

TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 24TH SEPTEMBER, 2014

PRESENT: Steve Ilee in the Chair

Adam Abeid, Carol Bennett,
Michael Healey, Roderic Morgan, Keith
Newsome, Phillip Rone, Barry Stanley,
Damien Walsh and Jackie Worthington

13 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

14 Late Items

The Chair agreed to accept the following late information:

- Agenda item 9, 2014/15 Quarter 1 Performance report. (Minute No. 19 refers)

The above document was subsequently made available on the Council's website.

15 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted by Sandra Bland and Jim Fergusson.

The Board was informed that Kevin Sharp and Maddie Ullah had resigned from Tenant Scrutiny Board. The Board thanked Kevin and Maddie for their positive contribution to the work of tenant scrutiny.

16 Minutes - 23 July 2014

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.

17 Draft Terms of Reference - Annual Tenancy Visits

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented draft terms of reference for the Board's inquiry into annual tenancy visits.

A copy of the draft terms of reference had been issued to members after the meeting in July for comment. Responses had been received from the Chair and Vice Chair.

RESOLVED – That the terms of reference for the inquiry be approved.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 16th October, 2014

18 Scrutiny Inquiry - Annual Tenancy Visits

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented information as part of the Board's first session into Annual Tenancy Visits (ATVs).

The following information was appended to the report:

- Report of the Chief Officer (Housing Management), including the purpose of the visits, performance in 2013 and progress since April 2014
- A copy of the Tenancy Agreement
- Details of the Lone Working Training given to Housing Officers.

The following officers were in attendance:

- Liz Cook, Chief Officer (Housing Management)
- Amanda Britton, Tenant and Community Involvement Manager.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The benefits of the ATV to the landlord and tenant, ensuring that tenants were effectively managing their homes and taking action on tenant fraud.
- Ensuring a more personalised service for tenants by reducing Housing officer patch sizes.
- Confirmation that there had been approximately 10 cases of tenancy fraud / sub-letting over the previous year. The majority of tenancy fraud cases had been identified by Housing officers through their day to day work.
- Acknowledgement of improvements needed to the out of hours service.
- Confirmation that priority was given to ATVs that had not been undertaken over the previous year.
- The type of issues discussed on ATVs – the primary role was to identify tenant fraud. Other issues identified, included, overcrowding, under occupation, employment, health and wellbeing, disrepair and outstanding repairs and any rent arrears.
- Identifying safeguarding issues and work undertaken to provide further support to tenants where appropriate, e.g. Children's Services and / or Adult Social Care.
- Support for tenants in relation to tenancy and financial issues identified during the visit.
- Confirmation that the cost of a tenancy visit was £15 for an hourly visit and £7 for a 30 minute visit.
- Training and development requirements for Housing officers. Members were advised that all visiting staff received training in lone working. Training was also provided in relation to safeguarding, allocations, financial inclusion and tenancy fraud.

- Confirmation that systems were in place to warn staff of any issues prior to visits being undertaken. The Board were advised that systems were currently being reviewed to ensure they were robust.
- Acknowledgement of improvements needed to remote working and ensuring that information could be updated electronically during visits.

RESOLVED – That the issues raised be incorporated in the draft report of the Scrutiny Board's inquiry with the acknowledgement that they may alter as the inquiry progresses.

19 Additional Information - 2014/15 Quarter 1 Performance report

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented a summary of performance against the six Housing Leeds priorities. These were submitted to Housing Advisory Board on 9 September 2014. Also included was the Housing Leeds capital financial position, period 3 2014/15.

The following officers were in attendance:

- Liz Cook, Chief Officer (Housing Management)
- Amanda Britton, Tenant and Community Involvement Manager
- Anna Tansley, Service Manager (Intelligence and Improvement)
- Frank Perrins, Research Manager (Research and Satisfaction).

Members were provided with an overview of the performance information available. It was suggested that the Board provided the directorate with a wish-list of performance information to be reported back. The Board was particularly interested in receiving performance information in relation to repairs and customer satisfaction.

To assist the Board with its request for information, Anna Tansley, Service Manager (Intelligence and Improvement), invited Board Members to meet with the performance team to discuss their requirements.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Board notes the quarter 1 performance information relating to the six Housing Leeds priorities and the Housing Leeds capital financial position, period 3 2014/15
- (b) That the Tenant Scrutiny Board provides the directorate with a wish-list of performance information to be reported back.
- (c) That the performance information requested be formally considered at the October Board meeting.

20 Scrutiny Inquiry - Annual Tenancy Visits - Next Steps - Session 2

The Board discussed next steps as part of its inquiry into ATVs. It was suggested that the Board undertook visits to Housing offices to discuss ATVs with Housing Managers. The Board asked to be provided with details of

Housing offices and Housing Managers, with an option for Members to undertake the visits either on their own or in a small group. The information gathered on the visits could be reported back to the October Board meeting.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the further information required be provided as part of the Board's inquiry.
- (b) That the Board undertakes visits to Housing offices, identifying best practice and areas for review.
- (c) That the information gathered on the visits be reported back to the October Board meeting.

21 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 16 October 2011 at 1.30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds.

(The meeting concluded at 3.25pm)