



Somerset Council

Tenants' Strategic Group – 25th September 2023

VOIDS Group outcome report

This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Member for Communities

Report Authors: Sharon Sloan and Wayne Hobson (Tenants Action Group Chair)

1. Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

The report is to update the Tenants Strategic Group on the outcomes of the VOIDS Group.

2. Background

This group was set up to address the time it takes to turn VOIDS around and to ensure that all properties are let in line with the lettable standard. The group finished in June 2023.

3. Findings

3.1 During the lifetime of the VOIDS Group, the following has been achieved:

- Understanding of issues when properties are handed back in an extremely poor condition. Please see appendix 1-photos
- Delays with asbestos specialists accessing properties.
- The costs involved in making some of these properties habitable.

3.2 The objectives for the group and expected outcomes were as follows:

1. Ensure properties are up to the lettable standard before re-letting.
2. Understanding the issues where there are delays in having properties ready for re-letting.

Both objectives, have been achieved.

3.3 12 properties were inspected and all met the lettable standard.

4. Considerations

4.1 Discussed moving boilers to make more room, decided too expensive.

4.2 Discussed completing capital works programme e.g kitchen and bathrooms whilst VOID, decided that this was not viable because it would delay the tenant from moving in. Agreed better to have the VOID turned around quicker and do the capital works as part of programme, once tenant has moved in.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Capital Works work together with VOIDS more urgently to complete works.

5.2 Continue to use local contractors where able as they are quicker to respond to any issues.

5.3 Emphasise to new tenants that the lettable standard must be adhered to for both parties the landlord and the tenant

5.4 Ensure leaving well visits are conducted.

5.5 All employees visiting properties for any reason must feedback if there are issues in any home.

5.6 Continue to monitor the properties that are left in appalling conditions, how many and the cost implications? Were the leaving well visits completed?- Suggest setting up a new group in TAG to monitor this.

5.7 To request that the group continues to work with the VOIDS team on an ad-hoc basis to ensure that standards do not slip.

5.8 The Tenants Strategic Group is asked to note this report and are invited to ask questions and agree/disagree with the recommendations.

6. Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

A risk assessment is not required to accompany this report.

7. Are there any Finance / Resource, Legal implications directly to do with this report?

There are no financial implications directly to do with the recommendations in this report

8. Are there any Equality and Diversity Implications?

There are no equality implications directly to do with this report

9. Are there any Data Protection Implications?

There are no equality implications directly to do with this report

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APPENDIX 1:

















