

LANDLORD SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

24 November 2022

NOTES

Present:

Cllr Paul Rivers (Chair)

Terry Daubney, Waverley Tenants' Panel
(Vice Chair)

Cllr Jacquie Keen

Cllr Stephen Mulliner

Cllr John Robini

Robert Stratford, Waverley Tenants Panel

Danielle Sleightholme, Waverley Tenants
Panel (Co-Optee)

Annie Righton

Andrew Smith

Annalisa Howson

Jeanette Englefield

1 Apologies for absence

3 Declarations of interest

Councillors John Robini and Jackie Keen declared that they both rented garages from the council.

2 Notes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th October were agreed. It was noted that Danielle Sleightholme gave her apologies for the meeting held on 27th October.

The Chair addressed the Board and highlighted the unfortunate death of a young boy as a result of mould. He felt that the council should prioritise mould and where it existed in Waverley homes, it should be tackled and dealt with. The Group discussed the issues, including communicating mould prevention messages to residents and private tenants. The Board also agreed that it would benefit from a clearer picture of mould in Waverley. The Group recommended providing information in People and Holmes magazine, the councils website and social media.

4 Q2 Performance Report

Annalisa Howson addressed the Board, she advised that the Q2 Performance report covered July – September. She informed the Board that the works at Vernon Court had nearly been completed. Annalisa Howson shared a photograph of the works with the Board. She noted that the New Strategic Asset Manager, Hugh Wagstaff would be starting in January. She advised that they had continued to work on the Housing Stock Condition survey tender and will be out next month.

Annalisa Howson noted the work completed with the Tenants at Lucas Fields, she advised that it had been a very positive piece of work involving Tenants and Councillors. She confirmed that there had been some improvements to the lighting and pathways that had made a real difference. She informed the Board that this

was something she really wanted to continue and intends to roll it out to other residents.

Annalisa Howson, confirmed that she spoke with Chris Shipway from Ian Williams regarding their performance as they were not yet meeting targets. She noted the areas of improvement and that the contractors performance was heading in the right direction. She also noted that the team was now fully staffed and had recruited a Resident Liaison Officer. Annalisa Howson advised the Board that as winter approached the council would see a significant increase in the number of responsive repair jobs.

Councillor John Robini queried the red KPI's, he noted that the performance was improving, but hoped that at the next meeting some of those indicators would be amber and green. Annalisa confirmed that the red KPI's were related to the voids and repairs contract and she expected to see improvements as a result of the staff recruitment as mentions earlier. Councillor Keen queried the current response turn around time. Annalisa Howson confirmed that this was now 26 days, compared to a target of 20 days. She explained that the target had not been meet for some two years as a result of Covid-19 and the proceeding lockdowns. There was further discussion by the group with regards to the multiskilled workers and those specialist trades like roofs and flooring.

Danielle Sleightholme queried the notice of seeking possession and understanding the process this follows, she felt that a flowchart of the steps would be helpful to understanding where help and support could be provided to residents. Annalisa Howson confirmed that there had only been one eviction in 2022 and the team were focused on helping tenants stay in their homes. She advised that the rent team could attend the Tenants Panel and provide an update. Danielle also queried the target for the level 2 complaints and whether it was attainable. Annalisa felt that it was a challenging target that was attainable and she would like to keep working towards meeting the target. She reminded the Board about the changes to the designated Persons Complaint panel and the new Customer Experience Group.

The Group discussed void properties, including the state properties are returned to the council and plan to improve the void turn around performance.

5 Head of Service Matters arising - Verbal update

Andrew Smith addressed the Board, he advised that he was going to discuss the mould issue, but the Board had already had a detailed discussion. Andrew Smith noted that the draft budget would be brought to the Board for discussion and comments in January.

6 2023/24 HRA Draft budget

Candice Keet addressed the Board, she explained that the HRA and General Fund were not separate legal entities, the HRA is a ring fenced account within the General Fund restricting the use of income and management costs of the housing functions in compliance with the Housing Acts. She also informed the Board that the HRA is primarily a landlord account containing the income and expenditure arising from a housing authority's landlord functions. She noted that the council were currently in the early stages of setting the budget for 2023/24. The numbers

contained within this presentation are estimates and will change as the budget setting process progresses.

Candice Keet discussed inflation at 11% and the Capital and Core Capital (Major repairs) budget. She informed the Board about the rent budget, the rent cap and the possible rent increases of 4-7%. Candice Keet took the Board through illustrations of the rent impact summary and rent impact borrowing. Finally, she discussed the rent collection performance and informed the Board that full details including variances, growth proposals and rent setting will be brought forward in the new year.

Councillor Stephen Mulliner queried the likely hood of imposing CPI plus 1% on tenants. Candice Keet advised that it was an illustration to show comparison against the norm and where the council's current position. The Chair thanked Candice and reminded the Board that the councils rents go towards repairs which had become more expensive as material and labour cost soar.

Councillor John Robini wanted to congratulate the council on the White Hill housing project, he expressed how impressed he was. He noted the relationship between, social housing, rent charges and the private sector rent charges. He queried if the figure of 85% of market rent was achievable. Candice Keet explained that there was a rent formular for social housing. Andrew Smith confirmed that in the new Affordable Housing Delivery Strategy put forward in April 2022 this was now lower than 80% of market value including service charges. 65% for 3&4 bed homes and 70% for 1&2 bed homes. The Board discussed how important it was to ensure service charges were included in the rent costs.

Councillor Stephen Mulliner queried the extent of the councils borrowing, Candice Keet noted that throughout the strategic review it became clear that the council would need to borrow as a result of the way in which the Councils debt repayments are scheduled, she advised that it was a balance act with the HRA and the council's priorities. Annalisa Howson advised the Board that Candice was invited to brief the Board and to give member as opportunity to think about the council's position and the increases ahead of the budget which will be coming to the Board in January.

7 Housing Asset Management Strategy Implementation Update

Heather Rigg addressed the Board, she advised that the Strategy was published in April 2022 and was brought to the LSA Board, it was agreed that an update would be brought back in 6 months. She advised that the strategy was a framework and an action plan for the Property Services and Housing Operations teams to deliver the investment of the HRA business plan and the council's strategic priorities. She took the Board through the four core themes of the strategy 1) Understanding our services, homes, tenants and Stakeholder requirements, 2) providing modern homes across the borough, 3) Proactively decarbonising homes and 4) Ensuring homes are safe and secure for tenants and leaseholders.

Heather Rigg explained that the team had learnt lessons regarding communications, data planning and accountability. She also noted that there were a number of influencing factors such as the residents voice, the council's corporate priorities, the national picture, housing revenue business plan review and the decarbonisation of our homes. Heather Rigg informed the Board that the

commitments covered four main themes 1) Assets planning and service delivery, 2) Modern Homes, 3) Energy efficiency and decarbonisation and 4) Compliance and Building Safety. She advised the board that the Housing Asset Management Strategy is a live document that is well understood by the Property Service Team. She noted that it was under constant review to ensure actions are appropriate and relevant and after a challenging start it was gratifying that actions were progressing.

8 Work Programme

Annalisa Howson noted the copy of the completed work programme for 2022 and the upcoming meeting on 15 December where the Board would plan the meetings for 2023 and review the Boards achievement over the 2022. She noted that the meeting would also focus on how the Board communicated outcomes to Waverley's wider tenants and members. She noted that the Board would review the gas contract, an update from the senior living team and the budget in 2023.

9 Date of next meeting

It was confirmed that the date of the next meeting would be Thursday 26 January 2023.