



TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Wednesday, 6th January, 2016 at 1.30 pm

(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 1.00 p.m.)

MEMBERSHIP

Sallie Bannatyne

Olga Gailite

John Gittos (Chair)

Christine Gregory

Michael Healey

Maddy Hunter

Peter Middleton

Roderic Morgan

Jackie Worthington

Please note: Certain or all items on this agenda may be recorded

Agenda compiled by:
Guy Close
Scrutiny Support Unit
Tel: 39 50878

Head of Scrutiny and Member Development:
Peter Marrington
Tel: 39 51151

www.twitter.com/scrutinyleeds

Produced on Recycled Paper

A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <p>RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:</p> <p>No exempt items have been identified.</p>	
2			<p>LATE ITEMS</p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)</p>	
3			<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence.</p>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
4			<p>MINUTES - 2 DECEMBER 2015</p> <p>To confirm as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2015.</p>	1 - 6
5			<p>CHAIR'S UPDATE</p> <p>To receive an update from the Chair on scrutiny activity, not specifically included on this agenda, since the previous Board meeting.</p>	7 - 8
6			<p>SCRUTINY INQUIRY - ENVIRONMENT OF ESTATES</p> <p>To receive a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development regarding the Board's Inquiry into the Environment of Estates.</p>	9 - 12
7			<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Wednesday, 3 February 2015 at 1.30pm (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 1.00pm)</p> <p>THIRD PARTY RECORDING</p> <p>Recording of this meeting is allowed to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings. A copy of the recording protocol is available from the contacts named on the front of this agenda.</p> <p>Use of Recordings by Third Parties– code of practice</p> <p>a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.</p> <p>b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.</p>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No

TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

PRESENT: John Gittos in the Chair

Sallie Bannatyne, Olga Gailite, Christine Gregory, Michael Healey, Maddy Hunter, Peter Middleton, Roderic Morgan and Jackie Worthington

36 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

37 Late Items

There were no late items.

38 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

39 Minutes - 4 November 2015

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2015 be approved as a correct record.

40 Chair's Update

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which provided the Chair of Tenant Scrutiny Board with an opportunity to update Board Members on some of the areas of work and activity since the November meeting.

The Chair advised that he had attended Scrutiny Board (Environment & Housing) on 17 November 2015, at which landfill, waste strategy and housing lettings policy were discussed.

The Chair also reported that he had now received a formal response following issues raised by Mr Ilee. This had been circulated to Board Members. Housing Leeds were thanked for its quick response on this matter and agreed that no further work on this matter would take place.

Finally the Chair reported on a recent meeting held with the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development in relation to the future administrative support to the Tenant Scrutiny Board. This would be discussed at the Board's March 2016 meeting.

RESOLVED – That the above update be received.

41 Scrutiny Inquiry - Environment of Estates

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented information as part of the Board's Inquiry on the Environment of Estates. This included a summary of the responses received from Leeds City Councillors following a questionnaire sent by the Board in relation to estate walkabouts.

The following Councillors were in attendance:

- Councillor Adam Ogilvie, Beeston & Holbeck Ward
- Councillor Angela Gabriel, Beeston & Holbeck Ward
- Councillor Caroline Gruen, Bramley & Stanningley Ward
- Councillor Kevin Ritchie, Bramley & Stanningley Ward
- Councillor Sharon Hamilton, Moortown Ward

These Councillors represented those estates visited by the Tenant Scrutiny Board as part of its inquiry.

The following officers were in attendance:

- Sharon Guy, Housing Manager (Customer Relations, Tenant Scrutiny, Tenant Involvement and Equality)
- Lee Ward, Neighbourhood Services Officer.

By way of introduction, the Chair provided a summary of the purposes of the Inquiry and work undertaken to date. The Chair also outlined the draft timetable for completing the review.

The attending Councillors were invited to share in turn with the Board their own perspective of the issues facing estates, their particular frustrations and the frustration of tenants as relayed to them. This was followed by a broad discussion.

A number of common themes emerged from these discussions. Those being:

- A general consensus that one of the biggest issues on estates was the management of waste and general issues around litter.
- The standard a grass cutting.
- The speed of repairs and quality of work.
- The management of gardens and the understanding tenants have of their responsibilities under their tenancy agreement.
- Dog fouling and initiatives to improve deterrence.
- The importance of good relationships between local ward members and housing officers.
- The need for Housing Officers to be known by and be visible to tenants.

- The management of repair requests and other tenant service requests at the housing office front desk. It was suggested that consideration be given to the technical feasibility of introducing an on line tracking system so customers can track the progress of their repair/service request (in the same way that customers can track progress of on line shopping).
- To what extent the Council uses its enforcement powers.
- Whether Council officers are aware of the consequences of not getting it right first time.
- Whether tool banks could be rolled out across the City

Specifically in relation to estate 'walkabouts' and the feedback from Elected Members to the questionnaire, the following was noted:

- 32 Ward Councillors representing 25 out of the 33 wards responded
- 100% of Councillors had attended a walkabout , 98% in the last 12 months
- All stated that the process was useful.

Positive comments included

- Ideal way to develop relationships with housing officers
- Important for tenants to see that councillors and officers are interested and care
- Important to see estates for oneself
- Good way of identifying other 'personal' issues
- Good way to share perspectives and establish good practice
- Provides the opportunity for ward Councillors to set clear expectations and to set standards for the environment
- Provides opportunities to monitor the consistency in performance of housing officers

- Provides the opportunity to gather the intelligence needed to target resources

Negative comments included;

- lack of notice over times
- diary clashes
- poor communication over pending visits resulting in low tenant involvement

Some ward Councillors had fed back that they received the reports of walkabouts even if they had not attended, however this was not consistent across the city. Others stated that the walkabout should be used to identify and compliment those tenants who kept a tidy and pleasant environment and to start enforcement action on those in breach of their tenancies. A recurring theme was the importance of ensuring that actions agreed happened in a timely manner and the importance of 'joined up working' between the different agencies and council departments. It was also acknowledged that the process of picking up actions during walkabouts illustrated previous 'system failures'. It was suggested that at least once a year *all* appropriate agencies undertake a joint walkabout.

All ward Councillors stated that the estate walkabout was only one of a number of ways in which they gained knowledge and an understanding of their estates. Other methods cited included; street surgeries, casework, attendance at tenant/community group meetings, private walkabouts, correspondence and membership on HAP.

Concluding the discussion, the Chair outlined the next steps of the Inquiry which would include the distribution of a questionnaire to tenant groups (as agreed by the Board)

It was also agreed that Peter Middleton, Sallie Bannatyne and Olga Gailite would represent the Board in terms of the work being undertaken by Housing Leeds in relation to walkabouts. To assist, a summary of the Board's observations in this matter would be drafted for the Board's January 2016 meeting.

RESOLVED –

- I. To thank the attend Councillors for their time and constructive contribution.
- II. That three Board Members contribute to the harmonising project in relation to walkabouts and that a summary of the Board's observations in this matter would be drafted for the Board's January 2016 meeting.

III. That the next steps in the Inquiry be noted.

42 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 6 January 2016 at 1.30pm (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 1.00pm)

(The meeting concluded at 3.10pm)

This page is intentionally left blank

Report of Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Report to Tenant Scrutiny Board

Date: 6 January 2016

Subject: Chair's Update Report – January 2016

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline some of the areas of work and activity of the Chair of the Scrutiny Board.

2 Main issues

- 2.1 Invariably, scrutiny activity often takes place outside of the formal monthly Tenant Scrutiny Board meetings. Such activity can take the form of specific activity and actions of the Chair of the Tenant Scrutiny Board.
- 2.2 The purpose of this report is to provide an opportunity to formally update the Tenant Scrutiny Board on activity since the last meeting, including any specific outcomes. It also provides an opportunity for members of the Tenant Scrutiny Board to identify and agree any further scrutiny activity that may be necessary.
- 2.3 The Chair and Head of Scrutiny and Member Development will provide a verbal update at the meeting, as required.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 Members are asked to:
- a) Note the content of this report and the verbal update provided at the meeting.
 - b) Identify any specific matters that may require further scrutiny input/ activity.

4. Background papers¹

4.1 None used

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Report to Tenant Scrutiny Board

Date: 6th January 2016

Subject: Scrutiny Inquiry - Environment of Estates

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1.0 Summary of main issues

1.1 This is the Board's fifth session looking at the Environment of Estates. At the last meeting it was agreed that a questionnaire would be sent to all tenant and resident groups, the 11 Housing Advisory Panels and 37 Service Improvement Volunteers. This questionnaire would focus on estate walkabouts and estate inspections. A copy of the agreed questionnaire is attached as Appendix 1. A link to the online version can be followed here.

<https://consult.leeds.gov.uk/KMS/elab.aspx?noip=1&CampaignId=959&SessionId=H8SUWY5GDx>

Because of the Christmas period officers are allowing four weeks for response rather than the usual two weeks. It is hoped that officers will be able to provide a verbal update at the meeting and a more detailed analysis in February.

1.2 The Board at its last meeting also discussed the reporting of issues by tenants and how this was managed. It was agreed therefore, for the sake of completeness, that the Board would invite the relevant officer(s) to today's meeting to gain an understanding to how the City's Contact Centre operates and its relationship with Housing Leeds.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Board is requested to

- (i) Discuss with officers any emerging issues arising from the questionnaire

- (ii) Receive information from officers in relation to the operation of the Contact Centre
- (iii) Agree the next steps in the Inquiry.

3.0 Background documents¹

3.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

ESTATE INSPECTION / WALKABOUT QUESTIONNAIRE

Housing Leeds carry out regular estate inspections / walkabouts of our estates. We look at all aspects of environmental issues, including; fly tipping, graffiti, overgrown gardens, grass cutting, litter and assess potential investment needs. We use information gathered to direct resources and make improvements. We aim to involve tenants, leaseholders, Councillors and other Council Departments as much as possible in monitoring estate conditions.

The aims of estate inspections / walkabouts are:

- To get local people involved in improving neighbourhoods.
- To help highlight any issues and influence the content of any works that may need doing.
- To provide regular feedback to let people know what we are doing in their neighbourhood.

1. Are you aware of when Estate inspections / walkabouts are taking place in your estate?
2. Would you like to be involved or receive more information about estate inspections?
3. If you are aware of them, how do you find out about them?
 - a. Online
 - b. Posters in the Housing Office
 - c. Community notice board / Notice Board in lobby
 - d. Directly from your Housing Officer
 - e. Notice boards in high rise blocks
4. Have you ever taken part in an Estate Inspections / Walkabout?
5. If so, how long ago was it?
6. Have you any comments, both positive and negative on those you have attended, do you have any thoughts on how they could be improved?
7. If you've not been on an inspection / walkabout, can you tell us why? Is it because
 - a. The time of inspection / walkabout was not convenient
 - b. Not enough notice
 - c. Concern about being seen as 'interfering' in others' lives
 - d. Not interested in doing them
 - e. Other – please state
8. Are you aware of Housing Leeds Estate Standards?
9. Have you any comments on the standards?
10. Should additional Housing Leeds Officers or other representatives attend with residents on Estate Inspections / Walkabouts?
11. Are you interested in taking an active role in your neighbourhood?

