

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 17 May 2016 at 18:00.

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## **Agenda**

- 1 Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 22 March 2016 and 18 April 2016 (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 Tenant and Leaseholder Satisfaction Project. Report of the Assistant Director of Housing & Community Development and Community Development Officer (attached).  

Reporting Officers: Martha Dudman  
Simon Lewis
- 6 Update on DLO Relocation Project. Verbal Report of the DLO Project Manager (verbal).  

Reporting Officer: Richard Brown
- 7 Update on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan Review. Report of the Director of Housing and Communities (verbal).  

Reporting Officer: James Barrah
- 8 Update on The Deane House Relocation Project. Report of the Director of Housing and Communities (verbal).  

Reporting Officer: James Barrah

The following items are likely to be considered after the exclusion of the press and public because of the likelihood that exempt information would otherwise be disclosed relating to the Clause set out below of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 9 Confidential Report on Building Services and Property Services Restructure.  
Report of the Interim Assistant Director of Property and Development (attached).  
Reporting Officer: Terry May

Bruce Lang  
Assistant Chief Executive

21 June 2016

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.

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## **Tenant Services Management Board Members:-**

Mr A Akhigbemen

Mr R Balman

Councillor C Booth

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

Ms D Pierowicz

**Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 22 March 2016 at 6pm in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.**

**Present:** Mr R Balman (Chairman)  
Ms M Davis (Vice-Chairman)  
Mr A Akhigbemen, Mrs J Bunn, Mr D Galpin, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr K Hellier and Councillor S Coles.

**Officers:** James Barrahan (Director – Housing and Communities), Terry May (Interim Assistant Director – Property and Development), Stephen Boland (Housing Service Lead), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), and Emma Hill (Democratic Services Officer).

**Others:** Councillors Berry, Miss Smith and Mrs Smith  
Julia Williamson; Vice-Chair, Tenants' Forum

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

**1. Apologies**

Councillor Bowrah and Mr I Hussey

**2. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 25 February 2016 were taken as read and were signed.

**3. Public Question Time**

No questions received for Public Question Time.

**4. Declarations of Interests**

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

Councillor Coles declared a personal interest as a member of Somerset County Council.

**5. Verbal Update on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan Review**

The Director for Housing and Communities gave a verbal update on the review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan.

Below was a summary of the verbal update on the HRA Business Plan Consultation:-

- The Core Business of the Council should be social rented housing for the most vulnerable in our communities.
- General approval for the proposed new objectives for the HRA.
- It was felt that much more could be done to improve the customer experience of the housing service.

- Understandably Tenant Groups did not want standards in our existing housing stock to fall. But it was felt that the Council could make better use of the current repairs and maintenance spend in order to free up resources.
- An appetite to look at housing products that were closer to the market in order to generate additional income on new build/regeneration schemes.
- An acceptance that our current approach to debt repayment would need to be revised, based on treasury management advice, to achieve a viable business plan and protect services.
- Officer talked Board Members through a draft flow chart for the HRA's proposal of possible tenants' transition through the Council's housing service, from temporary accommodation, introductory tenancy, flexible tenancy, intermediate housing and outside council stock.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:-

- In response to a question relating to what happened if the tenants' introductory tenancy was not renewed making the tenant homeless, the Board was informed that on entering into an introductory tenancy, tenants were supported all the way through the process. If the tenant neglected to adhere to the tenancy then they could be classed as making themselves intentionally homeless, this negated the Council's statutory duty.
- Board Members were informed that there were other external agencies that could step in and provide more intense support if people were evicted by the Council.
- Discussion relating to the turnover of existing housing stock and whether it would be adversely affected by renewal of introductory and flexible tenancies rather than moving on to intermediate housing or out of Council housing.
- Concerns were raised that communities would be split up and that they might not want flexible tenancies introduced but had no choice in it.
- Concerns were raised that tenants on short term tenancies might not bother with keep up of general maintenance of the property, which they would do if they had a long tenancy.
- In response to a question how would officers respond to tenants not keeping up with general maintenance of their property, the Board was informed that general maintenance of the property was part of the tenancy and the condition of the property would affect whether or not the tenancy was renewed.
- In response to a question relating to what would the Council do to help the percentage of people who were not receiving Housing Benefit but could not afford to buy their own property with a mortgage or go into private rented properties, the Board were informed that the Council did not have extensive data regarding this but might get more from pay to stay scheme and could look into small scheme of affordable housing, which was 80% of market rate.
- Discussion on a future consultation regarding improvement to customer service within the housing service.
- Concerns raised over the Council trying to pitch other areas for development and that the Council might be left with only the areas of non-traditional housing for development, when high value assets might be sold off.

**Resolved** that the Information Presentation's report be noted.

## 6. Verbal Update on Repairs and Maintenance Service.

The Interim Assistant Director for Property and Development gave a verbal update on the performance and progress of the Council's Repairs and Maintenance Service.

Below was a summary of the main points from the update on the Repairs and Maintenance Service:

- There was no update of Key Performance Indicators but an update would come to the April meeting of the Board.
- Piece of ongoing work looking at setting the staff establishment within the Deane DLO, which about understanding the required number of tradesmen's as a normal for the numbers of repairs service had.
- Issue surrounding the recording of time spent on individual job tickets, this related to timesheets. Adjustments had been made allowing for appropriate travel time to jobs and sufficient time to complete the job. Working through trade by trade on this.
- Reviewing the different software products services were using and how well they were performing for us.
- Council was considering more software in addition to the current package and migrating functions across to extended new OC package.
- Call Repairs and Work Planners teams had been merged together and training was ongoing ensuring that teams could operate each other's systems.
- We were trialing an expansion to the Area Managers for Surveyors from two to three. This would hopefully, spread the work load better and ease pressure on the service team.
- The upgrade to Version 13 of OC would take place in April 2016.
- Deane DLO were driving the initiative of starting as many traders from their home rather than from the depot. For them to only come to the depot if needed.
- Ongoing piece work relating to reducing the amount of paperwork connected to trades and job tickets as well as making better use of the current resources and streamlining processes.
- Currently, only the repairs team had been issued with PDAs and we were pushing for full introduction, which included the Voids team but we were chasing timescales from SW1.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:-

- Discussion relating to the impact of work load by only having two Area Managers within the Surveyors team. Board Members were informed that this was one of the factors for trialing the extension from April to three Area Managers.
- Board Members requested an update report from officers regarding the progress of the introduction of PDAs to the trade services.

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

## 7. Open Contractor IT System.

Considered the report previously circulated, concerning an update on progress of the Open Contractor IT system, modules and associated software.

The Board had raised concerns on the length of time it had taken to implement Open Contactor (OC) and verbal responses had been provided, with a view of providing a report.

OC was part of a suite of modules of the 'Capita' Open Housing and Open Contractor IT solution for Housing Organisations, being either Local Authority or Housing Association. TDBC purchased a number of modules but had only implemented OC, integration to Kirona DRS, Total Mobile and Insight. There were many others such as, Planned and Asset that had not been implemented.

Implementation was undertaken with limited knowledge, resources and guidance from Capita representatives, and without reviewing and understanding the Business Processes of the DLO service. In addition, there appeared to have been a lack of ownership and a dedicated person to drive implementation and the required change.

The Board was advised that a Health Check of the DRS work planning system was going to be commissioned. A representative from Kirona had carried out this review and provided a report with recommendations that included training was undertaken with specific reference to correct methods for manually scheduling and operative selection.

Work had commenced on reviewing Business Processes in preparation for an upgrade of OC version 11 to version 13 that would provide improved functionality and reporting.

Capita had been asked to provide a report on modules the Council had, what else might be needed, with costs to implement. In tandem to this, the Council was exploring options for specialist support, as we wish to provide dedicated leadership to drive the significant change in implementation and use of IT solutions required. The current temporary Project Manager's remit was split between DLO support with IT improvements and the DLO relocation project.

Kirona's Health Check report confirmed our perception of how the planning system was being operated, being overridden to allow manual scheduling and operative selection, moving and fixing appointments, rather than letting the system choose. Therefore, the Project Manager was developing an Action Plan to implement the recommendations within Kirona's report that included appropriate training. Once the plan was complete and agreed it would be presented to a future Board meeting.

The Business Process review was progressing, with outcomes being considered at the next Project Board meeting. Decisions would be made on how this would feed into the upgrade of OC version 11 that was being undertaken in April.

The Council had to be mindful of an overall review of the Councils IT systems, whilst we review the Housing & Communities Directorate IT systems, in particular, those within Asset, Property and the DLO. However, our requirements had a degree of specialism and the Council had systems in place that were not fully utilised, which we were reviewing, hence the request to Capita for options to further develop what modules we had and how best to use them.

To support appraisal of Capita OC and associated modules, representatives of the project team and the DLO had visited Kensington & Chelsea, and Yarlinton Housing Group to see how they were using OC and understand what issues they encountered during implementation.



There was provision within the TSMB forward plan to update further at the October TSMB. However, if there were significant changes or progress, an early update would be provided.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:-

- In response to a question relating to the prevention of similar implementation issues arising again with the new version of OC, the Board were informed that part of that prevention was the employment of Assistant Director and his previous experience with OC with Yarlington Housing Group as well as introduction of IT Project Management Officer.
- In response to a question relating to whether or the Council was using LEAN principles and who was taking the lead on this, the Board were informed that the Council Asset Database Manager was our inhouse expertise as they had Six Sigma's training and we were now using these principles.
- In response to a question relating to the timescales for the introduction of the new version of OC software as well as any additional software packages for migration, the Board were informed that when Officer had put together a plan for the implementation and had timescales, they would return to the Board with a report.

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

## **8. Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Annual Conference 2016**

Considered the report previously circulated, concerning this year's TPAS Annual Conference. The Conference was maintaining the same format as last year, with the conference being held in July in the same venue near Warwick.

The Board was asked to decide whether to send delegates to the conference, and if so how many.

TPAS was a leading national tenant participation organisation working to promote tenant empowerment. As well as providing training events, it held an annual conference which allowed tenants from all over the country to attend workshops, hear guest speakers and meet with other tenants.

TPAS had decided to hold the conference in the same venue as last year:

- Chesford Grange, Kenilworth, near Warwick
- 13th and 14th July 2016

TPAS were currently finalising the full programme, which included workshops and speakers. The full programme should be available in April 2016. The cost of the conference would be met by existing budgets.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:-

- Discussion relating to the number of representatives that the Board should send and whether or not an officer could attend as well.

- In response to a question about what hotel would the representatives be staying, the Board were informed that this would be discussed with the representatives attending.
- ARCH (Association of Retained Council Houses). Board Members requested if Officers could find out when their annual conference was and how we could attend.

**Resolved** that:-

1. The Officer's report be noted.
2. The Board should send three representative to the conference.
3. The three volunteers attending the conference were Mr A Akhigbemen, Cllr B Bowrah and Mr I Hussey

## **9. Tenant Service Management Board Forward Plan 2016**

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the development of a forward plan for the Tenant Services Management Board (TSMB).

The Board was asked to review the attached plan and comment on the scheduled dates of the agenda items and decide whether further agenda items should be presented.

The TSMB met on a monthly basis, in order to allow agenda items to be scheduled a forward plan had been developed for 2016. A copy of the developed forward plan was attached to the covering report. At the end of forward plan, there were some agenda items that had been identified but had not yet been allocated to a meeting. This was due to some uncertainty as to when the item would be finalised and ready to come before the board.

**Resolved** that:-

1. The Officer's report to be noted.
2. The attached version of the TSMB Forward Plan be approved and required no changes.
3. There were no additional items for the Forward Plan at this time.

(The meeting ended at 7.19pm)

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 18 April 2016 at 6pm in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.**

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

**Officers:** James Barraah (Director – Housing and Communities), Jan Errington (Project Manager), Simon Lewis (Assistant Director – Housing and Community Development), Lucy Clothier (Senior Accountant - Services), Stephen Boland (Housing Service Lead), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), and Emma Hill (Democratic Services Officer).

**Others:** Councillor Berry, Beale, Booth and Mrs Warmington  
Julia Williamson; Vice-Chair, Tenants' Forum

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

**1. Introduction**

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

**2. Apologies**

Mr R Middleton

**3. Public Question Time**

No questions received for Public Question Time.

**4. Declarations of Interests**

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

Councillor Coles declared a personal interest as a member of Somerset County Council.

**5. Tenant Services Management Board 2015/16**

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

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

- Board had seen a programme of installing Solar Panels starting May 2015, additional wall insulation, and replacing housing stock UPVC Doors.
- The Board hoped the HRA and Council would be able to continue these programmes.
- Seen the results of the New Build programme of Creechbarrow Road and Vale View in West Bagborough.
- The Board had been involved with whole process and was grateful for the regular updates as well as the chance to visit Creechbarrow Road and see inside of some of the finished properties.
- The Board had been very impressed with the high standard of workmanship.
- The Board scrutinised how the Council's Housing service was performing every quarter. This included repairs performance and this area could perform better, which was also highlighted by the STAR Survey.
- This had prompted the employment of Assistant Director Terry May. Since then the performance of this area had improved.
- Part of the Board monitoring role included quarterly financial statements and looking specifically at rent arrears.
- The Board was aware that many tenants would be concerned by the changes in Welfare Reform and the benefits.
- Adding to that, Universal Credit was to be rolled out further, later this year and the Council would not know the extent of the impact until more tenants were taken up.
- The Tenants Employment Support Programme started last month and the Board would receive a progress update report in August.
- Chair thanked all the board members for all their hard work over the last year and also thanked the members for electing him as chairperson.
- Chair thanked the Tenant Empowerment Manager for the support and hard work he puts in on board's behalf.
- Chair thanked all the department Managers and Councillors who without their backing the board would not be able to progress.
- Chair thanked Democratic Service Officer for working away next to him every month.

**Resolved** that the Chairperson's report be noted.

## **6. The Year ahead for Housing and Communities**

The Director for Housing and Communities gave a verbal update relating to the HRA and the Council projects for the forthcoming year and updating the Board on the wider Council issues as well as local issues effecting this Council and its Tenants.

Below was a summary of the main points from the update:

- The Board would be receiving more updates in the future regarding the HRA Business Plan review. With a view to bringing recommendations before the Board in June/July.
- The key issue that the Council was faced with was our ability to become financially stable and sustainable.
- Following the Councils undertaking of the first phase of JMASS project, the continuing part of that project was about transforming what the Council did and how we did it so we could make more efficiencies.

- The project had taken a pause, allowing reflection on the changes so far as well as the undertaking of a second piece of work including three separate scenarios for both Councils, which would be put to Elected Members later in the year.
- The Council was seeking to implement a new customer access strategy and this would be looking to make the Councils transactions more efficient and trying to move more people to digital transactions and digital communication with Council
- Part of this was reviewing what services the Council provided and how we provide them including a detailed look at our systems and processes.
- The Councils new IT strategy would promote greater IT enablement and this would bring the Council up to date and prepare us for the future ensuring flexible and agile working.
- Officers were looking to increase the Councils commercial opportunities increasing our sources of income.
- The Transformation project team had been out visiting other Councils to get ideas and examples on how it was being done elsewhere as many Councils were in a similar position to us.
- The Councils new Corporate Strategy had been brought before the Board and sat alongside the Transformation Project, which had been put in place in both TDBC and WSC.
- The Councils Accommodation project was being reviewed as the initial offer from SCC for the relocation from The Deane House to County Hall had been significantly and substantially altered due to affordability issues.
- The Council was currently taking stock of that project and re-reviewing the Councils options and make a further decision and come back to Council with an update on that project in the summer.
- Following the offer revision, the decision was taken to pause and review all the options available to the Council.
- Investigation into the options open to the Council, which included the Council occupying The Deane House in a different way to allow us to share it with other partners to help us pay for the cost of running this building.
- A key development for the Councils was Hinkley Point, the Council was waiting for the final investment decision.
- The final decision would trigger a whole variety of activities and would have a profound effect on Taunton Deane and the wider area. This decision would also trigger commercial activities, which would effect the housing sector.
- It would release additional funding for the Council to mitigate some of the impact on Taunton Deane, specifically a housing funding.
- From Day one of investment decision, 750 workers would be descending on us. This figure would double every six months for three years. The impact was that all of those people would require housing, they would impact and invest in our communities.
- There was a significant amount of work still to be done within the repairs and Voids service and the Council needed enforce some good cost control within those areas.
- With the aim to working towards improvement in the quality of the job completed including completing the work first time around, therefore reducing the need for return visits.
- An ongoing project, was about sustaining the work of the One Team areas by continuing to challenge the way the Council works and how other agencies work with individuals, families and communities.
- Welfare Reform was a significant impact on communities and full roll out for Universal Credit in TDBC and WSC had been confirmed as October 2016.

- The Council was aware from the several cases, we had the support required was significant just to navigate the system and to release that they had to take ownership of their own affairs, that the system would not do it for them.
- Following the announcement, the Council was just reviewing its action plan corporately and was in communications with Home in Sedgemoor and Sedgemoor District Council as their roll out was May 2016.
- The Council had ongoing new build projects, which included the new depot at Wellington. Officers were preparing for the logistics of moving services and staff from Priory Depot to the new building.
- The Creechbarrow Road development was behind schedule but the finished product was very smart.
- Officers would be coming back with reports to the Board as the Local Letting policy comes into play in that area and trying to maintain and promote a community feeling.
- There were some big challenges for the Council to address.
- Officers thanked the Board for their ongoing engagement and input over the last 12 months and looked forward to the next 12 months.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:-

- In response to a question enquiring if the Hinkley Point Developments would cause an increase in the requests for Housing, the Board were informed that Sedgemoor District Council and West Somerset Council would receive the majority of the requests but there would be a percentage requesting housing in Taunton Deane.
- Members raised concerns that this increase would have a knock on effect of Landlords choosing higher paid workers over Councils tenants.
- In response to a questions asking if these workers would be classified as essential workers for housing purposes, the Board was informed they would not and would remain in the open market

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

## **7. Verbal Update on Extra Care Housing Service Review Project**

Reference Minute No. 4/13October/2015 updated Board Member on the Review of the Councils Extra Care Housing Schemes. The Project Manager gave a verbal update on the Review of the Council's Extra Care Housing schemes.

Below was a summary of the main points from the update provided by the Project Manager:

- The Council had two Extra Care Housing schemes (ECH).
- The County Council (SCC) were recommissioning the service.
- There had been delays in the process of the service review and its recommissioning
- Additional options and variations on the commissioning of service had been submitted and required consideration.
- The latest date for the new contract was April 2017 with the tendering process in the summer of this year, leading to decision on new provider.
- October 2015, the Board supported the recommended option to allow SCC to procure an integrated care and support provider for our ECH schemes.

- A service level agreement (SLA) between TDBC and the provider would ensure effective joint working and monitoring of the service by TDBC.
- November 2016, Community Scrutiny supported the recommended option subject to an updated report in the event of SCC changing the service model and its commissioning intentions.
- Despite additional options being reviewed, the recommended option remains the same.
- The alternative option presented by SCC was for TDBC to provide the weekday housing related support in an interim contract. There would be no service integration although an SLA would promote joint working. Staff restructuring would be required.
- The recommended option was stronger as it was in the best interests of tenants, by delivering greater benefits to tenants in terms of Help, Flexible Responsive Service and reflected the tenants' aspirations.
- The SLA would ensure effective monitoring and joint working and help guard quality for the tenants.
- Recommended option delivery structure created a part time post at TDBC. This would manage the additional housing management with line management support from the existing specialist post of Senior Supported Housing Development Officer.
- The post would be on site at each scheme weekly to hold drop in sessions.
- Tenant Empowerment Manager would work closely with the provider to ensure regular tenant meetings etc.
- Through the Tender process, TDBC tenants would be consulted and involved in design and evaluation.
- TDBC officer were involved in stage 2 evaluation. This gave the Council some influence in procurement
- Officer would be providing information to Community Scrutiny for context on the revised proposed ECH service charge in advance of tenant consultation and the Fees and Charges approval cycle.
- The proposed change reflected the service and costs more accurately and was lower in the recommended option than the alternative.
- The proposal was to protect affected existing tenants from the increase.
- Tenants were being kept informed and officers visited the ECH schemes.
- The tenants' main concern was to know what was happening when and who to go to rather than the complexities of the process.
- Key to managing the transition would be high level of step by step communication with tenants and staff.

In summary, the recommended option to allow SCC to procure an integrated care and support provider received support at each stage last year as the most beneficial to tenants, meeting theirs and SCC's aspirations, lower risk and would not require subsidy from TDBC. In both options ECH service charges would be revised to reflect the costs of additional housing management accurately. The service charge was lower in the recommended option and the service charges would be picked up through Fees and Charges for approval in due course.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:-

- In response to a question enquiring if Tenants had received an update regarding the ECH scheme review progress, the Board were informed that Officers visited the schemes individually and the most recent occasion being the previous week. Tenants continued to inform the Council, they did not want specific detailed

information on review but information on what would affect them, which included staffing and service cost.

**Resolved** that the Officer's update report be noted.

## **8. Review of the Performance Indicators for 2016/17**

Considered the report previously circulated, concerning the review of the Housing and Communities Performance Indicators for 2016/17.

Historically, Housing and Communities had collected and reported a wide range and number of performance indicators that covered all of its housing service and many had previously been prescribed by government as statutory performance indicators or were ones the Council collected to use as part of a benchmarking set for Housemark.

The collection, monitoring and reporting of these measures was time consuming and for some measures, the value in collecting them had been questionable. So the government had made efforts to reduce the burden on councils to collect and report on performance indicators and over the past couple of years, the Housing Service decided to stop collecting and submitting Housemark data due to the burden of work on the Business Support team as well as that many Housing Providers now collected and report data in a different ways.

The Council had agreed to cut back performance measures as far as possible to retain accountability but to reduce the burden both in terms of collecting and reporting and within this context that Housing and Communities had undertaken a review of its performance indicators.

Managers had been working to identify one compact set of performance indicators that focus in on and capture the key business and service areas of the housing service. These measures needed to ensure the service was accountable but also drive the housing business and service delivery in key areas as well as needing to align with the emerging HRA Business Plan and particularly the 'stronger business' focus that the new Business Plan would require and remain relevant to tenants and TSMB and as previously reported to the Board, the 'top 10' measures was largely unchanged.

One of the Councils requirements was to move away from having different sets of performance measures for different purposes to having one suite of measures that would be used to report for all purposes but there was recognition that services and teams would still retain some additional internal measures as part of the good management of those services. However unless these were key measures, they would not be included to be reported externally.

The attached with covering report was a copy of the proposed performance indicator suite showing the list of 22 performance indicators that would be collected and reported. Below was a breakdown on the proposed new suit of indicators:

- 21 were relevant to the Council and would appear in all the Councils performance reports and publications;
- 5 were relevant for West Somerset Council and would appear in WSC performance reports.



- The table included reference to those that are part of HouseMark benchmarking in case the Housing Service chooses to re-join this, or seek benchmarking data from other housing providers.

For comparison purposes, Board Members were provided with a copy of the previous 'top 10' performance measures for TSMB as well as a copy of the previous full suite of 46 measures used in 2015/16.

Manager felt that the performance measures presented as appendix with the covering report were now fit for purpose for the Housing Service but acknowledge that with a new HRA Business Plan being written and a range of other projects taking place that, the Council might choose in future to report back on additional outcomes and this might form part of the performance indicator suite.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:-

- In response to a question enquiring whether or not the Council had the facility to re-house tenants if the repair to their property was significant enough to require it, the Board was informed that the Council did have this facility and even in an emergency situation.

**Resolved** that:-

1. The Officer's report be noted.
2. The proposed Performance Measures presented to Board Member for ongoing quarterly reporting from April 2016 be approved

## **9. Review of Tenant Service Management Board Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct.**

Considered the report previously circulated, concerning the review the Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct of the Tenant Services Management Board (TSMB). These documents had been in existence since the introduction of the board in 2010 and the Terms of Reference state that they should be reviewed every two years. The last time they were updated was at the TSMB AGM of April 2014. The documents were included as appendices the covering report.

The Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct detailed the role, aims, objectives and expected conduct of the board, were agreed at the start of the board's existence and were subsequently reviewed and updated at the TSMB AGM of 2012 and 2014.

Point 21.2 of the Terms of Reference state that "The Terms of Reference would be reviewed every two years". The two years had now elapsed, meaning the TSMB should reconsider the documents and put forward any amendments it felt were necessary.

**Resolved** that:-

1. The Officer's report to be noted.
2. The attached version of the TSMB Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct be approved and required no changes.

## **10. Any Other Business**

In response to a question by a Member enquiring if the Council had borrowed money for the Creechbarrow Road New Build project, did the Council own those properties, the Board was informed that the Council did in fact own those property despite borrowing money to complete the project.

(The meeting ended at 7.00pm)

## Declaration of Interests

### **Tenant Services Management Board**

- Declared a personal interests as a Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Tenants;
  - Mr R Balman
  - Mrs J Bunn
  - Mr M Davis
  - Mr D Galpin
  - Mrs J Hegarty
  - Mr K Hellier
  - Mr I Hussey
  - Mr R Middleton
  - Mr A Akhigbemen
  - Ms D Pierowicz

## TENANT AND LEASEHOLDER SATISFACTION PROJECT

Key Project Activity	Lead	Outputs	Outcomes (Improved Tenant & leaseholder Satisfaction with the Housing and Communities Service)	Milestones
1. <b>Grounds Maintenance Review</b>	Phil Webb	Defined by Project Manager	Defined by Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be agreed</li> </ul>
2. <b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance Review</b>	Terry May / Mark Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HRA Business Plan review by Savills                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stock Condition Survey</li> <li>Maintenance Standards</li> <li>Life Cycle Costing</li> <li>Asset Appraisal Model – Viability</li> </ul> </li> <li>Restructure of Property &amp; Development Directorate</li> <li>Review of Business Processes and IT systems so as to develop and implement future proof fit for purpose operational platform that allows digital first access to customers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand future long term financial and maintenance liabilities of the HRA Housing Portfolio, and what it will mean to our customers, and meet the Councils vision of a Stronger Business.</li> <li>Provide a staffing structure to deliver improved customer focussed services.</li> <li>Enhanced operational process and IT platform to enable better; first time fix, appointment options and greater customer access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be agreed</li> </ul>
3. <b>Feedback, Compliments &amp; Complaints</b>	Martha Dudman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An established and agreed feedback procedure (completed by Paul Harding)</li> <li>A system that ensures feedback (both positive and negative) <u>is used</u> to shape the service</li> <li>Training for all staff on the procedures and a clear message on expectation to use the procedures correctly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tenants feel their views are listened to and acted upon</li> <li>Tenants feel valued and able to help shape the service</li> <li>Staff who use the feedback system confidently and use the data to improve service wherever possible</li> </ul>	<p>April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the current procedures and whether it is or is not being followed – meet with Paul H</li> </ul> <p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with Kat East to look at trend analysis</li> </ul> <p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish options – including communication templates and staff training</li> </ul>
4. <b>Service Standards Review</b>	Angela Summers (Stephen Boland)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To publish a set of Service Standards and/or Customer Charter that is aligned with HCA Regulations</li> <li>All published Standards are clear, useful, accountable, balancing legal requirements, usefulness to staff, helpfulness for tenant</li> <li>Communicated and agreed with tenants</li> <li>Fundamentally imbedded internally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tenants and staff expectations are aligned</li> <li>Tenants and staff are aware of and understand the agreed Service Standards</li> <li>The Standards are be used by both tenants and staff to ensure service remains high</li> </ul>	<p>April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand HCA Regulations – meeting with Stephen Boland</li> <li>Identify potential managers for each standard</li> </ul> <p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm lead manager for each standard – meeting with Simon Lewis</li> <li>Meet with Lead Managers to confirm design and format template and standard content</li> <li>Agree gaps in service with lead managers</li> <li>Carry out best practice research</li> </ul> <p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations to Martha to be included in implementation plan</li> </ul>

## TENANT AND LEASEHOLDER SATISFACTION PROJECT

<b>5. Customer Service</b>	Martha Dudman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well trained staff delivering high quality customer service, including taking ownership of enquiry, dealing with at issues first point of contact where possible, always being professional, polite and helpful.</li> <li>An improved customer contact system in place at all levels – web self-service, phone, face-to-face/case management (not yet sure what this will look like)</li> <li>A more robust system of tenant involvement in the Housing and Communities Service – ‘Menu of Involvement’</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tenants feel contacting and accessing the Housing and Communities Service is simple and straightforward</li> <li>Tenants are satisfied that the service provided to them is of a high quality</li> <li>A culture among staff to provide high quality customer service to all tenants</li> </ul>	April <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualitative staff and tenant discussions</li> <li>Best Practice examples established – including visits to other organisations</li> </ul> May <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation sessions with tenants – ‘quality check’</li> <li>Mary Gober Briefing (18<sup>th</sup> May)</li> <li>Scoping out the options – working with Lucy to look at costings &amp; affordability</li> <li>On-going meetings with iESE to ensure projects are aligned</li> </ul> June <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin writing report and implementation plan</li> </ul>
<b>6. Quick Wins</b>	Martha Dudman (overseeing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continual identification of short term projects (quick wins) where action can begin immediately</li> <li>Projects Leads will be identified for the individual work streams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes and improvements to be made as soon as possible (rather than waiting for the publication of the Implementation Plan in July)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-going</li> <li>To be included in final report with details of current progress</li> </ul>
<b>7. Leaseholder input</b>	Claire Thackray	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using best practice from improvements made to leaseholder satisfaction</li> <li>Ensuring Leaseholders needs are represented during this project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued improvements in Leasehold satisfaction levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance at Project Board meetings to ensure leaseholder views are represented</li> </ul> June <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any recommendations to Martha to be included in Implementation Plan</li> </ul>
<b>8. Finance Support</b> (anticipated as project progresses)	Lucy Clothier	Yet to be determined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The service that provided in the future is affordable and sustainable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>

**N.B.** There are several themes that are cut across all the above Key Project Activities

- Stakeholder Engagement** – the involvement of tenants, staff and leaseholders is crucial throughout this process. Responsibility for this will be held by Martha Dudman (staff), Martin Price (tenants) and Claire Thackery (leaseholders).
- Financial Restrictions** – the current financial situation of the HRA account will ultimately guide what can be achieved throughout this process, and consequentially the expectations of all stakeholders must be managed accordingly.
- Communication & Publicity** – ensuring that all stakeholders are kept up-to-date with progress and recommendations is will be crucial to retaining interest and support for the project.
- Procurement** – the Council’s procurement of services or systems must keep in mind the specific needs of the Housing and Communities Service to ensure they are fit for purpose and support the delivery of good quality customer service.

Improving Tenant and Leaseholder Satisfaction	2016										2017							
	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug
<b>Phase 1- Research *</b>																		
Write and agree Project Brief																		
Establish and agree Project Board																		
Initial Project Board meeting																		
Establish critical friends, best practice research																		
Baseline research																		
Possible solutions research - focus groups (staff & tenants)																		
First options appraisal																		
Present priority issues list to Project Board for approval																		
<b>Phase 2 - Establish Recommendations</b>																		
More in-depth research into possible solutions for each issue																		
Feed into HRA Business Plan consultation with tenants																		
Second options appraisal																		
Present recommendations to Project Board for approval																		
Write Implementation Plan																		
<b>Phase 3 - Implementation of Changes</b>																		
Agree Lead Officers for recommended changes																		
Meetings with identified Lead Officers to scope out various workstreams																		
Implementation of change																		
<b>Phase 4 - Monitor and Review</b>																		
Consultation and focus groups																		
Write report detailing progress so far and feedback from initial consultation																		
Satisfaction Survey																		

\* it is anticipated that there will be short term, 'quick wins' and that work will commence on

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 17 May 2016 at 6pm in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.**

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

**Officers:** Martha Dudman (Community Development Officer), Simon Lewis (Assistant Director – Housing and Community Development), James Barrah (Director – Housing and Communities), Terry May (Interim Assistant Director – Property and Development), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), and Emma Hill (Democratic Services Officer).

**Others:** Councillor Beale and Mrs Warmington  
Julia Williamson; Vice-Chair, Tenants' Forum

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

**1. Apologies**

Councillor C Booth

**2. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 22 March 2016 and 18 April 2016 were taken as read and were signed.

**3. Public Question Time**

No questions received for Public Question Time.

**4. Declarations of Interests**

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

Councillor Coles declared a personal interest as a Member of Somerset County Council.

**5. Tenant and Leaseholder Satisfaction Project.**

Considering the information and data tables previously circulated, concerning the Tenant and Leaseholder Satisfaction Project. The Community Development Officer gave a verbal update to support the previously circulated information.

Below was a summary of the main points from the update provided by the Community Development Officer:

- The project emanated from the Housing Service's STAR Survey, which was completed every two years. Looking at Tenant and Leaseholder satisfaction of the Housing Service.
- Following the last STAR Survey, there had been a decline in satisfaction across certain areas of the Housing Service with our tenants and leaseholders.
- The Project team would be looking at the particular areas of the survey, which received poor or unsatisfactory opinion from tenants and leaseholders.
- The project had eight key project activity areas included on an action plan, which were split between ten responsible officers. This included Grounds Maintenance, Repairs & Maintenance, Feedback Compliments & Complaints and Service Standards.
- The action plan would detail what the service needed to or required to do to address the issues presented to the Council through the STAR survey.
- This project started at the beginning of March 2016 from the STAR survey results being brought before the Board. The Project team responsible met once a month.
- Following the start of this project, the Project Manager pulled out statistically the priority areas off the back of the survey.
- This led to several of visits to and with tenant and leaseholder groups as well as input from staff.
- Following further research to hone the details of the suggested options to resolve the highlighted issues, an action plan would be created detailing the implementation of the Project Outcomes and brought back to the Board for their opinions and feedback.
- This report would include rough financial costings and timescales for each of the options. From this some decision would need to be made against the context of HRA Business Plan as well as against the available budgets, as to which options the Council and Housing Service take forward.
- There was project consultation next week being held at three locations, which Board Members were welcome to attend.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:-

- It was suggested that the biggest complaint relating from Tenants was relating to Grounds Maintenance and the mess/debris left after the staff had completed grass cuts near properties and this mess left behind on paths posed a safety hazard to tenants.
- In response to a question concerning the gathering of research and solutions to each issue for phase two before the end of May, the Board Members were informed that the officer had made progress with the headline issues and more research was required to complete the finer detail. As to progress of the other unique area, this was something that was dependent on individual service/officer workloads.
- Discussion regarding the issues relating to Grounds Maintenance currently completed in certain areas of Councils Housing Stock, which included the maintenance of hedges and the Board felt there was no set standard of work that all staff adhered too when it came to completing jobs for Housing Stock.

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



## 6. Verbal Update on DLO Relocation Project

The Director for Housing and Communities gave a verbal progress update concerning the Deane DLO depot build and relocation project.

Below was a summary of the main points from the update provided by the Director of Housing and Communities:

- As the project proceeded and made more progress, officers would provide the Board with a more structured progress update report.
- Copies of the newsletter were circulated to Board Members, providing them with pictures of the new depot progress.
- The Project Team and Delivery Team had monthly meetings and the project sponsor was Director of Housing and Communities.
- The contractors were making progress with the site and were currently three weeks ahead of schedule.
- The move to the new Depot location would take place in December 2016.
- The Build was being undertaken by Somerfield.
- The Council had put robust governance in place to monitor the project progress and performance.
- The Delivery Team were working preparing and making progress on the extensive project and task of getting the Deane DLO offsite at Priory Way to the new site located at West Park Business Park near Wellington.
- The biggest challenge for the project team was the move from the existing site to the new location near Wellington.
- Service managers were reviewing and disposing of the accumulated variety of 'stuff' currently located at Priory site. This included selling items that would not be required at the new site. The meant only the essential equipment would be taken and unwanted items that required selling off could be done through places like eBay, which we were making a good return on.
- As buildings at Priory site were emptied, they were being secured and were no longer in use.
- Service managers were completing a documents audit to review and reduce the amount of historic paperwork being stored. This was being indexed and transferred to the new electronic storage on Sharepoint for easier access and storage.
- The project team were undertaking an extensive HR project to support employes affected by the site location change. This was monitoring the impact on staff of the change as well as training for staff and managers on areas such as Sharepoint use.
- Part of the HR project and location change was an increased number of staff starting from home rather the depot.
- Project team had organised a number of site visits with service managers. This has included a visit to adjoining business unit, which was similar in site and style to the new Depot location.
- The Project team had seen some press activity as well as the promoting of the sites progress through internal information and the newsletter.
- The new facilities at the new location would fall under the existing facilities management service.
- The Councils legal service was currently working on the transfer of lease for the existing site to the respective businesses wishing to use the land following the DLOs departure for the site.

- All the temporary housing units located on adjoining piece of land to the existing site had been vacated and the project team were organising to have the units secured and demolished.
- The new IT infrastructure and support was a key risk area for the Project team and an officer had been seconded from West Somerset Council to the project team to ensure the procurement of the appropriate IT equipment for the new site, which included a modern telephone system.
- The Project team were currently focusing on the preparation for the move off the existing site.
- The Project team were developing a summary performance scorecard to bring before the Board to allow the monitoring of the project progress.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:-

- In response to a question enquiring if DLO staff were required to come into the depot to report in every morning, the Board Members were informed that traditionally some trades had to come into the depot every morning to collect vans, equipment and their job tickets for the day but this was slowly changing and that any trade that could start from home in the mornings and receive their job tickets either their PDA was being actioned and only those staff who were required to collect equipment such as grass cutting equipment etc were coming in and their rounds were being altered/adjusted to start from new depot site. We were also investigating the possibility of delivering essential parts for job tickets to the location preventing the need to come back to the depot during the day. The investment in available new technology was helping with this.

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

## **7. Verbal Update on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan Review**

The Director of Housing and Communities gave a verbal progress update on the review of the HRA Business Plan and the connected work streams including Council and Service priorities.

Below was a summary of the main points from the update provided by the Project Manager:

- Following the review of the HRA Business Plan, the Council had settled on three key priorities, which were providing quality homes, better service, supporting vulnerable people and stronger business.
- An action plan had been produced connected to the priorities and planned work streams.
- The next set of data from the Councils Stock Condition survey was due. This data would be added to the HRA financial module to review baseline positions for HRA.
- As part of the adjustment of baseline position following the survey results, the Council had found its Capital would be slightly higher than expected but we had also there was room for more efficiencies within our revenue costs, which would balance out the higher than expected capital costs.
- With the revised debit repayment plan, this would form part of the revised baseline position and financial module for the HRA Business Plan. This new position included a target of 15 new build home per year as well as reviewing

the Councils work streams and staffing costs, such as its work as part of the One Team project.

- The HRA and General Fund were still required to make more savings as part of the wider transformation project.
- Project team would bring a report concerning the options for HRA budgetary savings to the Board for them to consider the options available to the HRA. This would include some recommendations for decisions.
- The key unknown for the future of HRA Business Plan was the Councils ambitions and there or not HRA and the Councils could afford those ambitions.
- The HRA Business Plan review was made up of many different work streams, which came together to form it.
- The Housing and Planning Bill had become an Act. Provisions had been put in place following this but these needed to be enacted in the Housing and Planning service.
- Part of this was the introduction of the Pay to Stay scheme. With possibility of increased rent for those wanting to live in Council accommodation who were on higher salaries. Officers felt that this would have a side effect that tenants would not see the benefit of the increased rent and decide to go for Right to Buy instead.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:-

- In response to a question enquiring about the average number of RtB per year and whether the number was higher than the desired annual new build target, the Board were informed that currently the interest in RtB was static at 35 requests per year so effectively the Council would be going backwards and not increasing its stock of houses.
- The ambition was to keep RtB stable allowing for some increase in stock and so far with the Council New Build Programme and Buy Back projects, we had made a good impact on this but the likelihood as time went on that things would get away from the Council.
- In response to a question concerning the extension of the pay back of debt to the Government and what the extent of the difference in years, the Board Members were informed initially it was 18 years remaining but the Council was looking to extend this to 60 years, officers were waiting for confirmation from the Councils s151 officer before proceeding with this. The HRA and Council simply could not afford to pay back the debt over the current timescale of 18 years or over if it was extended to 30 years. This was due to 1% reduction in Housing rent that the Government had imposed on Local Authorities and Housing Associations.
- In response to a question regarding why there had been an increase in cost for Voids and Repairs service, the Board Members were informed that the cost for these services had not increased overall but after benchmarking and comparison, the Councils costs for Voids and Repairs were comparatively higher than other Housing providers. The Council took this as a sign of higher standards of property maintenance for our tenants.
- Discussion regarding the choice between repaying the debt or maintaining services for tenants and the people of Taunton Deane. The Board Members mentioned that tenants were concerned with the bigger picture of the Councils finances, more about maintaining and preserving services.
- Officers informed the Board, the asset value of the Councils Housing stock was £200/250 million and there was still value locked up in the stock for the Council

**Resolved** that the Officer's update report be noted.

**8. Verbal Update on The Deane House Relocation Project**

Reference Minute No. 6/18April/2016, the verbal update of the Director for Housing and Communities regarding progress of The Deane House Relocation project. The Director reiterated this verbal update on the project's progress.

The Director informed the Board that when there was any further progress or anything to report that the Board would receive an update report at a future meeting.

**Resolved** that the Officer's update report be noted.

**9. Exclusion of Press and Public**

**Resolved** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item because of the likelihood that exempt information would otherwise be disclosed relating to Clause 2 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

**10. CONFIDENTIAL Report on Building Services and Property Services Restructure.**

The Board considered a previously circulated confidential report from the Interim Assistant Director for Property and Development concerning the restructure of Building and Property Services. The report identified further improvements to the service through transformation by the aligning of the work streams and priorities of the Property and Building Services.

**Resolved** that the Officer's confidential report be noted.

(The meeting ended at 7.27pm)