CUSTOMER FOCUS COMMITTEE
Monday 16 February 2026
16.30
Microsoft Teams

PRESENT / IN-ATTENDANCE:

Members (Present):
- Nasrin Fazal (Chair)
- Marie Gilluley
- Philip Argument

Observers/guests (Present):
- Bob McGechan,
  ASPIRE Panel Chair (for Item 03)

Officers (In-attendance)
- Anne-Marie Heil, Director of Customer Services & Lead Officer
- Christian Hartley, Assistant Director - Customer Excellence
- Rachel Cossey, Governance Manager
- James Dunn, Governance Officer (Note taker)
- Louise Evans, Customer Engagement Team Leader (Item 3)
- Paul Worthington, Director of Property (Item 4)
- Lucy Darbyshire, Senior Customer and Colleague Communications Officer (Item 5)
- Natalie Connolly, Complaints Manager (Item 6)
- Anila Khalid, Assistant Director – Neighbourhoods (Item 7)

01	**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**	**Actions**
	Carol Jack and Paula King sent their apologies; the Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate. There were no declarations of interest.	
02a / 02b	**MINUTES AND ACTION MONITOR FROM MEETING 17 NOVEMBER 2025**	
	The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and progress with the Action Monitor was noted.	
03	**ASPIRE PANEL UPDATE** (PRESENTATION)	
	The ASPIRE Panel Chair provided an update on the most recent meeting, which was on the 4 February. The agenda included presentations on the Tenancy Sustainment policy, the new Customer Communications Guide, ASB policy updates and building safety at Lancashire Hill. Committee Members discussed the tenancy sustainment presentation and asked for more information as to how SHG are identifying potential hoarders. It was confirmed that there are multiple methods including reports from	

	officers as a result of tenancy visits, repairs operatives and referrals made by family members or neighbours. The Committee queried what actions have been taken for the bin chutes in high-rise properties. The Director of Property confirmed that there is a fire suppression system for bin stores at ground level, the cost of installing this at a higher level for the bin chutes is being explored. There was then a discussion about 'finding our silences.' This is an effort by SHG to contact tenants where there has been no contact with over the past 12 months. The Director of Customer Services confirmed that data is being pulled from a number of systems to identify these tenants and using that to prioritise current tenant visits. The Committee mentioned the Customer Communications Guide and the intention to ensure communications are jargon free. She also commented on the statement around neurodiverse friendly feedback. The accessibility tools available have been made clearer and easier to find on the website.	
	RESOLVED: That the Committee noted and commented on the Aspire Panel Update.	
04	**REPAIRS / DMC / AWAAB'S LAW UPDATE** (ASSURANCE)	
	The Director of Property provided an update on repairs, DMC (Damp, Mould and Condensation) and Awaab's Law. Emergency repairs performance remained steady over the past 12 months, with only two minor dips in December due to unavoidable issues. Non-emergency repairs have improved significantly, with missed appointments falling to single figures. No access rates have stabilised following improved communication processes. The Committee questioned whether the 5% target was achievable, it was confirmed that future targets may be adjusted to reflect realistic sector benchmarks. Awaab's Law implementation has now been embedded into systems, with significant training delivered. The Committee noted a spike in reported DMC cases during November; numbers have since stabilised. The Committee commented on the progress made on reducing the repairs backlog and sought assurance on the accuracy of this. It was explained that data dashboard draws from Servitor and has multiple aspects feeding into it. Triangulation with other sources of data provides assurance that it is correct.	

	The Committee also noted significant improvement in average repair completion times (now around nine days), and welcomed the bespoke app created in-house for damp and mould assessments.	
	RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the current performance.	
05	**CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE** (DECISION)	
	The Senior Customer and Colleague Communications Officer presented the recently developed Customer Communications Guide, shaped directly by extensive customer consultation. The guide replaces the former strategy and embeds clearer, more inclusive communication standards. Engagement with customers included online surveys, social media promotion, printed invitations, sheltered scheme outreach, and Aspire Panel feedback. Changes made following consultation included simplified language, improved guidance on tailored messaging, clearer accessibility options, and relocation of the alternative format request information to the start of documents. The Committee welcomed the development of the new Customer Communications Guide.	
	RESOLVED: That the Committee approved the Customer Communications Guide	
06	**CUSTOMER FEEDBACK REPORT QUARTER THREE 2025-26** (ASSURANCE)	
	The Customer Feedback Report for Quarter Three was presented by the Complaints Manager. Complaints volumes remain 7% lower year to date than the previous year, despite rises in Q2 and Q3. Stage 2 volumes remain stable, with escalation percentages influenced by lower overall Stage 1 numbers. Timeliness remains strong at 96% (Stage 1) and 98% (Stage 2) year to date. Compliments continue to rise, particularly in Carecall and Independent Living services. The Committee noted a significant sector-wide rise in Ombudsman determinations; however, positively SHG's maladministration rate remains below national averages. MP and councillor enquiries rose by 25%, partly due to increased local political activity and improved internal recording. The Committee talked about his own personal experience of an increase in cold calls from legal companies chasing disrepair claims. It was agreed that this is down to an increase in the number of these companies.	

	The Committee asked that future reports show the correlation between any SHG actions and any change this has in the data. The Committee also queried the rise in MP and Councillor enquiries and the driving force for these; there has been a 25% increase year-on-year. New Councillors are more active in requesting information and all enquiries are now collated by the Customer Feedback team, previously some were dealt with locally. It was agreed that Committee members would review the Feedback Report and provide any feedback to the Complaints Manager, whilst copying in the Director of Customer Services and the Assistant Director of Customer Excellence.	**NC** **Committee Members**
	RESOLVED: That the Committee noted and commented on the report.	
07	**MANAGING OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS** (PRESENTATION)	
	The Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods delivered an overview of the Neighbourhoods service, covering allocations, housing management, safer neighbourhoods, environmental services, CCTV, community centres, leasehold management and Three Sixty Living. The Committee noted the breadth of work, including management of 2,000+ cameras, over 20,000 trees, significant refurbishment responsibilities, high demand for properties, rising support needs, and cost of living impacts. Good partnership working with Stockport Council and the voluntary sector was highlighted. The Committee discussed complaints from tenants about grass being cut after rainfall which ruins the lawns. It was explained that the contractor is paid for a set number of cuts per year and this can lead to them having to do cuts at the end of the year, however, feedback would be provided to the contractor. The Committee discussed footpath maintenance. Responsibility is shared between Stockport Homes and Stockport Council in maintaining footpaths. Detailed mapping work is being done on footpaths in the Borough, but this is expected to take another couple of years, with about a third completed to date.	**AK**
	RESOLVED: That the Committee noted and commented on the presentation.	
08	**INSPECTION UPDATE** (ASSURANCE)	

	The Governance Manager provided an overview of progress following the regulatory inspection. Multiple documents have been submitted, with onsite days completed and additional clarification provided regarding Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) and stock condition approaches. Aspire Panel observation feedback from inspectors was positive. The outcome is expected in March.	
09	**INTERNAL AUDIT**	
	The Governance Manager provided an update on the ongoing internal audit and outlined proposed audit areas for 2026/27, including cyber security, responsive repairs, Awaab's Law compliance, safety compliance and core financial controls. The Chair of SKylight Board highlighted earlier discussion there regarding FRA sampling. Rachel assured members this consideration will be absorbed into compliance scopes.	
	RESOLVED: That the Committee commented on the proposals and identified additional areas for consideration	
10	**CUSTOMER FOCUS COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORT** (ASSURANCE)	
	The Director of Customer Services summarised the report incorporating customer voice activity, Age Friendly work, and a highlight on the new customer portal. Portal uptake has been strong, with 62 per cent of the first digitally engaged cohort registering swiftly and repairs being reported within hours of launch. Bulk onboarding of 1,000 customers per week is now underway. Board Members commented on the value of the report and the insight it provided on a wide range of items.	
	RESOLVED: That the Committee noted and commented on the contents of this report.	
11	**FORWARD PLAN**	
	The forward plan was reviewed and members noted recurring updates were now properly scheduled.	
12	**REVIEW OF THE MEETING**	
	Members praised the structure, presentations, and flow of the meeting. The Committee reiterated the importance of adding narrative insight to data.	

AUTHOR: James Dunn **DATE: 23/02/2026**
LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF: 23/02/2026 **CHAIR APPROVED DRAFT: 02/03/2026**