BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE

Minutes from the Meeting of the Shareholder Committee held on Wednesday, 18th March, 2026 at 4.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillors A Beales (Chair), C Morley and S Ring.

PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34: Councillor A Ware

OFFICERS PRESENT:
Karl Patterson, Housing Development Manager
Carl Holland, Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer
Duncan Hall, Assistant Director for Housing, Place and Regeneration
Charlotte Marriott, Interim Corporate Governance Manager

25 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

26 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the meeting held on the 30th October 2025 were approved as a correct record.

27 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

28 **MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor Ware was present under Standing Order 34.

29 **URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

30 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

31 **WEST NORFOLK HOUSING COMPANY ASSURANCE REPORT**

Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube.

The Housing Development Manager presented the report, providing updates on business plan delivery, funding opportunities, pipeline progress, and the impact of local government reorganisation and sector challenges.

In response to a question from Councillor Morley, the Housing Development Manager assured the Committee the impact of the Renters Right Act was minimal for the Housing Company and was not due to come into effect for registered providers until October 2026.

The Chair, Councillor Beales commented on the funding opportunities, such as the £39 Billion from Central Government. The Assistant Director for Regeneration, Housing and Place discussed the company's engagement with new funding streams, including the Social and Affordable Homes Programme and the National Housing Bank, highlighting ongoing discussions with Homes England and the potential for low-cost loans and affordable homes grants to support future delivery.

The Chair, Councillor Beales commented on a recent meeting he had attended with Freebridge Community Housing and explained the focus was delivery of housing and would support any future opportunity for the Council and Freebridge Community Housing.

Councillor Ring commented on the opportunity of exploring the potential for using new low-interest funding to support shared ownership properties. The Assistant Director for Regeneration, Housing and Place clarified that while the primary focus was affordable housing, there may be opportunities for market-led housing, and the company will examine the detail as it emerged including tenure swapping.

The Chair, Councillor Beales commented there was ambition within the Council to increase the scale to make bids attractive. The Assistant Director for Regeneration, Housing and Place added Homes England were trying to achieve more housing therefore the ambition to scale up was to be welcomed.

The Shareholder Committee Members discussed the transfer of properties from the Council to the Housing companies and existing and future tenure mix. The Assistant Director for Regeneration, Housing and Place commented further on transparency in purchases and leases.

Councillor Morely requested a regular update on reporting of schedule of housing delivery numbers including the stage and status of each site. The Chair, Councillor Beales commented this information was to be reported from the steering group.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Ware commented on shared ownership and expressed her concern of the failure in providing shared ownership. She highlighted the importance of the shared ownership on the right housing developments.

Councillor Ring commented on a significant dependency on one housing association for delivery and questioned if alternatives were to be considered to reduce risk.

The Housing Development Manager explained board members of the company had discussed this matter and was dependent on the outcome of the Local Government Reorganisation. He explained the scale needed to be higher such as 250 to 500 properties until economically viable before bringing in house.

The Assistant Director for Regeneration, Housing and Place added the reliance on the housing association as the managing company was significant and not having them was a risk so therefore careful consideration was taken. He highlighted to the Committee the success of another round of local authority housing funding from MHCLG.

The Chair, Councillor Beales requested an exempt session at a future meeting on the reliance of the housing association being the management company.

In response to Councillor Beales concern, the Housing Development Manager reported that a new Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Council was finalised and was going to the board for approval at their meeting next week.

Councillor Morley and Beales discussed the need for improved information sharing with all Members, including the creation of concise fact sheets, FAQ’s, website access, and regular updates to ensure Members of the Shareholder Committee can effectively represent shareholder interests and understand company activities.

Under Standing Order, Councillor Ware suggested circulating website addresses and creating updated fact sheets for both companies, enabling Councillors to easily access business plans and key information, with agreement from the committee to keep materials concise and accessible.

The Assistant Director for Regeneration, Housing and Place acknowledged previous concerns about resource constraints but committed to considering ways to improve ongoing information flow.

RESOLVED: The Shareholder Committee noted the contents of the Annual Assurance Report.

REASON FOR DECISION: To provide the Shareholder Committee with assurance on the West Norfolk Housing Companies performance against the business plan, governance and finances.

32 **WEST NORFOLK PROPERTY LIMITED ASSURANCE REPORT**

Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube.

The Housing Development Manager presented the report, detailing the company's leasing activities, management contract review, response to the Renters Rights Act, financial risks, and the need for external investment.

Councillor Morley raised concerns about the company's lack of provision for long-term repair costs and the potential financial exposure. Council Beales and the Housing Development Manager agreed to discuss the details further in exempt session and acknowledging the need for robust financial planning.

Councillor Ring queried the results of the tenant performance survey, with the Housing Development Manager confirming that the managing agent was addressing issues raised, further surveys are being introduced, and the board was reviewing the questionnaire to ensure meaningful feedback.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Ware raised her concern on the feedback from the survey as it highlighted the lack of available contact for tenants during weekends. She added the board members had requested further data including the questions asked in the surveys.

The Assistant Director for Regeneration, Housing and Place summarised the board's view that the high-quality PRS model was proven and in demand, but future sustainability depends on achieving greater scale and attracting significant external investment, with openness to partnerships with third-party investors and developers.

RESOLVED: The Shareholder Committee noted the contents of the Annual Assurance Report.

REASON FOR DECISION: To provide the Shareholder Committee with assurance on the West Norfolk Property Limited performance against the business plan, governance and finances.

33 **ALIVE WEST NORFOLK BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube.

The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer reported on the procedural steps to wind up Alive West Norfolk, including director resignations and new appointments to maintain board quorum, with the committee noting the progress and supporting the formal process.

Councillor Ring and Beales echoed the hard work of the Interim Corporate Governance Manager on Alive West Norfolk being brought back in house of the Council.

RESOLVED: The Shareholder Committee noted and supported the change in named directors to the Board of Alive West Norfolk as set out in the report.

REASON FOR DECISION: To note and agree changes to the named membership of the Board.

34 COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED: The Committee Forward Plan was noted.

35 DATE OF FUTURE MEETING

The date of next meeting was to be confirmed.

36 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

37 EXEMPT - WEST NORFOLK HOUSING COMPANY BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer presented the report.

The Shareholder Committee members agreed with report and recommendations. They asked questions in which Officers responded to.

RESOLVED: The Shareholder Committee:

1. Approved the appointment of Karl Patterson, Housing Development Manager, to the board of West Norfolk Housing Company
2. Agreed the West Norfolk Housing Company Board that Duncan Hall remains on the board of directors
3. Agreed the Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association are amended to disapply the 9-year maximum term provision to directors who are employees of the Company or officers of the Council and authority is delegated to the Principal Lawyer to finalise the revised wording.

REASON FOR DECISION: To provide the board with greater resilience in light of upcoming Local Government Reorganisation and ensure the recommendations align with the Company's constitutional arrangements.

38 **EXEMPT - WEST NORFOLK HOUSING COMPANY - LOAN FACILITY**

The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer presented the report.

Members of the Shareholder Committee asked questions and the Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer responded.

RESOLVED: The Shareholder Committee
(a) noted the process undertaken to develop the loan agreement and
(b) granted their consent for the loan agreement to be put into effect on behalf of the WNHC through the delegated authority to the Council's Housing Development Manager in consultation with the Council's Chief Operating Officer.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Council to support its wholly owned company, WNHC, towards delivery of its Business Plans and the Council's own Corporate Strategic aims.

The meeting closed at 5.26 pm