

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)