

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 21 May 2013 at 18:00.

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## **Agenda**

- 1 Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 18 March 2013 and Annual General Meeting Minutes held on 15 April 2013 (attached).
- 3 Public Question Time.
- 4 Declaration of Interests  
To receive declarations of personal or prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.
- 5 Halcon One Team Presentation. Presented by Sergeant Andy Murphy, Avon and Somerset Police (verbal)
- 6 Welfare Reform Update. Report of the Housing Manager; Lettings (attached)  
Reporting Officer: Paul Hadley
- 7 Performance Indicators Quarter Four 2012/13. Report of the Health and Housing Manager (attached).  
Reporting Officer: James Barrah
- 8 STAR Survey. Report of the Tenant Services Development Officer (attached).  
Reporting Officer: Steven Clarke
- 9 Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day Feedback. Report of the Tenant Services Development Officer (attached).  
Reporting Officer: Steven Clarke
- 10 Tenant Central Training. Report of the Tenant Empowerment Manager (verbal update).  
Reporting Officer: Martin Price
- 11 Community Reporters Training. Report of the Tenant Empowerment Manager (verbal update).

Reporting Officer: Martin Price

Tonya Meers  
Legal and Democratic Services Manager

09 July 2013

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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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 the Corporate Support Unit on 01823 356414 or email [r.bryant@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:r.bryant@tauntondeane.gov.uk)**

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**Tenant Services Management Board Members:-**

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

**Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on Monday 18 March 2013 at 6pm in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House Taunton.**

**Present:** Mr Dustyn Etherington (Chair), Mrs J Bunn, Mrs E Drage, Mr M Edwards, Mr I Gould, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr R Middleton Mrs T Urquhart, Councillor Bowrah and Councillor Brooks.

**Officers:** Shari Hallett (Health and Housing Business Support Lead), Chris Hall (Commercial and Community Services Manager), Steve Esau (Property Manager; Maintenance), Phil Webb (Housing Manager; Property Services), Steven Clarke (Tenant Services Development Officer), Stephen Boland (Housing Services Lead), James Barrah (Health and Housing Manager), Steve Major (Housing Development Project Lead) and Emma Hill (Corporate Support Officer).

**Others:** Councillors Jane Warmington. Graham Vickery from Halcon North Tenants & Residents Association Nicholas Taylor

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

**1. Apologies**

Mr K Hellier and Mr D Galpin

**2. Public Question Time**

Resident of Kilkenny Court expressed their concerns at the state of communal bathrooms as well as other communal areas that had clearly fallen into disrepair and the community feel that these areas need some attention. The guttering around the outside was also broken and along with the continual problems with the lift.

*The Property Manager for Maintenance said that he would arrange for himself and a surveyor to set up a meeting and inspect these issues. Concerning the lift, the Council were aware of the continual problems and were investigating the financial aspect of replacing it.*

Committee Member also a resident of Kilkenny Court enquired whether or not the Council had given out personal details of tenants or residents to private companies. This was in relation to difficulties had when trying to change energy suppliers after recently moving into the Court and also after being contacted by the current supplier of the flat with his knowledge.

*The Health and Housing Manager suggested that they discuss this matter away the Board meeting.*

**3. Repairs Review 2012 – 2013 Report.**

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the response to repairs response rates being off target within the Health and Housing scorecard, the Health and Housing Manager requested a review of repairs.

## Actions Taken to Date

- Flow chart produced to understand the repairs process.
- ALHCO separately had updated the Tenant Services Management Board on two occasions.
- Two meetings held with DLO to jointly discuss how to improve performance.
- There had been an 8% increase in DLO job tickets issued to beginning of Feb 2013 and 6% increase in overall contractor tickets which had increased pressure.
- A new report had been created to produce the completed jobs figures and we had reviewed all open tickets and closed those that were mistakenly left open.

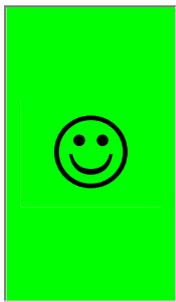
Other actions taken to date in relation to changes:-

- All DLO tradesmen now telephone each job before attending; Tenant's telephone number was flagged on the tickets.
- Outstanding job report produced for all contractors and results sent to the Property Manager (Maintenance).
- DLO produces weekly open ticket report to analyse outstanding jobs.
- The completed job report was created to allow monthly monitoring of the statistics.
- IBTSU (I have been to see you) process used when a tenant was out had changed, jobs were now closed on second aborted visit where there had been no one home and answering the telephone on two occasions.
- Discussions with DLO glazing contractor have begun and hope to be able to email tickets to them.
- The DLO was investigating capacity issues.
- Tickets which were complete and had remained unclosed and now had been closed.

The method of reporting statistics had been jointly reviewed and the data report was flawed. Firstly, the report included all DLO services for example ground maintenance; this had the effect of keeping tickets open and making statistics appear worse. Other refinements need to be made e.g. due to constraints between computer systems emergency or out of hour job tickets would show as not being completed on time. To rectify the effect of this in the performance figures to date, we were manually reviewing all of these job tickets. This problem would resolve itself when the "Cosy" computer software was replaced but in the meantime we would need to change the way we enter retrospective tickets to give a more accurate reflection of performance.

The improvement in statistics shown below: (figures are for Quarters 1 to 3 2012/13)

<p><b>10. Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b> Completion of repairs within priority target times: Emergency (within 24 hours) Target =98%</p>		<p>Was 92.01% Now 92.07% We are ranked 253 out of 272 for all providers and 36 out of 41 for all councils who own stock.</p>
<p><b>11. Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b> Completion of repairs within priority target times:</p>		<p>Was 65.52% Now 83.92% and we are ranked 245 out of 260 for all</p>

Urgent (within 3 working days) Target =94%		providers and 36 out of 41 for all councils who own stock.
<b>12. Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b> Completion of repairs within priority target times: Non Urgent (up to 28 days) Target =85%		Was 80.62% Now 90.02% and we are ranked 231 out of 264 for all providers and 31 out of 40 for all councils who own stock. (Changed from Red to Green)

NB: The effect of not being able to demonstrate completion of retrospective tickets on time was still a factor within these figures.

There was still further work to do to understand and improve our repairs performance figures but work had begun and would continue.

The following points were covered during the brief update of the Commercial and Community Services Manager;

- There had been a new focus on priority reports, which could now be drawn from Academy instead of the COSY system.
- Reported problems with return around times for glaziers. This was originally completed by trained DLO workers during the days of single glazed windows but the current double glazed windows must be completed by contractor and was not possible to turn around within seven days. New timescales consist on temporary plastic pane within 24 hours and then 28 days to replace.
- Currently, there were nine vacancies at the DLO. With the first phase of internal advertisement completed only five applicants so far.
- With an increased level of work due to reduced number of staff, timescales had been affected.
- There had been successful tender for the new software including hand held computers. The completion timescale could be up to nine months for full installation. Contract had been awarded but not signed.

During the discussion of this item, board members and the public made the following comments and asked questions: - (*Responses shown in italics*)

- For clarification, do you they need to come and measure each window requiring replacing or could they not keep a template for roads or areas of houses? *Each window must be individually measured in case of movement within houses. Each window can be different by millimetres or centimetres.*
- A Committee Member had been notified of a requirement to change a single glazed window in the house but not date was given and this was months ago. *It depends whether it was a window refresh changing from single to double or a broken window replacement as to which department would be dealing with it but there was a contract for refresh windows as well as broken window replacement.*
- It used to be that the Council a policy that they didn't remove and change the window during the winter months (with exception to broken windows), what had happened to this?

*The Council currently had a number of different contracts running all best to be done during the warmer months and not enough to months to complete all so some windows had to be refreshed during the colder months.*

- Plastic Window Pane replacement over broken windows instead of wooden boarding was step in the right direction. Boarding makes estate and community look ugly.
- *The Procurement processes was lengthy and had limits so the Council were trying wherever possible to keep the work in-house.*
- After the Officer's review of the repairs figures, they appear to be more accurate and improving, which was re-assuring but the figures for emergency repairs still gives the Board concerns.

*The Council were still getting problems with retrospective tickets being entered after emergency call-outs over the weekend. This was the next task on the list to sort out so they wouldn't effect the next quarter and would be more accurate.*

- With the introduction of PDA's, how would that affect data transfer? Would it cause problems?

*The Council had been told the data transfer between PDA's and back office would be seamless due to the company already providing the Council back office software.*

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Officer's report.

#### **4. Gas and Other Heating Quarterly Monitoring Report**

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the report and annex had been produced to give members monitoring information on the performance of the servicing and repair contract with ALHCO.

This report was for Quarter three showing performance data; in addition the report highlights issues with the contract and improvements being made. TDBC had a responsibility as a landlord to ensure that all rented properties had a valid Gas Safety Certificate; an annual gas safety check had to be carried out. In addition the contractor was responsible for the servicing of solid fuel and oil appliances together with checking electric storage heaters, servicing of extract fans, smoke detectors and breakdown repairs.

At the end of Quarter three we had 72 properties without a valid Cp12 Certificate, 50 properties attributed to being lost off the ALHCO's Aero mark IT System following the change over from Scotland to Bristol at the end of December. At the time 45 properties had been revisited, the 5 remaining properties which we had not been able to gain access. These properties had been included on the March Hit list to gain access. These visits take place from 26 to 28 March. The remaining 22 were late services all of which had valid certificates.

A summary of additional concerning Reactive Maintenance for Quarter Three:

- KPI figures were showing below target in all areas in Quarter Three
- One of the problems was the manual handling of data back from the contractor
- Also the number of different appliance types a total of 144 making it difficult for the contractor to achieve a first time fix
- The void levels had been above average for Quarter three.

- The work ALHCO had to do was been carried out on time but this had do with a number of installations where systems had not passed the gas safety inspection.
- A third party organisation called Quarter Gas to carry independent audit of ALHCO's work. They carried out audits in the last quarter, whilst there were no serious issues.

There were still a number of issues and problems that the Council and ALCHO were working together to resolve. Some of these can be resolved in the short term others would take longer particularly around data transfer, which cannot fully be resolved until we had automated links between academy and aero mark. Below were a number of actions and improvements that are being carried out:

- Weekly Operational meetings.
- Weekly monitoring information and data from Aero mark.
- Gas Officer attending Bristol Call Centre monthly to discuss and resolve issues with the Call Centre Manager.
- South West Audit Partnership was carrying out an audit of Gas Servicing and Maintenance Management. We were hoping to see the results in April. Any actions or recommendations would then be put into an action plan.
- Working with Alhco, Taunton Deane Borough Council's Finance and Information Technology to explore interfacing between the two systems.

Heating systems that were serviced regularly work more efficiently therefore reducing CO2 emissions and the environmental impact.

Currently, the revenue surrounding Scrap Metal stands at £7,500 but there had been problems around transferring of money. But the estimated total at the End of Year looks to be around £10,000. This would be going to the HRA.

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

- Could the Council consider standardising system around the variety of appliances?  
*The initial work with ALCHO around the discontinuation of parts had helped with the current five year replacement program.*
- The replacement of back to back boiler, could this include heaters?  
*The Council were still installing heaters but it required a letter from a Doctor stating they require instant heat in the form of electric fire.*
- Was the Council considering Carbon Monoxide detectors for all open flu appliances?  
*The Council would be looking into this.*
- Concerns rose over numbers of jobs cancelled (78), although percentages dropped off rapidly later in the Quarter four.  
*The Council would be working with ALCHO to bring them up.*
- Council data about individual properties needs to be reviewed as Board Member had been contacted about having their Gas Boiler serviced but they had a Rayburn.  
*There problems around data for the Council and ALCHO. With the new Software and PDA system, the majority of these would be solved.*
- Concerns rose over the remaining outstanding CP12 within Tenant houses. Couldn't the Council gain access with out permission?

*The Council cannot just gain access to the property. We must give notice of a minimum of 24 hours but the entire process starts with plenty of time before the current certificate expires.*

*Access without permission would need to be an emergency. The Council had a strict procedure for all issues.*

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Officer's report.

## **5. Contracts Specifications Report**

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the start new contracts for the replacement of timber fascias and soffits with UPVC, and new heating installations using air source heat pumps such as:

- Air source Heat Pumps and Cylinders
- White plastic rainwater installation
- Radiators and Valves

Members were previously briefed of the planned Capital workload for 2013/14 and budgets had now been confirmed; the Housing Capital budget being in the sum of £7.7 Million.

### **Fascias and Soffits**

In order to be able to properly deliver the works necessary within the HRA 30 year Business Plan it was essential Housing Property Services prepare a number of contracts within the next six months. This would ensure that arrangements were in place to cover all the eventualities for planned and responsive work to be covered.

The first in this line of contracts was for the replacement of existing fascias and soffits to roofs with UPVC cladding. This work would originally been part of our planned external repairs and redecoration works but it had not been part of it for the last five years. Access to high level within those contracts was inordinately expensive for the volume of work that was to be done and as savings would be needed at the time to afford Decent Homes work. It was decided to postpone this work until such time as a full programme could be devised. In the meantime, if roofing work had been carried out then we would replace fascias and soffits as part of that work. We were now in a position where fascias and soffits would be programmed as a stand-alone contract.

This year's contract was a trial project on one type of gutter system (concealed) and was being part funded by budget slipping from 2012/13 into the New Year. We shall take what we learn from this one type of guttering and expand it into a longer term contract later in 2013/14.

### **Houses**

The houses had been described in location and by type. Each house was a complete installation with components described for each roof slope or elevation. The "Total" figure was the number of that type of house in that location. Downpipes were replaced in the existing positions.

## **Flats**

The blocks of flats had been described as a single installation to be replaced in totality, with downpipes replaced in the same position as existing.

## **Maintenance, defects liability and servicing**

The air source heat pump equipment was supplied through the Advantage South-West procurement arrangement with a direct supply contract between the contractor and Daikin. The Daikin equipment was provided with a five year manufacturer's warranty.

The Contractor would accept a 12 months defects liability period under the minor works contract with Taunton Deane Borough Council

The Contractor would enter into a servicing Contract with Taunton Deane Borough Council as described herein for both previous installations and the works currently being tendered for.

## **Taunton Deane Borough Council Tenants**

The Contractor would be required to liaise with the tenant in terms of the design and installation of the Daikin system and prior to the handover, instruct the tenant in the use of the equipment and provide the tenant with the operating hand book.

It was intended that the void properties would be added into this contract and the Contractor would be required to return to the property to instruct the new tenant in the use of the equipment as described above at no additional cost.

The individual property design was to be achieved with discussion with the resident and due regard to the resident's possessions and furniture layout.

Each individual property design was to be approved by the Supervising Officer before implementation.

The following design criteria were to be adopted in respect of each individual property. Where a property was presented when these design criteria were not met, the property was to be drawn to the attention of the Supervising Officer.

1. External walls to be insulated cavity walls with facing brick external skin and block work inner skin.
2. Windows to be UPVC double glazed
3. Roofs to be insulated to a minimum thickness of 200mm

Consideration was to be given to the resident's particular usage of the property.

Where necessary, consideration was to be given to the layout of the garden and access to the building, including both front and rear doors, and where re-design of the pathways to accommodate both the unit and its drip tray arrangements was required, this was to be implemented with the submitted design.

We had a current contract with Otter Heating Services who were continuing to install until such time as the new contract was in place; this was likely to be late spring time.

A consistent problem was that not all tenants that we offer it to actually welcome it and although the Council had a list of prospective addresses for installation, they were met

with fair amount of resistance. We were visiting tenants in advance of the works now in an attempt to convince them of the benefits available.

This work was necessary to be able to deliver the Medium-Term Capital Programme and the HRA 30 year Business Plan.

This work would feed into “Quality Sustainable Growth and Development” and in addition would help to deliver the HRA 30 year Business Plan.

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

- What would do about those Tenants who refuse the installation of new systems?  
*Installation plans based around life of heating systems. Tenants would refuse installation for many reasons but Council would have to accept and wait until property becomes available.*
- Would the Council be tackling Night Storage Heaters?  
*The Council would be tackling this and easily programmable systems installed where no gas was available.*
- Could the Council look into sustainable and alternative heating sources with increasing gas prices? And would be Tenants be allowed to choose what heating sources would be installed into the property?  
*The Council were investigating and making sure the alternatives were future proof.  
The Tenants preferences would be taken into account but there were many factors that the Council were required to take into account.*

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Officer’s report.

## 6. Welfare Reform Strategy Update Report

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the details of a new Welfare Reform Strategy and Action Plan that aims to help with mitigating the impact of welfare reform on Taunton Deane Borough Council’s housing service and its tenants.

The action plan had been developed alongside the strategy and pulls together into one plan objectives and activities on benefits and money advice, financial inclusion and affordable warmth.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 would be enacted on the 1st April 2013. The four major changes that were taking place:

- Under Occupation (bedroom tax)
- Benefit Cap
- Non Dependant Deductions
- Universal Credits

The key parts of the three year Housing Services Welfare Reform Strategy was:

- The strategic vision;
- The strategic objectives; and

- The priorities for action.

Details of Housing Services welfare Reform Strategy Action Plan were presented to the Board Members along with this report.

Of the 500 affected people within Taunton Deane 283 had been visited by Housing Officers so far. These visited were to establish their position and advise them of their options.

Feedback had been obtained from tenants and members of the Tenants' Forum.

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

- Concerns raised the use of direct debits within the Welfare Reform and Benefits if these benefits fail to make it into bank accounts on time, then bill direct debits would fail and people would be charged.  
*When Universal Credit starts everyone would go to electronic payment but Somerset Savings and Loan run a Jam Jar accounts but the Council would be giving them options but not forcing them.*
- Had rent arrears increased? How would people cope from receiving money weekly to monthly? What about those people who was not IT savvy?  
*There had been an 11% increase in rent arrears. There would be a transitional grant to those changing from Benefits to Universal Credit. There would a post put into place to assist with this change.*
- Had the Council contacted any Local Authorities that didn't retain any housing stock to see in regards to Welfare Reform?  
*The Council had contact other Local Authorities and were doing similar breakdown.*
- Did the figures for downsizing and upsizing match? 516 people affected.  
*40 People wanting to downsize and these were encouraged to mutually exchange but there would enough one and two bedroom houses or stock.*
- Did our plans for house building match our demographic need? What would happen to those wanting to downsize but there wasn't the stock to do so?  
*The new build size would be mix of house sizes. This would make for a better community. These would qualify for the discretionary housing payments to help.*
- Advertise through 'Tenants Talk'. Pull on the heart strings around people needing to move due to over crowding and encourage those living in houses to big for them. Sort of Peer pressure.
- The Council need to help people under the pressures on Council Housing Stock.  
*Not all vacant or available properties were advertised on Homefinder, only the majority. There were some exclusions i.e. direct matches. These maybe families suffering or receiving violence towards them.*

**Resolved** that the:-

1. The officer's report was noted.
2. The Board Members supported the recommendation for approving the new Welfare Reform Strategy and Action Plan to Executive Councillor Jean Adkins.

## **7. Report on Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day and Tenant Services Management Board Annual General Meeting.**

The Tenant Services Development Officer gave a short verbal update confirming that the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day would be held on 15<sup>th</sup> April at Somerset County Cricket Ground starting 10:00am running until 5:00pm and also the Tenant Services Management Annual General Meeting would be on the same day in The Long Room at 3:30pm.

The Tenant Services Development Officer mentioned that the Open Day would require a number of meeters and greeters and the majority of the Member made known they would be available to help at some during the day.

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

- It was requested that a new batch of Board Member name badges be ordered for the event as some Members had them and some did not.  
*Officers said they would order those for on the day.*

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Officer's report.

## **8. Verbal Update on Creechbarrow Road Development Project.**

The Health and Housing Manager gave a verbal update on the Creechbarrow Road Development Project. Firstly, the Health and Housing Manager introduced the new Housing Development Project Lead to the Board Members.

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

- The Council had received the first acceptants for moving from Creechbarrow Residents.
- The Buy Back process had now started.
- The Council had started a cycle of fortnightly meetings with at least 50 actions taken away for each meeting.
- There had been continual changes to the development project design. During the pre-planning meeting had brought up more changes. An up to date version would be brought to the Board Members soon.
- The Officers stated there was still a lot to do.
- There would be two consultation events:
  - 9 April 2013 from 4:00pm until 7:00pm at Baptist Church in Halcon.
  - 10 April 2013 from 4:00pm until 7:00pm at Deane House
- If the consultation dates were not convenient, individual session can be arranged.
- The Council was up to date with all its permissions in regards to the project. The next decision would be going to Full Council in July.

The officer detailed the project roles of officer within Taunton Deane for the development project:

- Financial Element – Lucy Clothier

- Liaison Element – Rosie Reed
- Communication & Consultation – James Barraah & Rosie Reed
- Open Space Element – Debbie Arscott
- Legal Element – Nicola Cooper

The Council was looking at its work stream around how the Council would let the properties on the new development:

- Looking wider for those overcrowded within the Halcon area.
- Effective letting for the development site.

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

- Board Member asked for clarification in relation to the consultation event on 9 April, was this open to all?  
*The consultation event was open to all, both residents of Creechbarrow Road as well as wider Halcon Community.*
- What were the Council doing about the existing garages on the Creechbarrow Road Development?  
*The garages within the Knightstone section of development had been done already but those within the Taunton Deane section still to be done.*
- What was the risk of RTB for the larger properties? Could the Council index them?  
*That is risk for all the houses but there were restrictions to this brought to the Board at a previous report. The officers would look into indexing the new houses. The government were actively encouraging RTB.*

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Officer's report.

(The meeting ended at 8.00pm)

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on Monday 15 April 2013 at 3:30pm in The Long Room, Somerset County Cricket Ground, Taunton.**

**Present:** Mr Dustyn Etherington (Chair),  
Mrs J Bunn, Mr D Gaplin, Mr I Gould, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr R Middleton, Mrs T Urquhart, Councillor Bowrah and Councillor Brooks

**Officers:** James Barrah (Health and Housing Manager), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), Stephen Boland (Housing Services Lead), Paul Hadley (Housing Manager; Lettings and Anti-social Behaviour), Phil Webb (Housing Manager; Property Services), Stephen Major (Housing Development Project Lead) and Emma Hill (Corporate Support Officer).

**Others:** Councillors Jane Warmington.

(The meeting commenced at 3.30pm)

**1. Introduction.**

The Chair welcomed all Board Members and Tenants to the meeting, which was the third Annual General Meeting.

**2. Apologies**

Mr M Edwards, Mrs E Drage and Mr K Hellier

**3. Public Question Time**

A member of the public asked if the Board had a full complement of Members for the forthcoming year as there appeared to be several absences

*Tenant Empowerment Manager confirmed that the Tenant Services Management Board had a full complement of Board Members. The absences of Members had been confirmed through their apologies.*

**4. Tenant Services Management Board 2012/13**

The Chair of Tenant Services Management Board gave a verbal update welcoming those present to the third Annual General Meeting and reflected on some of the Board's work over the past year.

The board had seen a lot of change over the last 12 months which reflects not only its role but also the changes that were happening in the world of social housing as a whole and more specifically in Taunton Deane.

The following was a summary of the Chairman's reflection of the Board's activity over the past 12 months:

- 2012 marked the first election of the tenant board members, a historic event as for the first time every tenant in the borough had a vote and had the opportunity to choose who they wanted to represent them and represent their interests.
- This time last year, first discussions relating to the Council's plans to start building houses again after a gap of many years. Much had happened to move this forward over the last 12 months including the proposal to redevelop a large part of Halcon with approximately 200 properties being demolished.
- The board received monthly updates on the development of the project and after reviewing the results of the consultations from tenants of the area, the Board recommended that the project should not go ahead. The Board were pleased that the Executive, the leaders of the council, listened to us and had now decided to move forward with a smaller scale regeneration project.
- The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan was enforced in 2012. The board helped shape this plan and as agreed, had been part of the annual update process. It was also important that all tenants know what future plans were and where their money would be spent. The board was therefore pleased to see a summary of the plan published in the quarterly tenants' newsletter.
- The Board received on a quarterly basis a financial statement. This shows how much money had come in and what it had been spent on for that period. It was helpful that the Housing Accountant presents this and was able to answer any questions we may have.
- One of the main purposes of the board was to scrutinise how Housing Services was performing, making sure it delivers what it was supposed to.
- The board had received a report every three months that details the targets that had been set and the actual performance against them. These performance indicators clearly show whether the target had been met. From these we can see where there were areas for improvement and seek to raise quality of services tenants receive. From this the board had chosen the 'top ten' important performance indicators and had made sure these were available for all tenants to see by publishing them in tenants' newsletters.
- Tenants had consistently said that their priority was getting repairs done quickly and efficiently. Therefore the Board asked for a review of the repairs service and the managers of the DLO and Repairs Assistants attended the board to answer our questions.
- ALHCO had been appointed in the last year to be the new gas servicing and maintenance contractor for the Council.
- The Board had also looked at and approved the Anti-social Behaviour Strategy but also received two reports on Local Letting Plans that had been introduced into two separate areas of Taunton Deane. This would allocate the right properties to the right people showing a marked reduction in anti-social behaviour.
- The topics presented and discussed by the Board were many and varied. These sometimes were areas of concern, which prompted the board to ask for the relevant council staff to attend, provide clarification and more details.
- The Board had been partied to reviewing and commenting on a variety of new government policies, which Officers had brought before the Board. Examples this year include: Changes to Right to Buy policy and Welfare reform and Housing Benefit changes.
- The Board Members had reviewed and approved the council's Welfare Reform Strategy and approved other practical measures that were being put forward

such as the Transfer Removal Grant policy and leaflet that helps tenants move to smaller properties that still meet their needs.

- Thanks to Board Members and the Tenants' Forum who came together to help with the design and content of the Annual Report.

Thanks was given to the other Board Members for all their work over the past year as well as to the Council Officer's for their hard work and unbiased commitment to the board and those Councillors who come along to board meetings and add their valued input.

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Chairman's report.

## 5. The Year ahead for Housing Services

The Health and Housing Manager gave a verbal update outlining the new issues facing the Board for the coming year. These included the following:

- Development Projects – Good progress had been made with all development projects including Phase One and Creechbarrow Road. The new development team was now in place. The Council was looking at other site for future developments. There were currently four Phase One sites but we may lose one. The relationship between the Council and the development partnership with Knightstone Housing was good and they were challenging each other with their development project processes.
- Welfare Reform – This was the other biggest challenge for the Housing Service. The Council had made good preparation for this including knowing who would be affected. These affects had now started to kick in but they impact would increase.
- Housing Issues – There were new budgets for property extensions. The Council would be looking at completing four extensions per year. The Council was currently investigating potential extensions on housing stock.
- Sustainability Grant – new grant available for sustainability developments. The Council needed to improve on the current level of stock data to enable a baseline figure before making any improvements. Council planning to engage communities and tenants to advise them on the things that they were able to do.
- Housing Property Services – There was an increase in the Housing Services Capital Programmes over the next year. The procurement process was under way for these contracts.
- Performance – The Council would be continually reviewing the performance of all areas of the Housing Services Department. It was believed that the department had performed well with some of the easier KPI's over the last 12 months but the next challenge was to sustain over the longer term and address some of the harder targets. Generally, good progress had been made. There were areas that would require long term effort in order to bring them up to standard.
- Tenancy Policy – This would run alongside the Council's Business Plan. This had unfortunately not got off the ground as planned in the last year. This was due to the busy schedule of the officers involved. Officers were hoping to make ground on this in coming months.

- Right to Buy – The last 12 months for Right to Buy had been very busy. The number of applicants had not slowed and continuously increased over the period. More than 30 properties sold, this would provide additional receipts towards new builds. Despite the high number of successful applications still several application fail for various reasons. There maybe a future move to reduce the eligibility from five year to three years.
- Leasehold – There currently had not been any continuity with this service but the programme was still in place through ongoing recruitment.
- Supported Housing – The Council was tracking the progress of funding reduction. Currently, a procurement exercise was in place for the contract of the support service. Also work on the Council's Extra Care Schemes.
- Business Plan Review – This would be continually reviewed. The Council would be starting to think about this in September.
- IT Services – In regards to the replacement IT system known as COSY system. There had been developed a programme of works planned for the next couple years as well as many other areas relating to Housing Management system, also the asset management system.

The officer thanked the Board Members for their support and work over the last year.

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

- Members requested an update on Downsizing.
- What pressure was the Council under to convert two bedroom properties into one bedroom properties to cope with the increase in demand?  
*The Council was not actively looking into this option at the moment. The Council was currently investigating and looking into the merits and issues of one bedroom properties as well as investigating possibilities around bedsit option on new developments.*
- What's the service change?  
*This would be included in the Housing Newsletters both communal service and grounds maintenance service changes. Owner occupiers pay through Council Tax. The budget controlling programme of works for housing hadn't been cut. This was the service as previous year. This would be included in the Newsletter.*
- General Grounds Maintenance work; there was a thorny bush requiring maintenance. Do I cut it myself or continue to report it? Stinging nettles over taking area around stream in Outer Circle. Could someone come and cut them.  
*These grounds maintenance issues needed to be reported either to Estate Officer or directly to Health and Housing Manager or Housing Services Lead.*
- Does the Council know what our demographic dominance was through tenant information? Was it predominantly elderly? Also some other local authorities were building and selling their new builds.  
*The Council continually completes status surveys, which provides plenty of information for demographic but work continues on Equality and Diversity information. Through the Homefinder Somerset website, the Council had access to tenant's needs and desires.  
The Council had increased the number of one bed but there was currently a general coverage of housing types on the development.  
Current demands cover types and areas of houses within Taunton Deane.*
- Could certain types of properties be changed to another type of property?

*The need around Sheltered Schemes had changed. The Council had done this in the past but it's something the Council would need to look into i.e. de-commissioning housing schemes.*

- Would the Council be planning to build bungalows within the new developments?

*The Council had decided to go with Flats rather than Bungalows.*

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Officer's report.

## **6. Creechbarrow Road Development Project Update**

The Health and Housing Manager gave a verbal update outlining the new issues facing the Board for the coming year. These included the following:

- Consultation Events held last week were a success.
- There was wide ranging support for the development scheme.
- The Council had been refining the details of the development scheme.
- The officers were putting together feedback from the consultation events.
- There were three developments options presented to the Public, Staff and Councillors at the events.
- The Officers were combining all three options to make a hybrid design.
- The general preferences raised during the consultation event were for traditional looking properties rather than contemporary.
- The planning application moved a little from May. The Council Officer had met with the Knightstone Internal Board this week for approval of the development.
- The Council is moving forward on the consultation for the Community Hub. The Community Development Officer for Halcon would be leading on this but the deadline had been relaxed.
- The Council need to confirm the use of the Community Hub building. This would include the development on the first floor into more flats.
- Support for Tenants and Residents affected was gathering speed and the support would individually tailored for each household.
- The officers would arrange a meeting or post design to the Members to discuss their thoughts on the combined preference design for the development prior to the planning application.
- A more detailed report would be coming to the Board prior to Full Council in July.

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

- Would the house design for the Housing Association houses be different to those of the Council?  
*It would be cost effective for the design of the all the houses to be the same including the layout inside. Knightstone Housing had at least 50 individual housing designs. The Council would be looking at the external design and appearance but no requirement for them all to be the same. This was being actively discussed at the moment.*
- Could 'The Link Centre' move to 'The Community Hub'?  
*This was to be discussed with Community Development and 'The Link Centre'.*
- It was felt that Flats above 'The Community Hub' would limit what evening activities could be run from the Hub.

*The new Community Hub would have a larger ground floor than The Link Centre currently.*

**Resolved** that the officer's report was noted.

**7. Election of Tenant Services Management Board Chair for 2013/14**

The Tenant Empowerment Manager requested for nominations of the position of Chair of Tenant Services Management Board for 2013/14.

**Resolved** that that **Mr Dustyn Etherington** be appointed Chair of the Tenant Services Management Board for the duration of 2013/14.

**8. Election of Tenant Services Management Board Vice Chair for 2013/14**

The Tenant Empowerment Manager requested for nominations of the position of Vice Chair of Tenant Services Management Board for 2013/14.

**Resolved** that that **Mrs Judith Hegarty** be appointed Vice Chair of the Tenant Services Management Board for the duration of 2013/14.

**9. AOB**

The next meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board would be on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013 at 6:00pm in The John Meikle Room at The Deane House.

Notification for Board Member nominations would be this time next year with the election taking place end of April. Tenants would get two weeks to vote.

(The meeting ended at 4.45pm)

## Declaration of Interests

### **Tenant Services Management Board**

- Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Tenants;
  - Councillor S Brooks
  - Mrs J Bunn
  - Mrs E Drage
  - Mr M Edwards
  - Mr D Etherington
  - Mr D Galpin
  - Mrs J Hegarty
  - Mr K Hellier
  - Mr R Middleton
  - Mrs T Urquhart
  
- Member of Somerset County Council – Councillor Brooks
  
- Family member a Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Tenant;
  - Councillor Bowrah
  - Councillor Brooks

# Taunton Deane Borough Council

## Tenant Services Management Board 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013

### Information Report – Welfare Reform Project Officer Activities

#### Report of the Housing Manager Lettings – Paul Hadley and Welfare Reform Project Officer Michaela Mullen

(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 work currently being undertaken by the Welfare Reform Project Officer (WRPO).

The report will outline what progress Housing Services has made in responding to the implications of the Welfare Reform changes.

#### 2.0 Background

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 came into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 bringing changes to the welfare benefit system that will have an impact on our tenants who are of working age and claim Benefits. In response to the implementation of the Welfare Reform Act, a Project Officer was appointed in December 2012. The officer is responsible for providing support and assistance to our tenants who are affected by the changes.

The 4 main changes are:

- Under occupation (bedroom tax);
- Benefits cap;
- Non dependant deductions; and
- Universal credits.

#### 3.0 Welfare Reform Project Officer Objectives

Following the development of the Welfare Reform Strategy and Action Plan (a copy is available on request) a number of objectives were given to the WRPO:

The objectives are:

- Improve the information that we hold about our tenants to enable us to provide them with appropriate advice and support;
- Ensure tenants are claiming all benefits they are entitled to;
- Improve money management skills;
- Help tenants resolve any debt problems they may have;

- Enhance tenant access to bank accounts which allow payment of bills by direct debit;
- Help improve tenant access to low cost credit and opportunities for saving;
- Enhance tenant access to the internet;
- Help in achieving affordable warmth for tenants;
- Assist tenants in moving to more affordable accommodation which better meets their household needs; and
- Invest in community development to improve opportunities for employment and skills for tenants.

#### **4.0 Results achieved to date**

- Articles published in both Tenants' Talk and Deane Housing News. Additional information/ articles will be included in future editions of these newsletters
- All affected tenants received correspondence from Housing Services in relation to the benefit changes
- The Tenants' Forum held an Open Day event in Taunton for all affected tenants
- 380 visits completed with affected tenants
- 152 of the affected tenants have stated they intend to remain in their current home and will ensure they pay their weekly rent
- 112 tenants were not at home for visit, 2<sup>nd</sup> visit required
- 61 tenants wish to downsize to a smaller property
- 15 tenants have completed moves to a smaller property
- 26 affected tenants are in receipt of Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP)

#### **5.0 Recommendation**

It is recommended the Tenant Services Management Board note this information report.

#### **Contact officers:**

Paul Hadley, Housing Manager - Lettings 01823 356334  
Email: [p.hadley@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:p.hadley@tauntondeane.gov.uk)

Michaela Mullen, Welfare Reform Project Officer 01823 356334  
Email: [m.mullen@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:m.mullen@tauntondeane.gov.uk)

# Summary notes for TSMB 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013

## Health and Housing Quarter 4 / Outturn performance

### Overview & summary

Section	No. of measures	 Green	 Amber	 Red	N/A	Trend (from last quarter)
1) Managing Finances Housing	6	66% (4)	17% (1)	0% (0)	17% (1)	↓
2) Service Delivery – Satisfaction	9	78% (7)	11% (1)	11% (1)		↔
3) Service Delivery – Decent Homes	3	33% (1)	0% (0)	67% (2)		↔
4) Service Delivery – Manage Housing Stock	15	53% (8)	0% (0)	27% (4)	20% (3)	↑
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>61% (20)</b>	<b>6% (2)</b>	<b>21% (7)</b>	<b>12% (4)</b>	

<b>Movement since Q3</b>		<b>+7%</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>-3 %</b>	<b>-1%</b>
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### 7 RED ISSUES

Planned actions are off course.

- **Housing Services – Satisfaction Views Taken into Account.** The results are taken from our Status Survey which is completed every two years. The result will not change until the survey is re-run in 2013 (new results available Q1 2013-14. 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 for Decent Homes are off course.** Average SAP (energy efficiency) rating. Sustainable energy fund established in the business plan. New person in post to lead on retrofit project and has started to look at SAP ratings data. % dwellings without Gas Safety Certificate was 99.5% against 100% target, this position has improved.
- **Housing Services Diversity Information.** We hold 53.39% of diversity information which has increased by 2.39% but we have increased our target from 58% to 90%.
- **2 Repairs and Maintenance measures relating to completion on time.** Last quarter three measures were red so this is already showing some improvement. The backlog of job completions have been dealt with and a slight improvement has been achieved since last quarter. We will now concentrate on jobs not completed in target time. Ongoing dialogue with DLO to address capacity issues in workforce.
- **Lettings** average re-let time has increased this quarter to 26.93 days (our target is 21). In Q4 we had 69 minor voids 18 of these became Void pre- Christmas and approximately half were not started until after the Christmas closedown of one

week. This Christmas closedown period has had a negative effect on overall days turnaround and these days cannot be discounted even though they are valid holidays.

## 2 AMBER ALERTS 😞

Some uncertainty in meeting planned actions

- **Estate Management.** 97.71% Arrears are higher than usual due to payments not being posted due to closedown (£356k is arrears figure at 10<sup>th</sup> April).
- **Repairs and Maintenance.** 96.7% of tenants are satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service, our target is 98%

## 20 ON TRACK 😊

Planned actions are on course

- **Housing Managing Finances** – 4 measures are better than target.
- **Housing Overall Satisfaction** – 90% satisfaction, top quartile achieved.
- **Lettings Team Measures** – 7 measures are better than target.
- **Gas Servicing** satisfaction measure better than target.
- **Decent Homes** this measure is on track.
- **Three Community Development** measures are on track.
- **Supported Housing Measures** – 2 measures are better than target.
- **Repairs and maintenance** – 89.03% of non urgent repairs are complete within priority time of 28 days. Target is 85%

## 4 MEASURES UNDER DEVELOPMENT, NOT REPORTED OR WITHOUT ALERTS

- One finance measures were not reported as the data was not available due to end of year, this is the same across the council.
- 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).

# Health & Housing Services Scorecard Q4 2012/13

## Housing HRA

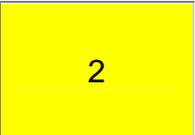
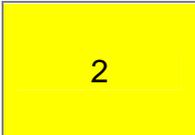
### KEY TO ALERTS

	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 <sup>st</sup> Quartile		2 <sup>nd</sup> Quartile
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quartile		4 <sup>th</sup> 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
<b>1. Housing Revenue Account</b> Overall expenditure against budget		Finance data not available	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>2. Income Team</b> Former tenant arrears as a % of annual rent debit Target = 5%		0.51%		30	8		133	30
<b>3. Income Team</b> Rent written off as a % of annual rent roll Target = 0.70%		0.27%		31	17		146	61
<b>4. Income Team</b> % of rent lost through dwellings being vacant Target = 2%		0.92%		37	16		165	77

<p><b>5. Estate Management Team</b> Rent collected as a % of rent owed including arrears b/f Target = 98.3%</p>		<p>97.71 The arrears figure used of year end includes the rent debt for the week, which the tenants have until the end of the week to pay. It does not include any cash postings from the closedown Wed 27 March 2013 (3 working days). The arrears figure on Wednesday 10 April 2013 was £356,146.29.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<p><b>6. Estate Management Team</b> Rent collected as a % of rent owed excluding arrears b/f Target = 98.3%</p>		<p>101.12% Arrears case numbers End Q1 1956 End Q2 2002 End Q3 2202 End Q4 1530</p>	1	36	5	1	146	14

## 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
<b>1. Housing Services</b> Tenants' satisfaction with landlord services overall Target = Top quartile performance status survey <i>Result from 2011 Status Survey, next survey planned 2013</i>		Top quartile performance achieved - 90%	1 (as at 2011/12)	21	1	2 (as at 2011/12)	188	61
<b>2. Housing Services</b> % 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>		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
<b>3. Lettings Team</b> % 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%		93%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>4. Lettings Team</b> % of new tenants satisfied with the allocations and letting process Target = 86%		93%	3	10	7	3	64	42

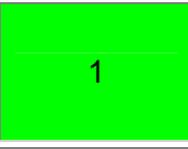
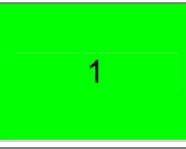
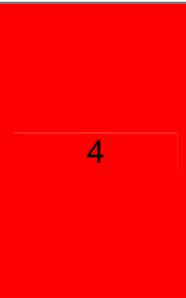
<b>5. Lettings Team</b> % of new tenants satisfied with the lettable standard of property Target = 86%		93%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>6. Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b> % of tenants satisfied with the most recent repair Target = 98%		96.7% We recognise that we are not hitting our target. We are analysing the survey information in order to be able to identify the issues more effectively and challenge our contractors on performance.	2	27	11	1	121	31
<b>7. Supported Housing</b> % 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
<b>8. Supported Housing</b> % of tenants satisfied with the Extra Care Housing service Target = 86%		93% surveys now sent quarterly	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>9. Satisfaction of Gas Servicing</b> % of tenants satisfied with the Gas Service procedure Target = 90%		100% based on the 102 surveys returned in Feb and March.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

### 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
<b>1. Asset Management</b> % of homes that fail to meet the Decent Homes standard Target = 0.5%		0.08%	2	22	10	3	141	84
<b>2. Asset Management</b> Average SAP (energy efficiency) rating of housing stock Target = 70		66.08 There is now an officer in post who will be working on projects to improve this performance	3 (as at 2011/12)	36	24	4 (as at 2011/12)	233	197
<b>3. Asset Management</b> % of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate Target = 100%		99.4% 26 properties out of 4443 did not have their certificate within date for various reasons. All 26 properties now have valid certificates.	4	30	25	4	199	175

#### 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
<b>1. Lettings Team</b> % of closed ASB cases that were resolved Target = 66%		94.12%	2	31	10	2	157	62
<b>2. Lettings Team</b> Average re-let time (calendar days) Target = 21 days		26.93 days In Q4 we had 69 minor voids 18 of these became Void pre-Christmas and approximately half were not started until after the Christmas closedown of one week. This Christmas closedown period has had a negative effect on overall days turnaround and these days cannot be discounted even though they are valid holidays.	2	31	14	3	161	86
<b>3. Lettings Team</b> % 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%		0.5%	3	26	17	3	133	22

<b>4. Lettings Team</b> % of dwellings that are vacant and available to let Target = 0.5%		0%		26	1		136	1
<b>5. Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b> % of properties re-let that meet lettable standard (20% sample) Target = 100%		Under development						
<b>6. Lettings Team</b> % of properties accepted on first offer Target = 75%		78.98%		17	4		76	15
<b>7. Housing Services</b> % of tenants on whom the landlord holds diversity information Target = 90%		53.39% This is off target. The target has also been increased further to 90% to recognise what we would like to achieve.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>8. Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b> 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						
<b>9. Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b> % of repairs completed on first visit Target = TBC		Under development						
<b>10. Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b> Completion of repairs within priority target times: Emergency (within 24 hours) Target =98%		91.4% Following an issue regarding internal processes that has hindered our performance management of contractors, the backlog		39	34		220	203

		of job completions has now been dealt with and a slight improvement has been achieved on last quarter. We can now concentrate on addressing jobs not completed within their priority target times. Ongoing dialogue with DLO to address capacity issues in workforce.						
<b>11. Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b> Completion of repairs within priority target times: Urgent (within 3 working days) Target =94%		83.83% As above	4	39	36	4	209	198
<b>12. Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b> Completion of repairs within priority target times: Non Urgent (up to 28 days) Target =85%		89.03%	4	38	30	4	211	190
<b>13. Community Clean ups</b> Number of events held, broken down by area		One Community Clean up day held in Taunton North – St David’s Gardens, in partnership with Knightstone Housing Association.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>14. Tonnage removed</b> From clean ups, broken down by event		2.6 tonnes removed in the skip.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>15. Events supported</b> Number of events/activities put on or supported by the team, broken down by area		One Tenants’ Day One Welfare Reform event Regular breakfast clubs at two locations.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

# Taunton Deane Borough Council

## Housing Services Performance Information Jan – March 2013

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	Jan to March 2013	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%	101.12%		
Percentage of closed ASB cases, that were resolved.	66%	94.12%		
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%	93%		
Average time taken to re-let empty properties (calendar days).	21 days	26.93 days		
Percentage of new tenants satisfied with the lettable standard of the property.	86%	93%		
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.	98%	96.7%		
Completion of repairs within the target time of 24 hours.	98%	91.4%		
Completion of repairs within the target time of 3 days.	94%	83.83%		
Completion of repairs within the target time of up to 28 days.	85%	89.03%		

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](mailto:tenant.empowerment@tauntondeane.gov.uk)

# Taunton Deane Borough Council

## Tenant Services Management Board – 21st May 2013

### Taunton Deane Borough Council 2013 Resident Satisfaction Survey – Survey Report

Report of – Steven Clarke Tenant Services Development Officer

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

#### 1. Executive Summary

In January 2013 Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) Housing Services commissioned Feedback Services to carry out a resident satisfaction survey.

The TSMB is requested to consider this report and at their next meeting in June 2013 are requested to comment on the survey findings as well as consider using the findings to trigger a service area improvement review/s.

Please note that the full survey will be distributed at the May 2013 TSMB meeting.

#### 2. Background

STAR (Survey of Tenants and Residents) was launched in July 2011. It provides social housing landlords with the essential means of discovering how satisfied tenants and residents are with the services provided by them and also allows landlords to benchmark satisfaction results with each other.

#### 2. Responding to the survey findings

The aim of this report and survey is to allow the TSMB to analyse the results and highlight areas of the service that they would wish to review at the June 2013 TSMB meeting. The full survey report will be distributed at the May 2013 meeting.

#### 3. Recommendation

Due to the amount information contained in the survey report, it is requested that the TSMB allow themselves time to digest the information contained within and set aside a period of time at their next meeting in June 2013 for commenting on the findings, with a view to considering which service areas they would recommend to be reviewed.

#### Contact officer:

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# Taunton Deane Borough Council

## Tenant Services Management Board – 21st May 2013

### Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day 2013 Feedback

**Report of – Steven Clarke Tenant Services Development Officer**

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

#### 1. Executive Summary

This report highlights the feedback received from tenants and leaseholders following the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day that was held at the Somerset County Cricket Ground on the 15th April 2013.

The feedback, which is detailed in Appendix 1, highlights the most popular stands visited from those who responded and their opinion of the event.

#### 1.0 Background

The third Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day was held at the Somerset County Cricket Ground on the 15th April 2013 between 10am and 5pm. 129 people attended the open day, an increase from the 2012 event (123 attendees) and 2011 event (100 attendees).

18 stalls were available including various departments of Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) and representatives from external organisations who were able to answer questions on a wide variety of housing related issues and other matters.

A questionnaire was circulated in order to seek the views of those attending the event, the results of which are contained in Appendix 1.

#### 2.0 Prize Draw

- 1<sup>st</sup> Prize = Oxford Place
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize = Monmouth Road
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize = Holway Road

### **3.0 Recommendations**

It is recommended the Tenant Services Management Board:

- Receive and note this report and analysis of feedback contained in Appendix 1
- Provide feedback on their experiences of the event
- Provide ideas on how the event can be improved, especially in terms of:
  - Whether to use the same venue
  - Hold the event over a longer or shorter time period
  - Whether there are anyother exhibitors to invite, inside or outside of TDBC
  - How to attract more tenants and leaseholders to the event
  - Whether to hold the event on a different day

### **Contact officer**

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## Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day 15<sup>th</sup> April 2013

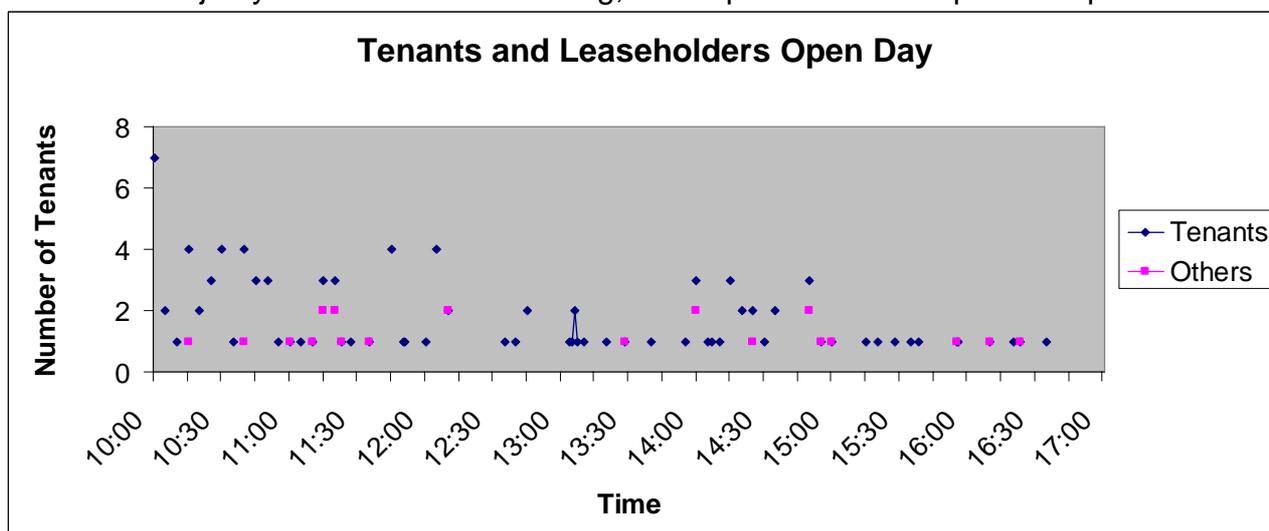
### 1.0 Introduction

All attendees were given feedback sheets to make comments and suggestions about the day. 28 feedback sheets have been returned and the replies are analysed below.

The organisations attending the event were:

ALCHO	TDBC Revenue and Benefits
TDBC Repairs team	Leaseholders Forum
TDBC Housing Property Services	TDBC Estate Management
Age UK	TDBC Lettings/ASB Team
TDBC Environmental Health	Avon & Somerset Police
TDBC Development team	Tenants' Forum
TDBC Deane Helpline	Somerset Savings and Loan
Citizens Advice Bureau	TDBC Supported Housing
Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service	
TDBC Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership	

The chart below shows the break down of the time when people attended the event. It shows the majority attended in the morning, with a peak between 2pm and 3pm.



## 2.0 How tenants and leaseholders learnt of the event:

100% of tenants attended as a result of receiving an invitation letter.

## 3.0 Whether tenants and leaseholders thought there were enough departments at the event:

No attendees answered this question on the feedback form.

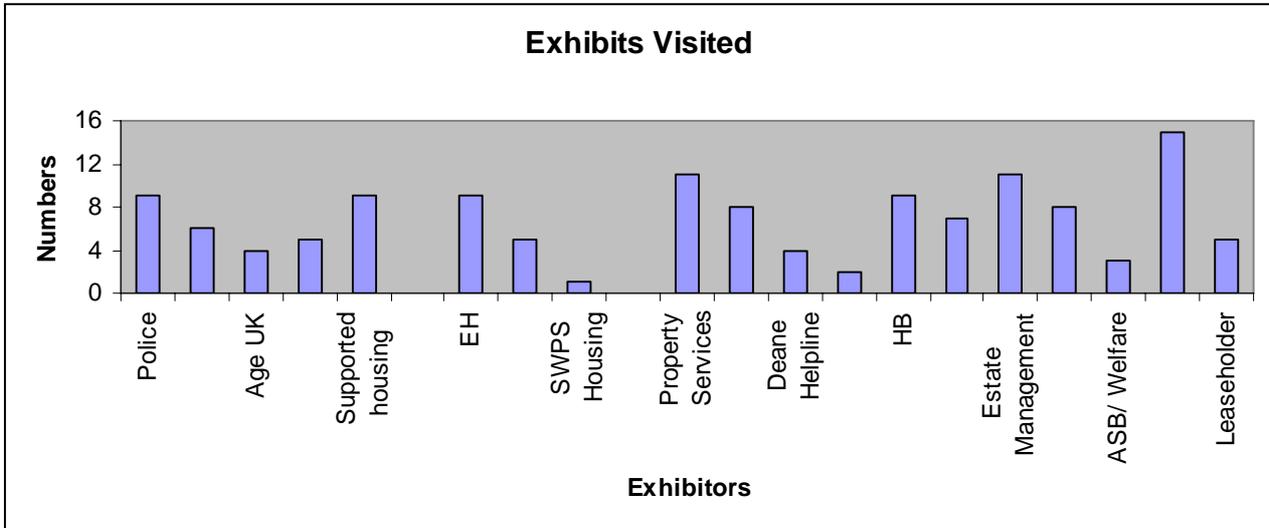
## 4.0 Exhibitors visited on the day:

The table and chart below show the number of visitors to each of the exhibitor's stalls.

<b>Exhibitor</b>	<b>Visitor numbers</b>
Police	9
Devon & Somerset Fire Service	6
Age UK	4
Somerset Savings and Loan	5
Supported Housing	9
Citizens Advice Bureau	0
Environmental Health	9
Centre for sustainable energy**	5
Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership	1
Housing Property Services	11
ALCHO	8
Deane Helpline	4
Tenants' Forum	2
Revenue and Benefits	9
Development team	7
Estate Management	11
Lettings	8
ASB/ Welfare Reform	3
Repairs	15
Leaseholders	5

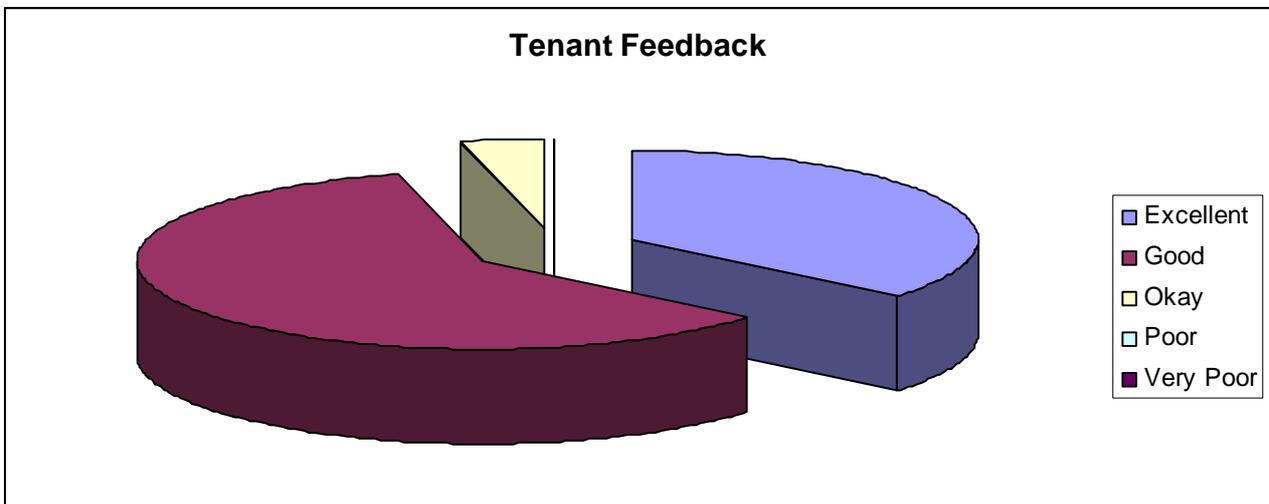
\*\*Please note that the Centre for sustainable energy did not attend the event

**Chart 2**



(The above information is only from the feedback sheets returned and not from all attendees to the event)

### 5.0 Feedback from attendees



24 visitors rated the open day as excellent or good, with no respondents stating poor or very poor.

### 6.0 Suggestions from attendees on how to improve the event in the future:

No attendees answered this question on the feedback form.

### **7.0 Feedback on TSMB Annual General Meeting:**

8 visitors who attended the TSMB AGM rated it as either very informative or informative.

### **8.0 Comments from exhibitors at the event**

- The majority thought the event went well, but were disappointed by the lack of tenants and leaseholders attending.
- A number of exhibitors felt better arrangements could have been made for refreshments for visitors attending the event.
- A more enclosed area, away from the exhibitors, to eat lunch would have been better.
- Changing the event to another day in the week. Monday tends to be the busiest day of the week for many organisations and TDBC departments.
- Some suggested remaining open later into the evening.

**Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on Tuesday 21 May 2013 at 6pm in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House Taunton.**

**Present:** Mr Dustyn Etherington (Chairman),  
Mrs Judith Hegarty (Vice-Chairman),  
Mrs J Bunn, Mrs E Drage, Mr M Edwards, Mr D Galpin, Mr I Gould, Mr K Hellier, Mrs T Urquhart, Councillor Bowrah and Councillor Brooks.

**Officers:** Phil Webb (Housing Manager; Property Services), Steven Clarke (Tenant Services Development Officer), Stephen Boland (Housing Services Lead), James Barra (Health and Housing Manager), Paul Hadley (Housing Manager), Norah Day (Housing Estate Manager), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), Michaela Mullen (Welfare Reform Project Officer), and Andrew Randell (Corporate Support Officer).

**Others:** Councillor F Smith.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

**1. Apologies**

No apologies received.

**2. Halcon One Team**

Police Sergeant Andy Murphy gave a verbal report and presentation regarding the new Halcon One Team.

The problems in the area were detailed. Historically there were 1800 crimes per year in the area in comparison with an area such as Galmington which had 300. Parts of Halcon were in the top 4% of deprived neighbourhoods in the country.

Since the project there had been a 27.9% reduction in overall crime with a 45.5% reduction in youth crime victims. As a result of the project there was a better relationship with the residents of Halcon, with problems on the estate being collated and work being linked to The Troubles Families initiative.

The overall aim was of the Halcon one Team was for it to lessen the demand that would be put on the police and the government resources.

Issues with residents of the estate not being able to obtain employment was discussed, it emerged that there were 12 people of the estate who were taking up voluntary roles (Link Power) which through the project were adding to their CV's, which as a consequence they had improved employment prospects.

In reference to the Link centre in Halcon it was recognised that the ability to discuss confidential matters without members of the public overhearing should be addressed.

It was requested that all Councillors were made aware of the project to change the impression that they have of the Halcon estate.

The combined rent arrears of residents on the Halcon Estate stood at £90k

During the discussion of this item, board members made the following comments -  
(Responses shown in italics)

- Congratulations should be given to the Housing Officers dealing with anti-social behaviour and issuing the ASBOs (Anti-Social Behaviour Orders). Please pass this on.

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Police Sergeant's presentation.

### 3. **Welfare Reform Update**

Considered the report previously circulated, concerning The Welfare Reform update with details of work currently being undertaken by the Welfare Reform Project Officer (WRPO). It outlines what progress Housing Services had made in responding to the implications of the Welfare Reform changes.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 came into force bringing changes to the welfare benefit system that would impact on our tenants who were of working age and claim benefits. In response to the implementation of the Welfare Reform Act, a Project Officer was appointed. The officer is responsible for providing support and assistance to our tenants who are affected by the changes.

The 4 main changes are:

- Under occupation (bedroom tax);
- Benefits cap;
- Non dependant deductions; and
- Universal credits.

Following the development of the Welfare Reform Strategy and Action Plan a number of objectives were given to the WRPO. The objectives were as follows:

- Improve the information that we hold about our tenants to enable us to provide them with appropriate advice and support;
- Ensure tenants were claiming all benefits they were entitled to;
- Improve money management skills;
- Help tenants resolve any debt problems;
- Enhance tenant access to bank accounts, which allow payment of bills by direct debit;
- Help improve tenant access to low cost credit and opportunities for saving;
- Enhance tenant access to the internet;
- Invest in community development to improve opportunities for employment and skills for tenants.

Some of results achieved to date were as follows:

- The Tenants' Forum held an Open Day event in Taunton for all affected tenants
- 380 visits completed with affected tenants
- 152 of the affected tenants had stated they intend to remain in their current home and would ensure they pay their weekly rent

- 112 tenants were not at home for visit, 2<sup>nd</sup> visit required
- 61 tenants wish to downsize to a smaller property
- 15 tenants had completed moves to a smaller property
- 26 affected tenants were in receipt of Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP)

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

- A more detailed analysis was requested in relation to correlation in rent arrears with regard to the impact of changes in the benefit system.

**Resolved** that the:

1. Board noted the Officer's report.
2. Requested an update report to be presented to the Board in three months time. This to include comparisons with other landlords and local authorities as well as the Council's performance against the Council's Business Plan.

#### **4. Performance Indicators Quarter Four 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 Four of 2012-13. The tables detailed the overall KPI performance of Quarter Four and the Top Ten Quarter Four Performance Indicators selected by the Tenant Services Management Board during Quarter One performance report.

The Quarter Four 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 Members that there was an increase in the number of green KPI (those on target) to 61%, as well as decrease in number of red KPI (those off target) to 21% and the number of amber KPI's had remained the same.

The Housing Scorecard Summary table continues to be displayed to tenants and the public through the following media outlets

- Tenants' Newsletter
- TDBC Website

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

- The position had not changed significantly since the previous report with the outturn financial scorecard due at the next meeting.
- The lettings turnaround time slipping back over the last quarter was discussed.
- Could the green ink be lightened for the next report so that it could be read.
- Why other councils were doing better and the possibility of a review done to assess this?
- Questioning took place in relation to the DLO with the possibility looked into that it was understaffed. Taking on Apprentices was suggested as a solution.

**Resolved** that the:

- 1 Board noted the Officer's report.
- 2 Request that Councillor Bowrah reviews the performance indicators and at the next meeting of the TSMB highlights 5 or 6 areas where improvements should be made and these to be benchmarked and/or investigated.

## **5. STAR Survey**

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the commissioned resident satisfaction survey done by Feedback Services.

STAR (Survey of Tenants and Residents) was launched in July 2011. It provides social housing landlords with the essential means of discovering how satisfied tenants and residents were with the services provided by them and also allows landlords to benchmark satisfaction results with each other.

The full survey report was distributed at the meeting.

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

- Could the survey be broken down to each area so that greater detail could be provided;  
*This wasn't done so that the questionnaire remained anonymous.*
- 1500 Tenants responded making up around 25% of the authority's social housing tenants.

**Resolved** that the:

1. Board noted the Officer's Report
2. Tenant Services Management Board to read the survey and highlight any areas that should be investigated with a view to identifying improvements. Comments to be returned in the self addressed envelopes provided by the 10<sup>th</sup> June.

## **6. Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day Feedback.**

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the feedback received from tenants and leaseholders following the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day that was held at the Somerset County Cricket Ground on the 15th April 2013.

The third Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day was held at the Somerset County Cricket Ground on the 15th April 2013 between 10am and 5pm. 129 people attended the open day, an increase from the 2012 event.

18 stalls were available including various departments of Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) and representatives from external organisations who were able to answer questions on a wide variety of housing related issues and other matters.

The Prize Draw was drawn and results were 1<sup>st</sup> Prize to Oxford Place, 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize to Monmouth Road and 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize to Holway Road.

Overall the feeling was that it was informative and it was rated by the Tenants and Leaseholders as either a very good or excellent event.

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

- Requested in addition to Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day that two additional half-day events; One at Halcon and One at Priorswood. Consideration of transport to be provided to and from the event, along with a separate event to be considered at Wellington for their tenants.
- Marketing and advertisement of Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day; every tenant would receive a letter informing them of the Open Day. Additional advertisement on local radio was recommended.
- Requested that changing the day of the open day to a Saturday as opposed to a weekday to allow for a greater number of people to attend would be looked at.

**Resolved** that the:

1. Board noted the Officer's report.
2. The Comments and suggestions provided by the Board Members above be noted.

## **7. Tenant Central Training.**

The Tenant Empowerment Manager gave a verbal update detailing the following training for Tenants which was being run by TPAS.

The course would be held on 12 June and would be free to tenants and cost £100 to members of staff. It was requested that the board send representatives to the training.

**Resolved** that the following Members of the Board had put their names forward:

1. Kevin Hellier
2. Tammy Urquhart
3. Councillor Steve Brooks
4. Ian Gould
5. Judith Hegarty (as back up)

## **8. Community Reporters Training.**

The Tenant Empowerment Manager gave a verbal update detailing training for Tenants.

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Officer's Report

## **9. TPAS Annual Conference.**

The Tenant Empowerment Manager gave a verbal update detailing the TPAS Annual Conference which will be held in September.

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Officer's Report

**10. Apologies for June 2013 Meeting.**

Councillor Brooks gave his apologies for the TSMB meeting to be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2013

(The meeting ended at 8.30pm)