

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board to be held in Committee Room 1, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 29 April 2010 at 18:00.

---

## **Agenda**

- 1 Introductions
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Role of Board Member - presentation by the Acting Tenant Empowerment Manager  
Reporting Officer: Martin Price
- 4 Terms of Reference  
Reporting Officer: Martin Price
- 5 Code of Conduct  
Reporting Officer: Martin Price
- 6 Appointment of Chairperson  
Reporting Officer: Martin Price
- 7 Appointment of Vice-Chairperson  
Reporting Officer: Martin Price
- 8 Public Question Time.
- 9 Declaration of Interests  
Reporting Officer: Martin Price
- 10 Introduction to Service Standards  
Reporting Officer: Martin Price
- 11 Lettable Standard - report of the Rent, Recovery, Void Manager  
Reporting Officer: Lisa West
- 12 Tenant Services Management Board Forward Plan - details of forthcoming items to be considered by the Tenant Services Management Board and the opportunity for further items to be suggested  
Reporting Officer: Martin Price

13 Dates, times and venues of future meetings

Reporting Officer: Martin Price

Tonya Meers  
Legal and Democratic Services Manager

07 May 2010

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussions.

There is time set aside at the beginning of most meetings to allow the public to ask questions.

Speaking under “Public Question Time” is limited to 4 minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes. The Committee Administrator will keep a close watch on the time and the Chairman will be responsible for ensuring the time permitted does not overrun. The speaker will be allowed to address the Committee once only and will not be allowed to participate further in any debate.

If a member of the public wishes to address the Committee on any matter appearing on the agenda, the Chairman will normally permit this to occur when that item is reached and before the Councillors begin to debate the item.

This is more usual at meetings of the Council’s Planning Committee and details of the “rules” which apply at these meetings can be found in the leaflet “Having Your Say on Planning Applications”. A copy can be obtained free of charge from the Planning Reception Desk at The Deane House or by contacting the telephone number or e-mail address below.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

These arrangements do not apply to exempt (confidential) items on the agenda where any members of the press or public present will be asked to leave the Committee Room.

Full Council, Executive, Committees and Task and Finish Review agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: [www.tauntondeane.gov.uk](http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk)



Lift access to the John Meikle Room and the other Committee Rooms on the first floor of The Deane House, is available from the main ground floor entrance. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are also available off the landing directly outside the Committee Rooms.



An induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter.

**For further information about the meeting, please contact Democratic Services on 01823 356382 or email [d.durham@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:d.durham@tauntondeane.gov.uk)**

**Tenant Services Management Board Members:-**



## **Tenant Services Management Board - 29<sup>th</sup> April 2010**

### **Lettable Standard**

#### **Report of Lisa West, Rent, Recovery & Void Manager**

### **Executive Summary**

The Housing Service takes the views of its tenants seriously when delivering all services. We aim to provide the best we can with the resources available to us. We also take the interests of our staff into consideration when carrying out these tasks. We are seeking to introduce a Lettable Standard to give our tenant's satisfaction that their new home will meet an agreed standard before it is re-let and also to ensure the consistent quality of each property.

The Lettable Standard is attached as Appendix 1 of this report – please note this is a draft version, with the artwork being subject to change.

#### **1. Purpose of the report**

1.1 To seek the views and opinions of the Tenant Services Management Board on the proposed Lettable Standard.

1.2 Members to recommend the implementation of the Lettable Standard.

#### **2. Background Information**

The Rent, Recovery & Void team was created in 2005 and consists of 3 full time officers, 2 full time assistants and 1 Debt and Benefit Advisor. The team is responsible for inspecting Taunton Deane Borough Council's housing stock once it becomes vacant and to ensure they are brought to a lettable standard for the new incoming tenant.

The implementation of this standard will provide new tenants with information on the standard that will be met.

### **3. Research**

With the need to update our procedures, we looked at how we are currently carrying out our void inspections and areas where we thought we could improve. Other Local Authority and Housing Association lettable standards were researched for examples of best practice before the compilation of our own standard.

### **4. Financial**

Having compiled the standard we believe the standard can be met within our existing resources of staff and budget. However, monitoring of these budgets will be carried out throughout the year on a quarterly basis to ascertain if this remains favourable or becomes adverse.

### **5. Tenant awareness of the standard**

To ensure that incoming tenants have an awareness of our lettable standard we propose that access to the document is available on our website. Also, a copy of the standard, which will be in leaflet form, will be given to the prospective tenant once the property has been offered and accepted by them. Upon signing the Tenancy Agreement there will be a copy of the standard along with a satisfaction survey. The standard will also be publicised in tenant publications such as "Tenants Talk", with the leaflet available on request and in reception areas of Taunton Deane Borough Council offices and housing surgeries.

### **6. Outcomes**

Once implementation has been agreed, we believe that receiving feedback whether this be positive or negative will be of great benefit to ensure we are constantly improving our services. It is therefore proposed to carry out spot checks whilst the void is in progress and/or when works have been finished. This will be set initially to 2 properties per week. We will also record feedback given from the satisfaction surveys to improve services and to report findings.

## **7. Timescales**

Following the boards agreement, the proposed timescales for implementation of the standard will be;

A 4-8 week period post decision to introduce the standard, during which time the leaflets will be produced and void inspection forms will be updated to reflect the standard.

A 4-8 week period post decision to introduce the satisfaction survey, during which time the questionnaire will be compiled and a spreadsheet created to capture the information for reporting.

An 8-12 week period post decision to commence spot checks on void properties.

Finally, it would be our intention to report back to the board after a period of 9 months post decision, with a progress report and after a period of 12 months post decision, a budget report taking into account a complete years budget spend.

## **8. Recommendations**

The board to recommend the implementation of the proposed Lettable Standard after taking into consideration the content of this report.

## **9. Contact Officers:**

Lisa West  
Rent, Recovery & Void Manager  
Tel 01823 356532  
l.west@tauntondeane.gov.uk