

Homes in Somerset Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The primary purpose of the AGM is to allow directors of the company to present the company's financial performance, reflect on the achievements and challenges of the year, and allow the shareholder to vote on the issues at hand.

APPROVED Minutes of the Annual General Meeting in the Sedgemoor Room at Bridgwater House on Tuesday 30 September 2025 at 12.34pm

Board Members:	Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts joined at 12:40 Cllr Kathy Pearce – joined at 12.53 Cllr Lance Duddridge Cllr Pauline Ham – joined at 12.44 Marie Hide Oliver Keates Paul Hackett Paul Stephenson (Chair) Sarah O'Neill	Federica Kathy Lance Pauline H Marie Olly Paul H Paul S Sarah
In Attendance:	Alice Pearce, Governance Manager (minutes) Ben Lane, Director of Finance & Performance Claire Tough, Director of Communities & Customer Service Denise Reeves, Project Manager, HiS Louise Pither, Governance Assistant Naomi Macey, Director of Asset Management and Safety Pauline Kelly, Executive Assistant (Admin support) Peter Hatch, Chief Executive	Alice Ben Claire Denise Louise Naomi Pauline K Peter
Guests:	Chris Hall, Executive Director Community, Place & Economy, Somerset Council Craig Green, Sedgemoor Tenants Assurance Committee (STAC) Karen Wilce, STAC Lorna Curtis, STAC Mr Stewart Thorn, tenant Ros Griffiths, STAC Wendy Lewis, Housing Specialist, Somerset Council (via Teams)	Chris Craig Karen Lorna Mr Thorn Ros Wendy
NO.	ITEM	
1.	Welcome Guests	
	Paul S welcomed Board members, attendees and guests to the meeting.	
	Apologies	
	There were no apologies received.	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
	There were no further declarations from Board members other than those previously recorded on Board Members' Declaration of Interests Forms.	
3.	Draft minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2024	
	The public minutes recorded on 24 September 2024 were agreed as accurate.	
	RESOLVED	
	The AGM APPROVED the minutes of the meeting recorded on 24 September 2024.	
4.	Matters Arising recorded on 24 September 2024	
	Members noted the matters arising. Both actions have been completed.	



RESOLVED

- The AGM **NOTED** the matters arising.



5.	Review of the Year by the Chair
	Paul gave a brief overview to members; the following highlights were noted. The Chair highlighted the context Homes in Somerset (HiS) had been working in. It had been a big year with a changing political landscape. Labour had made housing a key priority, there had been several consultations, which HiS had responded to jointly with the Council. We had another new housing minister, and we await the impacts. HiS had taken on the Development and Regeneration team from Somerset Council, covering development across Somerset Council's whole area. It had been exciting to be part of the new homes programme providing new housing in the area to address the long waiting list. To ensure effective governance for this new responsibility, there was a name change to Homes in Somerset, and we set up a Development Committee to sit alongside Audit and Risk (ARC) and the Sedgemoor Tenants Assurance Committee (STAC). Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) performance at HiS had been excellent and Paul thanked all those involved. We had achieved the ROSPA gold award for H&S. This was amazing as its not easily gained and involves a massive submission of evidence. The Community team had achieved the DAHA accreditation for their exceptional work with partners delivering a survivor's, person-centred approach to domestic abuse support. Paul felt this was an excellent example of what our work was all about. Chris and Peter had been working on the Options Appraisal. The Board's engagement would be starting next week. We are awaiting the outcome, we are hoping for a positive result. The business gained Investors in People (IIP) Gold accreditation, a great reflection on the culture of the business and our colleagues. There are four members of STAC and the Chair present today, showing the dedication, commitment and expertise of the Committee. The company benefits massively from their input, and a review of the year must recognise the work they do, how they challenge us, make us better, and provide assurance on our work. This year we have been working jointly with the Council on the Asset Management Strategy and preparing for AWAAB'S law, both policy and strategy. During this item Federica joined the meeting at 12:40pm and Pauline H joined at 12.44pm. RESOLVED The AGM NOTED the Chair's annual review.
6.	Review of the Year by Executive Director Community, Place and Economy, Somerset Council
	Chris extended his thanks to the Board and staff for the level of assurance they provided the Council. The assurance provided at Board and Partnership meetings is fed through to Council Committees and ultimately the full Council. HiS always reports performance in the top quartile. Previously Marie had stated that "we" is catching. Chris highlighted that he and Federica were proud to be part of that "we". Taking on the Council's development work and leading on the Property Condition Survey work were a great example of how HiS were always quick to respond



	to address any issues. It was beyond assurance, and a true partnership approach. HiS's transparency was another way the Council receives assurance, giving them confidence. If problems were to occur the Council was confident, they would work alongside HiS. The next 12 months would be interesting as we go into the Options Appraisal.
	RESOLVED The AGM NOTED the annual review from Somerset Council.
7.	Approval of the Annual Report and Financial Statements for Year Ended 31 March 2025
	Ben summarised the strong financial performance seen in the last year. There had been some underspends which had been put into reserves for use to further support customers. The team has had a clean audit, meaning there had been no concerns found around controls. The one recommendation from last year had been put in place. Board recommended the 2024/25 financial performance and KPI service results be presented at the AGM and invited the 'Company Member' to approve the accounts. They have been scrutinised by the Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) in June and presented to the Board in July. The Annual Report and Financial statements capture the strong performance delivered in the year. Chris H, on the behalf of the Company Member, approved the 2024/25 Annual Report and Financial Statements. The accounts will now go to Companies House and will be in the public domain.
	RESOLVED The Company Member APPROVED the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.
8.	Appointment of External Auditors – 2025/26
	During the retender exercise for HiS's external auditors, the ARC was asked for reassurance that the arrangements were not "getting stale" due to the period of time we had worked with them. To address this the lead audit partner had been changed. Good practice is not to go beyond 10 years with one organisation; this extension will bring the relationship to a total of 8 years. Considering the new lead, Ben had no hesitations in recommending the extension. The Company Member was invited to reappoint Bishop Fleming as auditors of HiS for 2025/26. The Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) were happy to make this recommendation as Bishop Fleming have served the organisation well over the previous years. The support they provide is comprehensive and professional. Chris H, on the behalf of the Company Member, approved the appointment of Bishop Fleming as HiS' auditors for 2025/26.
	RESOLVED The Company Member APPROVED the appointment of Bishop Fleming as the External Auditors for Homes in Somerset (HiS) for 2025/26.
9.	Board Member Retirements, Board Member Appointments and Councillor Board Member Nominations
	Alice outlined the proposed appointments. Endorsement of the nominations received from Somerset Council for Councillor Board members was sought. Nominations were received from SC in May 2025 for Cllr Kathy Pearce, Cllr Lance Duddridge and Cllr Pauline Ham to serve on the Board of HiS for a further year.



	The appointment of Sarah, for her first three-year term as an Ordinary Board Member, together with the re-appointment of Federica as a co-optee to the Board and the re-appointment of Jeff Astle as a co-optee to the Development Committee each for a further year. Prior to the meeting Sarah asked <i>if Councillor Board Members were subject to the same tenure requirements (6 years with exceptional extension to 9 years) as the other Board members. The NHF's Code of Governance treats councillor (council-nominated) Board members in the same spirit as other non-executive Board members but the precise term and any special rules for council nominees should be set out in the ALMO's constitution so they reflect democratic cycles and local arrangements. She sought clarity regarding this as the table does not make mention of the terms for councillor Board members. Ben confirmed the Articles (12.5) states there was currently no limit on Cllr Board Member tenures. HiS would look into this more as part of the upcoming review of the Articles, framing it in the context of the NHF code. This would be something that SC would have an input into.</i> Members endorsed the Cllr nominations and approved all the re-appointments. During this item Kathy joined the meeting at 12.53pm.
	RESOLVED The AGM: APPROVED the appointment to the Board of Sarah O'Neill as an Ordinary Board Member and Director of HiS for a period of three-year term (until September 2028). NOTED and APPROVED the nominations received from Somerset Council (SC) of the following Councillors as Councillor Board Members up until May 2026. - Cllr Kathy Pearce - Cllr Lance Duddridge - Cllr Pauline Ham APPROVED the re-appointment to the Board as a co-optee of Federica Smith-Roberts until September 2026. APPROVED the re-appointment to the Development Committee as a co-optee of Jeff Astle until September 2026.
10.	Questions from HiS tenants, lease holders and colleagues
	No questions were received or raised.
11.	Questions to the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee
	No questions were received or raised.
12.	Date of next meeting
	29 September 2026.
13.	Video: Review of the Year 2024/2025
	The AGM concluded with a video presentation which highlighted the key achievements of HiS in 2024/25. On behalf of Board members, Paul S thanked Charlie Harper for bringing together all the achievements into a single video presentation. Board members felt the video was excellent. Marie highlighted that it was not clear what "96 cases" referred to, Peter would get this rectified before publication. Olly enquired where, besides the website, this recording would be posted, the positive news needs to be shared. Peter informed the Board that it would be included in the stakeholder bulletin and social media. Sarah requested it be shared with STAC members and Savills, as part of our evidence for the Options Appraisal. The meeting ended at 13:02pm.



Confirmed as a true record of the meeting

Signed: 

Name (Chair): Paul Stephenson

Date: 29 September 2026