

CABINET COMMITTEE: HOUSING

Monday, 2 February 2026

Attendance:

Councillors
Reach (Chairperson)

Becker

Cutler

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Clear

Non-voting invited councillors

Councillors Horrill, Power and White

Members in attendance who spoke at the meeting

Councillors Batho and Pett (as Councillor Directors on the Venta Living Ltd Board)

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Clear as noted above.

2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations made.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held 4 November 2025 be agreed as a correct record.

5. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements made.

6. **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](#).

The Service Lead and the Corporate Head of Housing responded to questions and comments raised by councillors as summarised below:

- a) How variations in Public Works Loan Board rates were factored into financial planning.
- b) Further clarification was sought on whether the availability of grants caused an inflation of tender prices for build projects.
- c) Whether the council encountered difficulty in finding tenants for completed or acquired units.
- d) Information was requested regarding the intended proportion of social rent versus affordable rent properties in the future delivery proposals.
- e) Further clarification was sought regarding the status of the Extra Care scheme at Kings Barton and the Service Lead agreed to provide an update to Councillor Reach following her meeting to obtain a progress update from the developer later that week.
- f) Further information was requested on the direction of extra care provision in general following the postponement of the older persons strategy.

RESOLVED:

That the update regarding the new homes programme be noted.

7. **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 responded to questions and comments raised by councillors as summarised below:

- a) Further clarification was sought regarding the reduction in some Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHF) Wave 3 targets.
- b) A question was asked regarding the 16% rise in EPC C ratings anticipated by 2028 and whether this was achievable with current resources.
- c) Further details were requested regarding the financial benefits of EPC uplifts for tenants.
- d) Clarification was sought on the £2 million budget forecast for remedial work on previous retrofits that were not completed to standard.
- e) Further details were requested on the holistic approach used for the Winnall retrofit project including a request that ward councillors be involved.
- f) A question was asked regarding the involvement of leaseholders in multi-unit flats.
- g) Further clarification on the Swedish Matrix and the capacity to create individual plans for each home.

- h) A suggestion was made that ward councillors receive a dedicated briefing on solar panel and battery agreements to help them reassure any hesitant residents.

RESOLVED:

That the update regarding the retrofit programme be noted including the following:

- a) A reminder to ensure the involvement of ward councillors in retrofit programmes in their areas.
- b) A members' briefing to be arranged on the retrofit programme relating to solar panel installation.

8. **HOUSING STRATEGY 2023-2028 - REVIEW OF YEAR 2**
(CAB3534(H))

Councillor Reach and the Corporate Head of Housing introduced the report, which provided the second annual update on the progress of the Housing Strategy adopted in November 2023.

The Corporate Head responded to questions and comments raised by councillors as summarised below:

- a) The potential impact if the Homeless Prevention Grant was reduced or stopped, specifically concerning the discretionary grant element.
- b) Further clarification on the implications of the Renters' Rights Act on the council's workload and enforcement duties for the approximately 8,600 privately rented properties in the district.
- c) Concerns were raised regarding whether the level of fines imposed on landlords would cover the costs of taking enforcement action to court.
- d) Further clarification was sought on the potential risks posed by Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and in particular, the anticipated requirements to seek ministry approval for even minor expenditure once the Structural Changes Order was agreed.
- e) Further information was sought on the location and size of the 391 properties expected to be delivered by Registered Providers in the district. The Service Lead agreed to provide a report on these properties following the end of the financial year and suggested this be included in the next new homes update.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the progress of the objectives against year 2 of the Housing Strategy delivery plan be noted as outlined in report CAB3534(H).

2. That the emerging challenges that have arisen since November 2024 be noted.

3. That the amended delivery action plan for 2023-2028 be approved.

9. **ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICIES**
(CAB3544(H))

Councillor Reach and the Service Lead - Housing Landlord Services introduced the report, noting that the policies were developed in consultation with the TACT Board and external consultants (RESOLVE). It was advised that the purpose of the refresh was to provide a clear understanding as to what the council considered to be antisocial behaviour and to distinguish it from behaviours that were merely annoying or unpleasant.

The Service Lead - Housing Landlord Services responded to questions and comments raised by councillors as summarised below:

- a) Further clarification was sought regarding the scope of the policy and whom it applied to, including confirmation that the policy would be enforced if a private owner-occupier made a complaint about a council tenant. It was agreed that the policy wording be amended to clarify this.
- b) Further clarification was sought regarding how the council managed anti-social issues involving other Registered Providers (RPs) in the district.
- c) A concern was raised that the wording regarding a "victim-centred, proportionate, and fair" approach required more clarity to manage the expectations of victims. The Service Lead agreed to review the wording to ensure there was clarity on this point.
- d) A question was asked regarding the handling of parking disputes, noting that they often escalated.
- e) Further clarification was sought on how instances of hoarding would be dealt with.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the 3 Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policies be approved and adopted:

- a) Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- b) Hate Crime Policy
- c) Good Neighbour 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.

10. **TENANT PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT TENANT PARTNERSHIP AND INFLUENCE PLAN**
(CAB3543(H))

Councillor Reach introduced the report which outlined the new framework for tenant influence over housing services. It was noted that the plan was co-produced with tenants and replaced the previous 2020-2025 Housing Engagement and Communication Plan. The importance of plain English and the removal of jargon within the document was highlighted to ensure clarity for residents.

The Tenant Partnership Manager responded to questions and comments raised by councillors as summarised below:

- a) Whether trends were observed in attendance data at tenant engagement events in more rural areas and if barriers such as public transport were identified.
- b) Further clarification was sought on how the council intended to improve the collection and use of tenant data.
- c) A concern was raised regarding the needs of digitally excluded tenants and whether officers could use telephone communication for appointment notifications.
- d) A suggestion was made that councillors could be better utilised as a resource for community engagement.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Tenant Partnership and Influence Plan be approved and adopted.
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 Tenant Partnership and Influence Plan.

11. **TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES SURVEY RESULTS 2025/26**
(CAB3530(H))

Councillor Reach and Tenant Partnership Manager introduced the report, noting that the Council was required by the Social Housing Regulator to collect data on 12 tenant satisfaction measures. It was reported that the Council performed well against the benchmark in 10 out of these 12 measures.

The Tenant Partnership Manager and the Strategic Director responded to questions and comments raised by councillors as summarised below:

- a) Was there any further understanding about why tenants under the age of 35 remained the least satisfied with the repairs service?

- b) Further clarification was sought regarding why the national benchmark for satisfaction with complaints handling was considered to be low at 31% and whether the council had a higher target.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the 2025/26 survey results be noted.
2. That the progress made as a result of 2024/25 TSM survey results be noted.
3. That the work that is underway or proposed to address the two indicators that are below median benchmark be agreed.

12. **VENTA LIVING - BUSINESS PLAN 26/27 (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX)**
(CAB3542(H))

Councillor Reach welcomed Councillors Pett and Batho to the meeting who were both council appointed directors to the Venta Living Ltd board.

The Strategic Director introduced the report explaining it was the standard annual report required as part of the shareholder's agreement.

Councillors Pett and Batho provided an update on the company's performance and the proposed financial business plan for the 2026/27 period. It was reported that the company had traded successfully over the previous year and had achieved full occupancy at Foxglove House by the end of the first half of the year. It was noted that tenant feedback was positive and that the company had experienced lower levels of unit turnover than was originally anticipated. The directors advised that future opportunities in the professional House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) sector were being explored, particularly to support groups such as NHS employees, although it was recognised that the current financial climate was not ideal for seeking additional funding from the council as shareholder.

The Strategic Director, the Corporate Head of Housing together with Councillors Pett and Batho responded to questions and comments raised by councillors as summarised below:

- a) A question was asked regarding the decision-making process for future business opportunities.
- b) Further clarification was sought on the rationale for the proposed rent increase to £1,100 per month.
- c) A question was asked regarding the potential impact of the Renters' Rights Act on the company.
- d) Whether further information was available on the current trends within the local HMO market.

- e) Further information was requested regarding the responsibility for property repairs and recent defect works.
- f) A question was asked regarding the sequence of approvals for rent increases, noting that residents were informed of potential changes in January subject to formal notice.

Councillors present confirmed they did not wish to go into exempt session to consider further the contents of the exempt appendix.

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

RECOMMENDED (to Cabinet):

That the updated financial business plan, at Appendix A in the exempt appendix to CAB3542(H) be recommended for approval, including:

- a) **The proposal to increase rent by 5.26%, to £1,100 per month**
- b) **The proposed move to a dynamic renting model following the implementation of the renters rights Bill in May 2026, allowing for prevailing market rents to apply to individual units at the point of relet.**
- c) **To note that operating costs have been reviewed and updated in the business plan model.**

13. **EXEMPT BUSINESS:**

RESOLVED:

1. That in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2. That the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Minute Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of Exempt Information</u>
14	Venta Living Ltd business plan (exempt appendix)) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). (Para 3 Schedule 12A refers)

14. **VENTA LIVING - BUSINESS PLAN 26/27 (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the exempt appendix be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 12.20 pm

Chairperson