

Minutes of the Meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 25 March 2019 at 6.00pm in the John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.

Present: Mr A Akhigbemen, Mrs J Bunn, Mr D Galpin, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr K Hellier, Mr I Hussey and Councillor H Prior-Sankey.

Officers: Stephen Boland (Housing Specialist), Jan Errington (Project Manager – Housing and Communities), Clare Rendell (Governance and Democracy Case Manager).

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs D Flavell and Councillor B Bowrah.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 25 February 2019 were signed and taken as read.

3. Public Question Time

No questions were received for Public Question Time.

4. Declarations of Interests

Mr A Akhigbemen, Mrs J Bunn, Mr D Galpin, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr K Hellier and Mr I Hussey declared personal interests as Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Tenants.

Councillor H Prior-Sankey declared a personal interest as a Member of Somerset County Council.

5. TPAS Conference

The Housing Specialist handed out the leaflet to the Board Members with information on about the TPAS Conference due to be held in July 2019.

The TPAS Conference was the largest national event for involved tenants in the sector. It was held once a year and over 300 tenants, residents and community leaders met to hear from high profile speakers and build their networks of fellow peers who were committed to improving the services and performance of their landlords as well as their wider neighbourhoods.

During the discussion, the Board Members made the following points:-

- Three of the Board Members volunteered to attend the conference.
- Board Members queried what the future arrangements for the Board were.
The Head of Function for Performance and Governance was in discussions with the other Tenant Groups to sort out how the groups would be serviced in the future. An election would be required as per the terms of reference.
- Board Members highlighted that the Government had introduced new regulations for decent home standards.

A Social Housing Green Paper had been released which included lots of information on decent home standards and there was an appetite to improve standards. Tenant engagement was a big part of the new standards, which the Grenfell Tragedy had influenced.

Resolved that the Board noted the update on the TPAS Conference.

6. Customer Landlord Strategy Update

The Project Manager for Housing and Communities presented an update on the Customer Landlord Strategy Update.

The Strategy:-

- Identified the housing service offer, aims and aspirations and took into account our vulnerable customers;
- Ensured our services and approach met the needs of our customers and took into account the changing customer profile;
- Outlined how we would do this within our new operating model;
- Protected our assets and financial viability so that we could continue to support local communities and individuals with housing services that met their needs;
- Prioritised the importance of partnership working to get the most from our resources to solve problems and met needs together; and
- Provided direction for our newly forming teams in taking forward our services as a landlord.

During the discussion, the Board Members made the following points:-

- Board Members queried whether the Strategy was for sheltered housing only.
No it was for everything that the landlord serviced for the customers.
- Board Members queried whether drug usage and county lines issues were included in the Strategy.
Not yet, however, the one team approach should help identify any problems sooner, so that the relevant support could be given.
- The Board Members supported the Strategy but felt that more support was needed for vulnerable people.
The Project Manager for Housing and Communities explained that the Council had been in a phase of transition and had experienced some turbulent times, but now that officers were in post, services should improve.

Resolved that the Board noted and commented on the outline and aims of the Strategy.

(The meeting ended at 7.00pm)