

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD
12TH SEPTEMBER 2018**

PRESENT: The Chair (T. Edwardes)
The Vice Chair (T. Riley)
Councillors Draycott and Jukes
Mr D. Wright

Head of Landlord Services
Democratic Services Officer (NA)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Parton, T.Jackson and A.Davis

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 6th June 2018 were confirmed as an accurate record.

Matters arising from the minutes:

(i) The Head of Landlord Services would check there was a freephone landline number available for tenants to call for the Decent Homes contractor.

(ii) The Board discussed the issue of the underspends on the Tenant Bids budget. The Chair and Vice-chair advised the Board that they had attended the Charnwood Housing Residents' Forum (CHRF) recently and had been advised that there would be information going out to tenants in the Charnwood Matters newsletter regarding the funding still available in the budget. **The Head of Landlord Services would provide the Board with the requirement criteria for applications which they could advise tenants on.**

(iii) The Board would receive information regarding the SAP rating.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

3. HOUSING REPAIR SERVICES - BREAKDOWN OF COMPLAINTS

The Board received a report of the Head of Landlord Services showing the complaint trends for housing repairs and asset management. The report was presented by the Head of Landlord Services.

Summary of Discussion:

(i) The Board agreed it was a positive step to hire another sub-contractor to help with peaks in work. The Chair said they had spoken to Andrew Brown, the Principal Officer in the Repairs and Maintenance Team who had advised that delays in service delivery were mostly due to staff on long term sick leave and holidays being taken.

(ii) The Head of Landlord Services agreed that lessons had been learnt from receiving the complaints data.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason

To acknowledge the Board's consideration of this matter.

4. HOUSING ADAPTATIONS POLICY

The Board received a report of the Head of Landlord Services to consider the draft Housing Adaptations Policy. The report was presented by the Head of Landlord Services.

Summary of discussion:

(i) The Head of Landlord Services advised the Board that there were three main areas for discussion under the new policy: a cap to be placed on adaptations at £30,000, level access showers not being placed in first floor properties and not undertaking major structural works at properties of non-standard construction. Tenants would be rehoused where possible.

(ii) The Board was advised that adaptations over £30,000 tended to include extensions to properties. This was not a viable option for the Council so families were rehomed where possible to more suitable accommodation. It was explained that the cap of £30,000 would help manage expectations about what adaptations could be done to a property.

(iii) The Board noted that the Council's DFG policy had a further discretionary amount of £10K on top of the mandatory £30k and that it would be a two tier system; however they noted the need to manage expectations, and that this would be acceptable if tenants needing re-housing were given a suitable level of priority within the housing waiting list for alternative accommodation.

(iv) There was an agreement that level access shower requests should be dealt with on a case by case basis rather than being dismissed. There would be an option to rehouse the tenant to a more suitable property to meet their needs if required. It was noted that a family property may be adapted with a level access shower but that this may not then be suitable for a new family moving in e.g. with young children where a bath may be desired.

(v) The idea of static homes was mentioned as a solution to the housing adaptations problems. The Board was told that the Strategic Housing Team were looking at other options for housing such as the use of current garage sites for bungalows or building properties on the land.

(vi) There was concern that the projected figure of £3.1m identified in the HRA for adaptations was too low and would need to be increased. The Board was advised that it would potentially be increased and this would be reviewed as part of the Council's

budget planning process. It was noted that the policy would limit expenditure in some areas.

(vii) The issue of adapting non-standard properties would be tackled by moving tenants to more suitable accommodation where possible.

(viii) Stair lifts in communal areas were cited as a problem as they were proving difficult to navigate for tenants and workmen. The Board was advised that fire safety guidance approved the use of stair lifts in communal areas subject to them not obstructing the means of escape; however under the new policy the Council would not look to install them. Instead tenants would be helped to move to more suitable accommodation.

RESOLVED

(i) that the report be noted with the Board's comments.

(ii) The Board would receive a review of the policy in twelve months' time.

Reasons

(i) To note the Board's position and consideration of the report.

(ii) To review how the policy was working and whether any further changes needed to be made.

5. AGENDA VARIANCE

At the agreement of the Chair the following item was brought forward: Questions from members of the Board.

6. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

In accordance with the Board's decision at its meeting on 22nd March 2017 (HMAB Minute 24.1), members of the Board had been asked in advance of the agenda being published whether they had any questions on matters within the remit of the Board that they wished to ask, for response at this meeting.

On this occasion Councillor Draycott asked two questions regarding the disabled adaptations backlog being completed by Fortem. The response to the questions was given by the Head of Landlord Services who advised the Board that there was now an adaptations programme in place and work had started on the backlog of requests.

Based on the 8 completions year to date the current average waiting time from referral to works completion date was noted as 275 (working) days.

It is expected that the average waiting time will reduce to 194 working days based on start dates provided and an anticipated maximum duration of works at 28 days, which

would represent an improvement but there was still concern that tenants were waiting too long.

It was agreed that the Board would be provided with an ongoing update of the adaptations programme at each meeting so that they could monitor progress.

7. ROLE OF BOARD IN BUDGET CONSULTATION AND MONITORING

The Board received a report of the Head of Landlord Services to consider the Board's role in budget setting and monitoring. The Head of Landlord Services presented the report.

The Board was given an explanation of the budget setting process over the year and how each service submits their service pressure requests. They were asked to consider what their priorities were for next year.

Action agreed: the Head of Landlord Services would provide a draft budget report to the Board at their next meeting in November.

8. MOBILISATION OF NEW DECENT HOMES CONTRACT - UPDATE

The Board received a report of the Head of Landlord Services providing information on the mobilisation of the new decent homes contract. The report was presented by the Head of Landlord Services.

Summary of discussion:

(i) the Board was advised that mobilisation meetings were taking place on a weekly basis. Some problems had been identified and works are taking too long albeit to ensure that quality standards are met. Fortem were keen to deliver the contract to a high standard and a plan was in place to achieve this.

(ii) the resident's handbook had been updated and a revised copy would be provided to the Board.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason

To acknowledge the Board's consideration of this matter.

9. COMMUNAL CLEANING CONTRACT CONSULTATION - UPDATE

The Board received a report of the Head of Landlord Services to update on the progress of the communal cleaning consultation. The report was presented by the Head of Landlord Services who advised that the consultation was ready to start but they were waiting for the final pricing structure to be agreed. Once it had been received the consultation would be starting.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason

To acknowledge the Board's consideration of this matter.

10. WORK PROGRAMME

The Board received a report of the Head of Landlord Services to enable the Board to agree its Work Programme (item 10 on the agenda).

Members of the Board could identify matters that they considered required looking at over the next few meetings of the Board, including any already listed on the Work Programme but not yet scheduled. Officers present could provide advice as to whether items might be appropriately considered at the time proposed.

Summary of discussion:

(i) The Chair advised the Board that the update on the sheltered housing scheme had been postponed as the meeting of the project board had been delayed to the end of the month. Therefore the Board would be receiving an update at their next meeting.

RESOLVED

1. that the Tenant Support Policy be added to the Board's Work Programme for their meeting in November.
2. that the Fortem adaptations programme be added to the Board's Work Programme for every meeting.
3. that the 2019/20 draft budgets report be brought forward to the Board's next meeting in November.
4. that an update on the communal cleaning contract be added to the Board's Work Programme for the next meeting in November.
5. that a report on the Council's Corporate Plan and priorities be added to the Board's Work Programme for their meeting in January.
6. that the Board's Work Programme be updated to reflect all decisions made above and earlier in the meeting.

Reasons

- 1 - 5. so that it can be considered by the Board in a timely manner.
6. To ensure that the information in the Work Programme is up to date.

MEETING DATE/ FREQUENCY	ISSUE	INFORMATION REQUIRED/ INVITEES/ OFFICERS	NOTES
SCHEDULED:			
Every Meeting	Work Programme		To review the Board's Work Programme.
Every Meeting	Questions from Members of the Board		<p>Questions on matters within the remit of the Board (if any), for response at the meeting.</p> <p>Members will be asked in advance of the agenda being published for each meeting whether they have any such questions, for listing on the agenda.</p>
Every Meeting	Performance Information – Questions		<p>See HMAB minute 14.4, 9th November 2016.</p> <p>To enable the Board to ask questions, if any, on the performance information pack* sent out with the agenda for the meeting.</p> <p>To be last item on agenda.</p>
Every Meeting	Performance Information – update on Universal Credit and update on Fortem decent homes contract		Two updates to be included in the performance information pack.
7 th November 2018	Update on the Sheltered Housing Scheme	Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing	As requested by the Board at its meeting on 9th May 2018 in relation to the Housing Asset Management Strategy
7 th November 2018	Tenancy Support Policy	Head of Landlord Services	As requested by the Chair of the Board.

MEETING DATE/ FREQUENCY	ISSUE	INFORMATION REQUIRED/ INVITEES/ OFFICERS	NOTES
7 th November 2018	2019/20 Draft Budgets (Revenue and Capital)	Head of Landlord Services	2018/19 Draft Budgets were not considered formally by the Board as meeting (17 th January 2018) was inquorate. Annual Report.
7 th November 2018	Update on the Communal Cleaning Contract	Head of Landlord Services	An ongoing project.
16 th January 2019	Corporate Plan Update	Head of Landlord Services	Requested by the Board at their last meeting.
27 th March 2019	Housing Repair Services – Breakdown of Complaints	Head of Landlord Services	As per six-monthly update reports considered by the Performance Scrutiny Panel. Last submitted to Board 12 th September 2018.
12 th June 2019	Election of Chair and Vice-chair		Annual Item.
12 th June 2019	HRA Revenue and Capital Outturn (2017/18)	Head of Landlord Services	Annual Report.
TO BE SCHEDULED:			
To be scheduled	Review of HRA Business Plan	Head of Landlord Services	See HMAB minute 14.6, 9 th November 2016. Cannot be reviewed until regulations to enable this have been received from the DCLG. Annual report.
To be scheduled	Housing Asset Management Strategy	Head of Landlord Services	Review of the update the Strategy.

MEETING DATE/ FREQUENCY	ISSUE	INFORMATION REQUIRED/ INVITEES/ OFFICERS	NOTES
To be scheduled	Housing and Planning Act 2016 - Update	Head of Landlord Services	Last considered by the Board on 17th February 2016. (Report on Pay to Stay and Flexible Tenancies provisions in Housing and Planning Act 2016 considered 9th November 2016). Awaiting Government Regulations.
To be scheduled	Review of Repairs Standards and Response Times for Repairs, following consultation with Tenants	Head of Landlord Services	Added to work programme 1st April 2015.
To be scheduled	Storage of Gas or Propane Cylinders (Clause 9.2.30 of the consultation draft of the Revised Tenancy Agreement for Secure, Introductory and Demoted Tenants)	Head of Landlord Services	Added to work programme 4th February 2015. Revised Tenancy Agreement is awaiting Government guidance.
To be scheduled	Service Area Delivery Plan	Head of Landlord Services	Added to work programme 13th August 2014.
To be scheduled	Housing Strategy	Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing	Added to work programme 2nd April 2014.
To be scheduled	Housing Capital Programme Monitoring	Head of Landlord Services	Last considered 16th October 2013.

NOTES:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the Council meeting on 5th November 2018 unless notice to that effect is given to the Democratic Services Manager by five members of the Council by noon on the fifth working day following publication of these minutes.
2. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Housing Management Advisory Board.