Minutes

SKylight BOARD

Tuesday 4 August 2026, 5.00pm
Boardroom, Cornerstone

Members Present

Marie Gilluley (Chair)
Priti Butler
Tessa Wiley

Observers

Maura Jackson
David Smith

SHG Officers in Attendance

Anne-Marie Heil, Director of Customer Services (Lead Officer) **(AMH)**
Jessika Ann, Health and Safety Advisor **(JA)** *(Item 06)*
Kelly Cleaver, Senior Finance Business Partner **(KC)**
Lucy Darbyshire, Senior Customer & Colleague Communications Partner **(LD)** *(Item 03)*
Sam Donigan, Head of Assurance **(SD)**
Alison Gray, Governance Officer **(AG)**
Di Laming, Assistant Director People & OD **(DL)** *(Item 06)*
Amanda Ward, Head of Inclusion **(AW)**

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair welcomed prospective SKylight Board Members Maura Jackson and David Smith to observe the meeting ahead of their formal appointment at the Stockport Homes Annual General Meeting in September. Nicola Firth's absence was noted and AMH confirmed she would check following the meeting. Andy Kippax was also absent. There were no declarations of interest.

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES AND ACTION MONITOR

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record. Progress with the Action Monitor was noted.

3. SKYLIGHT MARKETING PLAN UPDATE (DECISION)

LD presented the SKylight Marketing Action Plan and highlighted activity delivered during 2025/26, including increased engagement through social media and web content, delivery of new videos, promotion of SKylight's Community Fund activity, and the designed SKylight Annual Report Summary.

The Board welcomed the videos shared at the meeting and noted that they helped to demonstrate the impact of SKylight services in an accessible way.

The Board discussed how the proposed marketing plan would be delivered during the year and sought assurance on the use of timelines and success measures. AMH explained that some activities were linked to known events such as Funding the Futures, while others would be developed with service teams throughout the year in response to priorities, campaigns and opportunities. The Board noted that target measures had been informed by previous performance and that the plan would enable clearer tracking of impact.

The Board also asked how customer experience and feedback were reflected within the plan. LD confirmed that feedback was captured through service delivery, events, training evaluations and colleague engagement, and that relevant learning would inform marketing activity, website improvements and future communications. AW added that 'You said, we did' communications were also produced and shared based on customer feedback.

RESOLVED: That the SKylight Board approved the SKylight Marketing Action Plan.

4. SKYLIGHT RISK REPORT QUARTER ONE 2026/27 (ASSURANCE)

SD presented the Quarter One Risk Report and advised that all SKylight risks were considered to be under control, with all risk control actions on track except the action relating to statutory homelessness duties and strategic solutions to meet increasing demand. The Board noted that homelessness continued to be the principal area of concern and that further context had been included following the recent MHCLG visit.

The Board sought clarification on the MHCLG feedback regarding improved forecasting and modelling. AMH explained that the visit had recognised the strength of the homelessness service offer, including prevention activity and partnership working, but had challenged the local system to strengthen strategic planning and demand forecasting.

The Board discussed the continued pressure arising from limited suitable accommodation, affordability pressures and the shortage of move-on options. AMH confirmed that the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy was due to progress through Council governance in September 2026 and further formal feedback from MHCLG was expected.

The Board expressed concern that homelessness remained a significant and persistent risk and discussed whether there were further ways for SKylight to support strategic influence, advocacy and partnership activity.

RESOLVED: That the SKylight Board took assurance from the contents of the report.

5. SKYLIGHT ANNUAL HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT (ASSURANCE)

DL introduced the H&S report and advised that the full Group report had been presented to SHG Board on 27 July 2026. JA highlighted key achievements and areas of activity during 2025/26, including: the continued achievement of RoSPA Gold Standard; review of lone working protection arrangements, and the low number of reported accidents relating to SKylight. JA advised that four accidents had been reported by SKylight employees and that these were low-level incidents.

The Board discussed the increase in reported unacceptable behaviour and verbal abuse and asked what support was available to colleagues affected by such incidents. JA explained that managers were expected to follow up with colleagues directly. SHG had Active Listeners and other support routes were available. DL added that relevant colleagues also had the opportunity to undertake de-escalation training and resilience work, with access to additional counselling and trauma support as required. AMH advised that she reviewed all reported H&S incidents within the Customer Services Directorate including SKylight weekly, and that colleagues were actively encouraged to report all occurrences. Targeted communications had been used to reinforce expectations around customer behaviour in high visibility areas such as Cornerstone reception.

The Board enquired about the development of a standalone H&S Strategy. DL advised that, following consultation with SHG Boards and other stakeholders, it was expected to be in place by April 2027. DL explained the strategy would incorporate the relaunch of the Health and Safety Committee, the proposed development of KPIs, and the stronger governance and oversight arrangements.

RESOLVED: That the SKylight Board discussed the H&S Annual Update Report, endorsed the planned initiatives for 2026/27, and confirmed that the range of H&S works and information provided was adequate to provide assurance over H&S management within SKylight.

6. SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26 (ASSURANCE)

AMH presented the Safeguarding Annual Report, supported by slides summarising safeguarding arrangements, activity, training and development, serious case reviews, coronial inquests, assurance arrangements and key challenges. AMH advised that safeguarding remained a collective responsibility across SHG, supported by policies, procedures, partnership activity and tailored training. Recorded safeguarding activity increased during 2025/26, including 438 new cases and 226 activity forms.

The main themes continued to be mental health, domestic abuse and self-neglect. AMH spoke about the Keeping Customers Safe learning pathway, safeguarding champions, case review involvement, coronial inquest processes and participation in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Training compliance had increased since year end and work was continuing towards the 95% target.

The Board discussed the level of resource required to respond to increasing customer complexity, higher thresholds for statutory services and the wider safeguarding pressures experienced by housing providers. AMH advised that SHG had adapted its service model over time, including through housing support, money advice, tenancy readiness and complex case arrangements, while continuing to challenge partner agencies where statutory responsibilities needed to be met. Members recognised the ongoing challenge of managing expectations about SHG’s role.

RESOLVED: That the SKylight Board took assurance from the report.

7. SKYLIGHT PROGRESS AND FINANCE UPDATE REPORT Q1 2026/27 (ASSURANCE)

AMH introduced the first part of the report covering key developments, including a spotlight on the Community Fund and the first business plan success measures dashboard and confirmation that key preventative contracts had been extended to March 2029.

The update included progress across a range of SKylight activity, including the launch of Cornerstone as a Live Well space, the development of the Stepping Hill Live Well model, the Trailblazer programme, Live Well in Later Life funding, the SKylight Community Fund and external grant funding secured by the Funding Officer.

The Board welcomed the Community Fund spotlight and recognised it as an important example of preventative, community-based investment that brought resources into local communities and helped reduce escalation into crisis.

KC summarised the financial element of the report and advised that SKylight had funds brought forward from 2025/26 of £2.419m, with the 2026/27 approved budget expected to use approximately £1.164m of funds. The position at the end of June was £21k favourable to budget, with a forecast year-end favourable variance of £44k, mainly due to increased bank interest receivable following higher cash balances. The Board discussed the cash flow position and was assured that positive cash balances were forecast to be maintained, with sufficient time to manage any future change in Gift Aid assumptions.

The Board discussed the business plan success measures dashboard and suggested that a shorter, higher-level traffic-light summary by theme would give enough information and that detailed reporting against each individual target was not needed. SD suggested that quarterly reporting may be too frequent and is not provided for other Business Plans within SHG, and that a six-monthly or annual summary against the three-year plan might be more appropriate. The Board felt that annual reporting was too infrequent but acknowledged that the reporting should be strategic, proportionate and focused by exception.

ACTION: AMH and MG to discuss and agree how the reporting could be refined so that Board oversight remained focused on delivery of the business plan and emerging exceptions.

RESOLVED: That the SKylight Board noted and discussed the progress and financial position to date.

8. SHG REPORTS FROM THE PREVIOUS QUARTER

AG advised the Live Well presentation and the Chief Executive’s Report from the 27 July SHG Board meeting had been linked for information.

9. FORWARD PLAN

AG presented the Forward Plan and advised that it reflected the current expected programme of business. The forthcoming Group Board Away Day on 9 October 2026 and the provisional SKylight away day ahead of the next Board meeting on 19 October 2026 were highlighted.

10. REVIEW OF THE MEETING

No further comments were raised as part of the review of the meeting. The Chair thanked Board members and officers for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Author: Alison Gray	Date: 05/08/2026
Lead Officer: Anne-Marie Heil	Date: 06/08/2026
Chair: Marie Gilluley	Date: 10/08/2026

*Matters arising are communicated and tracked via a separate **Action Monitor**.*