

Hillcrest Homes (Scotland) Limited
Operations Sub Committee

Item 2.2

Minute of the meeting held Tuesday 18th November 2025
at 5.30pm, on MS Teams

Present: P. Shepherd (Chair)
R. Burnett
D. Boyle

In attendance: F. Morrison (Deputy Chief Executive)
D. Milton (Head of Development)
C. Pickthall (Head of Housing and Enterprises)
D. Conway (Head of Asset Management)
L. Davidson (Board Services Officer)

Action by

1. **Introduction**

1.1 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from E. Jones, C. Robertson and S. Qadar.

1.2 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Minutes and Matters Arising**

2.1 **Minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2025 and matters arising**

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising:

Item 2.1 - P. Shepherd requested that contractor names are added to the development projects with a red or amber rating to allow the Sub Committee to identify any potential contractor risks. This was included in the report presented to the Governing Body at their meeting on 21st October and will be included in the next report for the Operations Sub Committee.

DM

3. **Business Matters**

3.1 **Rent Consultation**

The Head of Housing presented the draft correspondence for the tenant rent consultation. The consultation is based on two options to be agreed at the Governing Body meeting. Rent affordability has been taken into consideration as part of the budget setting process and it is proposed that two options are presented for consultation – 5.8% and 6.8%.

D. Boyle noted that the tenant correspondence last year highlighted that a rent increase above CPI was required to cover rising national insurance contributions and asked if this should be included, also referring to impact of the rise in Scottish Living Wage. This will be included in this year's tenant rent consultation correspondence.

CP

D. Boyle also asked if the average RSL rent increase data could be included for information. Information received from the Scottish Housing Network will be included based on the rent increase information received so far from the sector.

CP

The Sub Committee approved the following:

- *Tenant consultation based on two options to be agreed at the Governing Body. The likely two options for consideration will be CPI + 2% and CPI + 3% (September CPI 3.8%).*
- *Draft correspondence for the tenant rent consultation.*
- *Incentive of 3 x £100 vouchers.*

3.2 **Tackling Poverty Together Action Plan Update**

The Head of Housing presented the report, providing a summary of the progress to date.

D. Boyle noted that tackling poverty remains a key priority for the Scottish Government and asked how Hillcrest's contribution is reported. A publication will be produced, highlighting key areas of work for sharing with external stakeholders.

FM/CP

The Sub Committee noted the update against the action plan.

3.3 **Net Zero Strategy Group Update**

The bi-annual update on the activity of the Net Zero Delivery Group was presented to the Sub Committee for information. The Sub Committee noted the good progress made against the action plan.

The Sub Committee note the report.

4. **Asset Management**

4.1 Asset Management Operations Report

The Head of Asset Management presented the report, providing an update on the key areas of operation for the period to 30th September 2025.

Progress has been made on the implementation of the SBA recommendations, with the waking watch service in place at Colonsay View whilst the installation of the L1 fire alarm systems is progressing. The remediation works will be led by the Development team and government funding is still to be confirmed.

At the Governing Body meeting on 21 October 2025, members queried the additional warden to provide assistance for residents requiring a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP). The Deputy Chief Executive clarified that an additional waking watch was required to support the evacuation of PEEPs and when the L1 fire alarm system has been installed, this responsibility will be handed over to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

D. Boyle noted the progress made in carrying out adaptations, with the budget increased by Hillcrest when SG funding was cut. D. Boyle asked if we demonstrate the value of Hillcrest's contribution to external stakeholders to help secure funding in the future. A full breakdown is provided in a report to the SG annually with this information.

P. Shepherd noted that the right first time repairs has improved significantly. The reporting criteria has changed following publication of revised guidance on how this is calculated. The indicator is now much simpler and a truer reflection of work orders that are completed right first time. The Sub Committee requested that a comparison of other RSLs performance is also included for information in the next report.

DC

The Sub Committee noted the following:

- *Performance against key indicators.*
- *2025-26 spend to budget.*
- *Commercial property overview.*
- *Agency hostel overview.*

4.2 Property Disposal Update

The Head of Asset Management presented the bi-annual update on the property sales strategy.

The Sub Committee:

- *Noted the update on property sales to date.*
- *Approved the proposal to accept offers under 25% of market value for the property at Upper Bow.*

5. Development

5.1 Development Report

The Head of Development presented the progress in the delivery of the 3 year development programme. There are currently 19 developments on site. The performance of projects that are on site in respect of cost and time was noted by the Sub Committee, highlighting in particular the projects with a red rating. The upcoming acquisitions, upcoming handovers and completions were also presented to the Sub Committee for information.

The Sub Committee noted the general progress in the delivery of the 3 year development programme, in particular the performance of projects that are on site in respect of cost and time.

6. Housing Management

6.1 Housing Management Key Performance Indicators

The Head of Housing presented the Q2 performance indicators against the targets for 2025-26, highlighting the following:

- Void performance for Q2 exceeds the target by 7.51 days.
- Void rent loss for Q2 exceeds the target by 1.79%.
- Rent collection performance for Q2 exceeds the target by 0.72%.
- Tenancies sustained for more than 12 months in Q2 exceeds the target by 1.83%.

The trial where decorating is not subcontracted in Edinburgh has had no impact on re-let performance, with no adverse effect on void turnaround times or overall performance. There has also been a higher number of abandonments, and this will be closely monitored.

The Sub Committee noted the overall positive performance across all areas.

The Sub Committee noted the report.

6.2 Housing Management Update

The Head of Housing presented the report on the key priority topics for tenants and Homes.

The Engagement Team have been working on the scrutiny project looking at damp, mould and condensation (DMC) and tenants who have reported DMC have been contacted to invite them to join the feedback forum.

The Income and Engagement Apprentice has started work on a project to increase membership and engagement from younger tenants aged 16-25. The Engagement Team also hosted an event for colleagues across Scotland to meet workers from local landlords to share best practice and for joint working opportunities.

HEAT has secured external funding from HACT and Octopus to support the most vulnerable groups. The team were also shortlisted for the CIH Awards (Working in Partnership) but were not successful on the night. The Sub Committee congratulated the team on being shortlisted for the award.

The Sub Committee noted the report.

6.3 Tenant Satisfaction Survey Action Plan

The results of the annual tenant satisfaction survey were reported to the Sub Committee on 9 September 2025. Knowledge Partnership have now completed an in-house benchmarking exercise, and the results show that Hillcrest ranks 10th of the 18 RSLs and 3 local authorities and is above the average of 86.8%.

The overall areas impacting housing quality was shared with the Sub Committee. R. Burnett noted that the main areas for improvement were windows and doors and asked if there is data to show the responses are for those already or still to be upgraded. The data received is anonymous, but an additional question can be added to the survey for next year.

Progress on the action plan will be reported to the Operations Sub Committee in May 2026

The Sub Committee noted the report and approved the action plan.

7. Customer Services/Complaints

7.1 Customer Services Update

An update on the performance of the Customer Service Team in Q2 was presented to the Sub Committee with the following areas highlighted:

- There has been a reduction in calls received for housing and general enquiries and an increase in the volume of repairs calls.
- The Hillcrest App has 42% uptake of current tenancies.
- There has been a good uptake on the out of hours call back facility, with 92% successfully called back and answered.

The Sub Committee noted the report.

7.2 Complaints Update

A summary of the complaint performance for Q2 was presented to the Sub Committee.

The number of stage 1 complaints has increased by 14% this year compared to the same period last year. The overall stage 1 complaints performance is well within

target. Maintenance continues to receive the highest number of complaints, and this has been highlighted to the Head of Maintenance and further analysis will be carried out.

There were four stage 2 complaints received in Q2 and three have been completed within target timescale and one complaint was completed in October.

There were 383 compliments logged for staff.

The Sub Committee noted the report.

8. Other Issues

8.1 A.O.C.B.

The Deputy Chief Executive highlighted recent issues at the Reid Square accommodation.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 17th February 2026

There being no other business the Chairperson thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting.

.....