	Housing Scrutiny Committee 24 November 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director of Residents and Housing Services
	Lead Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters - Cllr Robert Johnson

Update on the Housing Management Advisory Board

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
List of Appendices:	Appendix A - Housing Management Advisory Board Terms Of Reference
Background Papers:	None
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1.0 Executive Summary

1.1. The purpose of this report is to update the Housing Scrutiny Committee on the development and work of the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) since its establishment in April 2025.

1.2. The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee received an update from the HMAB in November 2025.

1.3. The report summarises the Board's oversight activity, changes to its membership, development of its performance dashboard and forward plan, and its role in supporting resident influence and continuous improvement across Housing Management Services.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 That the Housing Scrutiny Committee notes the progress made in developing the Housing Management Advisory Board and its role in providing independent challenge, resident insight and oversight of Housing Management Services.

2.2 That the Committee considers the Board's current work priorities and identifies any matters it wishes the Board to consider as part of its future work programme.

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities and Strategic Context

3.1.1 The Board supports the objectives of the Council's Borough Plan, *Moving Brent Forward Together*, and its commitment to building thriving communities by ensuring that residents' voices are heard and can influence the delivery of Housing Management Services.

3.1.2 This report provides an overview of the Board's activities and demonstrates how members scrutinise performance, challenge the service and influence improvements. It also sets out how performance information, including Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), is being used to strengthen transparency, resident engagement and accountability.

3.2 Background

3.2.1 The HMAB was established in April 2025 to provides an important forum for discussion and oversight, whilst not exercising formal decision-making powers.

3.2.2 The Board acts as a critical friend to Housing Management, providing a forum for constructive challenge, discussion and oversight while having no formal decision-making powers. Its responsibilities include scrutinising regulatory compliance, monitoring delivery of the Housing Management Improvement Plan, and contributing to the development and review of housing policies.

3.3 <u>Activities</u>

3.3.1 **Meetings and work programme -** The Board meets every two months, with six formal meetings each year. The meetings last two hours and take place in person. Members are expected to review papers in advance and can access training to support their role.

3.3.2 In addition to the scheduled Board meetings, additional meetings are also held to provide dedicated time for focused discussion and scrutiny of specific service areas and priority issues, such as voids and the rent recovery project. This approach enables Board members to review key issues in greater depth and support effective oversight and service improvement.

3.3.3 Board members contribute collaboratively to agenda-setting. Agendas are informed by matters arising from previous meetings, the forward plan and trends identified through the performance dashboard. Standing items include a

performance data review and updates on the Council's self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing.

3.3.4 **Performance and regulatory oversight -** A dedicated HMAB performance dashboard was introduced in May 2026 and subsequently refined in response to Board member feedback. The revised dashboard was launched on 15 September 2026 and provides members with regular oversight of performance across Housing Management Services brings together key measures covering complaints, repairs, voids, rent collection, property management and arrears, alongside relevant Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

The dashboard also supports trend analysis and benchmarking against peer performance, helping Board members identify areas of concern, challenge performance and monitor service improvements.

3.3.5 The Board is able to use the information detailed to select which areas they would like more focus on and recommend items on the future forward plan for in-depth scrutiny

3.3.6 The Chair met with the Regulator of Social Housing on 25 February 2026 to discuss the Regulator's assessment following the Council's self-referral and progress against the Recovery Action Plan. Discussion included resident engagement and the steps being taken to strengthen residents' involvement and influence. The Chair subsequently briefed Board members on the discussion and the areas of interest raised by the Regulator.

3.3.7 At the meeting, discussions focused on resident engagement and the action being taken to strengthen resident involvement and influence. The Chair advised that the Regulator expressed strong interest in the Council’s approach and highlighted the progress being made and our continued commitment to improvement.

3.3.8 Tenant Satisfaction Measures form part of the performance information considered by the Board and provide an important resident perspective alongside operational performance data. The Board uses trends in satisfaction to identify areas requiring further scrutiny and to test whether improvements in operational performance are being reflected in residents' experience of services.

3.3.9 The Board is kept informed of significant service issues through briefing papers setting out the nature of the issue, the corrective action required and progress against agreed actions. Subsequent update reports enable the Board to track delivery and provide further challenge where required. The Chair also meets relevant members of the senior management team between Board meetings to discuss significant issues and progress, with key outcomes reported back to Board members.

3.3.10 **Forward plan -** At the Board meeting held on 15 September 2026, the Board agreed their forward plan and the key areas for scrutiny identified were -

- Repairs & Building Safety
- Resident Engagement
- Void Management
- Complaints & Learning
- Rent Collection & Tenancy Sustainment / Rent Compliance Recovery Plan
- Performance & Regulatory Assurance
- Housing Management Performance Review
- Board Effectiveness & Annual Planning

3.3.11 **Impact and outcomes -** During its first 18 months, the Board's scrutiny has resulted in a number of areas receiving additional management focus.

This includes:

- **Voids:** Following Board scrutiny of some long-term voids and the challenges faced in re-letting these properties, the service has devised an action plan for each individual property to progress the necessary works and return it to occupation as soon as practicable. However, for void properties identified as financially unviable to bring back into use, the Board has requested that a strategy be developed setting out the options for consideration, including a potential disposal programme and that an update on the strategy's development and proposed timescales be presented at the next Board meeting.

- **Rent recovery:** The Board challenged the rent compliance and potential overcharges that were identified in 1365 cases and requested that a review of each case be undertaken and corrective action implemented where applicable. In response, the Rent Compliance Recovery Working Group was established and a Housing Quality Network review of rent setting incorporating specialist legal advice was carried out. The outcome of which has indicated that the majority of the cases have had the correct level of rent applied and are therefore compliant, reducing the potentially affected cohort from to approximately 250–300 cases and the potential financial exposure

- **Performance:** Board members contributed to the redesign of the HMAB performance dashboard, resulting in a more focused and accessible reporting format that better supports effective scrutiny, highlights key performance issues and enables Board members to provide informed challenge on service delivery and improvement.

- **Resident engagement:** The Board's challenge on regulatory readiness and embedding resident engagement across Housing, with all staff and managers. This has led to a mock inspection being carried out and a review of the

engagement offer to ensure that it aligns with TSM resident engagement requirements.

3.3.12 **Board composition and membership -** The Terms of Reference provide for an annual review of the Board's operation and membership arrangements. In line with this provision and following the resignation of two of the board members due to personal commitments, a review of the Board's composition was recently undertaken to ensure it remains effective, representative and capable of providing robust challenge and independent scrutiny.

3.3.13 The revised structure increases the number of independent members from three to four and reduces staff representatives from three to two. Overall membership remains unchanged at 12.

3.3.14 This change increases the proportion of independent representation while retaining three council tenant members, two councillors and sufficient operational input from Housing Management staff. The Board's purpose, functions, meeting arrangements and reporting relationships remain unchanged.

3.3.15 The new membership structure will not change the Board's purpose, functions, meeting arrangements or reporting relationships and will deliver the following benefits:

- Increase independent representation and expertise.
- Strengthen the Board's ability to provide constructive challenge.
- Retain a strong resident voice through the continued representation of three council tenant members.
- Maintain democratic accountability through councillor representation.
- Preserve operational input from Housing Service staff whilst ensuring a greater degree of independence.
- Support the Board in fulfilling its purpose as set out within its Terms of Reference.

3.3.16 An extensive recruitment process took place during the Summer and two new independent Board members were successfully appointed. Following the local elections, the councillor membership of the Board was also updated, with Cllr Johnson (as Cabinet Member) and Cllr Anderson joining the Board.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

4.1 A dedicated Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) webpage was launched on 12 February 2026, providing information on the Board’s purpose, membership profiles and opportunities for residents to engage directly with Board members. The webpage also provides a platform for sharing updates on service delivery and performance standards.

4,2 To increase the Board's visibility and strengthen engagement with residents, Board members are encouraged to attend key resident engagement activities,

including the annual Housing Roadshow, tenant and leaseholder events and Tenant and Residents' Association (TRA) seminars.

5.0 Financial Considerations

5.1 The costs associated with the operation of the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB), including member remuneration, recruitment and training, are funded from existing Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budgets. No additional budget growth is required as a result of the recommendations contained within this report.

5.2 The appointment of one additional independent member is expected to result in a modest increase in expenditure which can be accommodated within existing approved budgets.

5.3 The HMAB provides an important assurance and oversight function through its scrutiny of key housing management activities, including repairs, building safety, complaints, void management, rent collection and regulatory compliance. Effective oversight supports the early identification and management of service delivery and financial risks and contributes to the Council's wider governance arrangements.

5.4 No significant financial risks are directly associated with the recommendations in this report. However, continued effective scrutiny and challenge through the HMAB supports compliance, service improvement and the long-term financial sustainability of the Housing Revenue Account.

6.0 Legal Considerations

6.1 N/A

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1 The Board is required to operate in accordance with the Council’s Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) policy, ensuring broad and representative participation in its membership and decision-making processes.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 The Board are responsible for holding Housing Management Services to account for service delivery, including those which fall under the Councils Climate Action strategy.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

9.1 N/A - although the Board are required to review its operation, membership, terms of reference and code of conduct on an annual basis

10.0 Communication Considerations

10.1 N/A

Report sign off:

Tom Cattermole
Corporate Director of Residents and Housing Services