

CABINET COMMITTEE: HOUSING

Tuesday, 4 November 2025

Attendance:

Councillors

Becker (Chairperson for the meeting)

Cutler

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor Reach

Deputy Members:

Councillor Learney

Non-voting invited councillors

Councillors Clear, Horrill, Power and White

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON FOR THE MEETING

RESOLVED:

That in the absence of the chairperson (Councillor Reach) Councillor Becker be appointed as chairperson for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Reach for whom Councillor Learney was deputising as noted above.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor Horrill declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of agenda items (should it be referred to) as her husband was a Trinity board member.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

John McKenna (Emmaus) and Sue McKenna (Trinity) spoke regarding report CAB3508(H) and their comments are summarised under the relevant minute below.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held 23 July 2025 be agreed as a correct record.

6. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements made.

7. **NEW HOMES PROGRAMME UPDATE (PRESENTATION)**

The Service Lead – New Homes gave a presentation on the New Homes Programme which was available on the council's website [here](#). She also provided a response to a query from the previous meeting, confirming that of the 424 units built, refurbished, or acquired by the council since 2012, 13% were social rent, 61% were affordable rent, and 26% were shared ownership.

The Service Lead, Councillor Becker, and other officers present responded to questions and comments raised by councillors on the presentation as summarised below:

- a) the viability of providing social rent properties.
- b) the status and schedule for the Extra Care scheme at Kings Barton. The Service Lead agreed to check and report back accordingly outside of the meeting.
- c) It was suggested that TACT Board resident members and ward councillors be contacted regarding the ongoing review of council-owned land and the Service Lead confirmed officers would make contact with the TACT Board.
- d) A question was asked regarding the modelling of future needs for housing, especially for smaller households and sheltered accommodation.
- e) Whether the upcoming Housing Development Strategy (scheduled to be considered at Cabinet on 19 November 2025) would include the previously promised rural housing strategy.

RESOLVED:

That the update regarding the new homes programme be noted.

8. **RETROFIT PROGRAMME UPDATE (PRESENTATION)**

The Retrofit Manager gave a presentation on the retrofit programme which was available on the council's website [here](#).

The Retrofit Manager and other officers present responded to questions and comments raised by councillors on the presentation as summarised below:

- a) The possible complexities caused by owner-occupied properties/leaseholders within blocks of flats targeted for retrofit measures.
- b) The risk of EPC ratings decreasing under the new Home Energy Model and potentially hindering compliance with the 2030 deadline. Although the deadline was currently under review due to the EPC reform.
- c) Clarification was sought on the current installation status of solar panels.
- d) Whether there was any possible impact of negative national reports regarding sub-specification retrofit work.
- e) Concern that the various changing regulations impacting on retrofits were confusing and the requirement for effective and accessible communications for tenants regarding this. The Retrofit Manager agreed to consider this suggestion further when the proposed reforms became clearer (anticipated within the next year).

RESOLVED:

That the update regarding the retrofit programme be noted.

9. **DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS POLICY 2025-2028**
(CAB3521(H))

Councillor Becker introduced the report outlining the statutory policy, noting it was designed to address evolving challenges, budgetary constraints, and recommendations from an internal audit. The draft policy had been considered by the Economy and Housing Policy Committee on 11 February 2025 and the comments from that meeting had been reflected in the report.

Councillor Becker, the Strategic Director and the Service Lead – Strategic Housing then responded to questions and comments raised by councillors as summarised below:

- a) A suggestion was made to disregard military compensation for veterans during the means testing process. In response, it was advised that the council would consider the proposal and make a recommendation once due diligence on the financial implications had been undertaken.
- b) Further clarification was sought regarding the financial implications of Paragraph 2.5 of the report.
- c) Clarification was sought on how and where the new policy would be reviewed and amended going forward.
- d) Further details were requested on how adaptations were handled within council housing stock.
- e) Whether there was a contingency fund for failures of adaptations and the importance of client communication was emphasised.
- f) Whether there was any provision of support for individuals who did not qualify for the Top-Up Grant following the means test.
- g) Further details of the methods used for assessing individuals with slowly degenerative conditions and specifically whether this would include adapting to changing requirements.

The Cabinet Committee agreed the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Disabled Facilities Grant policy for 2025-2030 be approved, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

2. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Head of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Healthy Communities, to make minor changes or those linked to legislative change to the DFG policy 2025-2030.

10. **PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2025-2030**
(CAB3508(H))

Councillor Becker introduced the report noting it aimed to make homelessness a priority, focusing on early intervention, meeting complex needs, and developing sustainable housing solutions. She thanked service users and partners involved in the consultation process. She advised that the report had also been considered by Economy and Housing Policy Committee on 16 September 2025.

Sue McKenna and John McKenna spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below.

Sue McKenna (Trinity)

She supported the strategy and the ambition for greater joined-up partnerships around health, addiction and rehabilitation to address the root causes of homelessness. She confirmed that Trinity worked in close collaboration with both the Housing Options team outreach and the Tenancy Support team at the council. Over the next year, Trinity aimed to complete its supported housing pathway and to provide some move on housing.

John McKenna (Emmaus)

He also supported strategy and welcomed the alignment with the Emmaus strategy. He also welcomed future collaboration on new opportunities.

Councillor Becker thanked both for their contributions and their support.

Councillor Becker, the Strategic Director and the Service Lead – Strategic Housing then responded to questions and comments raised by councillors as summarised below:

- a) Further information was requested on the current data available on rural homelessness, noting that it was often hidden.
- b) The current status of the outreach service (including new resources), how partnership working would be enhanced, and what would be done differently to reduce rough sleeping.
- c) Whether the council worked with neighbouring urban fringe authorities (e.g., Portsmouth, Havant, Fareham) concerning rough sleepers arriving from those areas.

In response to comments made, the Service Lead – Strategic Housing confirmed Trinity had been commissioned to provide a weekend outreach service and were in discussions with Emmaus regarding a “try before you buy” option for residents apprehensive about committing to entering their accommodation.

The Cabinet Committee agreed the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the report.

RESOLVED:

That the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030 be adopted.

11. **HOUSING COMPLIANCE POLICIES**
(CAB3520(H))

Councillor Becker introduced the report which sought approval for six housing repair and maintenance compliance policies which had been developed by specialist consultants to ensure that they meet the relevant legislative reform and regulative regulatory frameworks.

Councillor Becker, the Corporate Head of Housing, the Service Lead - Housing Landlord Services and other relevant officers from the team then responded to questions and comments raised by councillors as summarised below:

- a) What action was taken to mitigate against the risk of tenants disturbing asbestos-containing materials in council properties and garages. The Service Lead agreed to check that safety literature was provided to tenants of garages as well as homes.
- b) Whether Awaab's Law applied to the private rented sector (PRS).
- c) A concern was raised that policy summaries were communicated primarily via the website, and alternative, non-digital methods were requested. It was advised that officers would review other means of communication, such as newsletters and leaflets, to ensure information was provided in a meaningful and accessible way.

The Cabinet Committee agreed the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the following six Housing Repairs and Maintenance Compliance Policies be approved and adopted, as set out in Appendices 1 to 6 of report CAB3520(H):

- a) Fire Safety Policy
- b) Gas and Heating Policy
- c) Electrical Safety Policy
- d) Asbestos Policy
- e) Water Hygiene Policy
- f) Lift Safety Policy

2. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Head of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Good Homes, to make any minor amendments to the policies.

12. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting would take place on Monday 2 February 2026 at 10.00 am.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.35 am

Chairperson