



WELWYN HATFIELD

Notes of the last Residents Panel meeting

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| Date and Timing | Wednesday 27 May 2026 6.10pm – 8.10pm |
| Location | Council Offices, Campus East, WGC |
| Chair | Anthony Goodwin |
| Also present | Residents Panel Sue McDaid – Executive Director Resident Services and Climate Change Janice White – Assistant Director Homes & Neighbourhoods Simon Walton – Interim Housing Specialist Alison Wildey – Resident Involvement Manager Michelle Meaney – Resident Involvement Administrator |
| Agenda Item | Subject and actions |
| 1. | Welcome and Introductions. |
| 2. | Declarations of Interest – were noted |
| 3. | Notes of the last meeting (29/04) A recap of the notes from the last meeting. Officers provided an update on the progress of the roll out of Simpler Recycling. |
| 4. | Competency and Conduct Standard The Residents Panel felt this was the right approach to make sure staff had suitable skills for their roles, however also felt tenants should have to agree to treat staff respectfully. They were also conscious of training costs and wanted to be reassured that the Council would reclaim any training costs if staff left after completing the training. It was confirmed there is a policy in place and noted that the Council aims to recruit new managers into roles with the required qualifications wherever possible. |



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5.

Altair Report, Annual Reviews and Housing Excellence Plan

Officers delivered a presentation on how the Panel can support the council in 'co-Regulation' to help improve services and meet the requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act. A part of this is sharing transparent and accessible performance information for scrutiny.

Officers explained that Altair had reviewed our services against the consumer standards and presented their main findings, noting that this was based on evidence 6 months old at this point. The presentation will be shared with Panel members.

Officers then shared the 2025/26 annual housing performance reviews. This was the first time this information had been shared prior to Cabinet Housing Panel (CHP), something this Panel had requested. This helps ensure the residents' voice is heard clearly at CHP.

AG welcomed the approach in general but suggested setting up a dedicated sub-group to review performance reports going forward in greater detail. This was agreed and will be set up by September.

There were several questions raised in relation to the annual performance reviews:

- The Panel advised the website search function could be more easily accessible and suggested a separate standalone 'Tenant Hub' button. It was agreed the issue of the accessibility of the website would be added to the workplan for later in the year, and the 'tenant hub' button would be considered in the meantime.
- Officers asked those on the Panel who lived in blocks with communal areas, if they had fire safety information displayed. There was a mixed response. Tenants suggested that not all blocks had noticeboards in communal areas and fire safety 'stickers' on walls were easily removed. The Panel agreed notice boards would be useful, and Officers agreed to find out what the Council Policy is on this and report back.



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident Panel advised there's never been a fire drill at his block (IL). Officers advised that because council operates a 'Stay Put' Policy, fire drills are not required. • Residents Panel asked if the 'Stay Put' Policy has been updated since the Grenfell Tower tragedy? Officers confirmed the policy has been updated. <p>Officers then explained how the recommendations from the Altair report have been added to other ongoing actions to create the 'Housing Excellence Plan'. The Residents Panel agreed to help scrutinise the implementation of it prior to every CHP. In addition, the Panel will also choose one or two specific actions to review the 'quality' of the work and the 'status' of completion or percentage completed.</p> |
| 7. | <p>Chair's update</p> <p>Chair will meet with Officers to put together a separate focus group for more in-depth work.</p> <p>Following Panel members' feedback on their experience of logging fly tipping cases, it was agreed the Panel should take a deeper look at the process later in the year.</p> |
| 8. | <p>Housing update</p> <p>The council's current housing repairs and maintenance contract will come to an end in October 2027. Officers asked if the Panel would be willing to support with drafting the contract specification and evaluation of submitted bids. It was agreed that a separate meeting will be arranged to discuss this.</p> |
| 9. | <p>Matter Arising</p> <p>Officers advised Altair (who are assessing the council's preparedness for inspection) will be online observing the next Panel meeting in June. The agenda and meeting will run as normal.</p> <p>The Panel agreed which members will attend the next Morgan Sindall Strategic Core meeting in June.</p> |
| | <p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 24 June 2026, 6.10pm</p> |