

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board to be held in Meeting Room C, Flook House, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 11 December 2017 at 18:00.

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## **Agenda**

- 1 Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 13 November 2017 (attached).
- 3 Public Question Time.
- 4 Declaration of Interests  
To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or personal or prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Code of Conduct, in relation to items on the agenda. Such interests need to be declared even if they have already been recorded in the Register of Interests. The personal interests of Councillors who are County Councillors or Town or Parish Councillors will automatically be recorded in the minutes.
- 5 Transformation - Process Review. Report of the Senior Transformation Project Lead (verbal update).  
Reporting Officer: Paul Harding
- 6 Development Update. Report of the Housing Development and Enabling Manager and the Development and Regeneration Manager (attached).  
Reporting Officers: Rachel Searle  
Jo Humble
- 7 Weavers Arms Local Lettings Plan. Report of the Housing, Lettings and Anti-Social Behaviour Manager (attached).  
Reporting Officer: Paul Hadley
- 8 Feedback from the Visit of the Housing Minister. Report of the Tenant Empowerment Manager and Board Members (verbal update).  
Reporting Officer: Martin Price
- 9 Tenant Services Management Board Meeting Dates 2018. Report of the Tenant Empowerment Manager (verbal update).  
Reporting Officer: Martin Price

Bruce Lang  
Assistant Chief Executive

22 February 2018

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](http://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](mailto:r.bryant@tauntondeane.gov.uk)**

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**Tenant Services Management Board Members:-**

Mr A Akhigbemen

Councillor C Booth

Councillor R Bowrah, BEM

Mrs J Bunn

Mr D Galpin

Mrs J Hegarty

Mr K Hellier

Mr I Hussey

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 13 November 2017 at 6.00pm in Meeting Room C in Flook House at The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.**

**Present:** Mr R Balman (Chairman)  
Mr A Akhigbemen, Mrs J Bunn, Mr K Hellier, Mr I Hussey, Councillor C Booth and Councillor R Bowrah, BEM.

**Officers:** Stephen Boland (Housing Services Lead), Rich Prewer (Property Services Manager), Jonathan Stevens (Repairs and Maintenance Manager), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager) and Clare Rendell (Democratic Services Officer).

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mrs J Belcher, Mr D Galpin and Mrs J Hegarty.

**2. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 16 October 2017 were signed and taken as read.

**3. Public Question Time**

No questions were received for Public Question Time.

**4. Declarations of Interests**

Mr R Balman, Mr A Akhigbemen, Mrs J Bunn, Mr K Hellier and Mr I Hussey declared personal interests as Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Tenants.

**5. Maintenance Standards**

The Property Services Manager presented the report on the Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) Maintenance Standards.

The document had been developed collaboratively with tenant representatives and sets out TDBC Maintenance Standards for its housing portfolio. This enabled all stakeholders and those who delivered the standards to have a clear understanding of the expectations which were supported by the Council's Customer Promises:-

- TDBC were committed to putting customers first;
- Whatever the enquiry was, the customer could expect TDBC staff to be professional and fair;
- TDBC would deal with the customer's enquiry as soon as possible and keep the customer updated; and
- Customers would be able to see a copy of TDBC Customer Promise, known as 'People First Customer Promise'.

Within the document, details of the repairs service were detailed. TDBC promised to carry out a speedy repairs service that got the job done on time and right the first time. The Council would ensure:-

- 91% of all repairs were completed on the first time visit;

- 90% of the appointments made were kept without the need to move or cancel;
- Appointments were routinely offered for urgent and routine repairs;
- 100% of all emergency repairs were carried out within 24 hours of being reported;
- 97% of all routine repairs were carried out within 28 days of being reported.
- Contractors showed tenants their identification cards;
- Contractors left tenant's homes clean and tidy after any works. All debris and waste was to be removed from site and were not to be placed in tenants recycling bins; and
- Repairs performance was reported regularly to tenants in newsletters and on the TDBC website.

During the discussion of this item, Board Members made the following comments and asked questions (Responses shown in italics):-

- Members queried whether details on the timescales for repairs could be given. *The Property Services Manager advised that the department was trying to move away from timescales. The Property Department had a 24 hour emergency care line and would make an appointment for any repairs that needed to be carried out. Preferably the appointments would be made for times that contractors were already in the area, to be more efficient.*
- Members were concerned that the works would be dragged out due to the lack of specific timescales. *The works would be completed as soon as possible and would be monitored to ensure that repairs did not take too long to be carried out.*
- Members queried the amount of electric sockets allocated for each household and whether there would be enough to ensure modern lifestyle needs were met. *The department would ensure that there would be enough but had to be mindful of the budget.*
- Concern was raised on the location of the electric sockets. Currently they were located low to the ground which made it difficult to reach. *The contractors would locate replacement and new sockets in easy to reach locations.*
- Members queried the standard that stated every electric shower would be replaced with mixer taps and whether this would be the best choice for all tenants. *This would be judged on a case by case basis. Mixer taps were the most cost efficient option for tenants.*
- Members queried would any exemptions or restrictions be placed on tenants with regards to whether they would have a fence installed or replaced. *Officers had tried to move away from restrictions in the new standards, so therefore, the jobs would be judged on an ad hoc basis. Officers wanted to manage tenant's expectations with the standards.*
- Concern was raised about graffiti and who decided if it was offensive and marked for urgent removal. *This would be judged on an ad hoc basis.*
- Concern was raised about the behaviour of contractors compared to Deane DLO staff. *Contractors should act in the same manner as the Deane DLO staff. If they did not, tenants were required to report the behaviour.*
- Members queried whether the Council held a register of the works history for each property. *Unfortunately the Council did not hold a register of works. However, the*

*Property Team had worked with Asset Management to gather the information and hoped in the future to be able to compile a register. The team had tried to prioritise which works were needed on each property rather than the completion of periodic refurbishments when an emergency job was required.*

- Members praised the officers for their work and the production of a good report.

**Resolved** that the Board endorsed the Officer's report.

## **6. Performance Indicators for Quarter 2 of 2017-2018.**

The Housing Services Lead and Property Services Manager presented their report which provided an update on the Performance Indicators (PI) for quarter 2 of 2017-2018.

The following indicators were highlighted in the report:-

- HC 2.7 – Percentage of new tenants satisfied with the lettable standard of the property. The department had two members of staff that acted as the point of contact for new tenants and periodically checked if there were any problems and this service had improved tenant satisfaction.
- HC 2.8 – Percentage of tenants satisfied with the most recent repair. This PI had been a positive outcome for the service because it had gone from red to green. Officers had worked on improving the call statistics for the main repairs line.
- HC 3.1 – Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas certificate. This remained amber because the staff had experienced difficulties in accessing the properties.
- HC 4.1 – Average re-let time. This PI had been improved and was now green. The department had a quicker turnaround for void properties.
- HC 4.2 – Completion of repairs within priority target times. This PI had remained amber. Staff had not used the Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) provided to record works and repairs correctly which had affected the statistics.
- HC 4.4 – Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG). This had seen a huge improvement. The General Fund DFG's had included 13 cases, 10 were inside the 24 week period and 3 were not but this was due to the complexity of the cases. The Non-Council DFG's had an average completion time that was under 23 weeks.
- HC 4.8 – Percentage of tenants that had received an annual review of their Support Plan, needs and risks. This remained amber because officers had struggled to gain access to the properties.

During the discussion of this item, Board Members made the following comments and asked questions (Responses shown in italics):-

- Concern was raised on why HC 4.8 was still amber and whether the tenants had given any reasons why they did not want to be reviewed.  
*No reasons had been given. Officers believed that some tenants had not responded to their invite because they thought they did not need to be reviewed.*
- Members queried whether the emergency jobs that had been logged incorrectly in HC 4.2 was a training issue with staff.  
*There was a mixture of reasons, sometimes it was the call centre staff that logged it on the system incorrectly and other times it might be that the*

*contractors had not closed down the case in the correct timescale. Managers had encouraged conformity and would continue to monitor staff.*

- Members praised the Property Services Manager and his team for their hard work.

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

## 7. **Property Services Delivery Plan and Performance Indicators for Quarter 2 of 2017-2018**

The Property Services Manager presented his report which provided the Board Members with an update on the service which included details on operational delivery and process improvement. He understood that there was still room for improvement and the team had scope to learn from other businesses on how to become more innovative.

The Delivery Plan was broken down into six sections, which included:-

- Review and Improve Key Processes;
- Long Term Maintenance and Investment;
- Deliver Brilliant Services;
- Expansion of Building Services;
- Staff Development; and
- Networking Groups.

The progress sheet demonstrated that since April 2017, when some projects had yet to start, substantial progress had been made and in October 2017, a majority of the projects were now underway and the rest had been marked as completed.

The Property Services Manager would report back to the Board with more information by the end of the next quarter.

During the discussion of this item, Board Members made the following comments and asked questions (Responses shown in italics):-

- Members queried what DRS meant in the report.  
*DRS stood for Dynamic Resource Scheduling and was the system used by the department to log and schedule jobs. It was an efficient system and involved the use of PDAs which meant officers were able to work in an agile way.*
- Concern was raised on whether the Council had a continuity plan if the PDAs had stopped working.  
*Unfortunately there was no continuity plan in place. However, as long as the main system could be accessed, officers would be able to instruct the contractors on what jobs were scheduled.*
- Members queried why the figures had stagnated.  
*It was due to the types of projects that had been carried out.*
- Concern was raised on whether the Finance Department had struggled over the past few months due to the lack of the finance reports presented to the Board.  
*The department had not struggled, however, with the introduction of the new finance system, the officers were still being taught the new report processes.*

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Officer's report.  
(The meeting ended at 6.55pm)



**12 Moorland Close, Taunton**

Status Of Project		Last Report	This Report	Comments
<b>Construction</b>		<b>June</b>	<b>G</b>	
Status by Key Project Activities	Workstream Lead	Last Report	This Report	Comments
<b>Internal layout alterations</b>	Rachel Searle/Julie G	n/a	<b>G</b>	Complete
<b>First &amp; second fix</b>	Rachel Searle/Julie G	n/a	<b>G</b>	In Progress
<b>External works &amp; landscaping</b>	Rachel Searle/Julie G	n/a	<b>n/a</b>	Pending

Key	
<b>Red</b>	Unsatisfactory progress – milestones & timescales not being met corrective action or re-plan required
<b>Amber</b>	Issues against some milestones but remedial action will keep project under control overall
<b>Green</b>	All milestones being met & project on target/completed
Development Definitions:	
<b>Project Team</b>	A mix of appointed external consultants and Deane Housing Development staff.

Key Accomplishments LAST Period	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal layout alterations</li> <li>First fix mechanical &amp; electrical</li> <li>Re-roofing works, including ancillary works</li> </ul>	

Key Activities NEXT Period	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taunton East Development Trust (TEDT) visit new premises &amp; sign new lease for 12 Moorland Close</li> <li>Completion of second fix plumbing and electrics</li> <li>Internal decoration &amp; finishes</li> <li>External landscaping</li> </ul>	

Issues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None to report on building delivery</li> <li>TEDT service delivery is being closely monitored and assisted by Taunton Deane</li> </ul>	

**Weaver Arms Development, Rockwell Green, Wellington**

Status Of Project		Last Report	This Report	Comments
<b>Construction</b>		<b>June</b>	<b>A</b>	
Status by Key Project Activities for Weavers Arms	Workstream Lead	Last Report	This Report	Comments
<b>Roofing</b>	Rachel Searle/Julie G	n/a	<b>A</b>	Complete
<b>First &amp; second fix</b>	Rachel Searle/Julie G	n/a	<b>A</b>	In Progress
<b>External works &amp; landscaping</b>	Rachel Searle/Julie G	n/a	<b>n/a</b>	Pending

**Key**

<b>Red</b>	Unsatisfactory progress – milestones & timescales not being met corrective action or re-plan required
<b>Amber</b>	Issues against some milestones but remedial action will keep project under control overall
<b>Green</b>	All milestones being met & project on target/completed
Development Definitions:	
<b>Project Team</b>	A mix of appointed external consultants and Deane Housing Development staff.

**Key Accomplishments LAST Period**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erection of timber frame for flat blocks</li> <li>Completion of roofing work &amp; installation of windows for all properties</li> <li>Installation of new drainage</li> <li>Draft S104 drainage agreement approved – final copy to be signed shortly</li> <li>Approval obtained from private property owners for boundary treatment works</li> <li>Returning households have chosen colour choices for their prospective properties</li> <li>WRW obtained a good score from Considerate Constructors of 35 in November</li> </ul>
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**Key Activities NEXT Period**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of first &amp; second fix plumbing and electrics - bungalow end of site furthest advanced</li> <li>Completion of statutory approvals for car parking areas – legal agreement and technical approval being progressed by WRW jointly with Somerset County Council</li> <li>Internal decoration &amp; finishes</li> <li>External landscaping works</li> <li>Sale of two shared ownership properties (two bedroom semi-detached houses) will be advertised by local estate agent Wilkie May &amp; Tuckwood</li> </ul>
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**Issues**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delays with external bricking up of facades and window delays have had an effect on site activity</li> <li>Statutory approval between main contractor &amp; SCC for highways alterations has been delayed</li> </ul>
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# **LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN**

## **WEAVERS ARMS, ROCKWELL GREEN, WELLINGTON**

**This is a Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) local lettings plan for the Weavers Arms development scheme.**

**Weavers Arms is a purpose built scheme which contains 26 properties, of which 24 will be social housing properties and 2 shared ownership properties owned by TDBC comprising a mixture of types including 3 x 2 bedroom bungalows, 6 x 2 bedroom houses, 4 x 3 bedroom houses, 1 x 4 bedroom house and 12 x 1 bedroom flats. The properties will be constructed to current building regulations and will be considerably cheaper to run than an older property.**

### **Background**

Weavers Arms is situated within the village of Rockwell Green which is west of Wellington.

The broad aim of the scheme is that TDBC will construct and retain ownership of the new homes for rent but also offer 2 properties for purchase as shared ownership. Weavers Arms is being constructed on TDBC owned land next to existing Council owned properties which are part of a well-established general needs housing scheme.

### **Objectives of this Lettings Plan**

The objectives of this lettings plan are:

- TDBC to achieve the greatest choice and flexibility in meeting the needs of housing applicants; and
- To create a safe and secure environment in which tenants can live peacefully and in harmony with their neighbours and in which families can grow.

### **The Area – Weavers Arms, Rockwell Green**

Weavers Arms has been built on local authority land next to an existing council owned housing. The nearest Primary School is situated within the existing housing scheme approximately 200 metres away, the nearest Secondary School is approximately 800 metres away. There is a Public House in the village, the nearest shop is only 200 metres away. There a daily bus service into Wellington and Taunton Town centre.

## The Scheme

Weavers Arms is a scheme of 24 TDBC owned and 2 shared ownership properties. The properties will be constructed to current building regulations and will be considerably cheaper to run than older properties.

The stock break-down for the rented properties is as follows:

Property Type	TDBC affordable weekly rent
10 x 1 bed flat	£88.00
2 x 1 bed flat (wheelchair user)	£89.60
3 x 2 bed bungalow (wheelchair user)	£127.94
4 x 2 bed semi detached house	£120.00
4 x 3 bed semi detached house	£138.40
1 x 4 bed house	£148.00
2 x 2 bed semi detached house	Shared ownership 2.75% Open Market Value

There will be 3 x 2 bedroom bungalows suitable for wheelchair users, 6 x 2 bedroom, 4 x 3 bedroom, 1 x 4 bedroom houses and 12 x 1 bedroom flats of which 2 will be suitable for wheelchair users, these will be let to persons who have a recognised need for this type of accommodation.

## Tenancy Type

All of the applicants accepted into the scheme will be granted either an Introductory or Secure social housing tenancy by TDBC dependent on the household housing history.

## Lettings

TDBC is committed to advertising as many of the vacant properties as possible, on this scheme, through the Choice Based Lettings system. Adverts on vacant properties will give information on who will be eligible to apply for the properties.

## Exclusions

For households that have a history of persistent tenancy breach for anti-social behaviour or other types of tenancy breach within the last 2 years (as described in 31.7 of Homefinder Somerset Common Lettings Policy) for example:

- If existing or previous tenancy conditions have been broken for which there are statutory grounds for possession e.g. rent arrears or anti-social behaviour; and
- the applicant or a member of their household have committed acts of physical violence against staff or other residents the housing provider may decide they are not suitable as a tenant and will not consider them for a tenancy for a defined period.

Furthermore, in such cases we will assess applications using criteria such as:

- That the household will be safe and secure;
- That the household's quality of life will not be adversely affected;
- The quality of life for people already living in the area won't be adversely affected; and
- Where appropriate, the household will continue to positively engage with support agencies.

If it is assessed that a household does not meet these criteria, they will not be allocated a property on the scheme for the period of the local lettings plan.

For existing Registered Providers or council tenants, their present accommodation must be in good decorative condition.

For all applicants a landlord's reference will be required.

### **Allocations**

Priority will be given to applicants who have a local connection (as described in 6.4 and 7.4 of the Homefinder Somerset Common Lettings Policy) to the following areas:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Rockwell Green
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Wellington (without)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Langford Budville
- 4<sup>th</sup> Wellington
- 5<sup>th</sup> Nynehead
- 6<sup>th</sup> West Buckland
- 7<sup>th</sup> Remainder of Homefinder Somerset

In an effort to achieve the greatest choice and flexibility in meeting applicants needs the following target allocations will be applied:

Three of the properties (1 x 3 bed house, 1 x 2 bed house, 1 x 2 bed bungalow) will be let to existing TDBC households who are returning decants from properties demolished to allow construction of the scheme.

The remaining 21 properties will be let to Homefinder applicants who express an interest by bidding on properties on the scheme.

### **Note:**

- Property adverts will give information on who will be eligible to apply for a property. For example, if the property is labelled for older people the advert will state that only applicants above a certain age will be eligible. An adapted property suitable for someone in a wheelchair will be labelled to say that applicants must require such a property.

### **Underletting of general needs properties:**

It is our intention to only underlet properties when we are unable to let them to households that can make full use of the available bed space

1B/2P – let only to couples or single households.

2B/4P – let only to couples with child/children or single adult with children.

3B/5P – let only to couples or single adult with children.

4B/6P – let only to couples or single adult with children.

### **Note:**

- Due to Welfare Reform Legislation applicants who are underlet properties will have to demonstrate that they can afford to pay their full rent.

### **Monitoring and Review**

Careful monitoring of property allocations and the management of the scheme will routinely take place as part of an ongoing process. A number of areas will be monitored to ensure that this lettings plan is operating in the most effective way. Areas to be monitored may include:-

- A new tenancy visit will be conducted within 4-6 weeks of tenancy start date to capture feedback from new tenants.
- Number of expressions of interest for each property.
- Profile of those expressing an interest (e.g. transfers, disabled, BME, older people).
- Number of offers accepted first time.
- Number of properties re-advertised due to difficulty in letting.
- Average void rate.
- Number of nuisance and ASB complaints.
- Rent arrears.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 11 December 2017 at 6.00pm in Meeting Room C in Flook House at The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.**

**Present:** Mr R Balman (Chairman)  
Mrs J Bunn, Mr D Galpin, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr K Hellier, Mr I Hussey, Councillor C Booth and Councillor R Bowrah, BEM.

**Officers:** Paul Harding (Senior Transformation Project Lead), Rachel Searle (Development and Regeneration Manager), Paul Hadley (Housing, Lettings and Anti-Social Behaviour Manager), Steve Boland (Housing Services Lead), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), Steve Clarke (Tenants Service Development Officer) and Clare Rendell (Democratic Services Officer).

**Others:** Julia Williamson.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

**1. Apologies**

An apology was received from Mr A Akhigbemen.

**2. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 13 November 2017 were signed and taken as read.

**3. Public Question Time**

No questions were received for Public Question Time.

**4. Declarations of Interests**

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

**5. Transformation – Process Review**

The Senior Transformation Project Lead presented an update on the Transformation Project.

The Board Members were given some background information on the vision and design principles and the key points of the project were highlighted.

The three pillars which needed to align to deliver the change were:-

- People change – structures and behaviours;
- Technology to support the new ways of working; and
- Process change – working efficiently and ensuring the right people were involved at the right times. The right people included elected Members, current staff, customers, partners and other organisations.

The Senior Transformation Project Lead explained that the purpose of the Process Design was to:-

- Improve the customer and staff experience;

- Improve Council efficiency through the redesign of transactional processes for a smaller organisation;
- Prevent and reduce customer demand;
- Promote a customer centric ethos across the One Team; and
- Allow people to do more for themselves if they could.

The Process Design would be delivered by:-

- Making sure the right people did the right tasks;
- Ending processes that delivered no business benefit;
- Promoting the take-up of online services for those who could; and
- Focusing on customer journeys and the needs of the customer.

During the discussion of this item, Board Members asked the following question (Responses shown in italics):-

- Members queried was there much opposition to the project.  
*There had been a consultation on the project. Many of the Councils main partners were very supportive. The majority of the Town and Parish Councils were in support of the project, however, there had been mixed reviews from the general public. All of the responses had been submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration. The Secretary of State had now given a 'minded to' decision and the project was in a consultation period until 19 January 2018.*
- The Senior Transformation Project Lead would return to update the Board Members in six months' time.

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Officer's presentation.

## 6. Development Update

The Development and Regeneration Manager presented their report which provided an update on the Moorland Close, Weavers Arms and North Taunton Woolaway projects.

### Moorland Close, Taunton

The following key accomplishments were highlighted:-

- Internal layout alterations;
- The first fix for mechanical and electrical works; and
- The re-roofing works, which included ancillary works.

The project was now ready for the next scheduled set of activities. Those were:-

- Completion of second fix for plumbing and electrical works;
- Internal decoration and finishes;
- External landscaping; and
- Taunton East Development Trust were due to visit the new premises to sign the lease.

### Weavers Arms, Rockwell Green

The following key accomplishments were highlighted:-

- The erection of the timber frame for the block of flats;
- Completion of roofing work and installation of windows for all of the properties;
- Installation of the new drainage;



- Draft Section 104 drainage agreement had been approved and the final copy was due to be signed shortly;
- Approval had been obtained from private property owners for boundary treatment works;
- The returning households had chosen the colour schemes for their prospective properties; and
- The scheme had obtained a good score of 35 from the Considerate Constructors in November 2017.

The project was now ready for the next scheduled set of activities. Those were:-

- Completion of the first and second fix for plumbing and electrical works;
- Completion of the statutory approvals for the car parking areas;
- Internal decoration and finishes;
- External landscaping works; and
- The sale of two shared ownership properties would be advertised by local estate agents, Wilkie, May and Tuckwood.

There had been two delays which had effected site activity, one was on the external brick work and the other was on the highways alterations.

### North Taunton Woolaway Project

The Development and Regeneration Manager gave a detailed presentation on the progress that had been made on the project and the residents' engagement in the Design Group Meeting that was held on 15 November 2017.

At the recent meeting the members agreed on the roles, nominations, conduct and meeting protocols of the Design Group.

It was highlighted that 68% of the tenant households had had 1-to-1 meetings with the project team.

The Residents Charter had been set out and included the following:-

- How Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) would work with the residents;
- A code of conduct for working together; and
- Provided a clear statement of commitments to residents and home owners'.

The Options available to all residents were detailed. The options available were refurbish all, refurbish some and replace some or replace all.

When residents were given the options to either refurbish or replace, they were advised on the space standards for new builds and a comparison on the footprints of their existing properties compared with a new build. In all of the properties except for the flats, the footprints were bigger in the new build properties.

During the discussion of this item, Board Members made the following comments and asked questions (Responses shown in italics):-

- Board Members queried what the breakdown of properties was at the Weavers Arms Development.  
*3 properties would be for existing tenants who had decanted whilst the rebuild took place, 2 would be for shared ownership and the remaining 21 would be for affordable rent schemes. It was confirmed that 10 properties had been knocked down to create 26 on the new development.*

- Board Members queried what had caused the delay in the Weavers Arms Development.  
*The delays had been caused by the Statutory Authorities.*
- Board Members suggested that new build properties should be positioned so they were staggered instead of in a straight line to decrease the chances of noise transference.
- The Chairman thanked the Development and Regeneration Manager for her presentations and the positive feedback on all the projects.

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

## **7. Weavers Arms Local Lettings Plan**

The Housing, Lettings, and Anti-Social Behaviour Manager presented his report which provided the Board Members with an update on the lettings plan for the Weavers Arms development scheme.

The objectives of the lettings plan were:-

- TDBC to achieve the greatest choice and flexibility in meeting the needs of housing applicants; and
- To create a safe and secure environment in which tenants could live peacefully and in harmony with their neighbours and in which families could grow.

Weavers Arms was a scheme of 24 TDBC owned and two shared ownership properties. The properties would be constructed to current building regulations and would be considerably cheaper to run than older properties.

The stock break-down for the properties was as follows:-

- 10 one bed flats;
- 2 one bed flats suitable for wheelchair users;
- 3 two bed bungalows suitable for wheelchair users;
- 4 two bed semi-detached houses;
- 4 three bed semi-detached houses;
- 1 four bed house; and
- 2 two bed semi-detached houses for shared ownership of 2.75% open market value.

TDBC was committed to advertise as many of the vacant properties they could through the Choice Based Letting system. Adverts on vacant properties would give information on who would be eligible to apply for the properties. For households that had a history of persistent tenancy breaches for anti-social behaviour or other types of tenancy breach within the last two years, would have exclusions applied.

Furthermore, applications would be assessed using the following criteria:-

- That the household would be safe and secure;
- That the household's quality of life would not be adversely affected;
- The quality of life for people already living in the area would not be adversely affected; and
- The household would continue to positively engage with support agencies, where appropriate.

Priority would be given to applicants who had a local connection to the following areas:-

- 1) Rockwell Green
- 2) Wellington (without)
- 3) Langford Budville
- 4) Wellington
- 5) Nynehead
- 6) West Buckland
- 7) Remainder of Homefinder Somerset

Three of the properties would be let back to existing TDBC households who were returning decants from properties that were demolished to allow construction of the scheme.

During the discussion of this item, Board Members made the following comments and asked questions (Responses shown in italics):-

- Board Members queried who decided who could apply for the properties or who would not be suitable.  
*The landlord decided who would be eligible and the exclusions would be stated in the adverts.*
- Board Members queried was the whole area due to be redeveloped.  
*That type of project was not on the forward plan yet due to other large development projects being carried out within the TDBC area, but it could be a possibility in future.*

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

## **8. Feedback from the Visit of the Housing Minister**

The Tenant Empowerment Manager presented an update which gave details on the recent visit to the South West by the Housing Minister, Alok Sharma.

On 30 November 2017, an event was held in Bridgwater to gain feedback from tenants about their landlords. Twelve similar events were due to be held across the country.

The Minister had arranged the events due to the lessons learned after the devastation of the fire at Grenfell Tower.

Over 100 tenants had attended the event and were allocated tables which enabled a good mixture of people to give varied feedback. They also had a facilitator on each table to aid in the discussions. After the Minister gave an introduction, he joined each table throughout the day, along with other senior civil servants, to gain feedback. The tenants found him to be very approachable.

The tenants had identified during their discussions that each area had similar concerns about housing and tenant needs. The following points were highlighted:-

- Concern that tenants had to bid for properties;
- Local preferences should be given priority;
- Bedroom Tax;
- One for One Policy, that when a rented property was sold, another rented property was built;
- Universal Credit;

- Affordable rent, what was deemed as affordable;
- Rural issues, which included isolation, fuel poverty and lack of transport;
- 1% rent reduction, which caused disruption to landlord's business plans; and
- The importance of tenant involvement.

The tenants and officers thought it had been an excellent consultation day.

**Resolved** that the Board noted the Officer's update.

#### **9. Tenant Services Management Board Meeting Dates 2018**

The Tenant Empowerment Manager presented the revised meeting dates scheduled for the 2018.

**Resolved** that the Board noted the revised meeting dates.

(The meeting ended at 6.55pm)