

Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on Monday 19 March 2012 at 6pm in the John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.

Present: Mr Etherington (Chairman)
Mr Edwards (Vice- Chairman)
Councillor Bowrah, Councillor Brooks, Mrs Bunn, Mrs Drage, Mr Galpin, Mrs Hegarty, Mr Hellier, Mrs Marshall and Mrs Urquhart.

Officers: James Barrah (Community Services Manager), Stephen Boland (Housing Services Lead), Paul Hadley (Housing Estates Manager), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), Rosie Reed (Tenant Services Development Officer), Phil Webb (Housing Property Services Manager) and Keith Wiggins (Democratic Services Officer).

Others: Councillor Williams and Nigel Stuart-Thorn

(The meeting commenced at 6.03pm)

24. Apologies

None – all board members were present

25. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 20 February 2012 were taken as read and signed.

26. Declaration of Interests

The following members declared a personal interest as a Council house tenant:

- Mrs Bunn
- Mrs Drage
- Mr Edwards
- Mr Etherington
- Mr Galpin
- Mrs Hegarty
- Mr Hellier
- Mrs Marshall
- Mrs Urquhart

Councillor Bowrah and Councillor Brooks each declared a personal interest as a family member was a Council house tenant.

27. Communities and Local Government Consultation - Social Housing Fraud

Considered report previously circulated, concerning a draft response to the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Social Housing Fraud Consultation.

The Tenant Services Development Officer explained the background to the consultation and introduced each of the eleven consultation questions in turn.

Members of the board commented on each point and asked questions.

Resolved to note the proposals and request their comments be included in the Housing Services response to government.

28. Annual Report to Tenants 2010/11 Feedback Results

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the feedback received on the Annual Report to Tenants 2010/11.

Feedback forms had been provided to all tenants with the Annual Report to Tenants Calendar. A good response had been received, with over 600 feedback forms being returned by the end of January 2012. The feedback provided was largely positive and in favour of the new calendar format for the annual report.

Members were pleased that the report had been well received but requested that officers respond where possible to any concerns expressed by tenants.

Resolved to note the report.

29. Allocation of accommodation - guidance for local housing authorities in England

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the Homefinder Somerset Partnership's joint response to the Communities and Local Government's consultation - Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England.

The Housing Services Lead explained the draft proposals were seeking to provide guidance on the allocation of social housing and seeking to redress under occupancy of housing.

There would be support for older tenants to downsize if they wished and estates officers would be available to help families.

Resolved to note the report.

30. Tenant Awards

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the introduction of awards to Council tenants.

The awards would allow the good work Taunton Deane Borough Council's tenants do for their neighbourhood and other tenants to be recognised. Often this work was voluntary and time consuming but made a positive impact to the lives of others.

During the discussion it was suggested that the awards should be linked in with the annual Citizen of the year award ceremony.

Resolved to note the report and support the recommendation for a joint awards ceremony in 2013.

31. Tenants' and Leaseholders Open Day

The Open day would be held at Somerset County Cricket ground on Monday 23 April between 10 am and 5pm.

The Tenant Empowerment Manager requested volunteers for the TSMB stall and received offers from members that would cover the whole day.

32. Tenant Services Management Board Annual General Meeting

The Tenant Empowerment Manager confirmed the Board's Annual General Meeting would be on the same day as the open day, Monday 23 April at 4pm.

(The meeting ended at 7.50pm)