

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 14 September 2015 at 18:00.

Agenda

- 1 Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 20 August 2015 (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 Right To Buy Social Mobility Fund
Reporting Officers: Samantha Muckett
Jo Humble
- 6 The Weavers Arms Development Update
Reporting Officer: Caroline White
- 7 Photovoltaic (PV) solar Panels Scheme Update
Reporting Officer: Caroline White
- 8 External Wall Insulation Scheme Update
Reporting Officer: Caroline White
- 9 Extra Care Housing Service Review Project (verbal update)
Reporting Officer: Jan Errington
- 10 Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2012 - 2042 Review
Reporting Officer: James Barra

21 October 2015

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.

Except at meetings of Full Council, where public participation will be restricted to Public Question Time only, 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.

Full Council, Executive, Committees and Task and Finish Review agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk



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



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

For further information about the meeting, please contact the Corporate Support Unit on 01823 356414 or email r.bryant@tauntondeane.gov.uk

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Tenant Services Management Board Members:-

Mr A Akhigbemen

Councillor C Appleby

Mr R Balman

Councillor R Bowrah, BEM

Mrs J Bunn

Ms M Davis

Mr D Galpin

Mrs J Hegarty

Mr K Hellier

Mr I Hussey

Mr R Middleton

Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on Thursday, 20 August 2015 at 6pm in JMR, Taunton.

Present: Mr R Balman (Chairman)
Ms M Davis (Vice-Chair)
Mrs J Bunn, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr I Hussey, Mr D Galpin, Mr R Middleton,
Councillor Bowrah

Officers: Terry May (Assistant Director - Property & Development), Stephen Boland (Housing Services Lead – Housing Communities) Lucy Clothier (Accountant) Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), Phil Webb (Property Services Manager) and Michelle Brooks (Democratic Services Officer).

Others: Mr Dustyn Etherington

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

1. Apologies

Mr A Akhigbemen, Mr K Hellier, Mr M Edwards

2. Minutes of TSMB 23 July 2015

All agreed, signed by Chair.

3. Public Question Time

Comment and questions – Mr Dustyn Etherington:

With regard to the budget outlined by the Government, pay to stay for higher earning tenants in social housing. £30,000 average wage, isn't a high wage. This will affect many, with the average rent of £400 to increase to a market rent of £800, a lot of money to find. This could affect self-employed, may drive people to buy and take on a mortgage rather than rent, £150,000 mortgage will be cheaper than £800 rent. How will this affect HRA? How can HRA spend all receipts in 3 years? If not able to spend money, does this go to the Government and does this mean the Council loses it? £30,000 too low an amount, feels that this would change estates as there would be no social mix. Social mix gives aspirations to people, without this the estates could end up like ghettos.

Resolved that the Board note the comments.

4. Housing Revenue Account Financial Monitoring Quarter 1 2015/16

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the budget for 2015/16. Budget monitoring report for Quarter 1, with a new format for the report. Key issues:

HRA revenue - Income:

- HRA – underspend of £12k
- Income - overall budget is £26.9 million, mostly dwelling rents. Dwelling rents over recovery of £138K (expected).
- Additional over recovery of £17K service area and 19K supporting people.
- Overall = £177k over recovery.

HRA - Expenditure

- Housing management agency staff caused over spend of £103K, looking how to manage this.
- Overspend of £38k planned maintenance, additional asbestos testing and two contracts slipped back (maintenance and electrical testing contract).
- Other expenditure - communal areas, higher spend than last year, linked to planned maintenance and central costs all OK.

Capital

- £23.4 million overall approved budget, complete budget approved. Over the next few months work will be done to profile.

Three areas of reporting; major works, major internal items, other bits (external garages, meeting halls, environmental improvements, sustainable energy)

- Major Works – budget £9.2 million
- Major internal items, Contracts in place – kitchens, bathrooms, air source heat pumps, contracts coming into place, contracts started.
- Other works – on target, environmental improvements and extensions, because so large will go into next financial year
- Development – all schemes due to complete on financially on target.
- Expected to spend - £17.9 this year and £5.4 following year.

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

- Concerned Agency staff employed, long term?

Basically covering posts, opportune moment because of future transformation, with variable market rates, very difficult to attract employees. The temporary posts are to help cope with change and the initial impact, will see how it is affecting us in the service. This will help make firmer decisions, a temporary adjustment until we see what landscape will look like.

- Has anything been done on the figures, what is the actual income actually going to get over the next 4 years
Initial figures presently, waiting for full details but expect significant change with a lot of work to plan fully, not sure of the exact impact, but expecting it to be significant. More information will come from the Government in autumn - September/October, and then the information shared.

Resolved that:

1. The Board note the report.
2. Should anyone require a new format, speak with Lucy Clothier.

5. Performance Indicators Quarter 1 2015/16

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the key areas:

- Red or amber indicators relating to lettings - lettings of vacant properties. There is due to be a major review as the performance is poor. Imparticular tenant responses are at low satisfaction levels and expectations of new tenants are not being met.
- Accepting feedback from potential tenants – notice has been taken and the lettable standard is being reviewed. A new document, will be produced looking afresh and reviewing the process.
- Because of the poor state of property, once vacated, the neglect or damage, is expensive to repair. Temporary measures are being put into place to manage damage. Intention is to employ two members of staff to get alongside tenants known to cause damage. Then able to make early intervention, give support and in some cases maybe enforcement action will be needed.
- Internal audit – auditors to look at operating process, carry out assessment and provide findings. Indicators relate to lettings in 3-4 months' time, more information to come.
- Complaints – currently off course, but are within target and the parameters set. Senior management is raising the profile of dealing with complaints, expectations beyond target time will be improved upon.
- Income – within target, what the future will look like is uncertain. The risks are because of concerns of the changes from the Government.

- Rent arrears - primarily need to recover. There is no difference in previous years, and this always improves towards the end of the year.

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

- Empty properties – one in Staple Fitzpane that has been empty for 6 months, is this across the board, or a one off?
This is a one off. Sometimes have to enter into a legal process, and make available linked to parties. The legal processes in some areas of housing are frustrating but we have to set aside because the law requires it. As soon as the legal process concludes will re-let. Average 24 days to re-let time.
- Sheltered housing - believes this should not be on first floor.
Linked to next report, need to respond to the change and make decisions effectively making effective use of properties. Lots of information to take into account and review, maybe decommission is an option.
- Wellington project – is there still difficulty moving a client?
Oaken Ground, new build in Rockwell Green. Planning supported the application 2 weeks ago, out of 10 occupants, 8 have moved, 1 accepted, and the final occupant is still under discussion. Delicate situation, doing everything to bring about a satisfactory solution.

Resolved that: The Board note the report.

6. **Project Initiation Document – Review of Sheltered and Extra Care 2015**

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning properties:

880 sheltered housing units

90 extra care - Kilkenny, Lodge Close.

Review responding to external changes:

- Grant from County Council – A grant is received from County Council to fund, and resource sheltered and extra care tenants. County Council have changed specification and services, and reduced the amount of funding to provide those support services.
- Service specification is changing and need to respond. Need to make sure Assets (880 + 90) fit for purpose and make effective use of assets.
- Review of meeting needs of people started with Jan Emmington being the project manager,

- Assets – November 2015, received funding responses from tenants positive councillors approved funding for external expertise for review of assets.
- Sheltered housing service, further reports October/November. Details will be provided over coming months.
- Soundings from tenants, response is that they are pleased they are being involved comments on what we need to change and do differently, service delivery and funding arrangements.
- Further updates to be provided as findings collated and then to seek view on proposals from TSMB.

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

- What percentage of funding will the County Council take away? Do County Council expect the same service with less money?
Approximately £153,000. There has been a reduction every year. Rules have changed with service specification changed and the threshold for who qualifies.
- Will Standards go down?
No, have to look at the Business Plan, meeting the needs of the vulnerable is important. Housing will provide a report. Housing support officers still deliver some form of service, and engage with tenants, proposals later to TSMB.
- People in sheltered housing be kept up-to-date? Extra for facilities for being in sheltered housing, will this amount be going up?
- *Try not to pre-empt detail, this will all be in the report. County Council off setting costs, still need to meet needs of vulnerable people. Will produce a report so that TSMB know what is happening, tenants have received letters and been invited to meetings, and this will continue. Feedback is that they want to know detail. Implement by April 2016.*
- Big expenditure would be extra care?
One to one yes, more services on a care scheme, extra care is more complex.
- Sheltered housing officer, doubt should be there, not a lot of point.
Opinions may vary, some value sheltered housing officer. Many cases are complex, and a support plan will be jointly created. Actions agreed to be undertaken and reviewed. Some tenants have greater support needs, if taken away, their confidence goes and can feel less able to cope, and struggle living in general needs housing - people needs vary.
- As Part of property review, some sheltered housing may not fit the bill could change this change, lose a few?

Look towards future, with a more likely older, frailer population. More sheltered supported housing, not able to maintain their independence.

- Decommission sheltered housing? Are you careful who you put in upstairs apartments?
- *Yes, mindful of clash of lifestyles as aware this leads to problems. Decommissioning is not the only option. Mixed schemes has caused problems previously, not necessarily always worked. Sheltered housing need to, target the right audience and client group, need to provide right type of environment, with right support, as County can't afford nursing / residential care. Need to get this right to meet demand. More information in the coming months, interested in what TSMB have to say. Project started in July, receive more information over the coming months.*

Resolved that: The Board note the report.

9. Apprenticeship Management Scheme

Report went to the Board in January as part of Housing Revenue Account Business Plan review. This circulated report is the proposal:

Three year rolling programme with one application a year as below:

1st year – Business support

2nd year – Area teams

3rd year - Property services

The intention is to earn as the apprentices learn and complete a recognised qualification while attending day release at College. The qualification will be NVQ2 in the first year, and NVQ3 in the second year.

This be on a 2 year fixed term contract

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

- At the end of apprenticeship, guaranteed employment?
No, cannot guarantee employment, but the organisation will be in a position to look at the apprentice and the apprentice would be able to apply for posts. Gaining the experience and qualifications, while being paid is an advantage.
- What's the take up? Could be expensive for the applicant, bus fares etc.
Not sure, totally new and not done this before. Hope it will be attractive, will involve local college, job centre +, making sure lots know and will increase people putting themselves forward.

Resolved that: The Board recommend the report, all in favour – yes.

9. Tenants' and Leaseholders' Open Day

This outline work has been done and thanks to the Board and Forum for all of the support.

Changing to a local focus now instead of holding the open days at Somerset County Cricket Ground. Now these are to be held in and around local areas. These will be easier to get to and enable information to be taken away. This will provide two way advantage, people to speak with face to face and for officers to gain the opportunity to find out information.

The First Event is to be at Halcon:

Halcon – 9 September 2015, All Saints Church informal events from 10 am to 1 pm.

Other business:

Cllr Appleby is now on the TSMB (replacement for Cllr Federica Smith)

Tenancy fraud in next quarter be brought to board for discussion

(The meeting ended at 19.35pm)

Tenant Services Management Board

14th September 2015

Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund Home Ownership Cash Incentive Scheme - An update

Report of Jo Humble – Housing Enabling and Development Manager
(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Terry Beale)

Executive Summary

This report is a progress update following the detailed report presented to TSMB on 01st June 2015 regarding the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund and the grant funding secured by Taunton Deane Borough Council.

£300,000 has been secured through the bid and the administrative process and proposed methods of promotion to undertake a

1. Purpose of the report

To provide the Tenant Services Management Board (TSMB) with a progress update of the Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund 'Homeownership Cash Incentive' scheme to TDBC tenants with a Right to Buy Eligibility.

2. Background information

In February 2015 the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) offered the opportunity for any Stock Owning Local Authority to lead a bid for a Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund.

Partnership bids were encouraged to extend the scheme to tenants with a Preserved Right to Buy. Taunton Deane Borough Council led a successful bid in partnership with Magna West Somerset and West Somerset District Council.

The purpose of the Fund is to enable local authorities to provide a scheme for their eligible Right to Buy tenants to access a cash payment in the place of their Right to Buy discount on their current social property.

The cash payment must be used to help towards the purchase of a property on the open market. Local authorities will benefit by freeing up properties that can be allocated to new tenants. The grant can be used to buy a residential freehold or leasehold property anywhere in the United Kingdom. The property must be a suitable size to adequately house the tenant's family.

The grant cannot be used to buy the following types of property:-

- A mobile home, caravan or houseboat
- A property sold at auction
- A business
- An existing Council property eligible to be purchased under the Right to Buy scheme.
- Shared ownership or any other home ownership initiative

The scheme can be offered to all social tenants that are eligible for the Right to Buy discount, but the fund is specifically aimed at

- older tenants may wish to move to a different area to be closer to family or into more suitable accommodation;
- working age tenants may want to move closer to employment opportunities;
- tenants who pass the Right to Buy affordability test but are unable to raise a mortgage because of issues with the property in which they live

The bid submission gave the opportunity to include priority categories which will meet local needs; for example, by freeing up the type of properties where there is a local shortage. There is a recognised shortage of 1 bed accommodation within Taunton Deane therefore a prioritisation for those vacating 1 bed properties were included.

The funding must be spent by 31 March 2016.

3. The Proposal

On 26 March 2015 DCLG announced the bid submitted by Taunton Deane Borough Council in partnership with Magna West Somerset and West Somerset District Council had been successful. The bid was for £300,000 which equates to a grant of £20,000 to a potential fifteen applicants.

A restriction within the bid was the cash payment available to individual tenants must not exceed £20,000 for councils outside London or £30,000 for London boroughs. Money from the Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund is only available to fund cash incentives. It is not available to fund the administration of the bidding authority's scheme.

The timescales to initiate this 'Homeownership Cash Incentive Scheme' are very tight as the applicants must have exchanged and in the process of completing their open market property by 31 March 2016.

The bid required a breakdown of potential tenants priority categories, although the scheme is open to all those with an eligibility of Right to Buy or Right to Acquire. It is currently unknown what the demand will be for this fund. A similar cash incentive scheme was run by TDBC in 2006 / 2007 and all funding allocated with a positive take up by residents.

The following chart shows the proposed numbers of applicants to cover the prioritised categories. These numbers were determined through research of statistical data held within the Council and Magna West Somerset. This is a guide and DCLG guidance have advised that it will not prevent others with an eligibility for Right to Buy to apply to be successful applicants.

	2015-16			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Older tenants			2	3
Tenants moving to access working opportunities			1	1
Tenants unable to mortgage their social property			1	3
Tenants releasing 1 bedroom properties			2	2

4. 'Homeownership Cash Incentive' scheme procedure and promotion

The Right to Buy Officer, Sam Muckett is administering the scheme on behalf of Taunton Deane Borough Council. There is a close working relationship with Magna West Somerset's Home Moves Advisor who will be administering the scheme on their behalf.

To be eligible for the funding through TDBC the tenant must:

- Currently be a secure tenant of Taunton Deane Borough Council
- Have been a public secure tenant for at least previous 3 years
- Currently live in the property as your only or main home
- No legal problems with debt
- No outstanding possession orders

Interested tenants will be need to complete an application form and provide supporting documents, including a Mortgage in Principle certificate or savings statement as proof of ability to fund their purchase.

The application will be assessed on a 'first come first served' basis as advised by the DCLG. The assessment will confirm the applicant's eligibility for the scheme and will consider the current property occupied by the tenant and the tenant's circumstances against the priority groupings detailed in this scheme.

Successful applicants will be notified in writing and provided with an offer document setting out the terms of the grant and what is required in order to successfully complete a purchase under this scheme.

The grant will be paid direct to the applicants' solicitor's client account once evidence of signed contracts at exchange have been provided. The money will then be held by the applicants' solicitors until the date of completion. Neither the applicant nor their solicitor shall be authorised to use the grant monies prior to the date of completion. Therefore, should the applicant wish to exchange contracts before the completion date, they shall have to use alternative money for the purpose of a deposit.

The proposed promotion of this scheme includes an advert in Tenants Talk, and leaflets within the Deane House reception area alongside promotion through Tenants Services Management Board and Tenants Forum

5. Financial implications

Financial implications have been discussed with the Housing Revenue Accountant and agreed with the S151 officer.

6. Legal Comments

The legal implications are being discussed with Legal Services.

7. Links to Corporate Aims

This work has a positive effect on Corporate Aim 1 – Quality and sustainable growth and development and objective three within the Housing Action Plan; Investment in our housing stock, regeneration and affordable housing.

8. Recommendations

The Tenant Services Management Board is asked to note the contents of this report and facilitate the promotion of this homeownership cash incentive scheme.

9. Contact Officer

Jo Humble – Housing Enabling and Development Manager
01823 356 457
j.humble@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Photovoltaic (PV) Solar Panels Scheme to 350 panels

The scheme to fit PV to 350 council owned houses is nearing completion, with the final installation due near the 7th October.

The two appointed installers were Glevum Heating and Prolectric. Glevum have already installed their target of 175 properties and have the final one to fit in October. Prolectric still have approximately 12 properties to install.

Western Power Distribution decide how many properties in an area can be connected to the grid, therefore some tenants have not had PV whereas their neighbours have. This has caused some complaints. All we can do is reiterated the fact we need permission from Western Power Distribution to install PV to their home and connect to the grid.

A recent Government announcement informed us that Feed In Tariffs (FIT) are dropping from 12p per kilowatt hour to 1.63p on the 31st December. Our installed properties will be secure on the 12p rate but any future ones will be on the much lower rate. Therefore it is unlikely future schemes will be financially viable as the cost of panels are unlikely to drop in price to match the drop in FITs.

The investment TDBC have allocated for the PV scheme is £1.5m. The FITs we receive will go towards paying off the cost of the panels, which is estimated to take 13 years. From year 13 – 20 TDBC will have paid off the investment figure and will be in a positive cash flow due to the FIT income.

Over the lifetime of the panels it is anticipated they will save 11,000 tonnes of carbon emissions.

External Wall Insulation Scheme to a selection of Cornish type non-trad properties

Solid External Wall Insulation to a selection of Cornish house types is well underway and due to complete in late October. The original cladding from the early 1990s has been removed and a new 150mm fibre board and render system has been applied.

This is to make the homes easier to heat as it will insulate the whole of the lower elevations. The installation has happened over the summer months so tenants will not feel the cold while the original cladding was removed.

There has been a slight delay in completing the project as materials have had to come into the UK via Calais, which has encountered problems recently.

Below is a picture of the fibre boards being applied, two coats of render are then applied. Window cills are replaced, pipes are extended out to allow for the 4 inches of insulation and all external fixings are replaced. Tenants are informed not to affix anything to the EWI as it is not a hard material and puncturing it will lower the thermal efficiency.



Insulation boards before render is applied



New EWI next to bricked Cornish property

HRA BP Review 2015. Specification for consultancy.

A. 1st Phase – Indicative time period September 2015 to November 2015

1. Establishment of baseline financial position to include:

- Review of business plan financial model
- Review of functionality of the model and robustness of calculations
- Review and update of all inputs
- Review Void property expenditure and comment on suitability of average void cost of £2.5k per property in our context.
- Review management costs to progress decisions regarding whether additional (temporary posts) in relation to activities such as money advice and One Team input become permanent commitments.
- Review emerging impact of budget announcements on financial position, and any implications in terms of management costs.

2. Explore flexibilities and constraints:

- Set out the key features of the current regulatory and financial framework within which the HRA is required to operate, highlighting the opportunities and constraints in particular around asset acquisitions/disposals, capital investment and borrowing

3. Sensitivities and stress testing to model options for future decision making

- Rent policy options
- Provision of additional or different services eg employment skills development, lifeskills, health support etc
- Working with TDBC Treasury Management service to explore re profiling of loan portfolio to release cash earlier.
- Capital programme for major works to existing housing
- Debt increases or reductions
- New development, acquisition or disposal of housing arising from the regeneration programmes
- Test various quantum and profile of investment in non-traditional property regeneration
- Options for use of right to buy receipts
- Profile impact on recharges of reduced staff headcount in General Fund transferring greater organisational running costs to the HRA.
- Comment on the Council's HRA Governance and make recommendations as to how potential greater risks and pressures in the Business Plan can be monitored and mitigated by enhanced Governance arrangements.

4. Healthcheck of Codeman stock condition data to include

- A desktop review of the Codeman database to : -
 - Review the existing data collection set up and comment on any areas not covered
 - Review progress with increased coverage of survey data since last review.
 - Review the existing schedules of rates, and comment accordingly
 - Review the existing life cycles and comment accordingly
 - Using the raw data check for elemental population and frequency of replacement in line with life cycles and actual work completed and comment accordingly
 - Review works contracts in place and planned and comment on fit with stock data.

5. Refresh business plan progress and priorities

- Review of progress against previous objectives
- Workshop with staff to carry out - SWOT analysis of current service and plans
- Incorporation of feedback from other tenant survey/feedback conducted by TDBC or from STAR surveys.
- Review of available information on demand and commentary on implications for HRA stock
- Assess projected demographic and health demand data to consider niche supported housing opportunities e.g. dementia support.
- Review of current service performance and whether this needs adaptation to reflect strategic priorities
- Development of business plan narrative
- Update action plan
- Identification of key risks and establishment of risk management plan
- Workshop with members to present financial model and options for expenditure priorities over the short/medium/long term
- Presentation of key messages to Tenant Services Management board and incorporation of feedback from them to inform priorities

B. 2nd Phase – Indicative time period November 2015 to February 2016

Arising from the business plan review are likely to be several significant activities including

Asset Performance and new Strategy

- Review the financial and social sustainability of assets in order to inform long term asset management plans.

- Assessment of financial performance based on the net present value of the operating cashflows of the assets, alongside a review of social sustainability linked to business plan objectives and other core data.
- High level review of open market values and market rents used to inform strategies around disposal and tenure conversion as options to improve asset performance.
- Assess potential risks associated with current right to buy proposals relating to the sale of high value local authority assets.
- Make recommendations as to how assets could be managed at a portfolio and local level including identifying candidates for options appraisal to improve business plan cashflows, address void issues and support regeneration plans.
- Draft new Asset Management Strategy that targets investment in existing assets where it will add maximum value both financially, and against the Council's housing objectives.

Development strategy

- Review Development progress to date in particular assumptions used to determine business case for developments and contribution of new builds to HRA.
- Assess and challenge drivers for new build programme.
- Identification of opportunity areas/sites based on key drivers such as market evidence, asset performance, planning policy
- Review evidence for different housing products in terms of tenure, unit type and size in light of local housing need and changing demographic picture.
- Make recommendations for where and what we should be developing.
- Assess extent of investment required to address regeneration of non traditional portfolio and comment on emerging plans for initially tackling Woolaway properties and make recommendations on extent of investment required to address this class of property and staff team necessary to deliver
- Based on the first phase review make recommendations on the volume of investment possible and timing of investment to inform pipeline
- Consideration of procurement and delivery options
- Assess viability of additional investment in further sustainable energy initiatives, in particular further roll out of Solar P.V. and External Wall Insulation of suitable property.

In addition to investigate options for a Council owned company or similar special purchase vehicle. The purpose of this work would be to:

- Review and confirm the rationale for looking to set up such a vehicle – in particular what are the potential benefits it could offer compared to existing delivery options?
- Illustrate the nature and scale of housing and financial benefits it could offer the Council, in the context of a typical housing development project.
- Outline the alternative options for the structure and funding of such a vehicle, and the main steps which would need to be taken to implement the proposals, including the likely timescales, costs and risks.

Supported housing review

Development of future Sheltered and Extra Care housing strategy to include

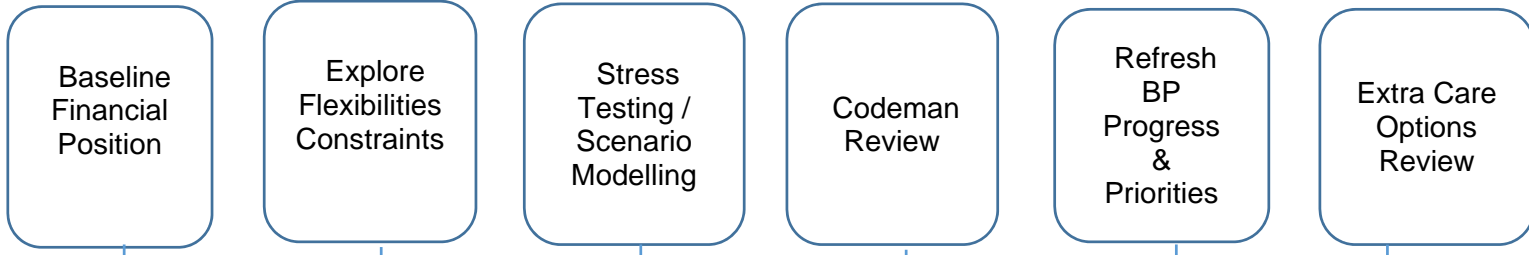
- Review of current sheltered housing stock to assess financial viability and capacity to meet identified needs now and in the future is appropriate for modern standards, and to support Council decision making
- Review the current physical environment offer of our Supported Housing stock and comment on its suitability against modern standards, and propose a potential new property standard that we could apply to our stock.
- Carry out an assessment of the suitability of stock against current and potential future improved standards, with recommendations for its future use, options including:
 - Refurbishment
 - Remodelling
 - Change of tenure or use
 - Additional provision for Extra Care
 - Disposal
 - Demolition / Regeneration

C. General

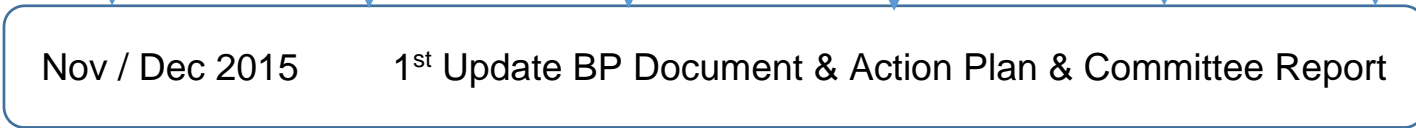
- Assist in planning suitable resident and stakeholder consultation activities and events concerning BP priorities. (Actual events will be delivered by TDBC staff).
- Support key decision making therefore plan to present at four evening committee meetings (two each for 1st and 2nd phase reporting).

TDBC HRA Business Plan Review

1st Phase



Budget Setting



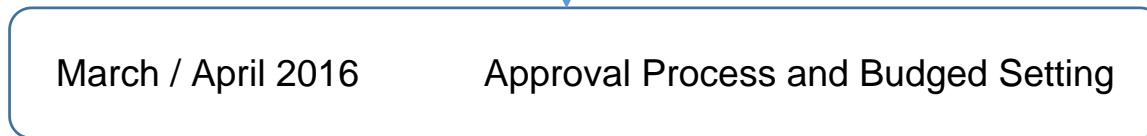
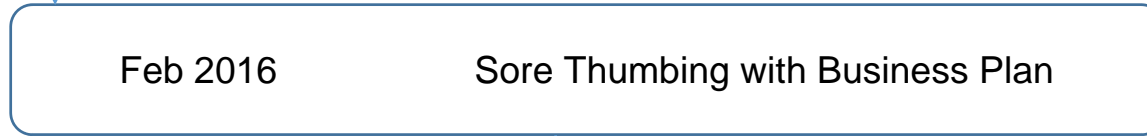
2nd Phase



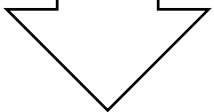
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CONSULTATION



Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on Monday 14 September 2015 at 6pm in JMR, Taunton.

Present: Mr R Balman (Chairman)
Ms M Davis (Vice-Chair)
Mr A Akhigbemen, Mrs J Bunn, Mr D Galpin, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr I Hussey, Mr K Hellier, Councillor Bowrah, and Councillor Appleby.

Officers: Jo Humble (Housing Development and Enabling Manager), Sam Muckett (Right to Buy Officer), Caroline White (Housing Development Project Lead), Jan Errington (Area Community Manager), James Barra (Director of Housing & Communities), Stephen Boland (Housing Services Lead – Housing Communities) Lucy Clothier (Accountant), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager) and Emma Hill (Democratic Services Officer).

Others: Councillor Bale and Councillor Mrs Smith

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

1. Apologies

Mr R Middleton and Councillor Mrs Warmington

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 20 August 2015 were taken as read and were signed.

3. Public Question Time

No questions received for Public Question Time.

4. Declarations of Interests

Councillor Bowrah declared a personal interest as member of his family were Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Tenants and declared a personal interest as family member had applied to the Council's Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund 'Homeownership' Cash Incentive Scheme.

Councillor Appleby declared a personal interest as Leaseholder of Taunton Deane Borough Council property.

Mr A Akhigbemen, Mr R Balman, Mrs J Bunn, Ms M Davis, Mr D Galpin, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr K Hellier, Mr I Hussey declared personal interests as Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Tenants.

5. Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund

Consideration an update on the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund and the grant funding secured by Taunton Deane Borough Council.

£300,000 had been secured through the bid and the administrative process and proposed methods of promotion to undertake a 'Homeownership Cash Incentive' scheme are underway.

Taunton Deane Borough Council led a successful bid in partnership with Magna West Somerset and West Somerset District Council. The purpose of the Fund was to enable local authorities to provide a scheme for their eligible Right to Buy tenants to access a cash payment in the place of their Right to Buy discount on their current social property.

The funding must be spent by 31 March 2016 and the bid was for £300,000 which equated to a grant of £20,000 to a potential fifteen applicants. The bid required a breakdown of potential tenants priority categories, although the scheme was open to all those with an eligibility of Right to Buy or Right to Acquire.

Interested tenants would be required to complete an application form and provide supporting documents, which included a Mortgage in Principle certificate or savings statement as proof of ability to fund their purchase.

The application would be assessed on a 'first come first served' basis as advised by the DCLG. The assessment would confirm the applicant's eligibility for the scheme and would consider the current property occupied by the tenant and the tenant's circumstances against the priority groupings detailed in this scheme.

Successful applicants would be notified in writing and provided with an offer document setting out the terms of the grant and what was required in order to successfully complete a purchase under this scheme.

The grant would be paid direct to the applicants' solicitor's client account once evidence of signed contracts at exchange had been provided. The money would then be held by the applicants' solicitors until the date of completion. Neither the applicant nor their solicitor should be authorised to use the grant monies prior to the date of completion. Therefore, should the applicant wish to exchange contracts before the completion date, they would have to use alternative money for the purpose of a deposit.

The proposed promotion of this scheme included an advert in Tenants Talk, and leaflets within the Deane House reception area alongside promotion through Tenants Services Management Board and Tenants Forum

The Council had received the Grants termination letter from DCLG and this meant that the scheme was active and we were actively promoting the scheme. Officers had received one application already and the scheme details were taken to Tenants Open Day in Halcon last week.

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

- Cllr Bowrah declared a personal interest concerning that a family member who had applied to the Council's Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund. He stated he wouldn't take part in the discussion of the item.
Declaration of personal interest noted by the Democratic Services Officer.
- Felt that £20,000 wasn't an incentive or attractive enough for Tenants to take up the scheme to buy their properties.

- I suggest officers should request with all application to RtB Social Mobility Fund, the Council requests Income and Expenditure, along with a credit check. This would eliminate any time wasters.
This was a valid point. The Council would be asking applicants to provide a 'Mortgage in Principle' or proof of savings when applying for the scheme. The deadline for completing on the scheme was 31 March 2016. This was a joint project with Magna West.
- Did the officers think the grant would be used by the deadline and if not could the increase the size of the individual grants?
We had always spoken to the DCLG about extending the deadline so that we could start the committee sign out process for that extension. This was something we would have to consider but we were unsure at the moment.

Resolved that:

1. The Board note the report.
2. Approved the facilitation of the promotion of this homeownership cash incentive scheme.

6. The Weavers Arms Development Update

Consideration of an update on the Weavers Arms Development Project in Wellington.

Officers obtained planning permission on 12th August subject to conditions for 26 properties, a mix of 1 bed flats, houses and bungalows. Below was a list of the conditions imposed by the Planning Committee:

- Planning condition 5 – west boundary treatment to be approved by LPA (Local Planning Authority) in the interest of neighbouring residents. Keep foliage in place to soften boundary and provide foraging for bats.
- Planning condition 6 – works implemented in accordance with Bat surveys – bat resting places & accesses thereafter permanently maintained (walls, eaves).

The Council was required to obtain a Bat License from Natural England as bats were protected species could only be moved at certain times of year, this would impact scheme timings. This won't be going ahead until April 2016. The house in question would be demolished by hand.

The officers were currently putting the Project works contract out to tender to contractors using the West Works framework.

There two decanted properties at Oaken Ground waiting to move as well as one household awaiting void property in Wellington to be finished and ready for occupancy.

There was an estimated on site date beginning 2016 and the construction type (timber or masonry) was yet to be confirmed.

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

- Was there any completion date on those Tenants moving into the one house?
There was no date as yet as there were void works The Council had impressed on the contractor on the urgency of need for moving date for the tenants.

- Concerns were raised regarding the presence of Bats at the site. Where were the roosting in the houses or the tree? How many Bats had been found?
The Bats were found on site behind a window frame in one of the properties. There were only two male Bats but there was a set procedure when any number of Bats were found.

Resolved that the Board noted the report.

7. Photovoltaic (PV) Solar Panels Scheme Update

Consideration of an update on the Photovoltaic (PV) Solar Panels Scheme on the Council's Housing Stock.

The scheme to fit PV to 350 council owned houses is nearing completion, with the final installation due near the 7th October.

The two appointed installers were Glevum Heating and Prolectric. Glevum had already installed their target of 175 properties and had the final one to fit in October. Prolectric still had approximately 12 properties to install.

Western Power Distribution were to decide how many properties in an area could be connected to the grid, therefore some tenants had not had PV whereas their neighbours had. This had caused some complaints. All we could do was reiterated the fact we need permission from Western Power Distribution to install PV to their home and connect to the grid.

A recent Government announcement informed us that Feed In Tariffs (FIT) were dropping from 12p per kilowatt hour to 1.63p on the 31st December. Our installed properties would be secure on the 12p rate but any future ones would be on the much lower rate. Therefore it was unlikely future schemes would be financially viable as the cost of panels were unlikely to drop in price to match the drop in FITs. The investment TDBC had allocated for the PV scheme is £1.5m. The FITs we received would go towards paying off the cost of the panels, which was estimated to take 13 years. From year 13 – 20 TDBC would have paid off the investment figure and would be in a positive cash flow due to the FIT income.

Over the lifetime of the panels it was anticipated they would save 11,000 tonnes of carbon emissions.

Officers had stated that Tenants were delighted with the results and project had been successful so far. The only problem, the Council had found was we had problems connecting some of properties in the scheme.

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

- Members asked for a commitment from Officers that they would monitor the market to wait and see if was feasible to roll out a second phase in future.
Unless the government make a U-turn on the feed tariff, we won't be able to introduce a second phase. Officers had made provision to monitor the market in case, it meant the Council could commit to a second phase of the project on existing housing stock.

- This project had been successful so far, let hope that the market in future allowed for a second phase.
- Looking at the PV coating, was this a cheaper option the Council was monitoring or considering?
Unfortunately, the PV Coating was a new technology and was currently not a cheaper option, which was the same for the battery storage technology, which allowed energy to be stored. Currently, the tenants were having to use the energy produced when the sun was out.

Resolved that the Board noted the report.

8. External Wall Insulation Scheme Update

Consideration of an update on the External Wall Insulation Scheme to a selection of Cornish type non-traditional properties.

Solid External Wall Insulation to a selection of Cornish house types was well underway and due to complete in late October. The original cladding from the early 1990s had been removed and a new 150mm fibre board and render system had been applied.

This was to make the homes easier to heat as it would insulate the whole of the lower elevations. The installation had happened over the summer months so tenants would not feel the cold while the original cladding was removed.

There had been a slight delay in completing the project as materials had to come into the UK via Calais, which had encountered problems recently.

Below was a picture of the fibre boards being applied, two coats of render were then applied. Window cills were replaced, pipes were extended out to allow for the four inches of insulation and all external fixings were replaced. Tenants were informed not to affix anything to the EWI as it was not a hard material and puncturing it would lower the thermal efficiency.

The Council was currently looking at 38 properties on this contract but we were looking to increase where possible and feasible.

The properties were in much better condition than first thought and only 8 columns out of 800 were in need of replace.

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

- Committee Member informed the rest of the committee and officers that they lived a Council owned Non-traditional Cornish property and the work completed by this project was brilliant and the contractors left the property clean and tidy. They could already feel the insulation working and the property was warmer.

Resolved that the Board noted the report.

9. Extra Care Housing Services Review Project

The Supported Housing Review Project Manager gave a verbal report accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Extra Care Service Model Options Appraisal.

There were three main work streams to this review project, they were:

- Sheltered Housing Servicer Model Review
- Extra Care Service Model Review
- Sheltered and ECH Property Options Review

Officers defined what was meant by Extra Care housing (ECH). The Council had two schemes, they were Kilkenny Court and Lodge Close. We were also working in partnership with Magna Homes in West Somerset who had six flats.

Officers gave the following detailed information regarding the ECH review;

- Why there was a need to review, change and update the Extra Care facilities and services.
- The underlying factors driving the need for was funding cuts, need to create a sustainable service and an aging demographic population.
- The aims of the ECH review, looking at service delivery models and ECH properties.

The service review was in two phases. Currently, the review was at phase one options appraisal. The second phase was the implementation of the chosen and adopted new service option.

Officers had conducted consultation within the ECH service this included ECH Tenants. Below was a summary of the feedback from the consultations:

- Emphasised Staff Flexibility
- Seamless Integrated Service
- Only One Manager to contact
- Local and Small Service Provider
- Sense of Community
- Service needs tailored to Individuals

Officers had discovered differing views between the different ECH schemes of Lodge Close and Kilkenny Court;

- Tenants at Lodge Close were happy with the service they were receiving and wanted no or little change to the current service.
- Tenants at Kilkenny Court weren't worried who provided the service, just wanted a high quality and better service than the current one.

The ECH service at Lodge Close had recently the staff had changed, this was due to...

But ECH facilities had expressed a desire that the housing facility management (or landlord) should remain as Taunton Deane Borough Council.

Officers detailed the key risks to ECH review project and also presented a table of a shortlist of current service model options open to the council. This was constantly changing as additional options not previously thought of were suggested to officers.

The next steps for the officers with ECH service review;

- Seek feedback and approval for option to take forward from the following Tenant Forum, Supported Housing Development Group, Tenant Services Management Board, Community Scrutiny and Executive.
- Implement options decision – this would include procurement, staff restructure, TUPE process, consultation and informing.
- Post implementation, evaluate/review and organise lessons learned workshop.

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

- Suggested that Committee Members should leave any main questions to the Special meeting of the Committee where this item would be discussed on a single item agenda.
- Why were the view of Lodge Close and Kilkenny Court so different? Had we identified the reasons behind the great difference in views?
*The complaints and comments related to frontline staff.
The whole of the Extra Care service was undergoing change but at Lodge Close, they had new temporary staff team so this had improved the service at this location without the results of the Business Plan review.
The service at Kilkenny Court had problems with lots of long-term sickness and operational frontline issues had affected the service. This had meant changing temporary staff cover. This had led to these particular the views of the tenants at Kilkenny court.*
- Was the Extra Care service provider the same at both sites?
Yes, it was the same service provider at both sites.
- There was no mention about Shelter Housing Changes in the report?
This was a separate project under the Business Plan review completely and a consultation event was due to take place.
- How many tenants were part of the scheme and how many tenants had attended?
*There were 90 tenants part of the scheme of which 16 tenants from Lodge Close and 15 from Kilkenny Court.
These figures were a combination of the three consultation events that had taken place. There had been two consultation in conjunction with SCC prior to our events.
We were asking Extra Care service staff to encourage all tenants to keep feeding back information to the project officers.
The consultation events was really productive. If Tenants had a burning issue or problem, the approach staff regarding these issues and because these were Extra Care Tenants, the Council was in regular contact with them.
Lodge Close and Kilkenny Court had very strong Community Groups.*

Resolved that the Board noted the report.

10. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2012- 2042

Consideration of the latest review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2012-2042.

Since the last review process, a number of significant policy changes had arisen through the Government's Budget Statement highlighted changes to the Rent Policy and new Policy supporting Right to Buy around higher value properties. These changes had impacted on the Business Plan. The review of HRA Business Plan two phases covering two indicative time periods, they were:

- 1st Phase – September 2015 – November 2015
- 2nd Phase – November 2015 – February 2016

Within these two time periods a number of different areas would be looked at. During 1st phase, the following would be looked at;

- Establishment of baseline financial position
- Explore flexibilities and constraints
- Sensitivities and stress testing to model options for future decision making
- Health check of Codeman stock condition data
- Refresh business plan progress and priorities

During 2nd phase, the following would be looked at;

- Asset Performance and new Strategy
- Development strategy
- Supported housing review

Also there were some general area being review, these were;

- Assist in planning suitable resident and stakeholder consultation activities and events concerning BP priorities.
- Support key decision making therefore plan to present at four evening committee meetings.

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

- It was requested that the officer confirm a previous statement, that the Council couldn't afford our planned new build projects?
This was one of the many features around our expenditure, the Council would have to review. It maybe that the extent of our new build ambitions was might be unaffordable. Even within what the Council could afford to do, we would have to prioritise, where we absolutely need to spend money on regenerating the non-traditional estates rather than traditional new builds.
- Page three, investigating options for a Council owned special purchase vehicle. Could you please expand on this?
This was an option many Local Authorities were exploring and implementing. There were multiple benefits. There were lots of risk around building new properties in the HRA. The Council could invest lots in new property but they could be acquired through RtB. There was a level of protection with something called the cost floor. So this stated that for 15 years if someone

wanted to purchase the property through RtB it would cost them the full construction cost of that new build. There was an exemption from the normal discount from most other RtBs.

It was a risk for Councils with higher number of new builds than us and it's a risk they were looking to mitigate through other models. Equally, the general fund was looking for new sources of income, so could the Council by setting up an arm's length management company explore investing in affordable housing or also invest development of market housing/market rental housing as a source of income. This was a model other Councils were looking and a legal way to make income. There were equal benefits as well as cost to general fund.

- Was stock transfer an option open to the Council?

The Council had looked at this option and this had no particular incentives or benefits to the Council in doing that and we were not aware of any local authorities that we doing this. This wasn't something we were considering or looking at the moment. The Council was in a better position since we started Self-Financing and we were far stronger position than Housing Associations. It had flipped around completely.

Housing Associations were having real problems with the Rent Policy applied them as well and confidence had been knocked all areas.

- Options around change the tenure or use of around shelter housing stock mean. Was that around people want to change but still stay as Council Tenants but save money by not having the stock of the Pipeline service on top their rent? A lot residents where I live didn't use the service but pay for it
This was an option open to the Council and any properties that had a change of use or tenure would fall back into circulation and we would let them as general needs properties. The whole issue of the service charge and the requirement to pay that charge was mandatory requirement and that was what the tenant signed up for when taking on a Shelter Housing property. This discussion would come with the piece of work was doing around the Sheltered Housing Review.

In order for the Council to provide that service for 50% of Sheltered Housing tenants, the Council had to guarantee a certain critical mass of staff and we needed an assurance of certain level of income. When officers had spoken to tenants in the past regarding this matter. We said it's an assurance scheme and that they might not need it now but in the future they may do. By paying the service charges means they would guaranteed to have access to it. It needs all Sheltered Housing tenants to pay into that service to maintain that critical mass of staff to provide the service to those who wish to take it. That's did limit choice and one of the things the Council would be exploring in the Service Review would be choice.

The Deane Helpline provide great service and takes a great burden off the Ambulance Service. To provide that required service required certain critical level of income for a 24hr service. So it's a balance between choice and mandatory requirements.

- Demolition of Housing Stock... Didn't want to come home and find my house had been demolished and gone?

With the Council's housing stock, this was unlikely from what I know of our stock but it had to be a considered.

It was more likely to be re-development of a small sheltered housing scheme that was on a really big plot of land and it had limited desirability and limited use as it was and so we would consider decommissioning it rather than changing the use and putting it back into general needs, the Council could put double density new builds on the site instead.

Resolved that the Board noted the report.

11. AOB

Members of the Committee asked the following questions of the officers present after the main agenda items had been discussed:

- UK's quota of Refugees – What or where would TDBC put the Refugees if we were to offer space for them?
*There had been no discussion as yet regarding this. There was potential around some void properties.
The government and LGA were currently pulling together more information on this subject for Local Authorities.*
- On behalf of the Committee, we would like to say congratulations to Lucy Clothier on her new appointment and welcome to Emma Hill after returning from maternity leave.
- The disabled bay in Parker Close. People had been parking there that weren't allowed or shouldn't be using the space. This meant the resident/s that it was meant for weren't able to use the space. Could officers help with this?
What action we could or would take, would depend on where the space was there for a specific person or general disabled space. After the meeting, could you provide with some more information and I would be happy to look into the matter.

(The meeting ended at 19.20pm)