

## SWT Tenants Strategic Group - 24 January 2022 held via Zoom Video Conference

Present: Alex Akhigbemen (Chair)

Jessie Bunn, Paul Cram, Kevin Hellier, Ivor Hussey, Luke Manning, Samantha Rickward, Mark Lithgow, Janet Lloyd and Francesca Smith

Officers: James Barrah, Chris Brown, Ian Candlish, Shari Hallett (Housing Performance Manager) and Tracey Meadows

Also Present: Councillor Brenda Weston

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm)

### 29. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Colin England

### 30. **Notes from previous meeting**

Notes from the previous meeting were approved.

Proposed by Ivor Hussey and seconded by .....

### 31. **Performance and Finance Report Q 2**

#### **2021/22 Housing Scorecard Quarter 2**

The report provided an update to the group on the housing performance through key performance measures and financial information for the second quarter of 21/22 (July-Sept 2021)

#### **Comments/questions from the group included;** (summarised)

- Clarification was sought on the Customer satisfaction indicator with regards to the 100% tenant satisfaction levels; *Over the three months 24, 37, and 32 responses were received this would be classed as 100% if all responses were good. A response rate indicator detailing the breakdown would be included in the text for the next report:*
- Concerns that satisfaction survey forms were sent out via mobile phone. If tenants did not have a mobile phone could this be sent via paper? *The survey was sent to a valid mobile number which then provided a link to the electronic survey. These surveys were not available in paper form at present. The comments would be taken away to see what could be put in place and reported back to the group;*
- Clarification sought on who performed the Sheltered Housing reviews? *Review's would be performed by the Sheltered Housing Officers. They*

*would go through various questions/concerns with the tenant and if a referral was needed, this would be organised for the tenant;*

- With regards to ASB cases, how are you content with just three cases closed in the month of Sept 21?; *most cases were extremely complex and could sometime involve a number of households and multi agencies and these cases could not be resolved hurriedly. Further information if required would be provided to reassure the group of our confidence in our performance figures;*
- How many ASB cases had been open for a year? *This data would be reported back at the next meeting;*

The report was noted with actions.

## 32. **Capital Programme update**

### **Capital Works Programme update**

The report was to give a status update to the Tenants Strategic Group on the Capital Works Programme. To illustrate the current operational and financial positions of the project, discuss the challenges and barriers to progress, and explore solutions to these issues.

#### **Comments/questions from group members included:**

(summarised)

- Concerns that tenants were not convinced that staff coming into their properties to perform planned works were Covid compliant. Also concerns that Tradesman were turning up for planned visit and the tenant had not being informed or prepared for the intended works to be carried out; *We will investigate the option of using a tenant liaison officer role to liaise with tenants making sure that the tenant was up to date for when planned works were taking place and allaying tenants concerns;*
- Concerns with the Capital Works Programme figures discrepancies from the previous meeting; *At the beginning of the year the original budgets were set which included slippage from last years work that did not get done so there was always going to be a discrepancy between the original budget and slippage from last year. Numbers on the current table were forecasted for this financial year and at the end of March and then the balance would feed into the next financial year;*
- There did not seem to be any projects planned to replace the septic tanks that were not fit for purpose; *We were in the process of looking at the 18 septic tanks that we managed. We intended to invest in 3 next year. When the programme was finalised, we would bring this back to the group and circulate the tanks that we would be investing in;*
- Was there a Capital Works Programme budget for outdoor buildings, i.e. brick built sheds. This should be also be tabled so that we know where the monies were being spent; *The PPM (pre planned maintenance) budget projects would cover this;*
- Were there any challenges and solutions to programme delivery. Were the supplies coming from abroad? *We were most impacted by fire proof slabs*

*being delayed caught up in Brexit and being stuck in containers. The main issues were getting into properties to start the job;*

The report was noted with actions.

### 33. **Wordsworth Drive briefing**

#### **Wordsworth Drive and Coleridge Crescent Flats Regeneration**

##### **Comments/queries from group members included: (summarised)**

- Concerns that the garages were not incorporated in the overall development at this stage; *A new access route was being proposed from the rear of Coleridge Crescent for the next few years. In the short term none of the garages for tenants or the rental aspect would be lost;*
- Would tenants have the right to return to their properties? *There would be no right to return as it was such a long a gap and a much smaller development;*
- Were there issues with the team trying to decant two regeneration projects at the same time? *There will be a little bit of a clash with these projects. The next decanting phase in North Taunton will be in about 18 months' time. A Housing Needs survey will be completed in the first instance with residents supporting the projects and believe that they could have a better home;*
- Would you consider moving the residents to be decanted to the finished properties in North Taunton? *This development would help some tenants, the customer would have the choice and would be supported if they wanted to move there;*
- Concerns with the tenant's choice of properties on Homefinder and the lack of properties that they wished to bid for; *the tenants that were decanting would be given Gold Band status. They would have to compete with other tenants to bid on what suited them most;*
- Comments from a group member stated that she had been through this process as she was a tenant who was decanted from a property in the north Taunton project area. She stated that there was a lot of support from the Homefinder team and the north Taunton project team who offered support and guidance which made a difference through a difficult process. She also wished to thank Chris Brown and his team for going over and above to make the process as painless as possible;
- Concerns that the decanted residents bidding on Homefinder had to compete with others, these residents should be given priority over others; *Gold banding on Homefinder would allow tenants to bid on the exact property for their needs in a reasonable amount of time. Discussions with the group on Homefinder would be on the agenda for consideration in the future;*
- Concerns with the already lack of housing stock and the flats not being replaced; *After three surveys on these blocks it was decided that the properties in this area had reached the end of their useful life so we did not*

*have any choice but to lose them. 349 new properties would be built over the next few years with the build programme;*

The report was noted.

34. **Directorate Report**

**This report was to update the Tenants Strategic Group on work being undertaken and progress made by the Housing Directorate since the last meeting of the TSG in November 21.**

Detailed discussions around unitary would be brought back to the group when we had something substantial to report.

**Comments/questions by the group included:**

- Capital Programme, would all windows now be triple glazed? *this would be checked and reported back to the group;*
- What was the policy for moving into a bigger unit due to fostering? *This information would be in the Homefinder policy. We would look at this and report back the details;*

35. **AOB and actions arising from the last meeting**

**Actions arising from the last meeting;**

- Officers to look at the classification of vulnerability;
- Get a check list from Customer services re: vulnerability;
- Add response rate to Performance report for Customer questionnaires;
- Out off 66 outstanding ASB cases, how many are over 12 months old (clasify into 3,6,12 as before);
- Ensure that all contractors follow the same Covid protocols, masks and wipe down;
- Circulate the list of Septic tanks to be invested in;
- Bring Septic Tank programme back to TSG later in the year;
- Chair to give Laurence Hughes specific concerns re: outbuildings;
- Check whether window replacements are double or triple glazed;
- To look into the Homefinder policy re: fostering;

(The Meeting ended at 7.53 pm)