

**Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013 at 6:00pm in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.**

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

**Officers:** Shari Hallett (Business Support Lead), Caroline White (Housing Development Project Lead), James Barra (Health and Housing Manager), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), Steve Boland (Housing Services Lead), Steven Clarke (Tenant Services Development Officer), Joy Wishlade (Strategic Director), Norah Day (Housing Estate Manager), Phil Webb (Housing Manager – Property Services), Rosie Reed (Tenant Services Development Officer), and Emma Hill (Corporate Support Officer).

**Others:** Councillors J Warmington and Councillor F Smith  
Graham Vickery from Halcon North Tenants & Residents Association

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

**1. Apology**

Mrs E Drage and Mrs J Hegarty

**2. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 17 December 2012 were taken as read and signed.

**3. Declaration of Interest**

The Chairman requested that the Members of the Tenant Services Management Board declare any additional declarations to be made, not already on the attached list of declarations.

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

**4. Verbal Report and Demonstration of Housing Information Technology Systems.**

The Business Support Lead gave a verbal report and demonstration to the Members of the Board on the Housing IT systems Academy, CodeMan and COSY.

All three IT systems were not currently interlinked. The advantage of being able to link the New Deane DLO system to Academy and CodeMan would allow officers to access a wider variety of information but also to include the use of PDA's whilst officers were away from the office including updating and closing Job Tickets. This process is still done manually using the COSY system.

The 'Choice Based Letting' system, which was also not linked in with any other system, would be another possible link to share and widen the information base available to Officers. Although, currently there were restrictions on the level of information staff can access. This was linked to the requirements of their job.

The Academy system is a Capita produced programme and currently in use for five years. Housing Services continually refines the system to make it fit for use. The information contained on the system was based on the individual properties and tenancies.

Under the Property section of the programme were detailed breakdown on individual repair jobs for each property. These also included details about the property itself and any adaptations for disabilities, comments and notes section as well as any linked cases (these included reports of ASB) were also highlighted and the storage of any scanned documents such as certificates and communications

An additional facility was a system of pop-up messages acting as a reminder for officers.

With the Tenancy section of the Academy system, this would display details of the individual tenancy agreements including rent payments, rent arrears, term of tenancy and comments/notes. This would also include details of SWIPE Card for rent payments. Also displayed would be any information gathering during consultations including personal details about the tenants themselves.

Another future vision for these software systems was the ability to produce reports from the data stored within. Currently, only certain trained members of staff negotiate complex spider diagrams to produce information reports but the vision would be to develop the system to collate and produce regular reports and use this as a scheduling tool for job tickets and work programmes.

The COSY system was a Green Screen style system used by the DLO to open, maintain/update and close Job Tickets. Also CodeMan (known as AMP4) was used to record details of the Council's Stock Condition. This system was linked to hand held PDA's devices last year to enable offsite updates, when on site visits.

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

- The new DLO software, how well would it interface with existing Housing software?  
*This would be considered as part of the procurement process but using another Capita based system would be advantageous for such interfacing and linking the systems.*
- What would the current timescale for opening and closing job tickets?  
*Actual timescales for job tickets can vary depending on the job. But there currently were four staff dealing with Job Tickets. You would be looking at days not weeks but this depends on the job. The vision for the future would be PDA's.*
- Could the Council spread out the rent arrears payments?  
*Normally, separate arrangements would be made for the re-payment of rent arrears but normally the Council ask for this as a full payment.*

- What were the current safeguards for protecting tenant personal information stored on these systems?  
*The safeguards were that only staff that their job requires them to access this information was allowed. As to outside sources hacking into the servers and through the laptop encryption screen, this wouldn't be possible. Also TDBC doesn't share information that would be gathered through such medias as Consultation.*

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

**5. Introduction from Housing Development Project Lead.**

The Housing Development Project Lead introduced herself and gave a verbal report to the Members of the Board in relation to the role of the post.

**Resolved** that the Board Members welcomed the officer and noted the Officers report.

**6. Verbal Update on Phase One New Housing Developments.**

The Health and Housing Manager gave a verbal update regarding the Phase one developments.

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

- I think there is no need to change the amount available for the TRGs by the responses given. Other Board Members gave general support for this.

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

**7. Verbal Update on Welfare Reform.**

The Housing Services Lead gave a verbal update regarding Welfare Reform

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

**8. Confidential Update on Halcon North Development.**

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

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

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

(The meeting ended at 8.00pm)

**Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on Monday 4 February 2013 at 6pm in Newton Road Community Hall, Newton Road, Taunton.**

**Present:** Mr Dustyn Etherington (Chairman), Mrs J Bunn, Mr D Galpin, Mr I Gould, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr R Middleton, Mrs T Urquhart.

**Officers:** James Barrah (Health and Housing Manager), Stephen Boland (Housing Services Lead), Rosie Reed (Tenant Services Development Officer) and Tracey Meadows (Corporate Support Officer).

**Others:** Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), Joy Wishlade (Strategic Director), Councillors Jean Adkins, Fran Smith and Jane Warmington.

**Public:** Miss Bleeks, Mrs Cure, Mrs Cure-E-Couto, Mrs Goddard, Miss Parsons, Mr Pierce, Mr Rawlins and Miss Wilkins.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

**1. Apologies**

Councillors Bowrah and Brooks, Mrs E Drage, Mr M Edwards and Mr K Hellier.

**2. Halcon North Regeneration – Creechbarrow Road Development Project. Report of the Health and Housing Manager, James Barrah.**

The Health and Housing Manager, James Barrah, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Proposed Redevelopment of Creechbarrow Road. The report proposals to undertake a redevelopment of housing land at Creechbarrow Road, Taunton. It identifies two potential sections of a combined project, one to be in the ownership of a partner Housing Association, the other to be retained by the Council. The project has the potential to secure significant investment in the Halcon Ward for new housing and significantly increase the affordable housing stock in this location.

In relation to the Housing Association portion of the site the report seeks a decision to progress transfer of part of the site and a development of 30 affordable homes.

In relation to the TDBC portion of the site the outline of a scheme is set out, subject to a satisfactory detailed scheme appraisal. A request is made to approve the redevelopment of the TDBC portion of the site broadly in accordance with the sketch plan provided, and for that purpose to undertake activities.

After the presentation of this item, the Chairman read out comments from the Halcon Ward Councillors reflections on this proposal, this was circulated on separate sheets and acknowledge by the reporting Officer.

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

- If the proposal goes ahead when will Knightstone want to start building?  
*Knightstone have a firm time scale on the site, the scheme needs to be finished by March 2015 as it is Time Bound, if not funding will be withdrawn.*
- Can we pick the accommodation/area that we are expected to move to?

*We need to reach a situation that is acceptable to everyone, there are limitations on stock but will do we can to accommodate you.*

- Are you going to payout compensation for the inconvenience of moving costs etc?  
*There is an award for disturbance, this is about £4,700, but it is based on individual needs.*
- Would the hub replace the Link Centre?  
*This has not been discussed yet, we need more details.*
- There is concern for the elderly and disabled, how are they going to manage if they have no one to help them move, these are their twilight years and they do not want the added stress of worrying about moving.  
*We have "Tailored Support" which will come in and pack your items for you.*
- Three residents have been living in the same block since they were built in 1976, how are you going to make sure that they stay together through the decanting?  
*We need to look at what support we can give these residents, this may be through Tailored Support or other methods.*
- Are the residents going to be phased in once the houses/flats are complete?  
*Residents will be phased in once parts of the scheme are completed.  
Decanting is not new to the Council, we will speak to the individual concerned and take into consideration their individual needs.  
People will benefit from a better standard of living, cheaper fuel costs, the physical look of the area and maintaining the community spirit.*
- We welcome these comments as residents fear that they may not go back to their home and it will not be the same community spirit that they have enjoyed.  
*Everyone that is decanted will be able if they wish to go back.*
- Concerns that you are only thinking of the land and what you can build on it.  
*This scheme is not a profit driven project; it is an investment in the area. We want to hear your concerns and fears, you can be assured that although there will be an impact we will make sure that it is as stress free as possible.*
- We just want the best for every tenant and all the problems need to be solved before you embark on this project. As the previous project was not appropriate for the area. It is a tough decision that we have been asked to make, but we are please that we are going to gain more family Council homes.
- Is there an expectation that you will put up the rent on these new properties?  
*This is expected as they will be brand new properties built to a code 4 standard. Social rent levels have not been looked at for 20 years, so this is a new thing for us; we need to balance all perspectives. Rents must be the same across the board as older stock is costing more to maintain due to planned maintenance.*
- Does that mean that you will also put up the Council Tax?  
*The District Valuer will look at this and we will be taking advice from them.*
- Why can't a condition be put in that previous tenants pay the same rent as they were before and when they vacate the property, the rent goes up to what it should be?  
*This is a bit tricky, due to administration and fairness.*
- On the Right to Buy Scheme how will this work as after 5 years you can apply to the Council to buy your property?  
*This properties are covered for 15 years, if you do decide that you wish to buy your property you will need to pay the full construction cost, with no discount applied. After 15 years the property discount is applied as per the Right to Buy Scheme.*

The Chairman read out the recommendations from the report. These were agreed by the board members but they also stated that the scheme did not address the other areas of deprivation in Halcon.

**Resolved** that the report would be look at by the Full Council in March 2013.

(The meeting ended at 7.35pm)