

LANDLORD SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD (EXECUTIVE WORKING GROUP)

29 February 2024

NOTES

Present:

Cllr Paul Rivers (Chair)
Terry Daubney, Waverley Tenants' Panel
(Vice Chair)
Cllr Jacquie Keen
Cllr John Robini
Cllr Janet Crowe

Apologies:

Chris Austin, Robert Stratford and Sally Purcell

In attendance:

62 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Christ Austin, Sally Purcell and Rob Stratford.

63 Notes of the previous meeting

The Board agreed that the notes of the previous meeting were a complete and accurate record.

The Chair noted that the statement of comments from the Tenant's Panel and the LSAB were not included in the agenda pack for Full Council on 20/2 and apologised for this.

64 Senior Living Consultation Feedback

The Service Improvement Officer delivered a presentation on the Senior Living Consultation 2023 feedback and noted the following points;

- There were 112 responses received – from 42% of residents.
- 87% of tenants were satisfied or very satisfied that the Senior Living service has improved over the last year
- 91% of tenants were satisfied or very satisfied with the Senior Living service. The 10% who were dissatisfied/very dissatisfied were contacted and it was found that these were due to repairs that had not been completed.
- The feedback showed that tenants wanted to see more communication in the past years – the feedback about communication this year has been positive due to an impact of measures put in place.
- The 2024 Action Plan was presented.

Discussion from the Board:

- Cllr John Robini queried visitor parking at Senior Living Scheme facilities. Officers noted that there are no designated spaces for visitors at Senior Living Schemes as parking is limited and prioritised for tenants. Some schemes have nearby street

parking and other areas nearby where people can park. There are signs in place to indicate tenant parking.

- The Tenants Panel guest raised an issue about the parking for carers. He noted that carers are parking in the residents' parking spaces and suggested that carers be allowed to park in the emergency bays. Officers are currently exploring this and will bring it to the upcoming Tenant's Bard meeting to identify number of carers, regularities and requirements for the ambulance bay.

65 Housing Management Update

Neal Davis, Housing Services Manager, presented an update from the Housing Management Team, the key points from the discussion were as follows;

- Dealing with antisocial behaviour, complaints and compliance are the priorities of the team and the biggest numbers are found in compliance and neighbourhood disputes. There is a distinction between ASB and neighbourhood disputes however both are prevalent,
- From April, reporting on ASB will be a formal KPI that will be monitored and the ASB module has been set up to monitor direct core data for the forthcoming year.
- The team have 30 open complaints, 60 open compliance cases and around 60-70 ASB cases.

The key points from the discussion:

- When setting up the ASB module, a distinction between neighbourhood dispute cases and ASB has to be established and there is a definition process to determine the category. There is an ASB specialist working with the team to provide definition, advice and a bridge to the police. There is a partnership with Mediation Surrey which can refer parties through to mediation and/or provide coaching support to one party through Mediation Surrey to prevent escalation to full ASB.
- Council tenancy ASB/Neighbourhood dispute cases should be referred to the Housing Team by Councillors
- The main issues with Compliance currently is around ensuring that gas servicing is completed within the 12 month limit. Team escalate contact with the tenant to complete the certification within the deadline. There was a backlog last year for which an action plan had to be implemented and contact with the Regulator.
- There is a small budget for parking schemes and officers are working on this however the cost and resources involved are excessive. The team can look at marking disable bays if they are on Waverley land, otherwise they will be referred to Surrey County Council.
- There is an out of hours team and Environment Health also have a referral line. Environment Health additionally have a noise system for tenants to record cases of noise disturbance.

66 Awaab's law: Consultation

Jordan Lucas-Dadzie, Housing Management Graduate Trainee, delivered a presentation on the Overview of the Awaab's Law Consultation, launched by the Housing Secretary.

- The law places tighter time limits on Social Housing providers to investigate and start fixing cases of damp and mould.

- These will be implemented within tenancy contracts to make tenants aware of their rights and the obligations of the Social Landlord.

Comments from the Board:

- With regards to the 14 day damp and mould investigation requirement, Cllr Keen noted that she was aware of tenants who had been waiting months for an inspector to investigate. Officers reassured that this legislation would enforce these timescales and ensure action is taken. If not, the Council will be liable.
- Cllr John Robini referred to Page 40 of the agenda pack and queried about tenants with health issues, particularly respiratory issues. The Damp and Mould officer explained that inspectors take many things into consideration to ascertain the extent of how urgent the response will be. The questionnaire sent to tenants asks if the tenant has any respiratory issues that should be taken into consideration to help create a report – those who say yes are prioritised. There is an out of hours line which triages the issue which then goes to the Repairs Contractor for escalation. Tenants can then be moved to hotel accommodation which the issue is being treated – if the investigation finds that the tenant has respiratory issues and is at risk, the Registered Provider must provide alternative housing (Decant).
- Once the Consultation has gone through, Social Landlords will be accountable to it.
- In terms of the additional resource implications; the Officers meeting identified IT improvements that will be required and any change in contracts with contractors to ensure that timescales are upheld. The Executive felt very strongly that additional costs would be needed to keep in line with increased regulations and Members agreed that financial concerns should be fed back to the Government as part of the Consultation.
- Officers noted that service requests should be reported to the Housing Service request team and if it is not answered then a complaint should be submitted.
- Officers noted that the Spring edition of Homes and People and the WBC website will include information about the Consultation.
- Officers noted that the Damp and Mould officer has been appointed and is overlooking final inspections and the Energy Efficiency Officer will be looking at a fabric-first approach for structural improvements. They will look at technology to mitigate the risk of D&M in future.

The Board RESOLVED to approve the recommendations in the report.

67 Succession Policy

The Succession Policy was presented to the Board.

- Cllr Jackie Keen expressed that the Policy should encourage spouses who succeed the property to downsize to smaller properties to free up larger homes for families.
- Officers explained that there is an easy move and transfer officer in place who will support spouses to move, however this cannot formally be implemented in Policy.

The Board RESOLVED to approve the recommendations set out in the report.

68 Senior Living Powered Mobility Device Policy

Amy Walton, The Service Improvement Officer, presented the Policy to the Board.

Members were satisfied with the Policy and RESOLVED to approve the recommendations set out in the report.

69 Performance Dashboard discussion

Officers presented the Housing Dashboard data. In previous meetings, officers agreed to provide the range of performance information that are collected for Members to decide what to keep track of. The Dashboard looked at the following areas:

- Repairs information – including categorisation of repairs complaints by Contractor and % of jobs completed in target times
- Voids – No. of properties and amounts of time re-lets have taken
- Complaints – including missed appointment figures, no access numbers and the amount of time and information on the subject of complaints.
- Rent arrears - % that rent areas make up to total rent with breakdown of number of tenants and size of arrears
- Compliance
- Housing Management

Members would like to see numbers of missed appointments.

Members recommended taking this information to a separate offline session to bring back to the next meeting of the LSAB.

70 HRA Planned Works: External Decorations and Roofline Works Contract Extension

Cllr Paul Rivers noted that a formal decision would be made in the meeting following this one and sought comments and advice of the Board.

- Cllr John Robini queried the difference between repairs with the Contractor and planned works.
- Cllr Janet Crowe asked if there were satisfaction surveys for Planned Works. Matt Alexander, Compliance Manager, noted that there Pylon do satisfaction surveys that the team reviews and 100% planned works are inspected.
- The Board agreed that satisfaction data should be monitored with new contractors every 6 months and requested that this data is brought to the Board by the Service Improvement Officer.
- Cllr Paul Rivers also requested that complaint figures are monitored, with approx. 900 responsive repairs a month, are the complaints data received just the tip of the iceberg?

The Board RESOLVED to agree to the recommendations set out in the report.

71 HRA Planned Works: Kitchen and Bathroom Contract Extension

The Board RESOLVED to agree to the recommendations set out in the report.

72 Head of Service update

It was noted that, Annalisa Howson will become Interim Head of Housing for Guildford Borough Council and Hugh Wagstaff will become the Interim Head of Housing for Waverley Borough Council, while the Executive Joint Head of Housing is being resourced.

73 Work programme

The Service Improvement Manager will circulate a work programme after the meeting.

74 Date of next meeting

Thursday 28 March 2024 at 10am.