives
- Ability to work with others and build relationships
- Good Communication skills
- Confidence and Enthusiasm
- Commitment to the Committee
- Commitment to training and development to perform this role
- Personal integrity, honesty, and objectivity

## **Appendix 6 – Tenant Panel Terms of Reference**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Tenant Panel (Panel) is:

- To monitor the performance of the Council in providing quality housing services;
- To consider ways of enhancing resident involvement in all appropriate areas of the Council's housing operations and review major housing customer information issues;
- In liaison with the complaint panel, ensure that the housing Complaints Policy and Procedure remains an effective method for customers to provide formal feedback or raise concerns;
- To assist with planned housing related service reviews.

### **Membership and Attendance**

The membership of the panel will include:

- 9 members in total
- Members will drawn from representatives across the borough. Customer representatives will include elected Street, Scheme and Block representatives and the Chairs of Tenant and Residents Associations, and Neighbourhood Meeting groups.
- Consideration will also be given to tenants who have formally expressed an interest.

All members must sign a declaration stating that they have read, understood and will abide by the Members Code of Conduct.

The Panel may at any time appoint a maximum of three co-opted members for projects where those individuals have specific skills, knowledge or experience for the success of the project.

Co-optees may take full part in discussion but cannot vote.

Co-optees or other attendees may be excluded from Panel meetings if members believe it to be necessary for the purpose of conducting Panel business. For example, on issues of a confidential or sensitive nature.

Members of the Panel must make every effort to give at least 3 working days notice of absence from a meeting to the Administrator except in unforeseen circumstances. If apologies are not received from a member, they will be recorded as absent in the minutes.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel will be appointed by the Panel annually from its current members. The Chair will have a casting vote. In the absence of the Chair and the appointed Vice Chair, the remaining members present will elect one of their number to Chair the meeting. The replacement Chair will have a casting vote.

The Panel may ask any officer or employee of CBC to attend any meeting and provide pertinent information as necessary subject to the prior approval of the Chair of the Panel in consultation with the relevant Director.

The Panel may also invite anyone who is not a staff member of CBC to attend where such

attendance contributes to the work of the Panel.

## **Quorum**

The quorum necessary for the transaction of business will be a minimum of five Panel members present (excluding co-optees). A duly convened meeting of the Panel at which a quorum is present will be competent to exercise all or any of the authorities, powers and discretions vested in or exercisable by the Panel.

## **Frequency of Meetings**

The Panel will meet at least four times yearly and more frequently as circumstances require. Meetings are arranged having regard to the annual cycle of meetings for the Housing Cabinet Committee.

The Panel Chair will convene a meeting upon written request by any Panel member who considers it necessary.

## **Role and Aims of the Tenant Panel**

The role and aim of the Panel is:

- to scrutinise and challenge the work of the council to ensure continuous improvement in housing service delivery for residents subject to appropriate regulatory and financial constraints;
- to ensure that residents are involved in influencing the council's strategic direction on housing delivery reflecting the needs and aspirations of its customers;
- to strengthen the links between current resident involvement activity and governance structures, to ensure that residents are able to influence the council's decision-making process

## **Duties**

The Panel can refer to a wide range of both formal and informal sources of information to support its work programme and priorities. The Panel will develop an initial action plan (based on evidence from the sources such as the examples detailed below) which will be reviewed annually:

- Performance indicators and other operational reports
- The Corporate plans
- Satisfaction Surveys
- Complaints
- Service standards and local offers (in line with regulatory requirements)
- Inspections, mock inspections and peer reviews
- Mystery Shoppers
- Audits
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Benchmarking with other council housing providers

## **General**

On a regular basis, and at least annually, the Panel will review its own performance and terms of reference to ensure it is operating at maximum effectiveness. Learning and development will be reviewed and recorded in an annual report.

## **Reporting**

The Chair of the Panel will report on the Panel's business to the Housing Cabinet Committee.

All decisions of the Committee regarding recommendations from the Panel will be reported back to the Panel in a timely manner.

The Administrator will distribute copies of the minutes of meetings of the Panel to all members.

## **Training**

Members will be required to undertake training prior to joining the Panel.

All members will be required to undertake mandatory Equality and Diversity training.

## **Support and Access to Information**

- The Community Involvement Team (CIT) will provide support to the Panel and will act as the link between the Panel and the Council;
- Administrative support of the Panel is provided by the CIT;
- The agenda and supporting documents for each meeting will be sent out 7 clear days prior to the meeting.
- The CIT will administer members' expenses on behalf of the Panel. This will include support with transport to meetings, room bookings, printing and copying, stationery etc;
- The Panel will be able to request reports and information from the Council to carry out its activities. Request for information must be made via the Community Services Manager;
- The Panel will be provided with the relevant resources to operate effectively.

## **Appendix 7 – Leaseholder/Shared Ownership Panel Terms of Reference**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Leaseholder/Shared Ownership Panel (Panel) is:

- To monitor the performance of the Council in providing quality housing services to leaseholders and shared ownership owners;
- Help inform policy for leaseholder and home ownership schemes
- Represent the interests of leaseholders and shared ownership owners in Cheltenham

### **Membership and Attendance**

The membership of the panel is as follows:

- 5 members in total
- Members will be drawn from representatives across the borough.

All members must sign a declaration stating that they have read, understood and will abide by the Members Code of Conduct.

Members of the Panel must make every effort to give at least 3 working days notice of absence from a meeting to the Administrator except in unforeseen circumstances. If apologies are not received from a member, they will be recorded as absent in the minutes.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel will be appointed by the Panel annually from its current members. The Chair will have a casting vote. In the absence of the Chair and the appointed Vice Chair, the remaining members present will elect one of their number to Chair the meeting. The replacement Chair will have a casting vote.

The Panel may ask any officer or employee of CBC to attend any meeting and provide pertinent information as necessary subject to the prior approval of the Chair of the Panel in consultation with the relevant Director.

The Panel may also invite anyone who is not a staff member of CBC to attend where such attendance contributes to the work of the Panel.

### **Quorum**

The quorum necessary for the transaction of business will be a minimum of three Panel members present (excluding co-optees). A duly convened meeting of the Panel at which a quorum is present will be competent to exercise all or any of the authorities, powers and discretions vested in or exercisable by the Panel.

### **Frequency of Meetings**

The Panel will meet twice a year and more frequently as circumstances require.

Meetings will be arranged having regard to the annual cycle of meetings for the Housing Cabinet Committee.

The Panel Chair will convene a meeting upon written request by any Panel member who considers it necessary.

### **Duties**

The Panel can refer to a wide range of both formal and informal sources of information to support its work programme and priorities. The Panel will develop an initial action plan (based on evidence from the sources such as the examples detailed below) which will be reviewed annually:

- Performance indicators and other operational reports
- The Corporate plans
- Satisfaction Surveys
- Complaints
- Service standards and local offers (in line with regulatory requirements)
- Inspections, mock inspections and peer reviews
- Audits
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Benchmarking with other council housing providers

### **General**

On a regular basis, the Panel will review its own performance and terms of reference to ensure it is operating at maximum effectiveness.

### **Reporting**

The Chair of the Panel will report on the Panel's business to the Housing Cabinet Committee.

All decisions of the Committee regarding recommendations from the Panel will be reported back to the Panel in a timely manner.

The Administrator will distribute copies of the minutes of meetings of the Panel to all members.

### **Training**

Members will be required to undertake training prior to joining the Panel.

All members will be required to undertake mandatory Equality and Diversity training.

### **Support and Access to Information**

- The Community Involvement Team (CIT) will provide support to the Panel and will act as the link between the Panel and the Council;
- Administrative support of the Panel is provided by the CIT;
- The agenda and supporting documents for each meeting will be sent out 7 clear days prior to the meeting.

- The CIT will administer members' expenses on behalf of the Panel. This will include support with transport to meetings, room bookings, printing and copying, stationery etc;
- The Panel will be able to request reports and information from the Council to carry out its activities. Request for information must be made via the Community Services Manager;
- The Panel will be provided with the relevant resources to operate effectively.