



# Housing and Landlord Services

## Resident and Community Panel

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**Date:** Tuesday, 25 November 2025

**Time:** 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

**Location:** Online (Microsoft Teams)

**Chair:** Fiona Lester (BCC)

**Transcribe:** Lesha Wilson

### **Attendees:**

Panel members: Tammy Howard, Ian Quaife, Carol Smith, Shaban Ali, Louise, Halima Omar, Alexandre Aranda, Dylan Evans, Karen Richards, Warda Ibrahim, Harriet Goodland, Chiara Lodi, Eneyi Pemu.

BCC: Fiona Lester, Kevin Lowry, Mark Kempf, Lesha Wilson, Councillor Barry Parsons

## **Minutes / Actions**

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

- Fiona welcomed everyone to the meeting, explained the purpose of the session, and outlined the agenda. Fiona explained that the meeting will be focused on setting the framework for the panel, including discussing what panel members want to get out of the panel and what panel members need from the council in order to support them to achieve that. The group would also discuss what their expectations are around how we work together, the terms of reference, and the code of conduct.
- In his introduction, Councillor Barry Parsons stated that he strongly supports the panel and its purpose. He praised the panel as a fantastic group of residents and community organisations and expressed excitement about their potential. Councillor Parsons stated that “The panel is seen as a platform for empowerment, enabling residents to influence decisions and improve housing conditions. The ultimate aim is to make life better for everyone living in council homes across the city.”

### **2. Apologies**

- Apologies were noted from Jackeline Martin-Burrows (panel member).



### 3. Resident Voice Strategy

- Mark Kempt reported that a Resident Voice Strategy for Housing and Landlord Services is being developed.
- The strategy is a key outcome of the Homes and Housing Delivery Committee task and finish group on resident engagement and aims to embed residents' voices in decision-making.
- The Resident Voice strategy will define resident engagement standards and commitments from the council.
- Work would be led by Housing and corporate policy colleagues over the coming months.

Discussion Points on the Resident Voice Strategy:

Panel members raised points on accessibility, digital exclusion, neurodiversity, and communication standards. Residents felt the strategy should:

- Ensure training for housing staff on handling difficult conversations, cultural awareness and awareness around ageism and intersectionality.
- Offer expanded language options on the council website.
- Be concise, avoid lengthy documents.
- Address digital exclusion; maintain paper-based options.
- Consider neurodivergent needs and different learning styles.
- Explore video/animation formats for accessibility and include signed content for deaf residents.
- Ensure face-to-face engagement with residents remains – this is essential.
- Develop a set of guiding principles for resident engagement that everyone in the housing department must follow.
- Several panel members volunteered to be on the working group.

**Action: Mark Kempt to form a working group with resident volunteers.**

As part of this discussion residents raised concerns about the usability of the NEC resident portal and recommended a user guide for residents with screenshots. Fiona invited residents to help us test the NEC resident portal and help us to develop better guidance for residents.

**Action: Kevin Lowry to coordinate a resident working group to test the portal and recommend improvements.**



## 4. Executive Director Recruitment

- Leshia Wilson informed the panel that recruitment for a new Executive Director of Housing was underway.
- Three panel members and three Housing Scrutiny Panel members volunteered to join the resident interview panel.
- Interview panel takes place on 4 December, volunteers will be contacted this week.

## 5. Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct

- Draft terms of reference documents were shared outlining the role and operating principles of the panel.
- Panel members raised concerns about clarity of purpose, influence on decision-making and the terms of reference. Panel members asked for clarity on:
  - Influence on decision-making, including a diagram showing the links between different resident panels
  - Clarity on how the panel/panel members will handle community issues

### Discussion Points:

- Panel role should go beyond information sharing; members want real influence decisions. If this the panel is just about discussion it will not work as residents in the community are asking what will change and have an expectation that things will be fixed. There needs to be a clear mechanism for reporting community issues, but without derailing strategic focus.
- Add to terms of reference that panel will have the ability to request progress updates, not just receive them.
- Define relationship with other bodies (Scrutiny Panel, Housing Committee).
- Provide more information about the housing scrutiny panel and committee. Barry responded (within the meeting chat) that The Homes and Housing Delivery Committee makes the key decisions about housing in Bristol. So it's a really important relationship for this panel. A link was shared so panel members can read about the committee members, their responsibilities and decisions on the council's website: [ModernGov - bristol.gov.uk](https://www.moderngov.com/d/4280467/moderngov-2019-2022/bristol)
- Include training and guidance for effective meetings.
- Offer support for panel members around dealing with community expectations, complaints and their role as community representatives.
- Provide a toolkit for residents to empower self-service.
- Within the chat Alex also added that he would like to see the following set out clearly for residents: The current position on sphere of influence -> Data gathering (What to gather) -> Storage (Entity Relationship Diagrams etc) -> Insights (what does the data tells us, build story) -> Solutions (think about what



can be done short with long term view) -> Decision making (optioneering where difficult decisions are made) -> Delivery with time, quality and cost oversight

**Action: Lesha to amend the terms of reference and re-circulate for further input from the group. Lesha also agreed to include some of the suggestions within induction and training, which will be available soon.**

## 6. Panel Meetings and Agenda Setting

Discussion points throughout the meeting relevant to this agenda item were:

- The panel need for a forward plan and clarity on connectivity with other panels.
- The plan should cover quick wins and strategic priorities.

## 7. Independent Chair Recruitment

- Lesha advised there is one space remaining on the panel for an independent member, ideally this will be a professional with housing expertise to support and add value to panel discussions. The independent member will need to understand the social housing sector, the importance of resident voice and preferably understand local issues.
- The senior leadership team are in the process of developing a long list of potential candidates.
- The independent member may act as panel chair, which worked well for the previous Housing Management Board. Fiona requested that panel members are given the opportunity to vote on who should chair future panel meetings.

**Action: Mark to email members a long list of potential candidates for independent member and set up a transparent selection process for the independent member.**

## 7. Panel Name

- The current name of the panel is 'Resident and Community Panel'.
- The group were asked to consider and put forward ideas on a name for the panel.
- Lesha made an alternative suggestion of 'Change Makers' and Dylan put forward 'Challenge and Change Group' to more accurately reflect the role of the panel.

**Action: Panel members to submit ideas for a name; decision to be made at next meeting.**



## 8. Forward Plan

- Members were asked to suggest areas of focus for a forward plan.
- Ideas included mental health support for tenants and investment priorities for high-need areas.

**Action: Lesha to compile suggestions into a draft forward plan for review.**

## 9. AOB

- Any other business items deferred

## 10. Close

- Meeting ended at approximately 7:00 PM. Fiona Lester thanked all attendees for their contributions.

## Summary of Actions

Action	Responsible	Deadline
Email interest to join Resident Voice Strategy working group	Panel Members	ASAP
Schedule Resident Voice Strategy working group	Mark Kempt	Early December
Arrange NEC portal testing via a working group	(Kevin)	Date to be confirmed
Develop and share proposed training and induction programme for panel members	(Lesha)	December
Revise Terms of Reference and ensure there is a mechanism for addressing community issues	Lesha Wilson	Before next meeting
Launch independent chair recruitment process and voting	Mark Kempt	December
Email agenda ideas to Lesha Draft forward plan	Panel Members Lesha Wilson	Before next meeting
Submit panel name ideas	Panel Members	Before next meeting

### Distribution:

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