



Minutes – Lewisham Council Leaseholder Forum 15th September 2026

Tuesday 15 September 2026 - 18.30
Microsoft Teams video conference

Chair: Lisa Keating (LK)

Lewisham Staff: Emma Mills (EM), Glenda Omogbai (GO), Yvonne Lemonius (YL), Duncan Carragher (DC), Zeinab Traore (ZT)

Councillor: Councillor Natalie Thomas (NT), Cabinet Member for Housing

Meeting attendance: (A&R), (CC), (C), (DW), (GE), (H), (HL), (I), (JC), (LSS), (LB), (LR), (M), (MA), (RB), (RM), (SH), and other attendees joining online.

Apologies: Michael Reece (MR)

1.	Welcome and introductions
1.1	LK welcomed attendees, noted the apologies, introduced DC as Interim Head of Stock Investment and Asset Management, and invited those present to introduce themselves.
2.	Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2026
2.1	LK summarised the principal concerns raised at the June meeting: major works communication, transparency of costs, access to stock condition information, changing messages, contractor quality, delayed documents, trust and historic commitments.
2.2	EM confirmed that the leaseholder satisfaction report had been deferred to the next forum because this meeting was focused on major works. A member-friendly paper would be circulated in advance.
2.3	H noted that leaseholders had been seeking a published maintenance plan for more than five years and asked for honesty about when this would be available. LK acknowledged that the absence of a clear forward plan had fallen short of leaseholder expectations. The stock condition survey was nearing completion, and the planned maintenance programme would be addressed later in the meeting.
2.4	LR supported these concerns and described the effect of historic major works, unresolved defects and high estimated bills on leaseholders at the Dacres Estate. She requested that the Council examine how the works had been commissioned and managed. LK said individual and historic issues would need to be followed up separately, while the service also needed to establish a clear, cost-effective and defensible future programme.



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2.5	Decision: The minutes of 16 June 2026 were agreed as factually correct.
3.	Action log
3.1	LK explained that no action would be closed where forum members considered that further information was required. The action log had been published before the meeting.
3.2	Refuse chutes, recycling and estate communication LR raised recurring blockages, flies, waste outside blocks, lack of consultation on food-waste arrangements and the need for clearer guidance about using refuse chutes. LB said the chutes worked well on her estate and asked that decisions be based on consultation with each estate. She also reported that relocating recycling bins and introducing food waste had worked well locally. LK said there should be estate-by-estate liaison before chute closures and agreed to establish what consultation, and communication had taken place at Dacres Estate and Bakers. Action: LK to seek an explanation of the consultation and communication on refuse chute, bin relocation and food-waste changes at Dacres Estate.
3.3	Planned maintenance and communal repairs H said the action log continued to show delays in producing the stock condition and planned maintenance programme. LB and M described communal drainage, external condition and repair problems and noted that a reactive system may understate need when residents have stopped reporting repeat failures. Decision: The action on analysing repairs by property type would remain open, pending clearer commentary on how recurring blocks and estate issues are identified.
3.4	Warranties and front entrance doors LR objected to closing the action on guarantees and warranties. Members said the Council should hold records where leaseholders had submitted evidence of compliant replacement doors and should provide formal confirmation. RM asked how the replacement programme could be planned without reliable records of doors already replaced. LK acknowledged weaknesses in record keeping and agreed to seek information on overall compliance, the replacement programme and what evidence could be shared. Action: MR to provide information on the front entrance door compliance and replacement programme, including the recording of leaseholder-installed doors, warranties, and the purpose of barcodes placed on some doors. This action remains open.



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3.5	Organisation charts and attendance EM explained that updated charts were needed because of recent staffing changes. DC confirmed that a chart was available for his service. Action: Updated structure charts for relevant services to be shared by the end of October 2026. LSS requested that senior officers responsible for agenda items attend future meetings so they can answer questions and be accountable. LK accepted the principle that the right officers should attend, and said cancellation may need to be considered if essential presenters cannot attend.
3.6	Pest control and estate management MA raised concerns about unresolved pest-control issues, disrepair and poor coordination between pest control and repairs. LK said pest control policy was being reviewed across services and should return as a separate forum item. Action: LK to include pest control and associated estate management issues in the forward plan for a future forum.
4.	Cabinet Member for Housing update
4.1	Independent review of major works engagement NT introduced herself and said casework from leaseholders had shown recurring concerns about major works consultation, including unavailable documents and documents arriving shortly before consultation deadlines. NT confirmed that the Council had invited bids for an independent review of the major works consultation and engagement process. The tender deadline was midday on 25 September 2026. Leaseholder engagement would be integral to the review, and the resulting report would be published. C clarified that this was a review of stakeholder engagement, not a survey of physical work. NT confirmed this and said external review was intended to provide objective scrutiny rather than the Council review itself.

4.2	Questions and comments RM asked how the review would lead to lasting in-house knowledge, training, and improvement given previous external reviews. NT said training and service changes were intended to follow the review and committed to doing what she could to ensure that recommendations led to action. CC asked how accountability would be strengthened. NT acknowledged the need for greater accountability and service capacity, while noting that improvement would take time. MA and LB discussed whether sinking funds could help avoid sudden large bills. LB cautioned that this should not be considered without a reliable, planned maintenance programme. NT agreed that the service was not yet in a position to pursue that approach.
4.3	Service capacity and resident impact NT said work was under way to strengthen the Stock Investment and Asset Management service, including recruitment, to improve its capacity to plan and deliver major works. LSS, CC, and other members emphasised the immediate financial and personal impact of large, estimated bills, unanswered questions, uncertainty for sales, and lack of trust. Members asked for accountable senior officers to provide clear written answers and measurable results. NT acknowledged the impact and said trust would depend on delivering results rather than further assurances.
5.	Planned major works programme update
5.1	Three-to-five-year programme DC presented the planned approach. Savills' survey information would be used to develop a three-to-five-year investment programme, supported by the new asset database. DC said decisions would draw on stock condition data, repairs history, damp and mould cases, disrepair claims, building safety requirements and resident feedback. The intention was to share the programme early in 2027. DC described a gateway, go/no-go operating model so that proposed works would be supported by evidence, and information could be shared with leaseholders before decisions progressed.
5.2	Procurement, building safety and governance DC said a new procurement strategy would consider a wider mix of specialist contractors and professional services. This work was expected to take 12 to 18 months. DC confirmed that Building Safety Act requirements were embedded in current decision making. DC said the operating model would be introduced for the 2027/28 programme. The first internal governance meeting was scheduled for 28 September 2026, with initial business cases expected to enter the new process in October or November and before Christmas.

5.3	Review of current major works schemes DC explained that Michael Dyson Associates was reviewing selected current schemes to consider the necessity and scope of work, delivery approach, good practice and value for money. Initial results were expected by mid-October 2026. C asked whether the review of Maple, Camden and North Houses was separate from the new three-to-five-year programme. DC confirmed that it was separate. A letter updating affected leaseholders had been posted on the day of the meeting. Further communication would follow after the report. The existing Section 20 process remained live at that point. I asked whether affected leaseholders would be consulted as part of the Michael Dyson review. DC confirmed that leaseholder engagement would take place.
5.4	Outstanding questions and communications LSS requested evidence of the review of appointment process, conflict checks, methodology and resident involvement, and responses to outstanding correspondence and information requests. LK apologised for the delay and committed to confirming a response date after discussion with the officers responsible. I asked that communications be sent to correspondence addresses and by email where possible. EM explained that formal notices must be served at the leasehold property in accordance with the lease. Where a UK correspondence address is recorded, copies should also be sent there. The current arrangements did not allow formal notices to be served electronically. Action: EM to download the questions and comments from the meeting chat, compile them into a response table, and provide written answers. Action: DC to ensure affected leaseholders receive further written communication following the Michael Dyson review, including the implications for the proposed works and any implications for leaseholders.
6.	Leaseholder Forum terms of reference
6.1	Case for change LK presented a proposed framework for discussion and co-design. The existing terms of reference were outdated, referring to Lewisham Homes, had an unclear purpose and participation model, and did not provide a strong feedback or accountability loop.



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6.2	Proposed scope and boundaries LK proposed that the forum focus on borough-wide, recurring and systemic issues, including service charges, major works and Section 20, repairs and maintenance, building and fire safety, caretaking and environmental services, complaints learning, performance and relevant legislative or policy changes. LK proposed that the forum review and test policies and communications, make recommendations and monitor outcomes. It would not replace complaints or statutory consultation processes, determine individual liability, provide individual legal advice, or discuss identifiable personal cases.
6.3	Participation and accountability LK proposed clearer roles, open agenda setting, accessible and potentially hybrid participation, chair and vice-chair, quarterly meetings, additional topic workshops, a six-to-nine-month forward plan and papers issued in advance. LK proposed an accountability cycle of listening, logging, acting, reporting, learning, and closing actions. Members were invited to comment on purpose, scope, chairing, wider representation, agenda priorities, and the reporting needed to show impact. Action: LK to circulate the presentation and consultation material, collect feedback, revise the terms of reference, and present a final draft at the next forum.
7.	Consent items
7.1	EM explained that consent items had been used to provide updates requested by members where no discussion was planned, but several previous consent items had since become substantive agenda items. The purpose and future use therefore needed agreement. LR said matters with significant implications, such as major works payment arrangements, should not be placed in a consent section that prevented discussion. Decision: The role and format of consent items will be considered as part of the revised terms of reference and future operating model.
8.	Future agenda items and next meeting
8.1	Proposed future items: leaseholder satisfaction; pest control and estate management; major works programme and review outcomes; revised terms of reference; and the future use of consent items.
8.2	EM advised that the next forum was likely to take place during the week commencing 23 November 2026, subject to confirmation around the rent and service charge timetable. Action: EM to circulate the confirmed date and meeting arrangements.



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8.3	EM confirmed that LK and DC's presentations would be published on the Leaseholder Forum webpages. Action: EM to publish presentations on the Leaseholder Forum webpages and circulate them to forum members.
9.	Close
9.1	LK thanked attendees for their contributions and apologised for the meeting overrunning.

There being no other business; the meeting closed at approximately 20.42.

Next Leaseholder Forum: 24 November 2026