

# HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of meeting on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024, 17:00 – 19:00

No.	Item	Lead
1.	<p><b>Welcome, introductions and apologies</b></p> <p><b>Board Members in attendance:</b> Councillor Jean Innes (Chair – Cllr I), Councillor Keith Miles (Cllr M), Councillor Glenys Falconer (Cllr F), Janice Bather (Tenant - JB), Chris Sanderson (Tenant - CS), Phil Simpson (Tenant - PS), Christine Durrant (Executive Director - CD), Jane Davies (Service Director Housing - JD)</p> <p><b>Board Members – apologies submitted:</b> Councillor Laura Bagley, Darrell Price (Tenant)</p> <p><b>Officers in attendance:</b> Vanessa Watson-Hopkin (Head of Housing Assets &amp; Interim Head of Housing Property Services – VW-H), James Crouch (Housing Strategy and Engagement Manager – Minutes - JC)</p>	
2.	<p><b>Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>The draft Terms of Reference document was tabled at the meeting and members of the Board were given the opportunity to read through and comment.</p> <p>CD suggested that the Terms of Reference be reviewed on an annual basis or more frequently if amendments are required.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> JC to schedule updates on the forward plan.</p>	JC

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3.	<p><b>Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) – Results and Actions</b></p> <p>JD provided an overview of tenant satisfaction results for 2023/24, and presented an update on each of the actions in the TSM action plan. JD reminded the Board that overall satisfaction with the landlord was 66.4%.</p> <p><u>Part 1: A home that is safe and well maintained</u></p> <p>Key TSMs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall satisfaction with repairs – 70.4%</li> <li>• Satisfaction with the time taken to complete repairs – 66.9%</li> <li>• Tenants who are satisfied that their home is well maintained – 66.4%</li> <li>• Tenants who are satisfied that their home is safe – 71.7%</li> </ul> <p>Discussion on relevant action plan updates:</p> <p>CS raised concerns over relying on information on the website, to communicate with tenants about planned improvements to their homes / neighbourhoods. JD advised that all tenants would be written to ahead of works commencing, and that housing management officers will be provided with information so they can share this with tenants in person, for example at tenancy visits.</p> <p>Cllr M asked whether the restructure of Housing Property Services would include technical officers / inspectors – JD advised that all posts and functions would be within the scope of the review.</p> <p>Cllr M asked how the issue of not being able to recruit to the repairs customer care role would be resolved. JD advised that short term support was to be arranged from elsewhere within the service and that permanent roles (which will be more attractive to applicants) will be established through the restructure.</p> <p>CS sought reassurance that if we move towards repairs staff completing repairs in a single visit, this won't be at the expense of health and safety, i.e. that we will always send appropriately qualified employees for electrical jobs. JD confirmed that health and safety is always the top priority and that only qualified electricians would deal with electrical jobs.</p> <p><u>Part 2: Neighbourhoods</u></p> <p>Key TSMs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfaction with landlord's approach to handling antisocial behaviour (ASB) – 48.3%</li> <li>• Tenants who are satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood – 55.7%</li> <li>• Satisfaction that communal areas are clean and well-maintained – 58%</li> </ul> <p>Discussion on relevant action plan updates:</p> <p>CD requested some clarifications to the wording of action 2.2, particularly in respect of support services.</p> <p>CS raised the issue that noticeboards are often in a poor condition, and the importance of cleaners having access to update cleaning schedule information.</p>	

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	<p><b>Action:</b> VW-H to ensure this is picked up in the roll-out of new noticeboards in all blocks.</p> <p><u>Part 3: Customer Care and Communications</u></p> <p>Key TSMs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants who agree that their landlord treats them fairly and with respect – 64.1%</li> <li>• Tenants who are satisfied that their landlord keeps them informed about things that matter to them – 51%</li> <li>• Tenants who are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts on them – 43.1%</li> <li>• Satisfaction with complaint handling – 25.2%</li> </ul> <p>Discussion on relevant action plan updates:</p> <p>JB reiterated CS’s earlier point about the importance of ensuring paper copies and other formats are made available for tenants who don’t use the internet.</p> <p>CS commented on the importance of information about tenants’ vulnerabilities being accessible from all IT systems. JC advised that this is a key element of the IT integration project.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> JD to update the TSM Action Plan to reflect feedback from the Board, circulate to members and upload on the Council’s housing webpage.</p>	<p>VW-H</p> <p>JD</p>
4.	<p><b>Quarter 1 key performance indicators</b></p> <p>JD presented an overview of performance across the housing service during quarter 1 (April – June 2024).</p> <p>JD noted the improvement in completion of repairs within timescales. At the end of June, 90.9% of urgent repairs and 61.1% of non-urgent repairs were completed on time. By the end of September these figures had increased to 94.55% and 72.57% respectively.</p> <p>Performance on responding to complaints within timescale was 32.04% at the end of quarter 1 which is significantly below target. However, for September the figure rose to 78%, suggesting the recent changes are starting to make a difference, and if this trend continues the full year average will be an improved position. JD noted the relatively low number of stage 1 complaints escalating to stage 2 which suggests that the majority of issues are dealt with appropriately at the first stage. Cllr M commented that our aim should be for no complaints to be escalated.</p> <p>The scheduling of future meetings will allow for the most recent performance information to be presented.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Quarter 2 performance indicators will be distributed to Board members once internal sign-off is completed.</p> <p>Additional performance information on Compliance, for September, was presented by VW-H. This will be circulated electronically to Board members.</p> <p>VW-H described the actions being taken to tackle damp and mould in council homes, and the significant reduction in cases over the past two years.</p>	<p>JD</p>

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	<p>CD offered clarification on the term 'process compliance', which indicates that in cases where checks are not at 100%, for example electrical tests, CBC as a landlord has taken all possible steps to gain entry to complete the checks.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Overview of tenant engagement activity</b></p> <p>JC briefly introduced the annual review of tenant engagement activity for 2023/24 and summary of the range of engagement options available to tenants.</p> <p>JC advised that with a new additional engagement officer recently having started, there is more capacity to expand the 'menu' of engagement options to consider leaseholders, mystery shopping and a complaints review group as potential options for new area of work.</p> <p>Cllr M enquired as to whether the engagement officers would link with the South Health and Wellbeing group as well as the others in the Borough. JC advised that engagement officers have attended these groups previously and with the additional resource would be able to do this and meet more with voluntary groups as well.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Regulator of Social Housing Update</b></p> <p>CD provided a verbal update on the inspection, following a meeting with the Regulatory team last Friday with Huw Bowen (Chief Executive), CD and JD.</p> <p>Some additional information was requested, and the result is likely to be confirmed in late November.</p> <p>The Regulatory team expressed thanks for the work put in by staff to prepare for and facilitate the inspection, and the open and honest discussions on the services provided.</p> <p>JD advised that an action plan to tackle the gaps identified would go to Cabinet for approval and the Housing Advisory Board will receive regular updates.</p> <p>Cllr I thanked all the officers and tenants for their efforts in contributing to the inspection, and this was echoed by Cllr F and Cllr M.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Additional information, learning and development update</b></p> <p>JC discussed the handout provided at the pre-meeting last week. The handout identified a number of websites for background reading on consumer standards, TSMs and the Housing Ombudsman.</p> <p>The option of holding a training session for board members provided by TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service) was discussed. Members of the HAB expressed a preference for in person training</p> <p><b>Action:</b> JC to identify options for dates and times from TPAS to provide the training.</p>	JC

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8.	<p><b>Confirmation of future Housing Advisory Board meeting dates</b></p> <p>Board members agreed to the following dates for the next three meetings: 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025 and 6<sup>th</sup> August 2025</p> <p>The agenda for 4<sup>th</sup> February will include quarter 3 performance and compliance information, TSM action plan update and a particular focus on complaints.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> JC to provide background information on complaints and offer a separate session before the formal meeting, to explain all of the Housing Ombudsman requirements and the service's current position.</p>	JC
9.	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>No other matters were discussed.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Next meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting of the Housing Advisory Board will be on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025, 17:00-19:00 in the Town Hall, committee room 3.</p>	

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