

Service & Performance Panel (SPP)
Thursday 12 June 2025
Hybrid (In person/ Teams meeting)
Civic suite, Catford, SE6 4RU, 6.30pm



Present:

Resident Members

Nigel (N) (Chair)
Theresa (T)
Keith (K)
Gosia (G)

Lewisham Council housing staff

Gillian Douglas (GD) - Executive Director of Housing
Chris Brown (CB) - Director of Housing Quality & Investment
Carol Hinvest (CH) – Director of Resident Engagement and Services
Clare Hopkins (CHo) - Head of Housing and Communities
Kemi Ojutalayo (KO)- Head of Stock Investment and Asset Management

Resident Observers

Moh (M)
Ian (I)

Apologies:

Kevin
Rosie
Alys Exley-Smith (AES) - Community Relations Manager

Item ref	Item	Owner
1	Welcome and introductions	
1.1	N welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. Agreement was made to record the meeting for the purpose of the minutes, and to be provided to Savills for the upcoming mock inspection. Two resident observers present introduced themselves. The observers (M and I) are not participating in the meeting but will be present.	
2	Minutes	
2.1	No issues of accuracy identified. The minutes of the meeting of 13 March 2025 were agreed as a true record.	
2.2	Action log	

2.3	<p>Item 2 – Keep open- To keep the jargon Buster (for common acronyms on the action list- a separate document is to be provided to the panel alongside the papers</p> <p>ACTION- produce a ‘jargon buster’ to be provided at meetings and keep refreshed/ updated.</p>	AES
2.4	<p>Item 3 – Keep open- The SPP Chair and Community Relations (CR) team are working to recruit more members to SPP.</p> <p>ACTION- continue to promote and recruit for the SPP</p>	AES/ NB
2.5	<p>T: made a request for the stock condition survey for their property to be shared but hasn’t received it.</p> <p>ACTION- Kemi to share T’s stock condition report via email</p>	KO
2.6	<p>CHo proposed to close remaining actions, except for the jargon Buster, and those that have not yet been populated.</p>	
2.7	<p>All other items/ actions agreed by panel to close. The Chair’s additional actions raised after the meeting will be addressed in the actions from this meeting</p>	
3	Update on ombudsman and regulation	
3.1	<p>GD: We've been under a regulatory notice since March 2024, and that followed a self-referral to the regulator by the Council in the previous December. We self-referred due to a high volume of repairs, the level of non-decency in our homes and the number of overdue fire safety remedial actions.</p>	
3.2	<p>GD: We have approximately 150 live complaints and need to demonstrate that we've acted on the learning and the findings, and over and above that.</p>	
3.3	<p>GD: The ‘Housing Ombudsman’ recently conducted a special investigation and spoke to residents as part of this. We will share the report of their findings with residents when we receive it.</p> <p>ACTION- To share results of the housing ombudsman investigation with the panel, and wider.</p>	GD
3.4	<p>We're currently in a mock inspection that will take about 12 weeks. Notification of the real inspection taking place will be received a few weeks in advance.</p>	
3.5	<p>N requested information on how residents can take part in the mock inspection.</p>	

3.6	GD: Based on feedback from other councils we have spoken to, they generally have one meeting with a recognised resident's group, without Officers present. They are also keen to observe meetings like this (SPP), as part of their way of understanding how the Council interacts with its residents.	AES
3.7	N feels opportunities for resident involvement with the mock inspection are limited but understood the reasons for this approach.	
3.8	N requested that any feedback given of the SPP meetings observed by Savills is shared with the SPP. ACTION: Share any feedback from Savills about the SPP meeting with the SPP.	
4	Update on Damp and Mould	
4.1	CB gave an overview of Awaab's law and Lewisham's approach to tackling hazards and improving services to ensure compliance.	
4.2	There have been a series of focus groups held with residents on the policy, procedures, and communication to help shape Lewisham's approach to damp and mould.	
4.3	New regulation states we must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a written summary to a resident within 28 days from the issue being reported to the Council. - Start the process of the works within seven days when a significant hazard is identified. - Be aware that some residents might be vulnerable and will ask questions around people's vulnerability on the first call, or when they report it through e-mail/ the portal. 	
4.4	The stock condition survey highlighted properties and blocks, which are more susceptible to water penetration. We plan to do work which focuses on weatherproofing properties, making sure that there is a more protection for properties, fewer leaks, therefore less damp, mould and condensation within the home, because of the structure of the property.	
4.5	We've layered information of damp & mould with repair history such as leaks and stock conditions. It's helped us prioritise the proactive work on blocks.	
4.6	It is currently difficult to recruit surveyors who are fully trained and qualified. We're having to look at how we can use other members of the staff colleagues and residents to support.	

4.7	The D & M policy received support from the resident focus group, but there are a lot of challenges around capacity and skills that we need to deliver and there are issues around how contractors will perform, and the work specification.	CB
4.8	N: Commended the work of the residents that have been involved in the task and finish group. He shared their concern about the resources to deliver on time and asked what we will not be going because we're doing this- i.e. the Opportunity Cost. I think it's something that residents will have an interest in moving forward. ACTION- The panel to track progress of new approach to damp & mould.	
4.9	N: Not everyone will be able to do an e-mail, so there will be a need to support those referrals, a whole system approach to this feels appropriate.	
4.10	GD: Meeting these new service standards is a challenge, but we must try. We are talking to public health about bridging resource to understand vulnerabilities and improve access for residents, but people's health and their circumstances change.	
4.11	GD: We'd like to get resident feedback of potentially offering self-use kits which are often promoted to landlords at housing conferences, for less severe cases. For example, sending these to residents where we can't get an operative out because it hasn't hit the threshold of severity, and to support residents to take their own actions.	
4.12	K: asked whether Lewisham thinks reporting of damp and mould might increase as winter approaches?	
4.13	CB: The difference of inside temperatures and outside temperatures are more acute. We need to know which properties are likely to be most affected due to their structure. We are improving ventilation when we are doing other types of works like kitchens, bathrooms and when we put in scaffolding up on the outside to do windows. We've got to be able to manage it as a reactive organisation as well as proactively through the capital programme.	
4.14	G: People can soon report online with the pictures- What will that look like? How big is the existing team?	
4.15	CB: Reports are coming through other teams, not just the damp & mould team. People can e-mail, we want to see if they could attach a photograph/ short video within that e-mail. As we develop the portal and its capacity, that type of opportunity will be there as a standard. We have got permission to increase our team by 9,	

<p>4.16</p> <p>4.17</p>	<p>but not recruited to those posts yet. We currently have about six people dealing with damp and mould.</p> <p>We will be making sure that the building's structure is watertight, and thermally efficient. Reducing internal leaks is an area we need to work with leaseholders on. There can be greater difficulty accessing the property, and we must have clear communication routes and processes to ensure access where there is leak damage in other properties.</p> <p>T requested</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - information about the support available to residents living in accommodation managed, but not owned by Lewisham Council (i.e. PSL properties) where the leaseholder is responsible for certain works. - someone contacted her in relation to New Butt Lane and potential to reduce risk of damp in properties there. <p>ACTION- To follow up with T on the above 2 requests</p>	<p>KO</p>
<p>5</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p> <p>5.4</p> <p>5.5</p> <p>5.6</p>	<p>Stock condition survey update</p> <p>CB presented an update following the recent stock condition survey: The stock condition survey has enabled us to develop our stock investment plan. We've been able to access 83% of tenanted properties. We have been working hard to gain access to all properties to ensure we gain a full picture of all the homes. We've recently had many residents contact us to request a stock condition survey, who had previously refused access.</p> <p>Building safety, and communal heating work will be done at the same time on some blocks. Each year, this five-year capital programme will be refined, there'll be tweaks, and we're keen to know how we get this information to residents.</p> <p>We must be more thorough throughout out the whole process. It's a change for our delivery partners because we're asking them to do more work at the beginning and it will be longer until they get to work.</p> <p>The Capital Works programme: Getting the processes right from the start, getting the money identified over a longer period should enable us to deliver more effectively</p> <p>The whole Council is currently looking at all the assets it has, and how we make the limited money go around and identify the correct investments, as part of an asset management framework.</p> <p>N: I think it might be helpful in terms of the asset management framework to get an idea in terms of what is in scope for resident</p>	

	<p>involvement and engagement and what is out of scope. Lewisham Tenants fund could potentially support with funding to support residents to work with you on this work, perhaps through a co-production approach to identify priorities.</p> <p>ACTION- Engage residents in relation to the asset management framework/ strategy</p>	CB
5.7	GD: There should be resident consultation around the asset management strategy, but we should remember that the stock condition survey has given us hard evidence on what we should prioritise.	
5.8	G: Is the system from the stock investment and repairs the same system? So, if the customer resident calls customer service, would they be able to get the information straight away from the customer service? Is it the system that works together?	
5.9	GD: It's not currently joined up. For the capital programme we've got a system which we're going to use in the short term, but we are keen to explore whether the two major systems we currently use (HMS or total mobile) can do that work as well.	
6	Performance update	
6.1	CH went over the performance report paper, with a focus on the tenant satisfaction measures.	
6.2	The report says where the highest levels of satisfaction are, which are currently: The landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them, the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect, satisfaction that the home is safe, and that we keep communal areas clean and well maintained. Those are the highest levels of satisfaction and there have been increases.	
6.3	The biggest jump on the compliance is with the communal passenger lift safety inspections, which has gone up. There is a description in narrative in the box as to why the stage 1 complaints responded to on time was so low for last year, this has considerably increased over April and May.	
6.4	There's been quite a considerable increase in emergency responsive repairs completed on time, and on the call centre performance, last month was it down to 9 minutes.	
6.5	There's been a lot of challenges in leasehold services because of the influx of right to buy applications, and because of the section 20 consultations.	

6.6	<p>N: It's a mixed picture, but there is some signs of stability and some areas of improvement. There are constraints on your productivity in terms of the systems, the quality of the data that that have been mentioned earlier. I think it's probably helpful for us and maybe for the regulator to see mapped against TSM performance what you're doing in terms of mitigating and the challenges you're facing. I am concerned about the number of abandoned calls I have to say because I think if residents can't access the service in a timely manner, then they're negatively impacted. One thing is missing in this report is statistics from the portal.</p> <p>ACTION- To share work happening with panel, to map TSMs and performance. Include statistics from the portal.</p>	CH
6.7	<p>CB: reporting repairs on the portal can intermittently fail, and we only know about the ones that get through. We realise that the portal is not as fit for purpose as it could be and is being replaced with a new portal that will be an integrated part of our housing management system. That process is underway, and we hope that most of the functionality of the new portal will be in the autumn. We are procuring a new system for repairs that will have better functionality for reporting repairs online. There are some workshops taking place over the next couple of weeks and there'll be additional functionality in the resident portal with far better repairs reporting.</p>	
6.8	<p>N: requested information and assurance around who is getting what emails and how long it's taking to turn them around, particularly if things are dropping off with the portal/ emails.</p>	
6.9	<p>CB: I do not believe we have a system that can capture it, I know we can't tell you what has not come through the portal because if it doesn't come through, we don't know it ever existed. We are doing cleansing all the time on e-mail inboxes. Have we got too many? Are they all being managed and staffed? We can bring you the picture of the live ones and where we know that they are being managed, it will be high level</p> <p>ACTION- provide SPP information about the number of emails received by the repairs team.</p>	CB
6.10	<p>G: Residents would like to volunteer to support with procurement for the new portal system. You may need to pay users/ residents to help you, but it would be useful to have the resident input on their user experience.</p> <p>ACTION- To consider re-establishing the resident procurement panel.</p>	CB

7	Resident Review Panel (RRP) actions update	
7.1	NB: I just wanted to commend Di Cox, who's been, a key driver to make sure that this Panel got this information.	
7.2	CHo: This is an update on the three outstanding Resident Review Panel (RRP) reviews where there are outstanding actions. We have had a meeting with the RRP to go through the actions on the independent living, and repairs complaints reviews. The report reflects what's been signed off and agreed. The updates on the new tenant's recommendations have also been shared with panel.	
7.3	We are having six monthly meetings to sign off the actions with the RRP. Most actions are complete, there's a few that are in progress because the dates aren't due yet and there's a handful of overdue one, there's some narrative about why they're overdue on the report.	
7.4	We have discussed with the RRP how we can clearly define the actions, and identify what success looks like. The current review will be a good opportunity to put this in place for the first time.	
7.5	K: Sometimes I feel once the project's done it can lose focus and there's no way of knowing what's changed, there doesn't seem to be much feedback. We need some easy wins and if you surveyed residents afterwards, they'd be able to say we noticed that change, that change made a difference to us. It helps the landlord to evidence the impact and value of resident of resident scrutiny. Panel considered this an important point well made.	
7.6	GD: If it's still in progress, it doesn't mean it's not in our plans. Not everything will be, but these committed to actions are. One examples is in repairs. One of the commitments was that we would look at callbacks, it says here we haven't done it, but we have partially done it because we've been undertaking to phone complainants, and we are doing that.	
7.7	In the contact centre we're implementing call backs for high priority jobs. So, when our call handlers have capacity, they will be doing call backs, which we didn't used to do. Just to give you a little bit of assurance that it might not be shelved completely.	
7.8	We are in a difficult place, recruitment wise, we don't have autonomy to recruit in a rolling cycle because of our budgetary position across the HRA and the General Fund. There are more constraints on us, which has slowed down recruitment. Capacity isn't continuous now, and that does impede some of our activity.	

7.9	N: the fact that when people have the time, they're calling back people who've made complaints- I think that kind of information is really useful for us to know.	
8	Forward plan	
8.1	N suggested we bring items off the consent agenda and back on to the substantive agenda like building safety and a look at the resident engagement framework and how that's functioning. If there are other things that panel want to see on the work programme and other deep dives?	
	ACTION – N and CH to discuss in agenda setting meeting.	N/CH
8.2	One of the things is the performance of the gas contractors as well. I think just in the run up to winter, we might need a little bit more assurance around that.	
9	AOB	
9.1	Ian requested more information about how service charges are calculated for leaseholders.	
9.2	CH: This has been raised at the leasehold forum. All leaseholders are welcome to attend. The information's on the website too. There's a leasehold guide and a guide to section 20 on the website, which will explain that. The leasehold forum is probably the place to raise these issues. That's where we talk about leasehold service charges, both revenue and major works service charges.	
10	Date of next meeting	
10.1	Thursday 11 September 2025 at 6.30pm	
11	Close	
11.1	N thanked everyone for attending and their contributions and closed the meeting at 20:30.	