

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board to be held in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 19 November 2012 at 18:15.

Agenda

- 1 Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 29 October 2012 (attached).
- 3 Public Question Time.
- 4 Declaration of Interests
To receive declarations of personal or prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Code of Conduct (attached).
- 5 ALHCO Performance Report. Report of the Property Manager - Maintenance (to follow).
Reporting Officer: Steve Esau
- 6 Verbal Update on Halcon North; The Next Step. Report of the Health and Housing Manager.
Reporting Officer: James Barrah
- 7 Performance Indicators Quarter Two - 2012/13. Report of the Health and Housing Manager (attached).
Reporting Officer: James Barrah
- 8 Financial Statement Quarter Two - 2012/13. Report of the Health and Housing Manager (attached).
Reporting Officer: James Barrah
- 9 Transfer Removal Grant Policy and Leaflet Report. Report of the Housing Manager - Lettings (attached).
Reporting Officer: Paul Hadley
- 10 Verbal Update on Leycroft Grove Local Lettings Plan. Report of the Estate Officer - ASB.
Reporting Officer: John Hart

Tonya Meers
Legal and Democratic Services Manager

17 December 2012

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 or Tenant Services Management Board Members 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.

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

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Tenant Services Management Board Members:-

Mr D Etherington	(Chairman)
Mr M Edwards	(Vice-Chairman)
Councillor R Bowrah, BEM	
Councillor S Brooks	
Mrs J Bunn	
Mrs E Drage	
Mr D Galpin	
Mr I Gould	
Mrs J Hegarty	
Mr K Hellier	
Mr R Middleton	
Mrs T Urquhart	

Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on Monday 29th October 2012 at 6pm in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.

Present: Mr Dustyn Etherington (Chairman), Mrs Jessie Bunn, Mrs Enid Drage, Mr Mark Edwards, Mr Dennis Galpin, Mr Ian Gould, Mrs Judith Hegarty, Mr Robert Middleton, Mrs Tammy Urquhart, Mr Kevin Hellier and Councillor Robert Bowrah.

Officers: James Barrah (Health and Housing Manager), Phil Webb (Housing Manager – Property Services), Christine Thompson (Supported Housing Manager), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), Paul Hadley (Housing Manager – Lettings), Rosie Reed (Tenant Services Development Officer), Lucy Clothier (Accountant), Antony Knight (Estate Officer ASB) and Emma Hill (Corporate Support Officer).

Others: Councillor T Slattery, Councillor Mrs Warmington, Cllr A Wedderkopp, Lisa Wychwood and Graham Vickery from Halcon North Tenants & Residents Association

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

1. Apologies

Councillor Steve Brooks

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 24 September were taken as read and signed.

3. Public Question Time

Representatives of the Halcon North Tenants and Residents Association expressed their gratitude for the support of Tenant Services Management Board and also expressed their pleasure at the outcomes from Community Scrutiny and Executive Committee.

The representatives also requested some advice for residents from the Housing Managers of Property Services and Lettings.

4. Declaration of Interest

The following members declared a personal interest as a council house tenants:

- Mr Dustyn Etherington
- Mr Mark Edwards
- Mrs Jessie Bunn
- Mrs Enid Drage
- Mr Dennis Galpin
- Mr Ian Gould
- Mrs Judith Hegarty

- Mr Robert Middleton
- Mrs Tammy Urquhart
- Mr Kevin Hellier

Councillor Bowrah declared a personal interest as he has family members who are council tenants.

5. Review of Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2012 - 2042

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the annual review of the HRA Business Plan

Following the HRA Self Financing settlement a new 30 year HRA Business Plan 2012-2042 was agreed from the 1st April 2012. At this time a formal review process was agreed and as such a project group has been convened to lead on a review of the HRA Business Plan, in light of a number of changes and issues that have arisen since April.

The purpose of this report is to consider and agree the aspects of the HRA Business Plan 2012-42 under review, and refresh the financial aspects of the plan to ensure they remain current.

The Council agreed that the HRA Business Plan would be subject to a formal annual review involving member scrutiny and agreement as part of the budget setting timetable each year.

In the first few months of the financial year it has become apparent that there are a number of issues that require amendment or inclusion in the business plan, as the context in which Housing Services operates continues to change rapidly. As a result of this a review of the business plan has now been undertaken to address a number of issues that are outlined in this report.

Asset Management:

Uplift of Disabled Facilities Grant and Aids & Adaptations Budget

The HRA budgets £500K capital per year to provide disabled aids and adaptations for tenants in our stock, this work is undertaken by the Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership (SWPSHP) on behalf of the housing service. In the original business plan we projected this figure to remain constant, however we were aware that the need is likely to increase in future years as the population ages.

Consequently a needs analysis has been commissioned for the HRA from the SWPSHP. This work is underway and will be reported in due course. For business planning purposes it is thought prudent to increase this provision by 5% per year for the next 10 years and then for it to remain fixed for the remainder of the plan. This issue can be re-visited pending the outcome of the needs analysis work.

Stock Investment Figures and Data Cleanse –

During the creation of the original business plan, a validation exercise was undertaken by Savills in relation to the quality of the Council's stock condition data. Consequently concerns were raised about the accuracy of the data and reliance on it for business planning purposes. At this time a commitment was made to address this issue during 2012 and the outcome from this work would be fed into the review process.

Since April work has been underway to cleanse the stock data of certain inaccuracies and undertake stock condition surveys. The impact of this work is a slight reduction in

the Future Major Works requirement for our stock over 30 years of approximately £4M, due to some re-profiling of the needs based on better stock information. However, there remains a significant backlog of work created in part by tenant refusals for improvement works previously and other works not completed as part of the Decent Homes programme. As a consequence of the inclusion of the additional items identified in the report, the overall capital expenditure over the 30 year period has risen to £191M from £187M.

Extension of Properties

Many years ago the housing service allocated a budget to undertake extensions to existing TDBC dwellings to help meet the housing needs of our larger families. Such practice ceased due to insufficient funding being available.

Currently (Aug 2012) our Housing Register tells us we have:
236 Silver Band Taunton Deane Registered applicants who are one bedroom deficient; and 15 Gold Band Taunton Deane Registered applicants who are two bedroom deficient.

Current TDBC Tenants within the figures above:
53 Housing Register Silver Band Taunton Deane Borough Council tenants who are one bedroom deficient; and 4 Housing Registered Gold Band Taunton Deane Borough Council tenants who are two bedroom deficient.

Note: Overcrowding data at August 2012 Homefinder Somerset Statistics.

With 3,818 (at 30/6/12) Housing Registered applicants in Taunton Deane and 18,813 (at 30/6/12) Housing Register applicants Somerset wide the demand for social housing is high.

It has been suggested that it would be appropriate to re-introduce a budget that will provide TDBC Housing Services with an additional means of helping to alleviate the housing need of those who are living in overcrowded conditions. It is therefore suggested to create a new improvements budget of £160K per year which would be used to fund approximately 4 two storey extensions per year. Operationally decisions regarding where extensions will be undertaken will be made on the basis of need, property type and return on investment.

In creating properties with a greater number of bedrooms the rent would have to be re-set to the appropriate level which would produce a small additional income to the HRA. In the original Business Plan £210K was allocated between years 1-10 for known extensions required to 6 properties where bathrooms required re location upstairs, this allocation will be incorporated into modelling of the additional budget for extensions.

Social Housing Development Fund (SHDF):

The current projections for SHDF phase one would be that 26 new units are feasible at cost of approximately £3.43 million. The Current business plan shows a SHDF investment of £2.3 million. If the "Phase 1" sites are to be delivered in the next four years, an additional £1.13 million would need to be added to the Capital Programme. The fund could go further if part of the revenue allocated for housing development were

used to service additional debt.

Welfare Reform:

An emerging housing services welfare reform strategy sets out the actions over the next 12 to 24 months for effectively managing the welfare reform changes. The strategy provides a clear focus for our interventions and initiatives, which would be aimed at maximising tenants' income.

The business plan could be impacted by the increase in financial hardship in the community and the potential greater challenges in collecting rent.

Firstly, the council's cash flow may slow down, which would create additional risk for the General Fund relating to less money for potential investment and for the HRA would benefit less from the return on those potential investments. Secondly, the irrecoverable debt may increase leading to a higher level of write offs.

Right to Buy (RtB):

The council signed the agreement with Government on the use of 'additional' Right to Buy receipts.

The additional receipts of 18 properties have been modelled into the business plan for this financial year. This shows potential 'additional' receipts in year 1 (2012/13) of approximately £600K.

Staffing:

In order to deliver the projects outlined, additional staffing resources would be required to lead on the HRA's development activities in the form of:

- Increase Housing Enabling Post's Part-Time Hours
- Recruit a temporary Housing Development Projects Lead (sustainable energy)
- Recruit a Housing Development Projects Lead
- Recruit a Development Manager
- Restore Repairs Line Service to the original 3.7 FTE

Other Financial Adjustments:

Retail Price Index (RPI) inflation, on which the annual uplift of rental income is calculated, has been falling in recent months and has reduced substantially from 5.6% in September 2011 to 2.6% in September 2012. Therefore it would be prudent to reduce the level of inflation included within the model from 3.5% to 2.5%. The impact of this is a reduction in both the annual expected increase in rent, and also the annual expected increase in expenditure

Due to better interest rates, the council gained an additional £0.817 million in year 1 in savings for the business plan. The council had taken advice from Treasury Management Advisors (Arlington Close) and they said it is not advisable to use interest savings to pay off any debt capital at this time.

Due to a long lead in period on development sites, not all Social Housing Development Fund would be spent in certain years.

Finance Comments:

Each Key change identified in this report had been modelled and its impact (either positive or negative) had been identified on both cash flow and 30 reserve position. If the council agrees all recommendations, the HRA Business Plan would still be viable and healthy.

During the discussion of this item, board members made the following comments and asked questions. Responses shown in italics:

- How are the building maintenance department going to handle the backlog of improvements for tenants' properties?
The backlog of improvements is due to several reasons some being due to refusal to allow entry but not all. On some occasions there had been no programme for improvements. The backlog would now be spread out over five years alongside current and ongoing programmes of improvements.
- With tenants refusing entry to council workers, are all our legal bases covered as a council.
Scheduled improvements on tenants' properties not a requirement by law, only gas safety certificate. If they refuse entry for whatever reason as landlord we must respect that.
- With reference to item 3.3 in the report, how did the council come to the costing for single and double storey extensions (£25k single & £40K double)?
The costing had been a budget estimate suggested and given by the council and SWPSHP.
- Concern that the uplift of 2% for bad debt would not be enough. Some tenants may lose between 200 and 250 pounds per month.
*An action plan would be put into place to assist council tenants through the welfare reform. With reference to tenants under occupying their properties and look into assisting with relocation. Also looking into transfer/removal grants to assist tenants to move.
The creation of debt advice post would be coming available through the revenue and benefits department.
The uplift percentage is flexible and can be reviewed.*
- Can the officers define what one for one means under the RtB?
The RtB one for one in affordable housing replacement had been set by the government and on a national scale. The council are not involved in the monitoring.
- Some tenants prefer to do the home improvements themselves and others including the elderly don't want the bother, mess or hassle.
There are many variables as to why tenants do not want council workers in complete improvements. Currently, 570 houses have refused entry for kitchen improvements.
- 570 houses would only be 10% of our current housing stock.
- The Chair of the Halcon North Tenants and Residents Association asked if it could help with the issue of those tenants who are refusing entry to the council. It could assist and support tenants through the process.

Resolved that:

1. The Tenant Services Management Board recommended: -
 - (a) To support the uplift Disabled Facilities Grant and Aids and Adaptations budget to 5 % for the next ten years pending the outcome of the needs analysis.
 - (b) To support the creation of new improvements budget of £160K per year, funding approximately four two storey extensions per year.
 - (c) To approve the investigations into extending the reach of the current Social Housing Development Fund by utilising some of the borrowing headroom towards funding for housing development.
 - (d) To support the interim development policy.
 - (e) To support the increase in allowance for bad debt in the HRA to 2% for a period of three years from 1 April 2013.
 - (f) To support the additional RtB receipts being ring-fenced and these to be allocated to a separate budget code.
 - (g) To support agreed outlined approach to additional staffing to support the Business Plan objectives and a consequent increase in revenue staffing costs of £55K.
 - (h) To support the agreement that any surplus Social Housing Development Fund budget remaining at the end of any financial year be allocated to a new "Social Housing Development Fund" ear marked HRA reserve.
 - (i) To support the agreed principle that surplus cash resources within the HRA are allocated to the new Social Housing Development Fund Reserve.

6. Verbal Update on Halcon North Project.

The Tenant Empowerment Manager gave a verbal update on the Halcon North Regeneration Project after an update report was presented to Community Scrutiny Committee on 9 October and Executive Committee on 10 October.

The Executive Committee resolved that, in view of the consensus of opinion in favour of smaller scale regeneration in Halcon North, Taunton, options be explored with partners to access funding for smaller scale development whilst maintaining and improving retained Housing Revenue Account stock. Any regeneration would be linked to the Priority Area Strategy, be constructed to the highest energy efficiency standards practicable and to include full risk and community impact assessments.

During the discussion of this item, board members made the following comments and asked questions. Responses shown in italics:

- Thank you to Tenant Services Management Board for supporting the residents and Community through the Halcon North Regeneration Project.

- The challenge for the Council is to tackle deprivation in this area.

Resolved that the Officer's update be noted.

7. Report on Tenants' Welcome Pack.

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning a proposal detailing the introduction of a new Tenants' Welcome Pack to assist tenants when moving into their new home.

The provision of a Tenants' Welcome Pack for tenants just starting their tenancy has been suggested by officers, the provision of this type of pack is considered good practice across social housing with many housing providers already supplying a variety of packs for their new tenants.

Welcome packs are designed to provide a selection of low value items for tenants when they first move into their new home, the contents are provided to help assist in making the 'void into a home'. By presenting new tenants with a pack the service can help make moving into a new home a more positive experience. A welcome pack is a simple way to help establish a good relationship between the tenant and the landlord at the earliest opportunity.

Research into how other providers source their packs has indicated that there are primarily two ways that they are provided.

1. Provided the housing provider sourcing items locally and making the packs up prior to being provided to tenants. This approach can take a lot of officer time and means that the pack contents would vary dependant on the availability of stock items.
2. Sourcing from a supplier who deal in 'ready made', 'pre-packed' stock. This approach involves much less officer time and the packs are simply ordered direct from a supplier.

Research on the internet including Housemark and the Chartered Institute of Housing has shown that HMDC Limited is the No1 supplier of the "ready made pre-packed" packs nationally. The company had supplied welcome packs for over ten years, and in that time have supplied tens of thousands of packs to housing associations.

The supply of the welcome pack is not to respond to problems faced by new tenants when they are offered a tenancy by the lack of sufficient funds to purchase many of the household items such as quality second hand or new furniture and 'white goods'. It is simply a pack that would 'help to make a void into a home'.

The introduction of a tenants welcome pack is a simple way to help establish a good relationship between the tenant and the landlord at an early stage of the tenancy. The supply of a pack that contains a selection of low value household items that would be helpful to the tenant during the disruption of moving home and would help make this stressful period a more positive experience.

The contents of packs can vary, but a typical pack contains some of the following:

Bin bags, cleaning cloths, washing up liquid, multi surface wipes, toilet roll, rubber gloves, scourer, plastic bowl, air freshener, dust pan and a drinks pack.

The packs would be provided to all new tenants and would be left in the home prior to the start of the tenancy by the DLO Voids Team.

Tenants Welcome Pack Options

Options available are:

1. Do not introduce a new Tenants Welcome Pack;
2. Housing Services officers source, pack and deliver the new tenants welcome packs; or
3. Welcome packs are purchased from a specialised supplier.
A selection of such welcome packs can be found at Appendix 1 of the report.

Note: The recommendation of the Housing Manager – Lettings would be to procure one of the two pre-packed items. The benefits of this option are simply that they can be ordered and supplied direct from the contractor. Either of these options would remove the need to take officers away from their normal duties to source, pack and supply the contents of the pack.

Further work would be needed to assess the financial impact on the housing service should Tenant Services Management Board members support option 2 above before a firm decision to proceed be approved.

Feedback/comments from the Tenants' Forum

Tenants' Forum members at their meeting in September 2012 were consulted on the introduction of a new tenants welcome pack and their comments can be found at Appendix 2 of the report.

Tenant Service Management Board members need to note that a significant majority of Tenants' Forum members were not supportive of the introduction of a new tenants welcome pack.

Finance Comments

During 2011/2012 the housing service completed 412 re-lets to new tenants.

The funding of this pack would require an allocation of additional budget resources.

Note: Further work would be needed to assess the financial impact on the housing service should Tenant Services Management Board members support option 2 above before a firm decision to proceed be approved.

During the discussion of this item, board members made the following comments and asked questions. Responses shown in italics:

- What was the source of the idea? Was it one of Estate Officers?
The source of the idea is unknown.
- Has a small trail been done?
Not as yet but it can be set up.

- General Support for this idea was shown by Members of the Board.
- This idea would give a sense of good feeling between Tenants and the Council. *I have seen this operating in other others through a variety of agencies. The council could look at the contents and speak to companies to see if we could move away from to many cleaning products.*
- Member suggested the introduction of Pack Two.

Resolved that the: -

- The Board noted the Officer's report; and
- Recommended to Executive Councillor Jean Adkins, the Housing Portfolio Holder that the preferred option in relation to tenants welcome packs i.e.
 - (a) A ready made Tenant welcome packs to be introduced. This to be purchased from a specialised supplier for all new tenants; and
 - (b) The preferred contents option by the Board Member would be those items in Pack Two.

8. Verbal Update on Lyngford Crescent Local Setting Plan.

The Housing Manager - Lettings gave an update on the Homefinder Somerset Common Letting Policy.

The Lettings Policy allows for occasions where certain property labels can be used in assisting with the tackling of issues that impact on small areas within housing estates. Applying such labels may be to:

- Reduce the concentration of certain needs groups which are impacting on housing management; and
- Promote a mixed and sustainable community by seeking to select/not select households with particular characteristics.

Lyngford Crescent is located in north Taunton within a large mixed tenure estate comprising local authority social housing, owner occupied and registered provider units. The crescent consists of 20 one bedroom flats built in 5 blocks of 4 flats which were constructed in the 1930's.

The crescent had a poor reputation locally and is known by residents as an area where anti social behaviour is prominent. Since January 2012 Avon & Somerset Police have received 48 calls to attend incidents in the crescent. There have been four burglaries, one case of criminal damage and significant incidents of drug activity including heroin, amphetamines and cannabis supply. The drug activity has resulted in one property being the subject of a 'crack house' closure order.

Other issues concern noise nuisance from loud music, dog fouling and abusive behaviour.

The area being considered for the Local Letting Plan Policy is Number's One to Twenty Lyngford Crescent.

The impacting issues on the housing management;

- Poor maintenance of tenancy conditions leading to disruption in the 'community'.
- High incidence of anti social behaviour
- Clear evidence that some tenants engage with Class A drug abuse

The impacting issues on the mixed and sustainable community;

- Tenants with a high benefit dependency
- Concentrations of single occupancy requiring intensive support to maintain tenancy conditions;
- Reputational damage to estate caused by negative impact of tenanted flats in the crescent.

Taunton Deane would only encourage applications from those who know that it would meet their needs e.g. employment opportunities, transport, family/friends networks and other facilities. In short, applicants who want to live there. Additionally to encourage older residents who want to remain in the area to downsize to more suitable accommodation that meets their needs. This would result in the increased availability of family homes for rent on the larger estate.

A mixed and sustainable community will hopefully be achieved if the following are promoted;

- A proportion of new allocations to be made to those in full or part time employment or a proven tenancy record;
- A proportion of new allocations to be made to those existing TDBC tenants who live on the Priorswood estate and want to downsize to a smaller property thus freeing up family homes for re-let;
- No persons known to cause anti-social behaviour problems to be considered for allocation;
- No persons with a history of rug related offences or drug related anti social behaviour to be considered;
- Improvements to the physical environment in and around the flats; and
- Community cohesion.

Regarding performance indicators, it is essential that clear targets are set from the start; therefore performance will be measured on a six monthly basis against the following:

- A reduction in reported incidents of anti social behaviour from the current level of four – five percentage, to two per week within six months;
- Positive feedback from residents;
- Reduce expenditure on the cost of clearing/cleaning and repairing the properties as a result of anti social behaviour, fly tipping and discarded needles and drug paraphernalia;

As monitoring procedures, at the commencement of Local Letting Plan (and annually thereafter) a questionnaire would be given to residents to ascertain their perceptions etc. A report of its findings would be circulated to Housing Services Managers.

During the discussion of this item, board members made the following comments and asked questions. Responses shown in italics:

- Hopefully, the Council have learnt lesson from the previous Local Lettings Plan and would be monitoring and maintaining for Lyngford Crescent.
Each applicant would be vetted. There has been improvement noted by the police and other agencies at our previous LLP. The vetting has additional background check in place. Everything that can be done would be done prior to people moving in.
- Are the trouble makers still there?
If tenants found to have breached their tenancy agreement or evidence of being troubled makers then action will be taken.
- Could LLP be used in the Halcon Estate?
This would be difficult to implement to a whole estate as it is too large to manage but small pockets of the estate have been identified for LLP. There is some trouble houses that are not TDBC owed.
- Could it be done Street by Street in Halcon?

Resolved that the;

1. The Board noted the Officer's report.
2. The Board supports that introduction of a Local Letting Plan at Lyngford Crescent.

9. Verbal Update on Setting Dates of Tenant Services Management Board in 2013

The Tenant Empowerment Manager asked the Tenant Services Management Board to confirm the dates for Board meeting in 2013. The dates for the meetings of 2013 would be as follows:

21 st January	15 th July
18 th February	19 th August
18 th March	16 th September
22 nd April (AGM?)	28 th October
21 st May	18 th November
17 th June	16 th December

Resolved that the Board confirmed and agreed the meeting dates in 2013 of the Tenant Services Management Board.

10. AOB

During the discussion of this item, board members raised the following points and asked questions. Responses shown in italics:

- Is there an update on the Annual Report Calendars?
Taunton Deane is working on this. A work group of tenants will be set up in the future to review the format and content of the Annual Report.
- Officers stated items to come to the Board at future meetings, including; Quarter Two Performance Report from ALCHO, Overall Taunton Deane Performance Scorecard.

- What is the recommended level of loft insulation?
There is a retrofit project coming up involving the topping up of insulation. The recommended level is 150mm but some have up to 200mm.
- How often are the non-traditional houses surveyed?
This is done every five years. The subject of enhanced surveys will be discussed at a future meeting of the Board. This requires a specialist report.

(The meeting ended at 8.00pm)

Declaration of Interests

Tenant Services Management Board

- Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Tenants;
 - Councillor Brooks
 - Mrs Bunn
 - Mrs Drage
 - Mr Edwards
 - Mr Etherington
 - Mr Galpin
 - Mrs Hegarty
 - Mr Hellier
 - Mrs Marshall
 - Mrs Urquhart

- Member of Somerset County Council – Councillor Brooks




- Family member a Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Tenant;
 - Councillor Brooks
 - Councillor Bowrah

Health & Housing Services Scorecard Q2 2012/13





July 2012 to September 2012

Housing HRA









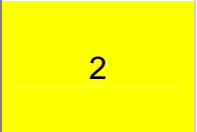

KEY TO ALERTS



	Planned actions are on course		Some uncertainty in meeting planned actions		Planned actions are off course
	Performance Indicators are on target		Some concern that performance indicators may not achieve target		Performance indicators will not achieve target

KEY TO QUARTILES




	1 st Quartile		2 nd Quartile
	3 rd Quartile		4 th Quartile





1. MANAGING FINANCES

MEASURE	MEASURE ALERT	ACTUAL	COMPARISON WITH ALL COUNCILS NATIONALLY			COMPARISON WITH ALL HOUSING PROVIDERS NATIONALLY		
			QUARTILE	NO. IN SAMPLE	TDBC RANK	QUARTILE	NO. IN SAMPLE	TDBC RANK
1. Housing Revenue Account Overall expenditure against budget		Forecast (£498,010) Variance (£10,080)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2. Income Team Former tenant arrears as a % of annual rent debit Target = 5%		0.49%		18	5		95	18
3. Income Team Rent written off as a % of annual rent roll Target = 0.70%		0.16%		18	13		92	57
4. Income Team % of rent lost through dwellings being vacant Target = 2%		0.95%		22	10		109	47




<p>5. Estate Management Team Rent collected as a % of rent owed including arrears b/f Target = 98.3% <i>(Corporate indicator)</i></p>		<p>96.6% This is a cumulative target and is a slight improvement on the figure for Q2 last year. The team has worked exceptionally well to achieve this despite an unusually high level of staff absence.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>6. Estate Management Team Rent collected as a % of rent owed excluding arrears b/f Target = 98.3% <i>(Corporate indicator)</i></p>		<p>100.92%</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>93</p>	<p>14</p>

2. SERVICE DELIVERY – SATISFACTION




MEASURE	MEASURE ALERT	ACTUAL	COMPARISON WITH ALL COUNCILS NATIONALLY			COMPARISON WITH ALL HOUSING PROVIDERS NATIONALLY		
			QUARTILE	NO. IN SAMPLE	TDBC RANK	QUARTILE	NO. IN SAMPLE	TDBC RANK
1. Housing Services Tenants' satisfaction with landlord services overall Target = Top quartile performance status survey <i>Result from 2011 Status Survey, next survey planned for 2013 (Corporate indicator)</i>		Top quartile performance achieved – 90%	1 (as at 2011/12)	21	1	2 (as at 2011/12)	188	61
2. Housing Services % of tenants satisfied that their views are taken into account Target = Top quartile performance status survey <i>Result from 2011 Status Survey, next survey planned for 2013</i>		General Needs – 73% Supported Housing – 78% Combined – 74% Actual performance achieved was 65.2% which is slightly above the TSA PI average of 64.1% at 2010.	1 (as at 2011/12)	18	3	2 (as at 2011/12)	179	88
3. Lettings Team % of tenants who have reported anti-social behaviour in the past 12 months, rating the help and advice given as excellent or good Target = 66% <i>(Corporate indicator)</i>		91.66%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
4. Lettings Team % of new tenants satisfied with the allocations and letting process Target = 86%		92%	3	8	5	3	47	29



5. Lettings Team % of new tenants satisfied with the lettable standard of property Target = 86%		92%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
6. Repairs & Maintenance % of tenants satisfied with the most recent repair Target = 98% <i>(Corporate indicator)</i>		97.6% Specific issues have been raised by tenants in the survey return, these are being discussed with the relevant department.	2	16	7	1	97	16
7. Supported Housing % of tenants satisfied with the Sheltered Housing service Target = 86%		89% achieved in Status Survey April 2011 (Status Survey is completed every two years, next due April 2013)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
8. Supported Housing % of tenants satisfied with the Extra Care Housing service Target = 86%		This is collected annually in Sept/Oct, the 2011 satisfaction figure is 91.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
9. Satisfaction of Gas Servicing % of tenants satisfied with the Gas Service procedure Target = 90%		Under development						




3. SERVICE DELIVERY – DECENT HOMES

MEASURE	MEASURE ALERT	ACTUAL	COMPARISON WITH ALL COUNCILS NATIONALLY			COMPARISON WITH ALL HOUSING PROVIDERS NATIONALLY		
			QUARTILE	NO. IN SAMPLE	TDBC RANK	QUARTILE	NO. IN SAMPLE	TDBC RANK
1. Asset Management % of homes that fail to meet the Decent Homes standard Target = 0.5%		0.07%	2 (as at 2011/12)	43	20	3 (as at 2011/12)	290	178
2. Asset Management Average SAP (energy efficiency) rating of housing stock Target = 70		66.08 Sustainable energy fund established in business plan and a new post to lead on retrofit project advertised 1/11/12.	3 (as at 2011/12)	36	24	4 (as at 2011/12)	233	197
3. Asset Management % of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate Target = 100%		99.82% 8 properties without certificate. Investigations are underway as the service may well have been undertaken but certification not available from contractor. Properties will be re-serviced.	2	17	9	3	133	94

4. SERVICE DELIVERY – MANAGE HOUSING STOCK AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE TENANTS

MEASURE	MEASURE ALERT	ACTUAL	COMPARISON WITH ALL COUNCILS NATIONALLY			COMPARISON WITH ALL HOUSING PROVIDERS NATIONALLY		
			QUARTILE	NO. IN SAMPLE	TDBC RANK	QUARTILE	NO. IN SAMPLE	TDBC RANK
1. Lettings Team % of closed ASB cases that were resolved Target = 66% (Corporate indicator)		90.48%	3	21	13	3	119	63
2. Lettings Team Average re-let time (calendar days) Target = 21 days (Corporate indicator)		Problem with data entry in Q2, not yet resolved therefore result not available however, Q1 performance was 21.92 days. This result led to TDBC being identified as the biggest improver in the Region for this indicator.						
3. Lettings Team % of dwellings that are vacant but unavailable to let (this includes dwellings undergoing or awaiting major works, held for decant, illegally occupied or awaiting demolition) Target = 0.5%		0.29%	2	17	8	2	103	44
4. Lettings Team % of dwellings that are vacant and available to let Target = 0.5%		0.63% Whilst this remains off target, this performance represents a 1.2% improvement over the previous quarter.	3	17	11	3	105	63

5. Repairs & Maintenance % of properties re-let that meet lettable standard (20% sample) Target = 100%		Under development						
6. Lettings Team % of properties accepted on first offer Target = 98%		75% Remains off target but this performance is a 4.13% improvement over the previous quarter. Target may be unrealistic and will be kept under review.	2	12	4	1	63	15
7. Housing Services % of tenants on whom the landlord holds diversity information Target = 58%		49.56% The service continues to recognise the importance of tenant profiling information in developing services and continues to work at capturing such data.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
8. Repairs & Maintenance Proportion of expenditure on emergency and urgent repairs to HRA dwellings compared to non-urgent repairs expenditure to HRA dwellings. Performance criteria = lowest Target = 15%		Under development						
9. Repairs & Maintenance % of repairs completed right first time Target = TBC		Under development. During the Q1 we reported 99.02% against a 96% target. The definition of this indicator has changed within Housemark to “% of repairs completed on first visit” and this						




		measure is now under development.						
10. Repairs & Maintenance Completion of repairs within priority target times: Emergency (within 24 hours) Target =98% <i>(Corporate indicator)</i>		94.95% Slightly better performance than Q1 figure of 93.9%, work still underway to address this.	4	23	21	4	161	145
11. Repairs & Maintenance Completion of repairs within priority target times: Urgent (within 3 working days) Target =94% <i>(Corporate indicator)</i>		90.33% Work still underway to address this.	4	23	20	4	150	136
12. Repairs & Maintenance Completion of repairs within priority target times: Non Urgent (up to 28 days) Target =85% <i>(Corporate indicator)</i>		87.48%	3	23	17	4	155	143
13. Community Clean ups Number of events held, broken down by area	Alert not required.	Six events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wyndhams, Wiveliscombe - Greenway, Bishops Lydeard - Moorland Road, Beadon Road and Valley Road, Taunton - Creedwell Orchard, Milverton - Grange Walk, Taunton - Blackdown Road, Taunton 						

14. Tonnage removed From clean ups, broken down by event	Alert not required.	Awaiting information from Viridor						
15. Events supported Number of events/activities put on or supported by the team, broken down by area	Alert not required.	North Taunton: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pride in Priorswood- 6 events - National Citizens Service projects with Somerset College East Taunton: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Happy Halcon- 6 events - Halcon Breakfast Club- every Monday and Friday morning during the school holiday period 						

Summary notes for Tenant Services Management Board 19th November 2012

Health and Housing Quarter 2 / Outturn performance

Overview & summary

Section	No. of measures	 Green	 Amber	 Red	N/A	Trend (from last quarter)
1) Managing Finances Housing	6	100% (6)	0% (0)	0% (0)		↑
2) Service Delivery – Satisfaction	9	67% (6)	11% (1)	11% (1)	11% (1)	↑
3) Service Delivery – Decent Homes	3	33% (1)	0% (0)	67% (2)		↓
4) Service Delivery – Manage Housing Stock	15	20% (3)	0% (0)	33% (5)	47% (7)	↔
TOTALS	33	49% (16)	3% (1)	24% (8)	24% (8)	

8 RED ISSUES

Planned actions are off course.

- **Housing Services – Satisfaction Views Taken into Account.** The results for this are taken from our Status Survey which is completed every three years. The result will not change until the survey is re-run in 2013. Although we did not reach top quartile performance in the status survey, our results were still 73% satisfaction general needs, 78% supported Housing, 74% combined which puts us in the top quartile with all Councils nationally.
- **2 measures - Asset Management - SAP Average Energy Efficiency Rating and % of dwellings with valid gas certificate.** Sustainable energy fund established in the business plan and new post to lead on retrofit project advertised 1.11.12. In relation to the gas certificate, 8 properties did not have a certificate. Investigations underway as service may well have been undertaken but certification not available from contractor. Properties will be reserviced.
- **2 measures - Lettings.** % of dwellings that are vacant and available to let 0.63% against 0.5% target, % of properties accepted on first offer 75% against 98% target, however both measures have improved over last years figures for the same quarter.
- **Housing Services – Diversity Information.** We hold 49% of diversity information but our target is 58%. We are actively looking for ways to increase this percentage.
- **2 measures - Repairs and Maintenance – Completion on time.** The performance has improved slightly from last quarter but completion of emergency and priority repairs are not currently reported as being on target (emergency repairs 94.95% actual, 98% target, priority repairs 90.33% actual 94% target). Work is underway to address this.

1 AMBER ALERTS 😞

Some uncertainty in meeting planned actions

- **Repairs & Maintenance.** 97.6% of tenants are satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service, our target is 98% (increase of 0.1% on last quarter).

16 ON TRACK 😊

Planned actions are on course







- **6 measures Housing Managing Finances** – 6 measures are better than target.
- **Housing Overall Satisfaction** – 90% satisfaction, top quartile achieved.
- **5 Lettings Team Measures**– 5 measures are better than target.
- **2 Supported Housing Measure** – 2 measures are better than target.
- **Repairs and Maintenance (non urgent repairs completed on time)** 87.48% actual, 85% target.
- **Decent Homes** % of homes that meet decent homes standard.

9 MEASURES UNDER DEVELOPMENT, NOT REPORTED OR WITHOUT ALERTS

- One Gas Servicing satisfaction measure under development.
- Lettings Team Property Services are reviewing their data entry for the quarter.
- Three Repairs and Maintenance Measures are under development (proportion of expenditure on emergency and urgent repairs, % of repairs completed right first visit, % of properties re-let that meet the lettable standard).
- Three Community Development measures do not require alerts.

Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services Performance Information April – June 2012

Listed below are indicators and data which show how Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services have performed. These indicators were chosen by the Tenant Services Management Board.







Key		Performance is on target		Performance may not achieve target		Performance will not achieve target
		Performance has improved since it was last reported		Performance has remained the same since it was last reported		Performance has declined since it was last reported




Indicator	Target 2012/13	April to June 2012	Performance	Trend
Percentage of tenants who were satisfied with landlord services overall.	To score in the top 25% of social housing landlords.	90%		
Income collected as a percentage of the rent owed. Figures over 100% indicate that arrears have been cleared.	98.3%	100.54%		
Percentage of closed ASB cases, that were resolved.	66%	80%		
Percentage of tenants who have reported anti-social behaviour in the past 12 months and who have rated the help and advice given as excellent or good.	66%	75%		
Average time taken to re-let empty properties (calendar days).	21 days	21.92 days		
Percentage of new tenants satisfied with the lettable standard of the property.	86%	89%		
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.	98%	97.5%		
Completion of repairs within the target time of 24 hours.	98%	94%		
Completion of repairs within the target time of 3 days.	94%	92%		
Completion of repairs within the target time of up to 28 days.	85%	89%		

If you have any questions about the information above, please contact the Tenant Empowerment Team, Telephone: 01823 356327, E-Mail: tenant.empowerment@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services Performance Information July – September 2012

Listed below are indicators and data which show how Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services have performed. These indicators were chosen by the Tenant Services Management Board.

Key		Performance is on target		Performance may not achieve target		Performance will not achieve target
		Performance has improved since it was last reported		Performance has remained the same since it was last reported		Performance has declined since it was last reported

Indicator	Target 2012/13	July to September 2012	Performance	Trend
Percentage of tenants who were satisfied with landlord services overall.	To score in the top 25% of social housing landlords.	90%		
Income collected as a percentage of the rent owed. Figures over 100% indicate that arrears have been cleared.	98.3%	100.92%		
Percentage of closed ASB cases, that were resolved.	66%	90%		
Percentage of tenants who have reported anti-social behaviour in the past 12 months and who have rated the help and advice given as excellent or good.	66%	92%		
Average time taken to re-let empty properties (calendar days).	21 days	Awaiting data		
Percentage of new tenants satisfied with the lettable standard of the property.	86%	92%		
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.	98%	97.6%		
Completion of repairs within the target time of 24 hours.	98%	95%		
Completion of repairs within the target time of 3 days.	94%	90%		
Completion of repairs within the target time of up to 28 days.	85%	87%		

If you have any questions about the information above, please contact the Tenant Empowerment Team, Telephone: 01823 356327, E-Mail: tenant.empowerment@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Housing Revenue Account Finance Scorecard
2012/13 - Up to Quarter 2 - April 2012 to September 2012

Please note Minus sign - means underspend

Income	Budget for the Financial Year 2012/13	Actual Spend Apr-Sept	% of Budget Spent Apr-Sept	Forecasted Spend for Financial Year 2012/13	Forecasted Over/(Under) spend	RAG Status	Comments
General Dwelling Rents	-19,352,790	-9,734,991	50.3%	-19,395,670	-42,880	GREEN	Voids slightly lower than budgeted.
Non Dwelling Rents (Garages, Shops and Land)	-576,970	-334,864	58.0%	-570,744	6,226	GREEN	Pressure in garages due to low vacancy take up in some areas, offset by one off easement in Land.
Supported, Sheltered & Extra Care	-3,980,230	-2,159,434	54.3%	-3,969,990	10,240	GREEN	Voids in Supported and Extra Care marginally higher than budgeted.
Other Income (Service Charges, Rechargeable Repairs, Leaseholder Charges and Contribution from TDBC)	-266,040	-231,709	87.1%	-461,390	-195,350	GREEN	Leaseholder income of £117k which is offset by expenditure in other expenditure.
Total Income	-24,176,030	-12,460,999	51.5%	-24,397,794	-221,764		

Expenditure	Budget for the Financial Year 2012/13	Actual Spend Apr-Sept	% of Budget Spent Apr-Sept	Forecasted Spend for Financial Year 2012/13	Forecasted Over/(Under) spend	RAG Status	Comments
Supervision & Management	3,396,350	1,002,271	29.5%	3,390,374	-5,976	GREEN	Procurement Savings removed from Policy and Management
Repairs & Maintenance - Planned	1,369,000	217,784	15.9%	1,112,329	-256,671	RED	Some PPM not going ahead this year.
Repairs & Maintenance - Responsive	3,231,620	1,228,736	38.0%	3,506,028	274,408	RED	Pressure in general maintenance.
Voids	1,099,930	576,561	52.4%	1,330,000	230,070	RED	Additional voids expected due to welfare reform and void properties in Halcon
Supported, Sheltered & Extra Care	720,070	252,114	35.0%	711,661	-8,409	GREEN	
Other Expenditure (Communal and Rechargeable Costs, Tenants Forum and Debt Management Costs)	886,330	288,256	32.5%	872,182	-14,148	GREEN	Pressure on leasehold flats offset by underspend on insurance costs.
Total Expenditure	10,703,300	3,565,723	33.3%	10,922,574	219,274		

HRA Revenue	Budget for the Financial Year 2012/13	Actual Spend Apr-Sept	% of Budget Spent Apr-Sept	Forecasted Spend for Financial Year 2012/13	Forecasted Over/(Under) spend	RAG Status	Comments
Contribution to Major Repairs Reserve (Incl. Capital Programme)	6,269,770	N/A	N/A	6,269,770	0	GREEN	
Contribution to TDBC for Repayment of Transformation Project Loan (Funded through Procurement Savings)	445,500	N/A	N/A	437,910	-7,590	GREEN	Small variance in expected procurement savings
Net Interest (Interest payable on loans less interest received on HRA balance)	3,745,870	N/A	N/A	2,928,870	-817,000	GREEN	Current forecasts show interest rate savings of £817k for 2012/13
Contribution to Repayment of Loans and Social Housing Development Fund	2,523,660	N/A	N/A	3,340,660	817,000	GREEN	
Total Other Expenditure	12,984,800	N/A		12,977,210	-7,590		

HRA Revenue	Budget for the Financial Year 2012/13	Actual Spend Apr-Sept	% of Budget Spent Apr-Sept	Forecasted Spend for Financial Year 2012/13	Forecasted Over/(Under) spend	RAG Status	Comments
Total Housing Revenue Account	-487,930	-8,895,276		-498,010	-10,080	GREEN	

Housing Revenue Account Finance Scorecard
2012/13 - Up to Quarter 2 - April 2012 to September 2012

Please note Minus sign - means underspend

Capital Programmes	Budget for the Financial Year 2012/13	Actual Spend Apr-Sept	% of Budget Spent Apr-Sept	Forecasted Spend for Financial Year 2012/13	Forecasted Over/(Under) spend	RAG Status	Comments
Bathrooms	740,000	148,904	20.1%	740,000	0	GREEN	Aiming to provide 300 bathrooms (rather than 200) within current budget.
Roofing	960,000	333,051	34.7%	960,000	0	GREEN	Rate of work to be increasing during the year.
Windows	415,000	209,450	50.5%	665,000	250,000	RED	100 Additional windows to be installed during year.
Heating	1,200,000	1,673	0.1%	800,000	-400,000	RED	Contract not yet started
Doors	120,000	0	0.0%	200,000	80,000	RED	Contract not yet started. Programme increased to 500 doors.
Fire Safety Works in Communal Areas	150,000	121,706	81.1%	250,000	100,000	RED	Phase 1 and 2 nearly complete. Phase 3 to go ahead
Cladding	500,000	0	0.0%	0	-500,000	RED	Structural surveys underway. Unlikely for work to start this financial year.
Fascias and Soffits	505,000	0	0.0%	150,000	-355,000	RED	Contract in preparation for tender process. Unlikely for full programme to complete in remainder of year.
Air Source Heat Pumps	225,000	225,533	100.2%	571,000	346,000	RED	Scheduled work due to complete early in the year. Additional 60 properties identified.
Door Entry Systems	75,000	1,416	1.9%	125,000	50,000	RED	Programme started and due to increase to 25 schemes.
Aids and Adaptations	200,000	60,597	30.3%	200,000	0	GREEN	
Disabled Facilities Grant	300,000	67,584	22.5%	300,000	0	GREEN	
IT Development	15,000	11,533	76.9%	15,000	-3,467	GREEN	Additional costs may be incurred for ICT costs associated with Academy upgrade. SWOne to confirm Oct 12.
Soundproofing	20,000	0	0.0%	10,000	-10,000	RED	Dependent on properties becoming void.
Meeting Rooms	20,000	0	0.0%	40,000	20,000	RED	Programme doubled as no work completed last year.
Asbestos Works	50,000	2,940	5.9%	50,000	0	GREEN	Responsive at voids or other works.
Tenants Improvements	5,000	650	13.0%	5,000	0	GREEN	
Kitchens	0	-18,128		115,000	115,000	GREEN	Subject to QS valuation.
Total Capital Programmes	5,500,000	1,166,909	21.2%	5,196,000	-307,467		

Right to Buy	Sales	Total Receipts	Retainable Receipts	Spend Needed Within 3 Years	RAG Status	Comments
To Quarter 2 2012/13	3	230,275	59,645	198,817	GREEN	

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Tenant Services Management Board 19th November 2012

Transfer Removal Grant Policy and Leaflet

Report of the Housing Manager Lettings – Paul Hadley

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Jean Adkins)

1.0 Executive Summary

This report provides members of the Tenant Services Management Board (TSMB) with details of a proposed new Transfer Removal Grant (TRG) Policy and an updated TRG Information Leaflet that aims to assist council tenants when moving to more suitable accommodation.

The policy outlines what tenants can expect from Housing Services to assist them when moving to more suitable accommodation. The leaflet provides information all about the TRG scheme.

The TSMB is requested to consider this report and indicate whether they support the proposed policy and information leaflet.

2.0 Background

The supply of appropriately sized good quality housing has a key role to play in positively influencing living standards, health, development and the wellbeing of households.

Demand for social housing in Taunton Deane, in particular family sized housing, is such that it can mean a long wait for applicants.

The aim of the TRG policy is to encourage existing Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) tenants who are under occupying their property, or those who are willing to vacate a purpose built disabled property, to move to another council or housing association accommodation that will be more suitable in meeting their current housing needs.

3.0 Transfer Removal Grant Policy

Full details of the policy can be found at Appendix 1 to this report.

The policy sets out:

- Which tenants are eligible;
- What support Housing Services can give to tenants who wish to move to more suitable accommodation; and
- How and what grant can they expect on completion of their move.

4.0 Transfer Removal Grant Information Leaflet

Full details of the leaflet can be found at Appendix 2 of this report.

5.0 Approximate costs

The cost of implementing this policy will be met within existing budgets.

The Housing Services current annual TRG budget is £30,000.

6.0 Consultation and Timetable

Consultation with tenants was carried out between the 1st July 2012 and 31st August 2012. Tenants who had previously accessed the existing TRG scheme were canvassed for their views and comments.

A second stage of consultation was completed with the members of the Tenants' Forum on the 21st September 2012 where the proposed new policy and leaflet were discussed and comments received.

On the 19th November 2012 the TSMB will be asked to consider the proposed new policy and information leaflet and provide a response.

Both documents will then be presented to Cllr Jean Adkins - Housing Portfolio Holder for approval.

Subject to agreement/approval by all of the above the policy and information leaflet will be implemented with effect of 2nd January 2013.

6.0 Equalities Impact

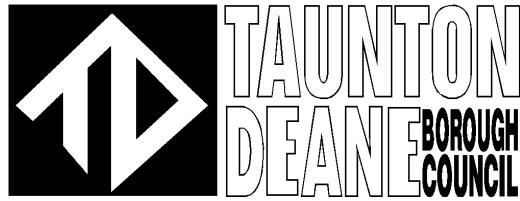
An equality impact assessment has been carried out. Feedback has been obtained from tenants and members of the Tenants' Forum. A completed equality impact assessment can be found at Appendix 3.

7.0 Recommendation

TSMB members are requested to consider this report and indicate whether they support the proposed new policy and information leaflet.

Contact officers:

Paul Hadley, Lettings Manager 01823 356334
Email: p.hadley@tauntondeane.gov.uk



TRANSFER REMOVAL GRANT POLICY

NOVEMBER 2012

Policy Title:	Transfer Removal Grant Policy
Lead Officers:	Paul Hadley – Housing Manager Lettings
Policy drafted by:	Paul Hadley – Housing Manager Lettings
Date Agreed by Board:	
Date Equality Impact Assessment completed:	9 th November 2012
Next Review Date:	

Transfer Removal Grant Policy

The aim of the transfer removal grant (TRG) policy is to encourage existing Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) tenants who are under occupying their property, or those who are willing to vacate a purpose built disabled property, to move to another council or housing association accommodation that will be more suitable in meeting their current housing needs.

In providing the TRG scheme the housing service will:

- Offer financial support to TDBC tenants of 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 bedroom houses who are presently under occupying and wish to move to smaller sized council or housing association accommodation.
- Offer financial support and additional assistance where TDBC housing service requires a tenant who has been left in a family house or a disabled persons dwelling, to transfer to more suitable accommodation. These situations will arise where the former tenant has died or otherwise vacated the dwelling.
- Offer financial support and additional assistance to help both tenants and the housing service to avoid expensive Disabled Facilities Grant work on their existing home, by arranging a transfer to a property where such extensive works are not required.
- Offer financial support and additional assistance to any TDBC tenant regardless of age, who is willing to vacate a purpose built disabled persons property and move to more suitable smaller accommodation.

Tenants who are mutually exchanging will not be eligible for a grant.

Due to limited resources TRG financial support will be provided on a 'first come first served' basis.

- Limit the maximum amount of financial support to £2,000 per application, making deductions for any debts owed to the council prior to payment.
- Regularly promote the scheme in order to raise awareness.
- Review its TRG policy every 3 years and the budget for the scheme annually.

Transfer Removal Grant Scheme at Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services

Transfer Removal Grant Scheme

The aim of the scheme is to encourage existing Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) tenants who are under occupying their property, or those who are willing to vacate a purpose built disabled property, to move to other council or housing association accommodation that will be more suitable in meeting their current housing needs.

Who Qualifies?

Tenants of 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 bedroom houses - Grant of up to £2,000 payable

Any TDBC tenant who is presently under-occupying their property could qualify for a maximum grant of up to £2,000.

The amount payable will be dependent upon the size of the property you currently live in and the type of TDBC property you move to.

How and when is the Grant paid?

The grant will be paid by direct bank payment, cheque or a rent credit. Prior to the payment being approved any debts owed to the Council will be deducted.

For example:

Rent Arrears; Court costs; Re-charges for repair works that the tenant is responsible for; Sundry debts and; Housing Benefit overpayments.

The tenant will be notified by letter of any deductions at the time payment is approved.

In order to improve the housing service for its tenants, on completion of your move a satisfaction survey will be carried out with you.

For further information please contact:

Housing Manager Lettings
Taunton Deane Borough Council,
The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton, TA1 1HE
Tel: 01823 356334 Fax: 01823 356583
Email: lettingsteam@tauntondeane.co.uk Web:
www.tauntondeane.gov.uk

Application for a tenants Transfer Removal Grant (TRG)

Name:
Current Address:
Telephone Number:
Mobile Number:

I/We would like to be considered for a Tenants Transfer Removal Grant.

Signed:
Signed:

Date:
Date:

Details of where to send this application are given on the reverse of the tear off slip.

Should you wish to apply for a TRG please complete the application on the reverse of this leaflet and return it to:

Housing Manager Lettings
Taunton Deane Borough Council,
The Deane House,
Belvedere Road,
Taunton,
TA1 1HE.

If you would like this document translated into other languages or in Braille, large print, audio tape, or CD please telephone us on 01823 356356 or email us at: enquiries@tauntondeane.co.uk

Equality Impact Assessment – pro-forma

Responsible person	<i>P. Hadley</i>	Job Title Lettings Manager
Why are you completing the Equality Impact Assessment? (Please mark as appropriate)	Proposed new policy/service	Transfer Removal Grant Scheme
	Change to Policy/service	New
	Budget/Financial decision – MTFP	None
	Part of timetable	None
What are you completing the Equality Impact Assessment on (which, service, MTFP proposal)	Health and Housing Theme (Lettings)	
Section One – Scope of the assessment		
What are the main purposes/aims of the policy/decision/service?	<i>Introduction of Policy and guidelines to support the amended TRG leaflet. To make best use of housing stock and give tenants the opportunity to move within our stock.</i>	
Which protected groups are targeted by the policy/decision/service?	<i>NO protected groups are specifically targeted by the introduction of the policy.</i>	
What evidence has been used in the assessment - data, engagement undertaken – please list each source that has been used	<i>Tenants who have used the service in 11/12 have completed a questionnaire. Also tenants who wish to downsize have been questioned. Liaison with the Tenants Forum has taken place.</i>	
The information can be found on....	<i>All the info is available on sclar\$ on 'ltostrv' u drive held by Taunton Deane</i>	

Section two – Conclusion drawn about the impact of service/policy/function/change on different groups highlighting negative impact, unequal outcomes or missed opportunities for promoting equality

No negative impact, unequal outcomes or missed opportunities identified

I have concluded that there is/should be:

No major change - no adverse equality impact identified	No Major Change to policy
Adjust the policy/decision/service	
Continue with the policy/decision/service	
Stop and remove the policy/decision/service	

Reasons and documentation to support conclusions

Section four – Implementation – timescale for implementation

TRG policy and leaflets to go before the Tenants Service Management Board in October. Then if agreed to go to the portfolio holder with a plan to introduce on the 2nd January 2013.

Section Five – Sign off

Responsible officer P Hadley

Date

Management Team Lettings Team Manager

Date

Section six – Publication and monitoring

Published on

Next review date

Date logged on Covalent

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Action Planning

The table should be completed with all actions identified to mitigate the effects concluded.

Actions table						
Service area				Date		
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed	Who is responsible?	By when?	How will this be monitored?	Expected outcomes from carrying out actions	

Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on Monday 19th November 2012 at 6:15pm in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.

Present: Mr Dustyn Etherington (Chairman), Councillor Steve Brooks, Councillor Robert Bowrah, Mrs Jessie Bunn, Mrs Enid Drage, Mr Mark Edwards, Mr Dennis Galpin, Mr Ian Gould, Mrs Judith Hegarty, Mr Kevin Hellier, Mr Robert Middleton and Mrs Tammy Urquhart.

Officers: Steve Esau (Property Manager; Maintenance) James Barrah (Health and Housing Manager), Paul Hadley (Housing Manager – Lettings), John Hart (Estate Officer), Steve Boland (Housing Services Lead), Phil Webb (Housing Manager; Property Services), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), Sharon Harvey (Supported Housing Team Manager), Rosie Reed (Tenant Services Development Officer), and Emma Hill (Corporate Support Officer).

Others: Councillors J Adkins, F Smith and J Warmington
Graham Vickery from Halcon North Tenants & Residents Association
John Clarke; Managing Director and Owner ALHCO.
Alan Murray; Contractor Manager ALHCO
Dale Macy from ALHCO.

(The meeting commenced at 6.15pm)

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 29 October were taken as read and signed.

2. Declaration of Interest

The following members declared a personal interest as a council house tenants:

- Mr Dustyn Etherington
- Mr Mark Edwards
- Mrs Jessie Bunn
- Mrs Enid Drage
- Mr Dennis Galpin
- Mr Ian Gould
- Mrs Judith Hegarty
- Mr Robert Middleton
- Mr Kevin Hellier
- Mrs Tammy Urquhart

Councillor Bowrah declared a personal interest as he has family members who are council tenants.

Councillor Brooks declared a prejudicial interest as tenant of a Council owned property.

3. ALHCO Performance Report.

The Property Manager for Maintenance gave a verbal update accompanied by a spreadsheet detailing the ALHCO Quarter Two KPI Performance Report for the period

covering April to September for 2012. The spreadsheet detailing ALHCO performance included such headings as Servicing, Reactive Maintenance, Voids, and Requests for Service, Health and Safety and Finance.

The following points were covered during the brief update of the ALHCO representatives;

- Ongoing problems with data transfer between TDBC and ALHCO.
- All CP12's were now in place. These are done electronically via the PDA's.
- Issues around access rate. High number of failed entries.
- Cumulative number of voids for year so far is 267.
- Scheduling site was moved from Scotland to new site in Bristol.

During the discussion of this item, board members made the following comments and asked questions. Responses shown in italics:

- Board members voiced some personal concerns and problems related to missed or no shows for appointments regarding servicing or repairs.
*Currently, there are 368 engineers for ALHCO on the roads. The engineers should be calling the next appointment whilst on route.
The contact details for ALHCO representatives would be passed to the clerk for distribution to the members of the Board. Officers requested that they be included in any communications regarding issues and problems.*
- The chair requested that Board Members with personal issues relating to appointments please contact both ALHCO and TDBC directly.
- What system do you use to contact tenants?
*Currently, we send a letter, then a follow up letter finally a telephone call. But we are hoping to introduce a SMS service as well. So it would hopefully become letter, then follow up call with a reminder SMS.
Currently, we operate AM and PM appointments but we are looking to introduce two hour slots, which would then become one hour slots.*
- Where does the money from the sale of scrap go?
All scrap is dealt with by TDBC. This is taken to a Scrap Yard across from the depot.
- The notice time between the letter and the appointment was not enough. This worked out at less than a week
- Concerns were raised relating to engineers ability to use PDA technology. What is process for training staff?
All staff using the PDA's receives half a day's training initially. The PDA's includes a series of quick reference menus and prompt questions. Staff have access to mentor if they have any further problems when out in the field although, no staff have used the calling mentor service. Staff has received a further half a day's training.
- Could ALHCO representatives bring along PDA's for the Board to look at?
- The servicing of my boiler originally was due late May time but this last servicing wasn't until November.
ALHCO's aim is to get into a routine of completing servicing before the winter period to just leave repairs and emergency calls.

Resolved that the Officer's report be noted.

4. Performance Indicators Quarter Two – 2012/13.

The Health and Housing Manager gave a verbal update accompanied by tables detailing the Health and Housing KPI Performance Report for the period covering Quarter Two of 2012. The tables detailed the overall KPI performance of Quarter two and the Top Ten Quarter one and two performance indicators selected by the Tenant Service Management Board during Quarter one performance report.

The overall KPI performance report included such headings as Managing Finances, Service Delivery Satisfaction, Service Delivery Decent Homes and Service Delivery Managing Housing Stock.

The Officers informed the Board Member that 49% of the 33 KPI were Green.

During the discussion of this item, board members made the following comments and asked questions. Responses shown in italics:

- On comparison of the two quarter's, there has been some improvement but only two have decreased. Could there be a link online to enable people to view the full report?
The Council would ensure the full report is available to view online. An Officer ensured the Board that they wouldn't be satisfied until all KPI's were green. We are improving slowly.
- Concerns raised around the VOID's area. Please could officers explain?
Council surveyors have gathered the data but were having problems entering the data into Academy IT system. This issue would affect the result against the target.
- Were the targets realistic with some of the KPI's? Would some of them be too high?
The target for repairs KPI's were realistic but there were other KPI targets requiring review.
- It was suggested a review takes place and re-set the KPI target to something more realistic.
- Is the target too low on point 12 of section four Service Delivery?
This completion element is to look and make assessment of the repairs required, not to make the repair. This may require another visit.
- Should the target for completion of repairs be 99.9% for emergency repairs?
Completion of the emergency maybe outside the essential 24 hours.
- Should Jobs requiring a second visit be excluded from this KPI?
There were limits to the current COSY IT system. But the Council would review the KPI's relating to repairs.
- The Council should stick to 28 days not have different levels.
- The Council is breaking down the repairs into separate section as well as emergency and non-emergency.
A single repairs category would not challenge the contractors to complete.
- Would the new version of COSY system work effectively with the PDA's? And would that affect the KPI's?
New version of COSY system has not been confirmed as yet.
- It appears that software issues and problems have had negative outcomes on the KPI's

Resolved that the: -

1. The Board noted the Officer's report; and
2. Officers to present a report or presentation to the Board on the current software systems as well as information of the new software system.

5. Financial Statement Quarter Two 2012/13.

The Health and Housing Manager gave a verbal update accompanied by spreadsheets detailing the Housing Revenue Account Performance Scorecard Report for the period covering Quarter Two of 2012. The spreadsheets detailed the breakdown of overall performance of Quarter two split between capital and revenue.

The Revenue Account Performance included such headings as Capital Programmes, Right to Buy, Income, Expenditure and HRA Revenue.

The following points were covered during the brief update of the Health and Housing Manager;

- High Voids Cost; relating to houses in Halcon. Some requiring extensive repairs.
- Under spend in some Capital Programmes. This is a risk.
- Right to Buy sales have increased. Now stands at 15.

During the discussion of this item, board members made the following comments and asked questions. Responses shown in italics:

- When is the start of the heating contract?
There were a number of contracts concerning heating, but the larger contracts have not yet materialised. There also been a delay in the launch of a new energy efficient electric heater.
- Does this mean that those due to have their heating upgraded, would have to wait?
100 new heating systems have been installed some through ALHCO.
- In this financial performance report, there seem to be a lot of red unhappy boxes? As well as a lot of zero spend; if you don't use it, you lose it.
Unfortunately, this is nature of finance. The council is looking at either starting small short term or more large long term contracts. The preference is start the process of procurement for more large long term contracts. But the procurement process is complicated.
- What is the status of the soundproofing installation?
This is done in the duplex flats between the floors but this would only be done when both floors are empty.
Maybe this should be removed from the capital lines, as this only seems to see occasional activity.
The officer's confirmed these would be moved to the Revenue budget.
- Why when phase one and two were incomplete, were the Council starting phase three?
There were several sets of contracts and contractors running at the same time, some with the DLO.
- What is the progress of the bathroom contract?
This is 200 house contract for a period of one year. However, the Council has met that and provided more than 200.

- When updating tenants' bathrooms, why are the Council not using dual flushes on the toilets?
This would be included in the details of the new long term contract during the procurement process. The officers would include the Board Members when the specifics of the contract details are being decided.
- There is an open procurement session at Yeovil for Advantage Southwest for doors etc. Maybe more representatives would want to attend?

Resolved that the officer's report be noted.

6. Transfer Removal Grant Policy and Leaflet Report.

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the details of a proposed new Transfer Removal Grant (TRG) Policy and an updated TRG Information Leaflet that aims to assist council tenants when moving to more suitable accommodation.

The supply of appropriately sized good quality housing has a key role to play in positively influencing living standards, health, development and the wellbeing of households.

Demand for social housing in Taunton Deane, in particular family sized housing, is such that it would mean a long wait for applicants.

The aim of the TRG policy is to encourage existing Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) tenants who are under occupying their property, or those who were willing to vacate a purpose built disabled property, to move to another council or housing association accommodation that would be more suitable in meeting their current housing needs.

The full details of the policy were presented in addition to this report. The policy sets out:

- Which tenants are eligible;
- What support Housing Services can give to tenants who wish to move to more suitable accommodation; and
- How and what grant they can expect on completion of their move.

The cost of implementing this policy would be met within existing budgets. The Housing Services current annual TRG budget is £30,000.

Consultation with tenants was carried out between the 1st July and 31st August 2012. Tenants who had previously accessed the existing TRG scheme were canvassed for their views and comments.

A second stage of consultation was completed with the members of the Tenants' Forum on the 21st September 2012 where the proposed new policy and leaflet were discussed and comments received.

Subject to agreement/approval the policy and information leaflet would be implemented with effect of 2nd January 2013.

During the discussion of this item, board members made the following comments and asked questions. Responses shown in italics:

- Concerns were expressed over the size of the Grant available. I think £2000 is enough of incentive. The PR on the availability of this Grants needs to be increased.
The current budget is £30,000, next year the budget would be £60,000. The number of TRG's by the end of the year would be 20, currently stands at 17 with three more in the pipeline.
- Is the decision criteria related to number of bedrooms and number of people occupying the house?
Also depends on whether or not you were going up or down in size of property.
- Are the house details included on the application form?
Most people downsizing don't know what house they are going to.
- In reference made a previous Board Meeting, I believe that tenants should be rewarded if they leave houses in good condition.
Most people wanting to downsize leave their houses in good condition. This is included in the criteria of the Grant.
- General agreements about the need for increased advertisement, as people were aware they are rattling around in a house too big for them.
Executive Member present acknowledged the comments and views of the Board and the situation would be reviewed.
- Would this be advertised in Tenants Talk Newsletter on a regular basis?
- All Board Members agreed that the size of the grant was too small relative to the size of the properties.

Resolved that the: -

3. The Board noted the Officer's report; and
4. The Board showed their support for new policy and information leaflet.

7. Verbal Update on Leycroft Grove Local Lettings Plan.

The Estate Officer gave a verbal update on the Local Letting Plan (LLP) at Leycroft Grove. This included a brief summary of the situation in the area prior to the implementation of LLP as part of wider improvement plan including the Police and other agencies as well as an update on the ongoing situation at Leycroft Grove and the improvements since the start of LLP.

The following points were covered during the summary of situation prior to the introduction of LLP;

- Leycroft Grove is made up of 32 residential buildings.
- Recurring problems included drug abuse, ASB and noise issues.
- Increasing amounts of Police activity included 12 drug warrants.
- 65 Police incidents reported prior to LLP
- Police introduced a Wider Improvement Plan; this took the problem solving approach, which included more foot patrols and introduction of the LLP.

When properties in an LLP controlled area come up for re-let, this is openly advertised on the property information. The applicants to a property in LLP area were rigorously checked to make there was no history of drug or alcohol abuse, ASB, priority going to mature applicants and/or seeking or employed.

During the discussion of this item, board members made the following comments and asked questions. Responses shown in italics:

- The Board would like to congratulate the officers and the Council for your efforts and progress with Leycroft Grove LLP.
- There were some drug use but the majority have moved on. It's quite an achievement.
There were still problems at Leycroft Grove, it's not perfect but these can be pinpointed.
- Would it be done as elsewhere, maybe on a smaller scale?
This has to be part of wider plan; it would work solely on its own.
- We would understand the low turn around for Voids in this area if that means the right person is allocated to the property.
- The LLP is a low key but effective element to improving problem streets and areas. Where have these people gone?
I don't know where these people have applied after the Council have evicted them. Most likely spread throughout the housing stock.
- The improvement in Leycroft Grove, could this be carried out in areas of Priorswood?
Plans have already been set in motion for LLP at Lyngford Crescent as part of a wider plan to improve that area. This was discussed at a previous Board meeting.
- It's a shame this was not implemented years ago. The improvements could be extended further.
- LLP is making people of Leycroft Grove feel safer.

Resolved that the officer's report be noted.

8. Verbal Update on Halcon North; the Next Steps.

Councillor Brooks left the room before the decision of this item after declaring a prejudicial interest.

The Tenant Services Management Board went into confidential session. The Health and Housing Manager gave a confidential verbal update on the Halcon North Regeneration Project.

Resolved that the officer's report be noted.

(The meeting ended at 9.05pm)