

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

TENANTS' FORUM

Meeting held – 10th January 2019

Present: Councillor Mark Rowley (Chair)
Councillors Maggie Don, Andrew Dutton, David Howes and Mike Tebbutt

Tenant Representatives: Brent Woodford (Ashley)
Brian Kimpton (Counties)
Martyn Lund (Highfield Road)
Steven Soper (Sackville Street)
Lindsay Wooldridge (Sackville Street)
Hamid Saleri (Geddington)
Gloria Moore (Grange)
Peter Matsa (Geddington)
Anne Swoboda (Rothwell)
Stephen Panther (Sackville Street)
Josephine Copson (Alfred Street)
Sandra Nash (Counties)
Trevor Nash (Counties)
Nick Sheldrick (Weston by Welland)

Also Present: John Conway (Housing)
Darren Ibell (Housing)
Tracey Copeland (Housing)
Dean Mitchell (Finance)
Pearl Nathaniel (Finance)
David Pope (Democratic Services)

18.TF.80 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr June Derbyshire, Leona Mantle, Reg Carvell and Ken Burnage.

18.TF.81 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

18.TF.82 MINUTES

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th December 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

18.TF.83 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

18.TF.71 – Homelessness Solutions

It was reported that KBC had made 19 referrals to the Kettering Night Shelter since its opening. The shelter had 15 places available each night with an average of 8 or 9 being utilised each night. The meeting noted the professionalism of shelter staff and the impressive nature of the set up.

It was heard that KBC had now acquired 20 properties on the open market that would be used for temporary accommodation purposes that would help reduce the reliance on paid nightly accommodation.

18.TF.84 MATTERS RAISED BY TENANTS' FORUM REPRESENTATIVES

An update was requested in relation to the backlog of Keyways applications. It was heard that slow progress was being made, applications from the first week in September 2018 were now being dealt with. In addition, all queries and emails coming into the council were being dealt with on the day of receipt.

18.TF.85 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

KBC's Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Manager attended the meeting to provide an outline of the work of the council in tackling ASB as well as detailing amendments to the revised ASB Policy.

It was heard that due to an increase in workload an additional member of staff had been added to the team tackling ASB to assist in progressing ASB cases in a timely manner and to offer support to Neighbourhood Managers. The forum heard that ASB offences were becoming more crime-based rather than incidents of lower-level nuisance.

The meeting noted the importance of partnership work when tackling ASB. The three main elements of this work were detailed to the meeting as follows:-

- MARAC – Assisting those individuals at high risk of domestic abuse.
- Corby & Kettering Cuckooing Group – This group aimed to target and assist vulnerable adults at risk of the practice known as cuckooing
- ASB Steering Group – This group would be relaunched in 2019 working alongside such partner agencies as the police and Youth Offending Service

The meeting was presented with details of the ASB enforcement performance information, with data supplied for the previous financial year and the current year to date. The forum noted that although more Community Protection Warnings had been issued in the current year than during the whole of the previous year, fewer cases were moving onto more serious levels of enforcement such as Community Protection notices, notices seeking possession and evictions. Overall, the current picture indicated that KBC was increasingly able to deal with incidents of ASB at an early stage. The meeting noted that heavy enforcement undertaken in the previous year had been necessary to tackle the rise of drug issues and incidents of cuckooing across the Council's housing stock.

Key trends and demands affecting the Council's ASB service were detailed, as well as the changing face of crime and ASB incidents.

The forum received an update in relation to the Council's ASB Policy which had recently been amended. The revised policy would be submitted to the Executive Committee for consideration prior to adoption. Key changes to the policy were outlined as follows:

- Clearly stated methods of reporting ASB
- Clarification of behaviours which are / are not considered ASB and advice about agencies to contact if the issue cannot be dealt with by the Council
- Introduction of case review trigger points and regular monitoring of progress by the ASB Team
- Requirement for risk assessments to be carried out at critical stages
- Service standards for case management including minimum contact timescales
- Clear case closure outcomes

The forum asked questions in relation to the support received from police, how the revised ASB Policy would impact tenants suffering from ASB and ASB in housing association properties.

18.TF.86 PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR ACCESS BID

No update was available to the forum as the government had yet to make a decision on the bid submitted. A further funding bid relating to rough sleeping would be submitted shortly. Further details would be supplied when available.

18.TF.87 HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The forum was provided with the latest asset management report.

It was noted that the capital programme was reaching its end and work was underway with the Finance Department regarding budgetary provisions for the forthcoming financial year.

It was heard that a comparatively mild winter had reduced the number of boiler repair calls that would normally have been expected and allowed for additional boiler installations that had been anticipated at the start of the financial year.

The report provided the meeting with a project focus in relation to kitchen and bathroom replacement. The asset management database indicated that approximately 200 kitchens required replacing on an annual basis as they reached the end of their natural lifespan. However, it was forecast that only 38 would be installed by the conclusion of the financial year. It was accepted that this figure was insufficient and there remained a piece of work to rectify this situation. A total of 23 kitchens had been identified as having significant health and safety risks that required their imminent replacement. A further 40 kitchens could be repaired to bring them to an acceptable standard.

Members of the forum asked question regarding repair service cover over the Christmas period and associated communication as well as requesting that safety standards for kitchens be made available for reference.

18.TF.88 CONNECT

It was noted that the editorial panel would shortly convene to begin production of the Spring/Summer edition of Connect.

18.TF.89 TENANT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

The meeting noted that the panel was scheduled to have its first meeting of the year the following week and further details would be brought to a future meeting of the forum.

18.TF.90 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A highways issue relating to pelican crossing timings near Sainsbury's was raised. It was noted that this was an NCC issue.

Figures were supplied for the number of families currently in temporary accommodation (182), the number of void properties across the council's housing stock (95) and the number of council properties being used for temporary accommodation purposes (70). It was noted that voids had increased after the Christmas period, although there were no identifiable patterns to the increase in tenancy terminations.

18.TF.91 PRIZE DRAW

The winner of the prize draw was Sandra Nash.

17.TF.92 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the date for the next meeting of the forum would be 7th February 2019.

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and ended at 7.47pm)

Signed

Chair

DJP