

Tenant Board Meeting

Wednesday 26th February 2025

Attendees:

Marcus Cooper	Tenant Board Member
Gerry Crease	Tenant Board Member
Liz Perryman	Tenant Board Member and Chair
Tony Cole	Tenant Board Member
Charmaine Jolly	Tenant Observer
David White	Housing Transformation Manager
Nikki Anderson	Building Services Admin Team Manager
Georgia Mecoy	Tenant Engagement Co-ordinator
Kerry Lecomber	Tenant Engagement Co-ordinator
Cllr Richard Winch	Housing Portfolio Holder
Cllr Jessie Carter	Housing Portfolio Holder

Apologies

Paula Warren

GC raised issue of double letters arriving for gas check and not being advised if it's morning or afternoon appointment. **Action: NA will take feedback to Compliance team.**

Actions from last meeting and introduction

Georgia opened the meeting and took guests through the agenda and introduced Charmaine who took part in the ASB Scrutiny workshops and is interested in joining the board.

Actions - Stigma campaign work with Customer Services – KL liaised with Gary Allen in Customer Services and work slightly delayed.

Declarations of Interest

None stated.

Recharge Policy

Policy was previously approved by Board in December, but Compliance team raised issue of having their own policy and unsure if it should be separate or added to the existing one and Board requested it be added. GL shared policy on screen with highlighted areas of change and took members through the proposed additions. All agreed it seemed fair and reasonable and could understand what was written.

GC enquired how the sum was made up. NA advised it was made up of the court costs of taking up an injunction including Solicitors costs. DW advised it's probably £300 court costs and £65 for the Solicitor to write the letter.

GM moved to the appeals and disputes section. DW advised it was added because the Consumer Standards require us to allow for a route to appeal. GM took members through the section added. All agreed it was clear and straightforward.

Held a vote but will have to canvas opinions from the missing board members.

TC, LP and GC all voted to approve it.

Action: GM will canvas remaining members for approval and share with the tenants who assisted with this previously.

Tenant Handbook recommendations

In previous Spring carried out Scrutiny project on new Tenant Handbook. Now launched, on website, at Citizens Advice Centres, MyHome Bulletin going out this week so all 6,000 tenants who we email will have it and there's a link to a survey. Only outstanding action is a property specific page to be added but that will be added going forward as and when tenants move into their homes. Being taken up by Tenant Services so information is collected at void.

Being reviewed quarterly to ensure it's up to date and also as services change.

Next set of changes will be in May.

GM took meeting through the changes recommended from Scrutiny.

ASB Scrutiny Project

GM took meeting through where we are with the project. The sessions worked brilliantly having them both online out of office hours and in person. We have now put all the recommendations together and ranked them in terms of Effort and Impact to help plan the work.

CJ enquired about the boundary recommended by the Police and DW clarified to contact the Housing Officer using the email from the Police and then they can speak to NA team to instruct to do the work, give a budget code to pay for it.

Action – KL to follow up to ensure it's being looked into.

GM advised that the top priorities from each group (1,2 and 3) were taken into a list which she shared. She then took the meeting through the list of recommendations.

Recommendation for using WhatsApp was rejected due to data protection issues.

CJ advised she's amazed that only one of the recommendations was rejected which she thinks is brilliant. It was her first time being involved in something like this and seeing it turn into actual action plans and knowing things will change as a result is really good to see.

GM advised that the changes to Roles, Responsibilities and powers available is part of the restructure of Tenancy Services. DW advised of more details on this and the proposal to increase the number of Housing Officers to 12 from 6 so they will have much smaller patch sizes and that fits into having a single point of contact and more 1:1 contact. Once we have finished the consultation and have an updated plan we will get Rob Longfoot back to take the Board through the changes that have happened because of tenant feedback probably in April or May.

GM enquired if the Board wanted to add anything and if they think it's a good representation of the sessions. LP advised there was one thing she hadn't seen, she had issues of Housing Officer being unavailable and not knowing who to go to. DW advised that as part of the new structure with 12 housing officers all of them will have a buddy. Currently with only 6, if 2 are absent that's impossible. They will not be allowed to be on leave at the same time so this will come under the 'Single Point of Contact' recommendation so there will always be the same back up officer.

Action: Elaborate on SPOC recommendation to make it clear officers will be put in place to contact.

Next steps is a report to Overview and Scrutiny and will be asking one of the Board to come along to present the findings to let them see the work we have done on 17th March. After that every few months we'll be updating on progress of actions and what we've completed and what's outstanding.

Tenant dashboards

GM had shared the Tenant Dashboards which Board members had seen and took members through the reports.

CJ enquired about the difference between Babergh and Mid Suffolk. DW took her through the structure of the two councils geographically.

DW advised that improvements to repairs figures were due to the transformation of Building Services and the work is starting to pay off and we are seeing an upward trend in performance reporting and satisfaction.

In terms of complaints there are now specialist staff in place to manage the process. DW advised of colour coding to see how things are improving.

NA advised how great it is to see the job completion improving and satisfaction on a good trajectory and less jobs outstanding. Often jobs being outstanding is due to trouble contacting tenants, leave etc. DW advised December is always an odd month because of Christmas.

LP enquired about Voids figures and if that can be included. **GM advised we can add that – Action.**

Any Other Business

Stop Social Housing Stigma Customer Services workshop – **ask PW to attend and report next meeting.**

TPAS training schedule will be shared with everyone. GM advised for CJ sake who TPAS are.

DW for GC – enquired if he attended the Repairs and Maintenance relaunch day which he did. We need testimonials from tenants and as he attended can he provide one about R&M. **Action: KL to contact.**

LP advised she was reading minutes from last meeting and UC housing costs in rent statements – HB does but not Housing Costs. Looked at mine yesterday and hers is now there. DW advised system has probably caught up because of year end.