

# **Tenant Board Meeting**

## **Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

### **Attendees:**

Marcus Cooper	Tenant Board Member
Liz Perryman	Tenant Board Member and Chair
Tony Cole	Tenant Board Member
Paula Warren	Tenant Board Member
David White	Housing Transformation Manager
Rob Longfoot	Tenant Services Corporate Manager
Paul Heaney	Rents and Service Charge Manager
Chris Gibbs	Fire Safety Manager
Alison Wade	Business Services Manager
Keeley Whitlock	Customer Resolutions Officer
Adam Gayford	Compliance Manager
Georgia Mecoy	Tenant Engagement Co-ordinator
Kerry Lecomber	Tenant Engagement Co-ordinator
Cllr Richard Winch	Housing Portfolio Holder
Cllr Rowland Warboys	Housing Solutions Portfolio Holder

### **Apologies**

Gerry Crease  
Cllr Jessie Carter

### **Actions from last meeting and introduction**

1. DF to provide article on HRA to GM/KL to share – delegated to DW
2. Declarations of interest to be standing item on agenda – done.
3. Dates to be shared for December meal – done.
4. Resource list shared with tenant board – done.

### **Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **Compliance Introductions**

AG introduced himself and his role. He went through his past experience and outlined his last 2 years working at BMSDC and how he has been transforming the Compliance team and contracts to improve the Service Levels, set Key Performance Indicators and improve contract management so they are now bespoke and correctly set up for us. Now working through all the policies and procedures and looking longer term. Looking to replace all boilers that are over 20 years old and looking at planned works up to 26/27. Investing in stock to future proof and hope to improve tenant satisfaction.

CG then introduced himself and his role. He has worked largely in the fire service and moved across around a year ago. His role is predominantly safeguarding our residents and the organisation. He is on top of our data now and looking at forward planning for the future to proactively improve the infrastructure of our buildings. He covers corporate buildings, community buildings, blocks and sheltered. Will be sharing communications soon regarding legislation and giving fire safety advice.

PW enquired as to compliance figures and AG confirmed Gas is 98%, Oil down to 29 overdue from over 1000 and the same for air source heat pumps. Still some we are unable to access. EICR on 99.4% compliant.

RW enquired if he was responsible for damp and mould and if he could give update.

AG advised haven't had D&M manager but have now secured Peter Stephens who has been employed to lead. It's a pandemic issue for all Councils. Have only had a couple of Category 1 inspections come back that were all fixed within 24 hours. Will be looking at a ramp up now as it's seasonal. No Category 1 at the moment but still work to do. Out of the 6 areas of compliance D&M is the one area which need a lot of work and a lot of baseline work and it's very manual.

LP enquired about percentage of properties needing heating systems updated – on Economy 7 or storage systems.

AG advised initially we didn't have the data to inform this so have had to do that work first. He is now carrying out work on oil and electricity and identified properties that could be moved onto ASHP. However need to make sure EPC C and above for that or could end up very expensive. By end December he will be able to give figures he's confident in. He thinks about 96 properties and that work has started.

### **Repairs and Maintenance Policy**

GM introduced the subject and outlined the research undertaken. AW then provided an overview of the policy and its aims. The policy is linked to other policies such as fencing, damp and mould etc. Policy sets out clear responsibilities, procedures and timeframes.

PW enquired as to the reference to the recharge policy and that states that any criminal activity that causes damage would be covered by tenant under their house insurance. AW advised we do understand not everyone has it. PW enquired about window damage as it's not covered. DW explained that with windows we would cover the repair but would require a crime reference number so we could claim. PW enquired about doors and DW advised the same. If a household member or visitor caused it they are responsible for costs.

LP enquired about the fencing policy and what was covered. DW advised that fencing policy states that boundary fences between properties was tenant / neighbour responsibility but anything out onto public space or highway was our responsibility at rear or side.

MC enquired if anything will be put in place for people who are unable to understand it. AW advised that sheltered housing officers and housing officers can be used. DW advised that Tenant Handbook will cover the basics of these in a more accessible way acting as a summary for the policies. We're currently trying to understand our tenants' vulnerabilities across the whole portfolio so we can adapt to support them.

LP advised she liked the fact that the section on responsibilities was very clear in setting it out and she liked the way it was set out and found it simple and easy to read. However understands MC point.

GM advised we were trying to be really clear with the Handbook with that information.

DW advised that all new policies have to go to Cabinet after coming to Tenant Board and Resident Readers have already reviewed and picked out some typos and it will then go to Cabinet for approval in December.

### **Service Charge Review**

PH shared a presentation and took the meeting through it. He will share a letter we have developed after the meeting.

RW advised that the principal of service charges makes sense but were worrying about it from the tenants perspective is how much they will be charged. PH advised on his master reports for each district with minimum and maximum charges marked. RL advised that we are doing a piece of work to identify those receiving benefits and if Service Charges will be covered so we can identify those who are impacted. Also the implementation of Service Charges in General Needs properties will go to Cabinet in January with a decision later along with an implementation plan. Also there have been so many issues uncovered it has added many different views. However all elements being added should be covered if completely on Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.

TC enquired if privately owned properties have access to portal. PH advised that Leaseholders weren't in scope for this project but will be included next year. Only currently looking at blocks in General Needs. GM advised that Leaseholders already have a service charge but the new dashboard will help with apportionment.

TC also enquired about garage areas and PH advised they weren't covered in Service Charges. This just covers communal areas. RL advised we have considered us providing additional services such as bollards at garage sites which would then be covered by a service charge but that's only under consideration.

PW enquired about the financial years used and PH advised we use part one year and part the next to get as close to accurate as possible.

## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

GM shared a presentation, and LP took the meeting through their visit to O&S committee. She advised it was very interesting and DW answered their questions, and they seemed really pleased with it but were focussing on a couple of things. They have supported us on what we have done, she was a little confused about the data we have on our tenants and how representative which she assumed was the tenant board, but it was around the complete tenant base.

Looking at doing some work and the whole housing team are collecting missing data. GM advised they wanted to ensure that the feedback was representative of our tenant base. Currently we don't hold a lot of that data but were really focussing on it.

The committee was very pleased with what Tenant Board had done and their methods and were totally aware that a wide variety of tenants were involved and were listened to. From her point of view that was the most important thing across all the different engagement groups. GM advised they made a couple of recommendation, thanked the board and involved tenants and approved the next two projects. GM advised we fit in with the O&S to show that the wider Council listen and that they can provide guidance and we're going back in March.

## **Anti-social behaviour scrutiny**

GM took meeting through the plan for this project. The Complaints project will be delayed until April as we have a new system which needs to gather data to feed in.

GM took the meeting through an outline plan for each member being given different pieces of information; Transactional stats, Transactional commentary, Perception and Perception commentary. Will then do a desktop review and meet in January to decide what will be scrutinised.

Board agreed on that approached.

DW advised Cllr Warboys on the plan and how it fits in with O&S and Cabinet.

**Action: DW will book meeting with him to go through the plan.**

GM asked Board to advise if there's any area they would prefer and PW advised she doesn't mind.

## **Any Other Business**

Christmas Meal – MC pointed out 1.5 hours too short.

Next meeting Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December as last weekend in November there is a conference.

TPAS Chair training online on 17<sup>th</sup> December, GM will share details.

Stop Social Housing Stigma - Marcus and Liz are going already and asked if anyone else would like to go. GM advised this is a longer-term project and there will be more opportunities to be involved. An action plan will be developed.