

LANDLORD SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD (EXECUTIVE WORKING GROUP)

30 May 2024

NOTES

Present:

Cllr Paul Rivers (Chair)
Terry Daubney, Waverley Tenants' Panel
(Vice Chair)
Cllr Alan Morrison
Cllr John Robini
Cllr Janet Crowe
Robert Stratford, Waverley Tenants Panel
Blackmore, Waverley Tenant's Panel
(Substitute)
Sally Purcell, Waverley Tenants Panel

Apologies:

Julian Higson, Councillor Jacquie Keen, Annalisa Howson and Chris Austin

In attendance:

Cllr Steve Williams, David Williams (Council Tenant)

15 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Keen, Cllr Morrison, Annalisa Howson, Julian Higson and Chris Austin.

16 Notes of the previous meeting

It was agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 25 April 2024 were a complete and accurate record.

Terry Daubney, Chair of the Waverley Tenants Panel proposed a recommendation on item 8 of the minutes of the meeting held on the 25 April 2024. The recommendation was as follows:

- That the customer services team ask residents if they have any related health conditions during the initial call.

17 Declarations of interest

There were none.

18 Questions from Members of Public

There were none.

19 Questions from Members

There were none.

20 Complaints Summary 2023/24

Amy Walton, Service Improvement Officer, presented a summary of the Housing Complaints received between April 2023 and March 2024.

Officers stated that one of the key takeaways from the presentation is that one of the most frustrating aspects that effected tenants was repairs. Officers also stated that they have put robust measures in place to improve complaint response time including the hiring a new complaints officer.

The Board asked for clarity about the difference between Level 1 and Level 2 complaints. Officers responded and stated that it was a two stage process. The initial Level one complaint was dealt with by the line manager. Additionally if the tenant was still not satisfied then the complaint went up to the head of service. The board also discussed the upheld housing management complaints and the high level of anti-social behaviour and asked if there was anything to be done to address it. Officers clarified that the reason for the complaint being upheld was because the actions had not yet come into effect, hence the reason for upholding the complaint.

The Board stated that it was important for the communication and repairs to be improved and that cooperation with the other organisations and agencies to reduce anti-social behaviour was essential. The Board also stated they wanted the compensation figures that have occurred due to legal disrepair claims to be brought to the next meeting.

21 Rents Data - March 2024

Debbie Harding, Rents Account Manager, presented the report.

Members enquired about how much resources was put in to prevent arrears building up in the first instance. Officers responded by stating that prevention was mainly dealt with by ensuring that direct debits were in place. Officers also stated that they have set up a four weekly direct debit for pensioners to prevent arrears. Officers added that they ensured that tenants maximised their income by ensuring they were in receipt of the correct benefits. Furthermore, officers noted that they had spoken to tenants at the sign up stage and reviewed their application thoroughly.

Members also enquired about the eviction process and asked if the Council had a duty to rehouse anybody who had been evicted. Officers responding stating that they ensured that the tenants knew exactly what their options were. Officers stated that they requested permission from tenants to do a duty to refer to the homeless team.

Members discussed tenants on universal credit and how they paid their rent. Officers responded by stating the direct debit was automatically adjusted to include the fifty third week for all tenants. On the specific matter of Universal Credit tenants, officers confirmed that they had written letter to all Universal Credit claimants and informed them on how to increase their rent.

22 Housing Dashboard (Standing item)

Amy Walton, Service Improvement Officer provided an update on the Housing Dashboard item.

There were no further comments from the Board on the item.

23 Q4 Corporate Performance Report 2023-24

Hugh Wagstaff, Head of Housing and Amy Walton, Service Improvement Officer presented the Q4 Corporate Performance Report 2023-24.

Members asked for clarity about the about the rating system. Officers responded and stated that the rating system was between one and ten with responses between seven and ten classed as satisfactory.

24 Executive Head of Housing update

Hugh Wagstaff, Head of Housing, provided the update.

The main topic that was reported to the Board was the letting of the gas contract. The Head of Housing gave a background on the matter explaining that a couple of years ago there was a provider called CHS who gave notice that they could no longer provide the service. As an interim solution Smith & Byford were brought in to do gas servicing and boiler repairs. It was stated that was a challenge to manage to the contract due to the lack of data and vacancies within the team.

The Head of Housing also updated the Board on staff vacancies and informed the Board that the Aids & Adaptions Officer Surveyor role had been filled.

25 Date of next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Landlord Services Advisory Board (EWG) would take place on Thursday 27 June 2024 at 10am in the Council Chamber.