



## Performance Advisory Group (PAG)

**28 January Board Room 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Barnet House**

**Main Meeting 6:30pm until 8:30pm**

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**Present:**

John Davies	(JD)	Chair
Aruna Bhatt	(AB)	Vice Chair
Norah Fallon	(NF)	Member
Angela Shine	(AS)	Member
Amlan Ghoshal	(AG)	Member
Maxwell Doku	(MD)	Member
Carol Douet	(CD)	Member
Elizabeth Fitzgerald	(EF)	Member
Deborah Beckford	(DB)	Customer Engagement Co-Ordinator
Angela Purcell	(AP)	BH Board Member
Paul Shipway	(PS)	Head of Strategy & Performance
Faisal Butt	(FB)	Housing Commissioning Lead
Joshua Henry	(JH)	National Management Trainee
Carly Williamson	(CW)	Complaints & Information Manager

Item	Title	Action
1	<b>Apologies and welcome</b>  Apologies received from Aletah Drake  Introductions were made around the table	
2	<b>Minute Approval</b>  All agreed the minutes were a true reflection.	Minutes to be published on website
3	<b>Matters Arising</b>  No matters arising	

4	<b>Homelessness Strategy</b>	Action DB to send link to survey
4.1	<b>Barnet Context</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing population</li> <li>• Rising Costs</li> <li>• Increasing house prices and private rents</li> <li>• Limited supply of affordable housing</li> <li>• Impact of benefit changes</li> <li>• Demand for housing assistance remains high</li> </ul>	
4.2	<b>Priority 1: Raising standards in the private rented sector</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of private rented sector accommodation in Barnet has increased from 17% in 2001 to 26% in 2016.</li> <li>• Our fresh approach to this sector involves the LEAD agenda, which focuses on Licensing, Enforcement, Advice, Data.</li> <li>• Licensing – requiring all HMOs to be licensed and focusing licensing efforts on areas with lots of renters</li> <li>• Enforcement – increased powers to punish rogue landlords</li> <li>• Advice – improving housing support and advice</li> <li>• Data – improving information and evidence held about the rented sector.</li> <li>• Do you agree or disagree with these priorities?</li> </ul>	
4.3	<b>Priority 2: Delivering more homes that people can afford</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The average house price in Barnet (£545,000) is 15 times the median household income (£36,000).</li> <li>• Private sector rents have also increased to £1,350 a month.</li> <li>• Since 2011, 10,000 new homes have been built in Barnet, including 2,657 that are affordable. The council will continue to work with partners to deliver new homes in the borough.</li> <li>• The council is delivering a pipeline of new affordable homes on its own land with The Barnet Group.</li> <li>• There are also estate regeneration schemes, such as the completed one at Stonegrove/Spur Road.</li> <li>• Additionally, there is a push for family sized accommodation to meet the needs of those with children, while also prioritising new homes for those who live or work in Barnet.</li> </ul>	
4.4	<b>Priority 3: Safe and secure homes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Grenfell Tower fire disaster highlighted the importance of best practice in fire safety.</li> </ul>	

4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council has provided additional investment of £52m for improvement in its own housing stock.</li> <li>• The council is also working with Barnet Homes, the Government and other agencies to ensure resident safety through a programme of fire safety works.</li> <li>• This programme of works involves the removal of cladding, the installation of sprinklers and the replacement of fire doors.</li> </ul> <p><b>Priority 4: Promoting independence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good housing can help to support other council objectives, such as helping older people and those with health and social care needs to live independently.</li> <li>• The council will promote the delivery of homes that help these groups, as well as care leavers, to live independently.</li> <li>• To what extent do you agree with the council's priorities for promoting independence amongst the following groups: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. older people</li> <li>2. adults with disabilities</li> <li>3. vulnerable adults in needs of care and support</li> <li>4. adults with substance misuse problems</li> <li>5. adults with mental health problems</li> <li>6. care leavers</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	
4.6	<p><b>Priority 5: Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in Barnet</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy identifies four strategic objectives for homelessness.</li> <li>• Preventing homelessness – by improving advice and early support and providing a personal housing plan to every applicant.</li> <li>• Reducing the use of temporary accommodation – by procuring more longer-term housing solutions as well as increasing the supply of affordable housing.</li> <li>• Establishing effective partnerships, working arrangements and support to those who are or used to be homeless to improve their resilience and reduce the risk of them becoming homeless again – by working more closely with partners and setting up a Homelessness Forum.</li> <li>• Supporting rough sleepers to address their housing and other needs – by recruiting specialist outreach and support workers.</li> </ul>	
5	<p><b>Housing Strategy consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation began on 5th November, ends on 4th February</li> <li>• 150 responses so far, with the feedback generally very positive.</li> <li>• Comments show support for licensing in the private rented sector and a desire for it to be enforced borough-wide.</li> <li>• Other comments show concern at the costs of renting in the borough.</li> <li>• Respondents also commented on the need to prioritise those</li> </ul>	

	with a local connection to Barnet in new housing.	
6	<p><b>Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation began on 5th November, ends on 4th February</li> <li>• 142 responses so far, with the feedback generally again extremely positive.</li> <li>• The main comments suggest the council and Barnet Homes take a more active role on checking on tenants to ensure they are suitably housed.</li> <li>• Other comments relate to concern about the loss of tenancy in the private rented sector as a cause of homelessness, in particular high renting costs.</li> <li>• There was also a belief that more of an awareness of how the public can help those who are homeless was needed.</li> </ul>	
7	<p><b>Next Steps and further information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies to be approved by the Housing Committee Spring 2019.</li> <li>• A copy of the Housing and Homelessness Strategies and consultation questions can be found on the Engage Barnet website.</li> <li>• Further information: please contact Faisal.Butt@barnet.gov.uk / 020 8359 6263</li> </ul>	
8	<p><b>Complaints</b></p>	
8.1	<p><b>Complaints Performance Overview</b></p> <p>The number of Stage 1 complaints received has increased from Q2, by 30.7% but decreased by 38.4% compared to Q3 2017/18.</p> <p>The number of Stage 2 complaints received has risen by 16% from Q2 and increased by 190% compared to Q3 2017/18.</p> <p>The proportion of Stage 1 complaints escalated to Stage 2 has risen from 2.30% in Q3 2017/18, to 10.8% in Q3 2018/19, but has reduced by 1.2% from Q2 2018/19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q2 2018/19: 12%</li> <li>• Q3 2018/19: 10.8%</li> <li>• Q3 2017/18: 2.30%</li> </ul> <p>The YTD results for complaints escalated to Stage 2 are 9% in 2018/19 compared to 7.5% in 2017/18.</p> <p>Compared to Q3 last year, complaints have dropped by 17.7%.</p> <p>There has been an increase in the combined number of complaints</p>	

8.2	<p>compared to Q2 2018/19 (+27%). Performance in-time has stayed the same at Stage 1 compared to Q2 but worsened at Stage 2. Performance in time has worsened at Stage 1 compared to Q3 2017/18 but at Stage 2 from Q3 2017/18.</p> <p>This report will go on to examine performance and key drivers in more detail.</p> <p>The central Complaints and Information team does not have access to complaints once they have been assigned to team-level complaints handlers. It is recommended that managers are more proactive in reviewing their direct reports' QL work-trays to monitor performance and address any performance issues.</p> <p><b>Stage 1 complaints</b></p> <p>Performance compared with Q2 2018/19  The number of complaints received in Q3 2018/19 has increased by 27% compared with Q2 2018/19. The in-time performance has remained above target though it has dropped from the previous quarter (94% in time in Q2 and 92% in time in Q3); however, it should be noted that performance-in-time rose from 88% in May to a high of 97% in July and has subsequently been decreasing month-by-month to 89% in October. It rose to 96% in time in November and dropped to 90% in time in December. In order to maintain performance above target, and ensure a strong end of year performance, an improvement in complaints handling to target timescales is required.</p> <p>The increase in the volume of complaints can be attributed to an increase in the number of complaints across several services; the areas showing the largest increase from Q2 2018/19 to Q3 2018/19 were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gas: +47.6%</li> <li>• Repairs: +28%</li> <li>• Housing Options: +41.1%</li> <li>• Neighbourhood: +36.8%</li> </ul> <p>During Q3 of 2017/18, Barnet Homes received an average of 74 Gas Stage 1 complaints per month; in Q3 of 2018/19, this had reduced to an average of 21 complaints. The volume of complaints about the Gas service increased in Q3 compared to Q2 by 38.7%, as we should expect due to seasonal variances. Performance will be monitored as we move into the even colder months, when we should expect the volume of complaints to increase again; historically, we have seen an increase from November each year, continuing into the new year.</p> <p>The Gas service has historically been a significant driver of Barnet Homes' fully upheld complaints performance, and despite the increase in complaints received, we have not seen much in the way of decrease in the proportion fully upheld of Gas complaints.</p> <p>Stage 1 Gas complaints upheld:  Q1 2018/19: 75%</p>	
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	<p>Q2 2018/19: 84%</p> <p>Q3 2018/19: 82%</p> <p>Performance compared with Q3 2017/18</p> <p>Complaints received in Q2 2018/19 reduced by 38.1% compared to Q3 2017/18, though we saw a slight decline in in-time performance, from 95% in-time to 93% in-time, although this remains above the corporate target. This is largely due to the 258% decrease in Gas complaints received (222 in Q3 2017/18 to 62 in Q3 2018/19). However, performance on % fully upheld was slightly better at 60% compared to 67%.</p> <p>Repairs and Gas continue to receive the highest volumes of complaints, accounting for 204 of all Stage 1 complaints in Q3 2018/19 (76%). This proportion has increased from Q2 2018/19 when Repairs and Gas made up 70% of all Stage 1 complaints (143 of 205). When Gas and Repairs Stage 1 complaints are removed, we see a slight decrease in complaints about other services in Q3 2018/19 compared to the same period in 2017/18, comparison to previous years below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q3 2016/17 - 48</li> <li>• Q3 2017/18 - 71</li> <li>• Q3 2018/19 – 64</li> </ul>	
8.3	<p><b>Stage 2 complaints</b></p> <p>The number of Stage 2 complaints in Q3 2018/19 was higher than the previous quarter (Q2 2018/19) and the same period in the previous year (Q3 2017/18), and the percentage of Stage 2 complaints fully upheld has increased slightly from the previous quarter (+4%). In addition, the in-time performance has declined as 93% of Stage 2 complaints were answered in time compared to 100% in time in Q2. The YTD in-time performance stands at 90% in time and we will require a strong Q4 in time performance to ensure we meet or exceed the 90% target.</p>	
8.4	<p><b>Stage 3 complaints</b></p> <p>No complaints were escalated to Stage 3 in Q3 2018/19. None were escalated in the previous quarter and none</p> <p>Housing Ombudsman and Local Government &amp; Social Care Ombudsman</p> <p>During Q3 2018/19, Barnet Homes has been notified of 4 customer complaints that have been referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman, 2 of which were formal enquiries and 2 of which were informal enquiries. This is compared to 6 referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman in Q2 2018/19. There was 1 informal enquiry to the Housing Ombudsman which we have not yet received a result of, or further formal enquiry, and 3 enquiries to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, one informal and 2 formal. We have yet to receive a decision on any of these.</p>	

## The Barnet Group: Information Requests Performance

Year-to-date performance on information requests continues to be affected by the atypically very poor performance in Q1 as a result of the long-term absence of a member of staff in the Complaints and Information team. Although measures were put in place to support the complaints and information processes during this period of operating at 50% capacity, the team struggled to manage the service to the usual high standards due to the substantial workload, which was coupled with some demand to manage relationships with individual tenants with challenging behaviours on behalf of operational services.

Q3 performance was significantly improved and back to the usual high standards. During July 2018, the backlog of information requests was cleared and new requests were dealt with efficiently, with a return to the usual excellent performance in August and September 2018, and in to Q3. The team continues to put in place additional measures to maximise capacity and capability.

### 8.5 Subject Access Requests (SARs)

SARs	Number due	Number In Time	% In Time
YTD 2018/19	39	37	94.9%
Q3 2018/19	11	11	100%
Q2 2018/19	19	18	94.7%
Q3 2017/18	1	1	100%
Q3 2016/17	9	9	100%

There were no SARs responded to out of date in Q3, back to the usual high standard.

#### Freedom of Information Requests (FOIs)

Note: since July 2017, FOIs regarding fire safety have been managed jointly by Barnet Homes and the Council, and are therefore not included in the figures below.

FOIs	Target (In-Time %)	Number due	Number In Time	% In Time
YTD 2018/19	90%	52	50	96.2%
Q3 2018/19		21	21	100%
Q2 2018/19		13	13	100%
Q3 2017/18		37	37	100%
Q3 2016/17		19	19	100%

### 8.6 Members' Enquiries (VIPs)

VIPs	Target (In-Time %)	Number due	Number In Time	% In Time
YTD 2018/19	98%	780	702	90%
Q3 2018/19		310	310	100%
Q2 2018/19		228	207	90.7%
Q3 2017/18		244	244	100%
Q3 2016/17		228	228	100%

	<p>Q2's Member's Enquiries performance was severely affected by July's performance of 71.2% in-time due to the backlog in this month, in particular as these enquiries have a shorter response time. Performance in August and September was 100% and remained the case in Q3. You will also note the 36% increase in VIPs received in Q3 compared to Q2 and the 27% increase from Q3 2017/18.</p>	
9	<p><b>Members Update</b></p> <p>JD reported that the Mears gas contract was going well. There were a few problems but these are related to IT, BH system not talking to Mears system.</p>	
10	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>DB reminded members to complete the End of Year survey.</p> <p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p><b>Monday 11 March 6.30-8.30pm</b>  <b>Board room 4<sup>th</sup> floor Barnet House</b></p>	