


<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Customer Services Subcommittee</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Thursday 5 March 2026</b>	
<b>Time</b>	<b>10:00am- 12:00pm</b>	
<b>Location</b>	<b>Teams</b>	
<b>Core Members:</b>		
<b>Paul Hayward (PH)</b>	Board Member and Chair	
<b>Becky Royle (BR)</b>	Board Member	
<b>Kathy Jones (KJ)</b>	Board Member	
<b>Lynn Fonseca (LF)</b>	Tenant Board Member	
<b>James Wood (JW)</b>	Operations Director	
<b>Ros Jones (RJ)</b>	Corporate Director	
<b>Nicky Richardson (NR)</b>	Chair of Customer Scrutiny Panel	
<b>James McGlone (JMc)</b>	Governance and Risk Manager	
<b>Joanna Grivell (JG)</b>	Corporate and Executive Services Manager and Minute Taker	
<b>Apologies:</b>		
<b>Duncan Kerr (DK)</b>	Councillor Board Member	
<b>Richard Amos (RA)</b>	Tenant Board Member	
<b>Jenny Daisley (JD)</b>	Shropshire Council	
<b>Julie Brock (JB)</b>	Shropshire Council	
<b>Presenters:</b>		
<b>Emma Jones (EJ)</b>	Customer Engagement Manager	
<b>Kasim Riaz (KR)</b>	Head of Housing	
<b>Mara Hargreaves (MH)</b>	Marketing Consultant	
<b>Alex Hawley (AH)</b>	Interim Assistant Director of Assets	
<b>Mick Cutler (MC)</b>	Head of Repairs, Maintenance and Voids	
<b>Gemma Griffiths</b>	Head of Corporate Services	

Agenda Item	Agenda Item	Who	When
1	<p><b>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair welcomed all and asked for presenters to keep the report summary brief to ensure time for discussion and questions. There are no items for decisions on today's agenda.</li> <li>No declaration of interest were raised.</li> </ul>		
2	<p><b>Minutes of Last Meeting: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was agreed that the minutes were a true and accurate record of the last meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025.</li> </ul>		
3	<p><b>Action Tracker Review</b> PH gave overview on the action tracker:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PH said we were getting better on the action tracker. It has taken a step backwards and there are some blanks and don't have updates. PH raised there is a lack of ownership of the action tracker. It's a combination of JMc communicating actions to owners and various people making the updates.</li> <li><b>Action 31: Tenancy sustainment</b> – This was about including the income gains as part of tenancy sustainment. PH raised that there is an update for this action around HSF, but it needs to be specific around those tenancy sustainment income gains. The action tracker has something noted but it isn't about the tenancy sustainment gains. Action ongoing.</li> <li><b>Action 35: Arrears target</b> – This was a point from the meeting in September that the targets seemed off. It was a really simple one of what the issue with the September targets was and had they been amended and if they had this action can be closed down. Action ongoing.</li> <li><b>Action: 45 Classification of Vulnerability</b> – This action has no update on the tracker. This is something that Richard Amos raised at the last meeting around the use of the term "vulnerability". We haven't got a response back. We've had a member of this committee raise the fact they're uncomfortable with the term "vulnerability" and we were going to go away and look at it and see whether we could come up with a better phrase than that. And unfortunately, that one hasn't been actioned. This needs to be picked up and dealt with urgently. Action ongoing</li> <li><b>Action 46: The customer priority group and progress</b> – The response on this relates to the Housing Ombudsman determination, this wasn't what the action is asking it is about what our current progress in terms of customer priority. Note the wrong action was updated. This has now been rectified.</li> <li><b>Action 51: Service Charges.</b> PH asked if the committee was happy with the comment we have had back on service charges and the update in terms of rent convergence. The committee agreed. Close.</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Action 52: PH asked if JMc could take away the various points and then recirculate the action tracker. If moving forward, if one person had the responsibility for ensuring the action tracker is updated.</b></li> </ul>	JMc	31/3/26
4	<p><b>Policies Update</b></p> <p>The report was taken as read. GG gave an update on the status of policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are at 76% which is 72 of 95 policies that we have that are in the various approval processes. The Housing policies are close to being ready to circulate for review and that would put the total at 87% complete.</li> <li>• There is still urgency that staff update the remaining 13% policies.</li> <li>• We are hoping that the majority of these policies will be out for approval by the end of March.</li> <li>• In terms of how we manage the policies going forward. Going to Board in the next two weeks is the draft 3 years rolling plan for future policies reviews. The issue has been that staff have had to deal with an awful lot of policies to rewrite all at once. The idea will be that there will be more structured approach going forward to keep it more manageable for everyone.</li> <li>• PH confirmed that the message for this committee is that there is potentially six policies coming in March and two in June. GG confirmed this.</li> <li>• GG thanked the people who have reviewed the policies.</li> </ul> <p><b>The committee was asked to note the update provided on their suite of policies as at the end of February 2026</b></p>		
5	<p><b>Operations Risk Register</b></p> <p>JW gave overview &amp; updates on the Operation Risk Register. Report taken as read.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are now four months into our operations restructure which came into effect in October 2025. We have a declining trend of what we believe are high risk items in operations. JW hopes that the committee can see through the report that performance is improving and performance against management KPIs, there are no serious incidents, and we feel our operations base is under control.</li> <li>• In the sector there are a couple of things coming forward that we might be looking to add to the Operation Risk Register in the future such as the new decent homes standard. We are currently reviewing this and there will be a separate report that is going to the Main Board. After this we will look at adding this onto the risk register as we need to make sure that we are fully satisfied that we have got the information on our stock and we've got the investment plan that we'll need to meet the new decent home standard.</li> <li>• PH said that all the risks seemed to reflect where it should be, and was noting that no Operational risks need escalating at this stage.</li> <li>• RR asked about the cultural bit and how you marry that with the approach to risk from a cultural perspective. JW explained that we have quite a big operations floor at Ptarmigan, and since we have been here, we have had a few shifts around in the office. The most recent shift is that we have moved the Contact Centre right into the middle of the office, so they are at the heart of the operations and are able to reach out to every department. This is to help with getting that first time resolution for customers.</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The operations wing is quite a noisy part of the building. Everything overlaps; there is a huge amount of collaboration. James and the Heads of Service in his area – Mick, Alex and Kas have worked very hard amongst our teams. There is naturally a bit of conflict as it's high pressure and everyone has competing priorities/ budgets, but what we have developed is a really strong atmosphere amongst the team. This morning there has been a nice story on People First around out of hours, where one of our electricians who was on out of hours didn't have the correct parts on his van and two others responded out of hours to get him the right part so he could get out and get a property with a young family back live on electricity. It's those sorts of cultural things when you know it's important to every team member to make sure we always go above and beyond.</li> <li>• What we see now in operations is that we get office attendance above and beyond the minimum statutory, which is 3 days. Quite a lot of the team members now are coming in four and five days a week and that's because they like being here and they like working with their colleagues and there's a good atmosphere in the office.</li> </ul> <p><b>The committee was asked to note the contents of the operations risk register report.</b></p>		
6	<p><b>Repairs, Maintenance and Voids Update</b> MC gave updates on Repairs, Maintenance and Voids. The report was taken as read.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the last quarter, we have got WIP down to 2.5 weeks and reduced the overdue down to under 200 jobs. At this time of year that is good. We have had a lot of damp and mould jobs raised but they have been minor damp and mould.</li> <li>• The guys have had their new vans. We are showing efficiencies in having good van stock which means they are getting more jobs completed.</li> <li>• We have now combined workforce instead of having Voids and Repairs separately. We combined them so they're one maintenance service and we use them where the resources are needed.</li> <li>• RR asked what are the things that are keeping him awake. MC says reporting data quality. The issues are getting sorted and it is getting easier each week. D&amp;M are low level compared to other organisations and stock control is very good. On voids we are working hard to get them to a really low level to increase efficiencies, cost savings and revenue for the Council.</li> <li>• JW said around the sector, repairs and maintenance is the burning platform of housing. The performance of our DLO is remarkable. The transformation that Mick has taken that department through since he's been with the business has come with a lot of pain and he now has a group of operatives that believe in him, that are supported by a strong management chain. To bring it back to the cultural piece they enjoy the job they do and enjoy being at STAR. For a Head of Repairs and Maintenance not to have something keeping him up at night right now shows what a high-performance area of the business that is. It is a testimony to Mick's leadership.</li> <li>• PH asked about the increase of disrepairs and the targeted campaign in Oswestry. Is there anything we are trying to do to get ahead of the</li> </ul>		

	<p>ambulance chasers. MC explained unfortunately they will go and door knock, and a lot of the cases we have had, have been rebuffed. We've had no history of ongoing repairs at these properties. They are sold the promise that the tenant could potentially get thousands following putting the disrepair claim in. We have had 7 in the last three weeks compared to 12 since the start of the financial year. There is a spike, but we haven't really had to do a lot to mitigate it as the properties they have been to have been really well maintained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JW said based on experience elsewhere, these ambulance chasers if they feel they find a problem and they're getting cases and they are earning income they will hang around, but we will rebuff these cases and hopefully they'll disappear to another area. Hopefully it is short term as it is a stress on the business.</li> <li>• PH asked about the improvement in voids and what has been done to achieve these improvements. MC confirmed that we are doing pre termination inspections, so prior to people leaving the property we are going in to see the level of repairs to get us on the front foot and if we need to order stuff we can order prior to the property being empty. We prioritise; we get the quick wins and then put the labour where it is needed. We have just done 24 Chestnut which has taken 70 days, but every wall and ceiling has been replastered, it's a four-bedroom property and it been fully painted and carpeted and a new heating system. This property is like a brand-new property.</li> <li>• <b>Action 53: PH said he would find helpful, separating out the maintenance voids and then in the housing management report seeing the letting side. It would be useful to see some numbers on length of time, oldest voids and to expand on the reporting to understand what all the columns mean. It would also be useful to have some information of numbers on damp and mould cases over time.</b></li> <li>• JW explained that we have added some further stress to this service in the sense we have taken on Parish Rooms and other Temporary Accommodation which has added about 70 more units that we support with repairs and maintenance and voids services. They are quite tricky parts of the business, as we are dealing with people with very high level of vulnerabilities and complexity, they are 2-man visits and so far, they have not needed a huge voids service. It is putting a stress on the business, but it is right thing to do and shows as the ALMO we are here to support. We have reduced voids, but we have increased numbers in too.</li> </ul> <p><b>CSS was requested to note the contents of this report.</b></p>	MC	8 Jun 2026
7	<p><b>Housing Management Update</b> KR gave the following update. The report was taken as read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the last quarter one of the biggest challenges has been around recruitment. That was impacting performance across the board but by the end of this month we will be fully recruited within Neighbourhoods and Income and then will concentrate of Lettings and Contact Centre. It has been a positive outcome.</li> <li>• The reporting while still work in progress, has been scrutinised quite a lot and we have a little more work to do on the reporting. An income working group has been established, we're making good traction internally on our</li> </ul>		

	<p>reporting processes and our responsibilities and we are hoping to take that forward to Shropshire Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrears are significantly higher than previous years. KR is not concerned based on the collection rate. Increased arrears are attributable to Universal Credit. This is where the working group are going to really delve into that and unpick so we can do some more concise reporting for this committee and wider business.</li> <li>• This committee wanted to see more detailed reporting from neighbourhoods in particular on anti-social behaviour. This is currently a work in progress, and it will be delivered in time for the next report and then moving forward on a regular basis. KR said he wants to bring to the committee all the various types of housing management cases we're dealing with and look with ASB to incorporate things like the EDI data where we can. That would be primarily our tenant base as we are unable to report EDI on third party reports that we receive.</li> <li>• <b>Action 54: PH asked that tenancy sustainment and linking it to the income work and to see that on a quarter-by-quarter basis. What income had been generated for residents - HSF, DHP. It's a good way of us demonstrating the value of tenancy sustainment so if this could be included into future reports.</b></li> <li>• <b>Action 55: PH commented that it looks as if the contact centre performance has improved. It would be helpful to get some information on the abandoned calls stats to understand what kind of average time people are abandoning calls, are people waiting a long time, is there a queue message.</b></li> <li>• On income sustainment KR said we will look to report on that in more detail. We have done a review on the income service and there will be a proposal going to EMT. If this is approved, we can build out what the sustainment reporting will look like. We need to be mindful that we don't have the financial inclusion team within STAR anymore and therefore we aren't capturing the data we use to, where we looked at the umbrella of financial gains for customers so we will be limited in some scope. Would like to have officers that are all responsible for income and sustainment. We would look to do some reporting in the next quarter to bring to Committee and see if that is acceptable. It won't be detailed gains per household but there is a lot that we can report on in terms of our hardship fund. PH said it is very much high-level gains.</li> <li>• RR asked about the call centre and new website, what are you expecting to see and achieve. She would like to have a chat at some point on this and what we as a committee should see as a norm in terms of dips and flows. KR said the website that we have launched is much more customer friendly, it allows the customers to be able to self-serve and get questions answered easily. We are looking to have an AI tool built into that will scrape our website and be able to self-serve our customers easily. This ties in with Paul's question on email demand. Emails can sink an organisation; they are so resource intensive. KR and JW are looking at ways we can put together a project around bringing our emails down whether that be customers and internally. That will help us when we move forward in terms of performance as we are not focusing our resource on answering customers, opening ourselves up to service failures by not responding to them. We can focus on doing the doing.</li> </ul>	<p>KR</p> <p>KR</p>	<p>8 Jun 2026</p> <p>8 Jun 2026</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JW said Housing has got out of the habit of wanting to talk to people. We are starting to have a cultural push and drive and stop hiding behind emails. We need to get on the phone to talk to people. We have a high percentage of Customers that want to talk to us, they aren't digitalised. We are going to have a big drive about this, and it'll be something that we will involve Emma on from a tenant scrutiny point of view. JW wants STAR to be market leaders in returning the phone being the norm. This creates customer satisfaction and it deals with complaints quicker.</li> <li>• PH asked if the 2000 Lettings emails that were mentioned in the report that they weren't just emails from customers but internal emails too. KR confirmed that the 2000 emails were all received in one month. KR is starting a lettings review next week. We are looking at it from an end-to-end process. It is currently an email heavy process, and it doesn't need to be. A lot of these emails are back and forth between STAR and Shropshire Council because of Home Point. We just need to have cleaner processes and work smarter. When we start this end-to-end review next week, we should see a big indent in the number of emails. Across the Board, this is a bigger piece of work we need to look at as every team is impacted by high email volumes.</li> <li>• JW explains there are wider conversations going on in the local authority about the suitability of Home Point. This lettings process is just one example of where it isn't a fit for purpose system. We have engaged with other local Housing providers to talk about what is working and what isn't working for them. We are looking at models from other local authority areas. Shropshire Council have demonstrated a willingness to undertake a review. There is a universal agreement that it isn't a system that is fit for purpose. Part of Kas's review we can start to evidence base this as well with these data points.</li> </ul> <p><b>CSS noted the contents of this report.</b></p>		
8	<p><b>Scrutiny Panel Update</b> EJ gave the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The scrutiny panel have conducted their third review which was of the communal spaces. There were 20 recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel; around the cleanliness and contract management of the cleaners, one of the big things is that the panel want a STAR standard. What they have highlighted is that if you went into one of the communal areas, flatted or independent living schemes as you would not recognise them as being STAR Housing.</li> <li>• There were also some recommendations about improved customer communication around planned works. For example, the fire door works and the communication around the follow up works.</li> <li>• We are going to be developing a new method for Scrutiny to go alongside the traditional scrutiny that we have been doing for bigger topics. It is quite labour intensive for the panel and takes a long time to carry out because you've got to plan meetings with staff, getting information and visiting. At the next meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March, TPAS will be attending to speak to the Scrutiny Panel about the approach that they have created called Scrutiny boot camp, where you look at smaller topics but include a wider customer</li> </ul>		

	<p>base. You would get more feedback instantly and recommendations through on the same day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are looking at this due to the Customer Engagement Strategy, we have committed to supporting the panel to do 9 reviews. If we continue to do only the full in-depth ones it is unlikely that we will reach that target of nine due to the length of time they take. From the 3 reviews already done, we have in total 52 recommendations which is incredible. We are looking at other ways that we can still get those results and hear the customer voice but in a less time-consuming way.</li> <li>• GG said the panel has also supported other activities alongside the Scrutiny reviews including the tenant portal testing, input on the website and testing. They were also involved with the rent and service charge tenancy agreement changes and the big check in. The amount of time the scrutiny panel is committing to us is significant, so we need to find a way to balance it.</li> <li>• EJ said when the strategy was put together, we didn't really have the Scrutiny panel. There are different ways to involve them without doing the full reviews.</li> <li>• NR said we have really enjoyed the recent one we did, going out and looking at the independent living scheme and flatted areas. They are in a bad state unless you go out and see them you don't really know that they are in such a bad state. There were 21 recommendations made to James and Alex and out of 21 they are taking 20 on board.</li> <li>• The final recommendation was on mobility aids and scooters. People are leaving them and blocking fire doors, and they are charging them wherever they see fit. I can't charge my battery in my home as I'm in a bungalow not a community area. If you are in an independent living scheme and they are told they can't charge them in their own home, they are going to charge it where they like. It needs to be made clear where they can and can't charge them and where they can be stored safely. The one recommendation that hasn't been fully accepted is that where you are putting someone into a scheme who hasn't got a back garden, then what are STAR doing to help. A lot of the tenants going into the schemes are because they are elderly or disabled, and that comes with mobility problems.</li> <li>• EJ clarified that the partially agreed part of the recommendation was the provision in independent living schemes but couldn't commit to that in our flatted areas.</li> <li>• JW explained there has been long term, 15-20 years underspend in community rooms, in blocks and communal areas by STAR. That is quite a big tanker to turn around as we have quite a lot of communal areas across all of our territory. JW and AH were already looking at this. It isn't just about Investment; it's about building safety and electrical provision. We are bringing together a number of proposals to undertake some work, and we have identified the worst blocks and started to invest in them. Over the next 2 years we will turn them around and make a real difference.</li> <li>• NR said the Scrutiny Panel alongside the boot camps are going to pick the topics for the whole year before the start of the financial year, so that they have got an idea of what will be tackled. It is vital that we as scrutiny panel have input to plan.</li> <li>• NR asked what the triage process was to identify the worst properties. JW said the feedback from the Scrutiny Panel, the current condition and fire</li> </ul>		
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	<p>safety, access points and some doors that are fire risks and it makes sense to do them first. Our annual FRAs pick up defective door sets or something that might have changed in the last 12-months and the last consideration is the look and feel. We are trying to bring three things together to say that is the immediate priority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Action 56: LF said clarity is needed related to the electric scooters. More people are using an electric scooter, some people are told they can't charge it inside their property, where some people are told you can't charge it in communal areas it needs to be done in your property. JW will take this away and get some guidance issued.</b></li> <li>• LF confirmed that it is vital that the scrutiny panel input into the projects.</li> <li>• JW asked if LF could give some comments around the investment that has been going on in the block where she lives. She said that there are 27 flats at Greenfield Court in Bridgnorth. It started with compartmental work in the roof space which was 12 months ago. Since then, there has been intensive works that has been going on, a lot of investment has been put into Greenfields Court. The residents are all happy. The communication has been good, James and Alex have made a big difference coming and talking to the residents as a group meeting, explaining what's going on and the time frames. Overall, it has been fantastic. If STAR treated every complex investment scheme the way we have been treated there should be no unhappy customers.</li> <li>• <b>Action 57: JW said he supports the comments that LF and NR have both made. It would be really helpful to see the good, the bad and the ugly. We have got some 3D cameras through a subcontractor, so maybe we could bring something to one of the committees where we do a 5–10-minute video which shows the good and the bad and then show you what the blueprint is for all future works. JW to take that as an action.</b></li> <li>• <b>Action 58: PH said it is important that resident shape the plan. He suggested that Emma check that the remaining 6 planned activities are still relevant as things do change. It is important for the residents to shape it. EJ said that will be sharing the TSM results with the panel and they can use that to formulate where they want to look at.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>CSS was requested to note the contents of the report.</b></p>	<p>JW/AH</p> <p>JW</p> <p>EJ</p>	<p>8 Jun 2026</p> <p>8 Jun 2026</p> <p>8 Jun 2026</p>
<p>9</p>	<p><b>Contact Centre Review Update</b> MH gave an update to Unified customer communication solution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are currently progressing with Option B as a preferred approach which builds on the service improvements already delivered through Option A. Option B includes refreshed call handling standards, published service levels and a stronger self-help service tool option with the introduction of the new STAR website. Option B will consolidate repairs and planned maintenance calls into a single front door and improved call centre software and strengthen the triage section giving our customer a better experience and support first time resolution.</li> <li>• Over the next few weeks, the intention is to conduct some in person sessions with shortlisted suppliers. Resolve the Council security protocol requirements, which was raised as a potential blocker for this project but following a meeting with David Baker, Head of IT for Shropshire Council, has</li> </ul>		

	<p>confirmed as STAR Housing is moving to an independent IT tenant, it assures us that we have that independence to be able to implement the software that we are looking to put in place. David is happy and confident that security issues are completely met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Another thing we are looking at is MRI Housing One integration requirements. If we can integrate MRI housing One so that our operatives know who you are just by the system identifying the telephone number that you're calling us on, it will also lead to a much better experience for the customer.</li> <li>• This will help us to produce some accurate indicative pricing for the executive management team to consider as requested at the end of December. We will then do a procurement, develop a high-level implementation plan which will gives us indicative time span for the project to be implemented.</li> <li>• During this time, we will introduce some more specific call centre targets such as first contact resolution and average handling time. We have already started by strengthening our reporting structure through weekly call centre readiness sessions, as there's a degree of knowledge transfer and upskilling required to deliver this project well for customers. We are anticipating that if all the dependencies are resolved promptly the target go live for the new system will be June/July. CSS are meeting again in June so can provide better timescales there.</li> <li>• Option B strikes the balance of achievable change and transformational benefit.</li> <li>• PH asked what involvement customers have had or will have. MH explained the success of the project is the customer experience. In the website project we had fantastic involvement from our involved customers, we had three very dedicated people helping us who painstakingly went through all the testing. Now the project has had a green light, we will work with Emma and the involved customers to see how we can better align them with the project and give them full opportunity to be involved. We can put out questionnaires to customers to see how they currently experience calling STAR.</li> <li>• NR said Emily what a firecracker she is, she is an absolute asset to your company. Emily and Mara need some serious recognition for the website. They've done an incredible job. The website and tenant portal will be used and all their hard work and the money that has gone into this will be 100% worth it in the end.</li> <li>• <b>Action 59: PH said he didn't feel the resident involvement came through in the report and wanted to make sure that residents will be included in contact centre review work. So we can demonstrate how they have helped shape the review and service.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>CSS were recommended to continue to support this initiative.</b></p>		
10	<p><b>Maladministration Case Update</b> JW gave the update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a long-term case which originally started in 2020. It involves a customer and a household with some extremely complex vulnerabilities. The utopia would have been back in 2020, we would have made an offer of</li> </ul>		

	<p>a more suitable property, but the problem is that we have a small number of 4 bed properties, particularly in the northwest of the County. That has never been a viable option.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aids and adaptations and requests to vulnerabilities is a very complex subject. There were some service failings around requests were made to make alterations to a property that were not matching an Occupational Therapist report. Between the backwards and forward of new OT reports and then trying to make alterations to a home to fit in with that OT report dragged on for a long period of time.</li> <li>• What should happen is you look at this in a rounded sense, we've got a customer with these complex needs, we should go ahead and make alterations to the property, so this is lesson one. Lesson two is that the alterations are structurally quite complicated and very costly to STAR, we should have thought outside the box.</li> <li>• We knew this case was with the Housing Ombudsman last year. Once we restructured operations and we brought in some aid and adaptations expertise, we proactively went to this property to review what the options were, and we found a modular construction solution that was better on the budget and gave a quicker and more suitable finished product. In other circumstances, this would have been withdrawn from the Ombudsman if we were able to get the planning permission quicker.</li> <li>• We have a quite happy tenant right now, but they aren't happy with the journey that they have had over the last six years. We need to learn from this and not let this happen again.</li> <li>• EMT felt this was something to flag to this Committee. To assure the Committee we have no other cases like this out there that we are aware of. We have looked through the really complicated complaints to see if there is anything that is going to reappear that we could take a proactive view on. We're comfortable that the two cases that are with the Ombudsman are very straightforward and they have been handled in a way that we are comfortable with. Also most importantly, there isn't massive service failings.</li> <li>• RR said there is no point looking back too much. You just have to learn from it. JW explained it comes back to the cultural piece; you have to have rules, policies and procedures but you need to have some latitude that allows people to make the right decision and to use common sense. The disappointing thing is that there wasn't any escalation, that would have allowed that common sense approach. To reassure the committee for all the reporting of investments areas there is an opportunity built in to escalate and challenge.</li> <li>• PH said it is important that those types of cases come through to this committee. He asked about the 115 A&amp;S cases and whether the communication is in place for them and managing their expectations. JW confirmed that he is comfortable with the 115 cases for A&amp;A. We have somebody who's very experienced and they have joined us from a big Midlands Housing Association to work on aid and adaptations. We don't have any live complaints on A&amp;A currently.</li> </ul> <p><b>CSS were asked to note the contents of the report.</b></p>		
11	<p><b>Aids and Adaptations Analysis and Policy</b> AH gave the following overview:</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There has been a lot of work going on with regards to Adaptations over the last 4-5 months. The key change is how we look at adaptation cases and how we proactively get on top of them. We look at the programme works and if there is a bungalow due for a new bathroom, we would look to put a wet room in, for example, so we get ahead of things. We look at adaptations completely different; we have restructured the team that look and deal with this area. So when a case comes through that we know we're going to have to decline as we don't have the housing stock or we can't adapt their current substantive property, it's about looking at other options as we might be able to say we're declining but in our pipeline of development, we're currently building 4 bungalows that they could potentially use.</li> </ul> <p>Note: The internet connection at the STAR offices was lost so many of the STAR officers were unable to continue with the meeting. The meeting continued only with PH, RR, LF, NR and JMc and JG.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Action 60: NR asked if all the bungalows are going to get the wet room approach as not everyone's disabilities or elderly are that infirm and they do need a bath. They need to discuss with the particular tenant first who would be going into that bungalow. It needs more thought that just implementing a wet room for everyone. Action on AH to confirm they consider the needs when they do the work.</b></li> <li><b>Action 61: PH asked if the 54 open cases are all in the right place and that they are all being communicated through to residents if there are any delays. Action on Alex to confirm.</b></li> </ul> <p>CSS were asked to note the contents of the report and endorse our new approach to service delivery in this area</p>	AH	8 Jun 2026
12	<p><b>Matters for Escalation</b></p> <p>There is nothing raised as a matter for escalation.</p>		
13	<p><b>Forward Plan Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Action 62: JG raised that the website was on the last meeting forward plan. It was agreed that would include website in the agenda for 6-months' time. RR said it would be good to have some metrics and determine what the aspiration was and the impact it has had on call rates. She would like the aspiration to be included in the report.</b></li> <li><b>Action 63: NR would like an update of the soft launch of the Website and if they have fully launched the website now and how it was received. Action on EP to give an update of soft launch for the website.</b></li> <li>PH said that there should have been operations performance for Q3 included. He would like to understand what performance information will be brought to the CSS committee, rather than what goes to Board. JMc said it was an EMT decision to adjust the amount of information, where the reports go and give more time for in depth conversation, there was a lot of duplication. For example, the Voice of Customer report would go to the</li> </ul>	EP	Sep 2026
		EP	8 Jun 2026

	<p>EMT, then to CSS and then it is in Board, so the same people are seeing the report multiple times, and it was felt that it would give more time for some of the other topics to be brought to the Committee. Performance and Budget aren't going to the FAR, it's going straight to Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Action 64: PH said he agrees that some reports he does see three times so supports the approach to reduce the duplication, but we need to understand what performance reporting is coming to this committee.</b></li> </ul>	JMc	8 Jun 2026
14	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LF raised about the alarming number of dropped calls to the call centre. What's the makeup of those abandoned calls. There doesn't seem to be any improvement. There needs to be granular information. Does the call ever get cut off. Is the call back plan operational.</li> <li>• NR said that she had once called the out of hours eight time and it would cut her off after a certain amount of time. Are the high number of abandoned calls the same person multiple times. More detail is required. <b>Note: This will be covered by Action 55 on the same topic.</b></li> <li>• RR asked if STAR does a door knock where Board members are invited to speak to customers. JG confirmed that a big check in was done last year but Board Members weren't invited. We do have another big check in planned for this year spread out over a week in July, and we will be having sessions in the community rooms so that people can come to us as well. RR would like Board members to be involved particularly for those on this committee.</li> <li>• LF said she was not sure that Board members should be involved as the big check in was to update personal information and ask about vulnerabilities.</li> <li>• RR said she is more interested in the feedback on STAR and how it is perceived by the customers.</li> <li>• JG advised that there will be a stock tour planned for July, for Councillors and Board members and they would go out and see the communities.</li> <li>• <b>PH said he agreed that the check in isn't for Board but to consider some way for the Board members to get feedback on the schemes and informal feedback from residents. Action 64: To ask EJ about considering how Board members could be involved in, for example drop-in sessions in the community rooms.</b></li> </ul> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions and thanked officers for their reports.</p>	EJ	8 Jun 2026