

SWT Tenants Strategic Group - 27 March 2023

Present:

Jessie Bunn, Paul Cram, Colin England, Ivor Hussey, Alex Akhigbemen, Sam Rickard, Cllr Mark Lithgow, Cllr Janet Lloyd and Cllr Fran Smith

Officers:

Stephen Boland, Chris Brown, Ian Candlish, Simon Lewis, Kerry Prisco, Sharon Yarde, Sharon Sloane, Darren Stone, Julie Sabey and Tracey Meadows

(The meeting commenced at 5.45 pm)

84. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Kevin Hellier, Luke Manning, Shari Hallett and James Barrah.

85. **Welcome from the Chair**

The Vice-Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

86. **Minutes from previous meeting**

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

87. **Q3 Performance and Finance Report**

This report provides an update on the housing performance through key performance measures and financial information for the third quarter of 22/23 (October – December 2022)

During discussion of this item the following comments/questions were raised

(summarised)

- A group member asked how long after a tenant had moved into a property were the satisfaction surveys sent out; *This would be a few weeks after the tenant had moved in. We can find out the frequency and report back;*
- Concerns were raised with the average wait time for the telephone repairs line; *We have had some issues with staffing levels, this has now been resolved with a dedicated team in place, we will continue to monitor as figures fluctuate daily;*

Resolved that the Group were asked to note 2.1 content of the housing scorecard for quarter 3 (October to December 2022). The executive summary of

the HRA finance report (2022/23 Housing Review Account Financial Monitoring as at Quarter 3).

88. **Damp and Mould**

The report is to update the Tenants Strategic Group on the outcomes of the Damp & Mould Start and Finish Group

During discussion of this item the following comments/questions were raised;

(summarised)

- How has the data collection been collected, and are you able to identify areas where damp is more prevalent? *All points are covered in Appendix 1 -Damp and Mould Acton Plan in your agenda pack;*
- Who owned the process of monitoring this work, was it repairs and management within housing? *A new group has also been set up which will include the Head of Asset Management, Repairs Lead, and specialist Housing Officer. These Officers will come together each month to see how we are performing and identify any problem areas. This would also capture any challenges and progress that we have made and be reported back to the performance board;*
- Will damp be remotely monitored? *monitors switches have been installed into our new builds to monitor how they were performing;*
- Will the data collection be inhouse only or do intend to join a national group as other groups may be looking to share information with other Councils; *A lot of the date will be collected by us initially and put into our own data systems;*
- The group members stated that they were pleased with the good work that this group has achieved;

Resolved that the Strategic Tenants Group were asked to note this report and were invited to ask questions and agree/disagree with the recommendations.

89. **Capital Programme**

The report is to update the Tenants' Strategic Group on work being undertaken and progress made by the Housing Directorate since the last TSG meeting in January 2023.

During discussion of this item the following comments/queries were raised;
(summarised)

- Concerns raised regarding the Capital Programme. Stated that this programme needed a lot of work, and the data was out of date;
- Clarification sought on whether SWT were going to employ an independent person to inspect work carried out by outside contractors as the last roofing contract was finished very badly with no one checking the

finished product; *with regards to the data, this has been improving for three or four year's we have had an accelerated programme of stock there is not very much information coming out. The key programmes, kitchens, bathrooms are held as a fund as these works need doing. We have a new capital programme manager so there will be a review coming out shortly on how the new staffing structure will look;*

- *Concerns raised again with the lack of repairs to outbuildings on estates; the pre-plan maintenance and the external decks is being looked at. There are some survey works being done and we will look to incorporate that within the programme in the next few years;*

The group noted the report.

90. Directorate Report

The report is to update the Tenants' Strategic Group on work being undertaken and progress made by the Housing Directorate since the last TSG meeting in January 2023.

During discussion of this item the following questions/queries were raised; (summarised)

- *Queries raised regarding the reviews from the domestic homicide safeguarding team. Was this something new? This is something that has been in place for some time. When a report of anti-social behaviour is reported within a property, the Police and other agencies would look to see whether this was preventable or whether any action could have been taken differently. This was systemic learning that we take as a result to see how we can improve our systems across Somerset. These reviews are published and can be viewed on the County Council Website;*
- *The report stated that there had been some serious ASB resulting in two tenants being reprimanded in custody and another being sectioned. What happens when you evict these tenants? There are sanctions that the ASB team can use to address these issues and that can result in tenants losing their tenancy, so legally if a tenant loses their tenancy, they can approach the homelessness service, that is not part of the HRA, it is part of the general fund service. The homelessness service would listen to the tenant and assess their homelessness. The household would then be tested to see if the family were vulnerable, another assessment would be taken to see if the family were intentionally homeless. If this was the case, we would not house them within Somerset West and Taunton. If children were involved, we would refer them to Children's social care for them to step in and take actions to make sure that the children were protected during any changes;*
- *What measures were you taking to improve Officer safety? In the team we have had discussions regarding lone working and Officer safety. The team now wear pendants that they can press to get support when they need it. We are also looking to put training in place for staff to keep them safe;*

The Tenants' Strategic Group noted the report.

91. **AOB**

The Vice-Chair thanked Cllr's Lloyd and Lithgow for all their support and input as members of the TSG. He also welcomed Cllr's Smith and Barr who will be taking their place from the 1 April.

Action points

- How long after a property is let is the tenant called?
- Ian Candlish to look and see whether outbuildings can be incorporated into the capital programme;
- Hope Corner Lane Block 16 need facias looked into and holes in the flooring;

(The Meeting ended at 8.30 pm)