

## TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD

FRIDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2020

**PRESENT:** John Gittos in the Chair  
Sallie Bannatyne  
Mary Farish  
Maddy Hunter  
Rita Ighade  
Jackie Worthington  
Ian Montgomery  
Ian Parr  
Peter Greenwood

### 19 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

None.

### 20 Late Items

None.

### 21 Apologies for Absence

Stanley Burton (SBa), Peter Middleton

### 22 Minutes -

RESOLVED – The minutes of the previous meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2020 were passed as a true record.

### 23 Matters Arising

Everyone introduced themselves via the online Zoom meeting tool.

JG apologised to the board members for the rescheduling of the previous meetings due to the Chair going into hospital two days before the meeting. JG said he met with Mandy Sawyer who informed him of Keith Mack's departure as he was taking early retirement. Mandy assured him there would be no changes to the board's current plans and the way it conducts its role, the only change being PG taking on the lead Scrutiny Officer role to support the board. JG expressed his thanks to KM on behalf of the board for his support with their previous and current enquiries.

PG introduced himself and expressed his eagerness to work with the board on their current and future investigations. IM confirmed there had been other colleagues leaving the service in recent weeks including the Chief Officer Jill Wildman whose role will be covered by Gerard Tinsdale, and Head of

Housing Management Dave Longthorpe whose role will be covered by Madeline Edwards. IM confirmed that previous scrutiny officer Sharon Guy has also retired.

JG informed the board of his next update meeting with Councillor Coupar is on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December.

Since the previous TSB meeting, JG had also given an update to the Environment, Housing, and Communities Scrutiny Board who gave their support to the work of the board. In terms of the present review the board are now carrying out, JG proposed that findings are collated and presented to the Environment, Housing, and Communities Board following each stage of the TSB enquiry, to which the board members agreed.

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JG told the board of two extra meetings with Gateshead Council's corresponding Tenant Scrutiny Board on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of December. The first meeting about how Leeds TSB conducts their scrutiny investigations, the second being a chance to discuss with Gateshead TSB conducts how they carry out scrutiny and any other wider tenant engagement practice that might help with the boards current review. JW and SBa offered to be involved in the discussions.

There will be an online meeting of the members of the citywide forums taking place on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December from 2pm – 3pm. Members should have already received an invite to this.

## **24 Your Voice Leeds - Katie Bell**

KB gave a demonstration of '[Your Voice Leeds](#)' a new platform to engage with tenants and residents, as part of a year-long trial. Users can see up-to-date information about the live consultations from the service as a whole, allowing residents to leave comments and suggestions in a variety of ways. The site is also accessible on different devices.

The number of visitors to any page and the feedback they give in response to the consultation can be monitored, giving useful insight from a wide range of tenants and residents – including those not able to attend more traditional ways of getting involved and giving feedback. The site went live with its first consultations in early November, with residents being invited to take part. Although in the early stages, so far there have been some 300 page views, with 9 tenants signed up at the time of the meeting.

The site is able to analyse comments and key words, collating all individual feedback as well as identifying generally positive or negative responses. As more consultations are published on Your Voice Leeds, tenants in those areas can be encouraged to sign up to give feedback. The aim is to open up

how we engage with tenants and residents so that more and more residents have an opportunity to give feedback. The service can also then give feedback to those who took part, sharing a summary of the findings and how we've taken their feedback on board.

IM offered creating a consultation page for the Tenant Scrutiny Board, giving information about the board, letting tenants know about their current review, and inviting a wide range of tenants to give their input into this. It can also appeal for new tenants to join the board.

JG noted that the site will be useful to be able to send and monitor surveys as the board has done previously and will not restrict responses which would allow for comments to be gathered and potentially feed into the current investigation. IM confirmed it may be possible to reach a much broader range of tenants using the site that the board had been previously unable to do.

JG asked what the potential longevity of the site is after the year's trial has passed. IM responded that it is very likely that the subscription will be renewed due to the cost effectiveness of the engagement it. Your Voice Leeds also supports Housing Leeds working on tenant, resident and community consultation with other services, albeit under the ownership and responsibility of Housing Leeds.

JG asked what the provisions will be for tenants who are not online, IM replied that Your Voice Leeds is in addition to and not instead of all of the currently existing methods of engagement. Tenants will still have support to be able to access online content – so it's about adding what for many is an accessible way to give feedback.

JG asked how tenants are able to access the site, KB confirmed that the only details required are an email address, a username, and the first line of the users' postcode so their rough location in Leeds is apparent. Tenants can be invited to join by clicking on a link in a text, email or on social media.

JG suggested that RI would be an effective lead on following up Your Voice Leeds, RI agreed that she would be willing to work with Katie and colleagues to draft the TSB consultation.

## **25 Using 'User-Centred Design' - Ian Montgomery**

IM reminded board members of the principles of user-centred design – to improve aspects of a service based on the perspectives and needs of the customer. .

User-centred design was used recently to help review how the service manages rent related enquiries. Listening to the input of customers and staff through a variety of methods. From this feedback, changes were made such inclusion of an automated payment line that allows customers to directly access what they need for the most simple transactions.

The choice based lettings team have also used the approach, surveying all new applicants for their feedback, which has had approximately 2,000 responses in the first research phase. The feedback is being used to identify which elements of the process are easy for customers, and where the issues or 'pain points' for the customer are occurring.

A review of the Council web pages was also completed with input from tenants using various workshops and analysis of what content tenants most often needed to find. Based on this feedback, pages were reorganised and unused pages have been removed, the process is much more streamlined and tenants are finding what they need more easily.

JG asked if the research conducted into the services is ever used to determine staffing levels. IM answered that it is not usually directly linked, but may for example provide information about how many staff and the wider resource needed to support a particular type of service request.

JG asked if the STAR survey or any responses from it might be contradicted by changing the ways of working in a particular service. IM replied that the two processes are very different ways of gathering data and identifying issues. Ultimately, UCD is about designing the best possible service, so should link to tenant satisfaction that way. Tenant satisfaction information would also be one of the pieces of information to highlight which elements of the service could be reviewed using UCD approaches.

JG thanked IM and KB for their input to the meeting.

## **26 Forward Planning**

JG confirmed the next board meeting will take place on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2020. JG encouraged the board members to think about if Fridays are still the best days for meetings as there may be some flexibility to allow for more attendance from members.

To confirm, two joint meetings held between members of the Leeds and Gateshead Tenant Scrutiny Boards. The first meeting will be on Tuesday the 1<sup>st</sup> of December from 10am-11am, and the second will be on Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup> of December from 10am-11am.

JG suggested that by the February meeting the board should be able to conclude the stage 1 information gathering phase, and that members should be expecting to do some of the work outside of scheduled meeting times to meet this date. JG can share a summary document of the kind of work to be completed outside of the meeting.

IM explained that there were other aspects of the service that would be useful for the board to be aware of in line with the scope of stage 1, and how we listen and respond to tenants more widely. IM offered to work with JG and SBa outside the meeting to share all the opportunities the board have to widen their research and information.

**27 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next zoom meeting is scheduled for Friday 18<sup>th</sup> of December at 12:45 for a 1.00pm start

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 3:00 PM