

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

TENANTS' FORUM

Meeting held – 8th March 2018

Present: Councillors Maggie Don, Andrew Dutton and Mark Rowley

Tenant Representatives: Brian Kimpton (Counties) (Chair)
Peter Harvey (Dahlia Road)
Josephine Copson (Alfred Street)
Reg Carvell (Leaseholder)
Martyn Lund (Highfield Road)
Lindsay Woodridge (Sackville Street)
Steven Soper (Sackville Street)
Hamid Saleri (Geddington)
Moira Brown (Highfield Crescent)
Jim French (Desborough)
Peter Matsa (Burton Latimer)

Also Present: John Conway (Housing)
Leona Mantle (Housing)
Tracey Copeland (Housing)
Darren Ibell (Housing)
Simon Haile (Housing)
Pearl Nathaniel (Finance)
David Pope (Democratic Services)

17.TF.101 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Howes and Mike Tebbutt. Apologies were also received from Anne Swoboda and Ken Burnage.

17.TF.102 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

17.TF.103 MINUTES

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th February 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

17.TF.104 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

17.TF.76 – Homelessness Reduction Act

A question was asked regarding how many individuals had been housed under the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol during the recent cold period. It was heard that there had been 15 spaces available for rough sleepers under the provisions, with 8 utilised. An exact figure on the number of nights SWEPE was in effect would be communicated to Cllr Don.

17.TF.94 – Reinventing Repairs

The Housing Repairs service was congratulated for its response in repairing boilers during the cold period. It was heard that there were currently 78 void properties, although the project to return toxic void properties to the council's housing stock was now complete. The meeting was advised that a Voids Project Manager had been appointed for a period of 12 months and would be introduced at a future meeting to explain their role.

17.TF.105 MATTERS RAISED BY TENANTS' FORUM REPRESENTATIVES

None

17.TF.106 REINVENTING REPAIRS

The meeting received a further update on the ongoing Reinventing Repairs project.

It was reported that a Voids Project Manager had been appointed and would commence work on 19th March for a period of 12 months, undertaking a comprehensive review of the whole voids process from the point that a tenant gave notice to the keys to the property being given to the next tenant.

It was heard that one of the senior surveyors would also be undertaking a review of the processes involved in undertaking responsive repairs including the scheduling of appointments, management of staff and the provision of information to tenants.

The recent cold period had resulted in a high number of boiler repair call outs and the team would be looking to see what lessons could be taken from that experience. Standardisation of boiler units would make ongoing maintenance and repair significantly easier.

17.TF.107 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018/19 & CURRENT UPDATE

The meeting received an update regarding the Capital Programme for 2018/19.

It was heard that the Council utilised the Estate Pro asset management database to record details obtained from its stock surveys. The initial stock survey had reviewed approximately 10% of the Council's housing stock and had extrapolated this data to provide an overall picture. However, it was noted that this method had proved to be inaccurate and the data could not be relied upon to produce capital programmes of work.

Over the last five years work had been undertaken to ensure that the information input into the system was accurate to allow for better outcomes. A revised stock condition survey had taken place in the previous two years whereby main component items of each property were assessed as to their condition. Each survey had reduced significantly in time taken which allowed for more surveys to be carried out each week. The level of accurate, surveyed data on the Estate Pro system had now risen to around 70% of the Council's housing stock.

The forum noted that it was important for all the departments across the Council to feed into the database to allow for the most accurate, current information to be held. To assist with this there needed to be staff support and training to ensure that knowledge of the system was imparted to all those who accessed it and that staff felt confident in using the data it contained.

Going forward the Council would undertake a street-by-street, area-based approach to the capital programme which would be easier to deliver and make more sense to tenants. Surveyors would start to visit properties during March, and component replacement would be combined where possible and practicable to minimise resident disruption.

Details of challenges faced by the service were outlined to the meeting and included the following:-

- Shortfalls in historical investment
- Organisational culture
- Surveyor consistency
- Difficult messages to convey to tenants
- Maintenance of the current approach
- Development of the system

The meeting was provided with an overview of the plan of works as follows:-

Main Components

Kitchens and Bathrooms – New components would be installed in approximately 40 to 50 properties, with some additional ad hoc replacements identified as part of day to day activity. Street by street assessments would be undertaken based on Estate Pro information. Where possible replacement works would be undertaken together to minimise disruption for tenants and to make effective and efficient use of the Council's workforce.

Boiler Installation/Central Heating – Approximately 150-160 properties were planned for the year, with 70 of those identified through responsive repairs. This area would operate as a more demand led service. Gloucester Close had been identified as part of the catch-up programme.

Roofing – A rolling four year programme of roof replacements had been procured and would be undertaken across 201 properties on the Pychley Road estate. This programme provided a good example of positive use of asset data to procure a long term programme.

GRP Doors – The Council had recently procured a framework for GRP door replacement for 2018/19. This work would be based on street by street assessment utilising Estate Pro data

Additional Programme – Aids and adaptations would form part of a reactive programme following the required assessments. Door entry system replacements were in the third year of a long term programme and the delayed window replacement programme on the Highfield Estate had recommenced. Work was underway to fit external wall insulation at the Hampden Crescent project and work would also continue on the Sparkle Project for sheltered housing. Approximately 280 Fire Risk Assessments would be renewed in 2019.

17.TF.108 CONNECT

The forum heard that the forthcoming edition of Connect was with the printers and article topics for the subsequent edition were requested.

17.TF.109 TENANT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Martyn Lund attended the meeting and reported that panel members had met to discuss the final report of the latest panel review with the Head of Housing and the Tenancy Services Manager.

It was considered by housing officers that the conclusions contained within the report were sound and that the review had provided

constructive scrutiny. The report required a small number of amendments to the presentation of its recommendations but would be presented to the next meeting of the forum in April.

It was heard that the panel had recently rewritten its Terms of Reference to ensure they remained fit for purpose. In addition the panel was still monitoring Performance Indicators and had recently had a number of potential new members in attendance.

17.TF.110 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Housing Tour 2018

It was heard that a date for the 2018 Housing Tour was yet to be finalised, however it ordinarily took place in May each year. A definite date would be communicated to members of the forum as soon as possible. It was noted that a visit to Hampden Crescent would form part of the tour.

Tenant Housing Event

A new date for the Tenant Housing Event postponed due to the adverse weather conditions would be communicated as soon as possible.

Temporary Accommodation

It was heard that there were 124 households in the borough currently housed in temporary accommodation.

Homelessness

Following a question from the public gallery, details of the work the council undertook to tackle the issue of homelessness was provided to the meeting.

Rethinking Social Housing Workshop

The forum was asked to consider a set of questions at part of the Chartered Institute of Housing's "Rethinking Social Housing Workshop" which aimed to obtain views of tenants and officers in relation to social housing.

The questions the forum were asked to consider were:

- What is social housing?
- What does social housing do?
- Who is social housing for?

The forum provided comments

Rethinking Social Housing Workshop – Chartered Inst of Housing, org that interested in formulating views of officers in sector and tens, through this workshop ask a few q's to get your views on social housing. Critical time for housing, rising up the political agenda, CIH want real comments to add to debates.

What is social housing? Affordable, security, step on the ladder to improve, quality knowing good landlord

What does social housing do? Helps those in needs, roof over heads, provides security and peace of mind, meets basic need and provides safety net, meets fundamental principal

Who is it for? Anyone, people not wishing to buy, housing need . Anyone who meets criteria, mainly family and those with add needs

Role and purpose =

Sort out more of these get together things

17.TF.111 PRIZE DRAW

The winner of the prize draw was Josephine Copson.

17.TF.112 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the date for the next meeting of the forum would be 12th April 2018.

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and ended at 7.48pm)

Signed

Chair

CG