Regulator of Social Housing

PUBLIC MINUTES
of the Board meeting
on Tuesday 22 September 2026
M.01, 23 Stephenson Street, Birmingham

Members present

Bernadette Conroy (BC)	Chair
Jonathan Walters (JW)	Chief Executive
Kalpesh Brahmbhatt (KB)	
Chan Kataria (CKa)	
Sukhvinder Kaur-Stubbs (SKS)	
Robert Light (RL)	
John Liver (JL)	
Geoff Smyth (GS)	

Officers in attendance

Angela Holden (AMH)	Director of Regulatory Engagement (LARPs)
Kate Dodsworth (KD)	Deputy Chief Executive
Karen Doran (KED)	Director of Regulatory Engagement (PRPs)
Rob Holroyd (RH)	Senior Assistant Director, Investigation & Enforcement
Yetunde Komolafe (YK) – item 14	Assistant Director: Deputy Head of Legal
Angela Maher (AM)	Assistant Director of the Chief Executive's Office
John O'Mahony (JOM) - items 9	Assistant Director Corporate Services
Will Perry (WP)	Director of Strategy
Sandy Pacek (SP) via MS Teams – items 9	Head of Corporate Services
Nikesh Shah (NS)	Interim Director Finance & Corporate Services
Jim Bennett (JB) – items 8 & 9	Assistant Director for Policy, Strategy & Impact

Minutes
Amber Gaskell

1 Welcome and apologies

01/09/26 BC welcomed everyone to the meeting, which is taking place in Birmingham for the first time. Ahead of the Board meeting, Board Members participated in a 'meet the board session' with staff. It was unanimously agreed that the session had been useful, and it was noted that Members had enjoyed the opportunity to meet directly with staff. There were apologies from Board member David Cassidy and Emma Tarran, Senior AD Head of Legal and Company Secretary also sent apologies.

2 Declarations of Interest

02/09/26 There were no new declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the last meeting 21July 2026

03/09/26 There were two comments made for the minutes from 21 July 2026

- 07/07/26 – JL asked that the wording is amended to include 'significant delivery challenges'

- 09/07/26 – SKS raised that there is a typo and extra hyphen to be removed.

Once these are considered and updates made, the minutes can be taken as an accurate record and finalised.

4 Matters arising

04/09/26 Members noted the Matters Arising. BC drew attention to 11/05/26 for the financial viability workshop, which will be removed, and asked that Members email anything they would like to be included in a future session of the workshop to JW and BC.

5 Forward planner

05/09/26 Members considered and noted the forward planner. BC asked that Board Members email any thoughts for future workshops in 2027 to both BC and JW.

Members to email any ideas for future workshops to BC and JW.

6 Chair's update

06/09/26 BC updated the Board on the following:

- There have been recent changes within Government, including the appointment of the new Prime Minister. A new Chair of the Select Committee has also been elected, and a letter will be sent to welcome her to the role, on behalf of RSH.
- Funding allocations under the Social and Affordable Housing Programme have now been announced. It was noted that there are some differences between the allocations anticipated by RPs and what was awarded.
- There are some upcoming LARP sessions that have been arranged for cabinet members and councillors. AM has shared the dates with Board members, who are invited to attend.
- Fiona MacGregor has recently been appointed to the Board of Sanctuary.

7 Nominations and Renumerations Committee (N&RC) chair update

07/09/26 SKS updated the Board on the NRC meeting held on 21 September 2026:

- There was a focus on the SCCP. It was confirmed that a dedicated N&RC meeting will be arranged for October to allow for further oversight and scrutiny of the programme.
- The wider people agenda was reviewed, including a report that provided an overview of the organisation.
- A new approach to policy reviews was discussed, and the re-establishment of the Policy Review Group. This will include HR and wider organisational policies.
- The Board succession plan was reviewed. There will be 4 Board members stepping down over next 18 months, so consideration is being given to the future of the Board and the skills needed going forward. The recruitment pack is now with MHCLG.

- The external Board effectiveness review has been deferred to early 2027 to allow JW to settle into his new role. In the meantime, a self-assessment will be completed for continuity.
- An update was provided on succession and disaster planning.
- The Committee recommended approval of the senior leadership pay award at 3.5%

8 Chief Executive's update

08/09/26 JW took the Board through the CE update. Since the last Board meeting, a new Prime Minister has taken office. While there is a greater focus on Local Authorities; the detail of any sector shifts is as yet unknown. The forthcoming budget will be a key moment and is expected to provide greater certainty. RSH are working closely with MHCLG to understand the implications of the government directive to build more council housing and what this means for the sector.

09/09/26 The allocations made under the Social and Affordable Housing Programme have been shared. This has resulted in some general uncertainty in the sector, particularly for those who bid and did not receive an offer. The programme is still the same size but less has been allocated upfront.

10/09/26 GLA have not yet finalised or announced their allocations. It has been noted that London councils are in a strong position in comparison to other LAs, as they do have the capacity and capability for development. At the Housing Community Summit in Liverpool, it was noted that across the sector some doubts are being expressed that LAs have the capacity to build.

11/09/26 The more and better homes engagement sessions are going well. The engagement period ends on the 30th September, with sessions ongoing until then. Key themes have already been taken from the responses so far, and every response will be read and reviewed.

12/09/26 Confirmed that LGR has been paused, with no further update at this time on what is expected to happen.

13/09/26 There was an update and discussion around Framework 28. The plan is for the consultation on the standards framework to go out in 2027. JL acknowledged how much work this will be and asked what the time scales are. JB advised between now and Christmas they will report back to the Board, but a more detailed plan would be provided in the New Year.

9 Update of Corporate Plan & KPIs development

14/09/26 JOM joined the meeting and SP joined on MS Teams. NS introduced the paper. It was acknowledged the discussion around the Corporate Plan for 2027 is happening early, and this will allow the Board to be engaged in advance and help shape the work.

15/09/26 GS asked if there are any ambitions to reduce the regulation costs on the sector, noting feedback from RPs that the costs of regulation are higher than they are comfortable with. JW noted that regulatory burden is a theme in conversations with RPs and these concerns would be

fed back to government, as ultimately it is for them to determine. RL suggested that the term regulatory burden is used in place of cost. There was agreement from the Board on this approach.

16/09/26 There was a discussion regarding the KPIs, with JOM offering to work up the detail and bring a clearer proposal back to Board in November. BC asked that the messaging comes through clear on this in November.

JOM to bring proposal on KPIs to Board in November

17/09/26 GS asked if AI is being considered in Paragraph 9. NS confirmed that it was. It was agreed that overall, there is a need to be more explicit on some points.

18/09/26 There was a request for a workshop to be scheduled on the future of regulation.

19/09/26 The timeline for the Corporate Plan was clarified. The document will be returned to Board in November in draft. January is when it will be brought for sign off. The publication will then need to be submitted to MHCLG by the end of February. RSH can publish internally, before MHCLG sign off, this will be done in April. JB left the meeting.

10 Finance & Corporate Services Q1 update

20/09/26 BC thanked NS for the paper and the revised format of the F&CS updates. NS shared that the financial performance of RSH continues to be strong, with a current underspend of over £1m. Board members asked how underspends are managed, and it was confirmed that any underspend is always rebated back to RPs, as there is no remit for RSH to carry underspends forward into the next financial year.

21/09/26 NS advised that the SCCP design work is progressing well and is currently preparing ahead of consultation. There was a discussion about the impacts a change programme has on staff morale. NS also shared that there is a more thorough approach being taken to recruitment during this time, with a refreshed Vacancy Control Panel to provide oversight and challenge of any vacancies being advertised.

22/09/26 An update was provided on DDaT, where progress was described as mixed. There is work happening to secure an MOU with MHCLG for their systems. Acknowledged that at some point RSH might need to go outside of MHCLG and engage with 3rd party providers.

23/09/26 It was raised that although the finance element of the report is well-illustrated, it would be good to see more detail in some other areas, for example, in relation to staff culture. It was agreed this would be taken onboard.

11 Performance & Risk Q1 update

24/09/26 NS took the Board through the Performance and Risk update for Q1. It was shared that a master dashboard for risk has been developed, with the intention for a simple dashboard to go alongside this, which would allow quick oversight on key risks and trends.

25/09/26 It was acknowledged that although digital is highlighted as a risk area, it also presents an opportunity.

26/09/26 SKS asked if the risks associated with SCCP have been accurately accounted for in this update. NS clarified that, as this is Q1 report, there is limited reference to SCCP at this stage. It will be expected to feature when looking back at the Q2 report.

27/09/26 BC highlighted the low compliance rates of employees completing the evacuation procedure training in the safety and security section. JOM explained the reasoning behind this, as some colleagues don't regularly attend the office, they might not have completed the training. It was noted that this should be better managed in future when the new learning management system is introduced, as it will provide an improved monitoring and reporting system on mandatory training. BC asked if in the future the age profiles of the statistics are also shared, as it is unclear if these figures relate to annual refresher training, or if they represent a long-term outstanding training requirement.

28/09/26 JL asked if there has been an increase in intimidation or threats to staff. KED confirmed that the overall number of incidents are small, although there have been several recent cases, including one or two security threats received via email. Confirmed there are good escalation routes in place, supported by a staff security and safety group.

LUNCH

12 Regulatory Engagement Q1 update

29/09/26 AMH introduced the Regulatory Engagement Q1 update report and drew attention to some of the key themes RSH are seeing. Referrals have been up for a considerable period and there has been an increase in casework. The inspection programme is on track and is driving landlord improvement works. There are repairs and damp and mould issues across all landlords.

30/09/26 JL asked for more detail on the damp and mould issues. KED explained they are complex, but most RPs are risk averse in this area and want to capture the risk around damp and mould, but this is expensive and often reactive. AMH also pointed out that some LAs are starting from a place with limited or no housing management system to record or track damp and mould issues.

31/09/26 KED advised there has been movement on Consumer and Governance grades with some RPs seeing improvements and some worsening. There are some governance weaknesses and more needs to be done by providers in managing those in business plans.

32/09/26 BC asked what the outlook on consumer standards are from LARP/PRP perspectives. It was agreed that across both types of RP there has been no complacency and there has been a push for better grades and challenge on C2 gradings, as RPs do strive to be C1.

33/09/26 JL asked how it is being managed from a resource perspective, as referrals and casework have increased. AMH confirmed that this was always expected and planned for when the Consumer Standards were brought in, and the team is resourced to manage this.

34/09/26 SKS asked if there are any case studies that have emerged for landlords on improvement journeys. AMH said the team will consider how this can be done, it was suggested as a potential workshop.

35/09/26 There was a discussion about the inspection process, with some Board members raising that an inspection process of every 4-5 years feels too long to pick up on risks. KD clarified that we do also have an annual engagement meeting with RPs and we receive data every year which allows for opportunities to have contact points between inspections.

13 Registrations Q1 update

36/09/26 AMH led the Registrations update. A discussion took place regarding the time it takes from application to registration for providers, with concerns raised that this can be an extremely long period. Board members asked for clarity around the time frame and the key drivers of delays. AMH explained there are a range of factors that influence the timescale. In some instances, there is a gap in responses from applicants, or the need for some back-and-forth correspondence to resolve queries. BC queried if applications should be closed if they don't respond in a set amount of time. AMH advised RPs would likely lose their fee if an application was closed, which is why we often leave them open. It was also noted some businesses need to work things through their own governance structures and board cycles which might add to the time taken.

JL left the meeting before the start of the next item.

14 I&E Q1 update

37/09/26 The I&E Q1 update paper was taken as read. RH took Board Members through the update. It was shared that there are 4 providers that have moved back into compliance during Q1.

39/09/26 CKa pointed out there are around 4 large organisations included on the I&E GUR list and asked if this is linked to governance and financial viability, and whether it should be a cause for concern. RH confirmed this is mostly consumer standard issues rather than financial viability, however acknowledged that more organisations are experiencing financial pressures in this current operating environment.

15 Any Other Business

40/09/26 There were no other matters for discussion.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 20 October 2026

Workshops Workshop session took place on:

- Viability regulation