

Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on Monday 19 August 2013 at 6pm in Newton Road Community Hall, Newton Road, Taunton.

Present: Mr Dustyn Etherington (Chairman),
Mrs J Hegarty (Vice-Chairman),
Mrs J Bunn, Mrs E Drage, Mr M Edwards, Mr D Gaplin, Councillor Bowrah and
Councillor Mrs Gaden.

Officers: Stephen Boland (Housing Services Lead), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment
Manager) and Emma Hill (Corporate Support Officer).

Others: Councillor T Slattery and Councillor J Warmington.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

1. Public Question Time

Questions were received from Councillor Slattery in relation to:

- grass cutting charges for tenants
- tenants earning over £60,000 paying a higher level of rent
- rent convergence
- tenants with reading difficulties being able to complete forms

2. Feedback from Tenant Services Management Board on STAR Survey 2013

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the STAR (Survey of Tenants and Residents) Survey 2013. This survey provides social housing landlords with the essential means of discovering how satisfied tenants and leaseholders are with the services provided to them and also allows landlords to benchmark satisfaction results with each other.

The aim of this report and survey was to allow the Tenant Services Management Board (TSMB) to analyse the results and highlight areas of the service that they feel should be reviewed in order for improvements to be made.

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

- *Officers informed Members of the Board that the summary version of the STAR Survey results went out in the Deane Housing Newsletter.*
- Anti-Social Behaviour at 19%, this was a positive point. There should be a more in depth review of tenants and residents with litter and rubbish in their front garden.
- Need to investigate why tenants have not kept their gardens clean. Was it an education issue or not able to remove rubbish? Motivational issue = if the estates were tidy then the tenants would be encouraged to keep their gardens tidy.
- An idea, which had worked in other areas, was Community Clean up sessions. More work needs to be done in finding out why and find a way to resolve the issue.

- Would the Tenant's Forum be in the 'task & finish' group for this?
Yes, the council would be inviting the Tenants Forum to get involved for this.
- Large majority of tenants didn't have internet access or a computer. The DWP were now going to all electronic communications.
Plans to look at a Digital Inclusion Project for this area, there was Capital Funding put aside. The Council were investigating places to put such facilities. There would be training in place at the localities. This would be local people training assisting others.

Resolved that:

- The Board noted the Officer's report.
- The Board suggested the following areas to scrutinise from the results of STAR Survey:
 1. Housing Repairs
 2. Ground Maintenance & Estate Services
- The Board Members also suggested an internal review with Housing Department of Customer Services as this had also been flagged on the STAR Survey.

3. Tenant Participation Advisory Services (TPAS) Tenant Central Training

It was noted that this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board. The Tenant Empowerment Manager provided copies of the training packs that were distributed at the training event.

4. Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholders 2013

The Tenant Empowerment Manager gave a verbal update regarding the Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholders for 2013. This report currently comes in the format of calendar.

This year's annual report would include financial information from 2012/13. The format of this report would be decided by task and finish group. This would go out to all tenants and leaseholders. In 2012, 88% expressed liking for the current format.

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

- Agreed with the coming together of TSMB and Tenants Forum in a task and finish group to make decisions regarding the Annual Report.
- The volunteers from TSMB to take part in the task and finish were Mark Edwards, Bob Bowrah and Judith Hegarty.
- Could you the Council help community set up something like 'Halcon in Bloom' competition?
- *Did the Members of the Board want to keep the format from 2013 calendar or change it?*
- The general opinion was preference to the format from 2012. The suggestion was to combine the best bits of both formats.
- Board Members agreed with putting out the Annual Report and 2014 Calendar at the end of November/start of December.

- *The contacts list and rubbish collections timings had proved a very popular addition to the calendar with everyone. The format and contents was a fine balancing act.*

Resolved that the officer's report be noted.

(The meeting ended at 7.30pm)