



HOUSING MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD

Date: Thursday, 21 June 2018

Time: 6.00pm,

Location: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Contact: Fungai Nyamukapa

Email: fungai.nyamukapa@stevenage.gov.uk Tel: 01438242707

Members:

Resident Members: C Anderson (Tenant), K Gibson (Tenant),
F Plumridge (Tenant), L Saunders (Tenant), L Storey (Tenant) and
J Thurlow (Leaseholder)

Councillors: S Barr, P Bibby CC, L Kelly, L Martin-Haugh and S-J Potter

Officers: J Cresser (Assistant Director Housing & Investment) and
C Miller (Assistant Director - Direct Services)

AGENDA

PART 1

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

To appoint the Chair for 2018/19

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

To appoint a Vice-Chair for 2018/19

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any apologies for absence and declarations of interest from Members

4. MINUTES - 19 APRIL 2018

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) meeting held on 19 April 2018.

Pages 5 – 10

5. HOUSEKEEPING

To review HMAB Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct

Pages 11 – 34

6. RIGHT TO BUY RECEIPTS

To consider the Council's position on Right To Buy (RTB) sales and replacements.

7. NORTH ROAD AND KENILWORTH CLOSE UPDATES

To receive North Road and Kenilworth Close updates

8. HOUSING ALL UNDER ONE ROOF UPDATE

To receive Housing All Under One Roof Update

To receive update on proposed HMAB Review

9. VOIDS AND REPAIRS UPDATE

To consider the Voids and Repairs update.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

To consider any other business considered by the Chair as urgent.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 19 July 2018, 18.00, Shimkent Room

Item no.	Subject	Lead	Mins allocated	Time
	Refreshments		15 Minutes	5.45pm to 6:00pm
1.	APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR	Constitutional Services	5 Minutes	6:00pm to 6:05pm
2.	APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR	Constitutional Services	5 Minutes	6:05pm to 6:10pm
3.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Chair	2 Minutes	6:10pm to 6:12pm
4.	MINUTES – 19 APRIL 2018	Chair	3 Minutes	6:12pm to 6:15pm
5.	HOUSEKEEPING	Chair	10 Minutes	6:15pm to 6:25pm
6.	RIGHT TO BUY RECEIPTS	Steve Georgiou	25 Minutes	6:25pm to 6:50pm
7.	NORTH ROAD AND KENILWORTH CLOSE UPDATES	Amanda Minto	25 Minutes	6.50pm to 7.15pm
8.	Housing All Under One Roof Update	Jaine Cresser	15 Minutes	7:15pm to 7:30pm
9.	Repairs and Voids Update	Craig Miller	15 Minutes	7.30pm to 7:45pm
10.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	Chair	5 Minutes	7:45pm to 7:50pm
11.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING THURSDAY 19 July 2018, 18.00, SHIMKENT ROOM	Chair		

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STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Date: Thursday, 19 April 2018

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: **Resident Members:** J Thurlow (Leaseholder) (Chair),
C Anderson (Tenant), F Plumridge (Tenant) and L Saunders (Tenant)
Councillors: P Bibby (Vice Chair), C Latif and J Mead
Staff Members: J Cresser (Assistant Director – Housing and
Investment) and C Miller (Assistant - Director Direct Services)

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
End Time: 7.55pm

1 APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Martin-Haugh, S Mead and J Thomas.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES - 22 FEBRUARY 2018 AND 15 MARCH 2018

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) held on 22 February 2018 and 15 March 2018, are approved as a correct record to be signed by the Chair.

3 REVIEW OF 2017/18 AND WORK PLANNING 2018/19

The Board outlined the performance to date against the 2017/18 HMAB Work Plan and agreed the Work Plan for 2018/19.

The highlights of the performance review are listed below:

What worked well	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Co-operative working2) Link with Customer Scrutiny Panel (CSP) - CSP Chair ex-officio HMAB Member3) Good attendance at meetings4) Support from Resident Involvement team5) Support from SBC officers6) HMAB objectives were met/HMAB fulfilled fundamental purpose7) Added value through customer/resident scrutiny of performance and challenges - e.g. Review of Rent Letters8) Regular engagement and dialogue with residents
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	<p>and other stakeholders</p> <p>9) General format of meetings – discussion, input from stakeholders and detailed reports from officers</p> <p>10) Better understanding of Council work – as a result of HMAB reports, updates and discussions</p>
What would you have done differently	<p>1) Agenda too long – not enough time to discuss agenda items in detail</p> <p>2) More involvement in formulating Housing Policy (Term “Advisory” suggests low-key role)</p> <p>3) Provide clarity on functions of HMAB, CSP and Leaseholders’ Forum so as to avoid duplication</p> <p>4) Clarify relationship between HMAB and Community Select Committee</p> <p>5) Less frequent updates on Aids and Adaptations and Voids and Repairs (Provide quarterly updates or monthly updates only for major items)</p>
Ideas for the following year	<p>1) Have a shorter agenda</p> <p>2) Remove Housing Performance Updates and use performance briefings instead</p> <p>3) Allocate performance reviews to CSP</p> <p>4) Improve the Leaseholders’ Forum</p> <p>5) Board play leading/active role in setting Agenda</p> <p>6) Networking with other resident groups</p> <p>7) Voids and Repairs Review/Monitoring</p> <p>8) Empty Homes Review</p> <p>9) Aids and Adaptations Monitoring</p> <p>10) Service awareness sessions, e.g. visits to services</p> <p>11) Work with Chair of Leaseholders’ Forum to share experiences and learning</p>
Training needs	<p>1) Housing Law</p> <p>2) Analysing budgets/financial statements</p>
Any other comments	<p>1) Ensure there is more structure to Residents’ Forum</p> <p>2) Structured and more formalised induction for new members</p> <p>3) How do we know what difference we make in decisions taken by Council?</p> <p>4) Provide updates on organisational changes</p> <p>5) Need for clarity on remit of HMAB with regards to policy development</p>

It was **RESOLVED**:

- That the issues raised be noted
- That the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment), Assistant (Director Direct Services), the Chair and Vice-Chair discuss the feasibility of HMAB involvement in housing policy development work

- That the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment) liaises with Community Select Committee to avoid duplication

4 **AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS SERVICE CHARGE UPDATE**

The Housing and Investment team provided an update on Aids and Adaptations Service Charges and a general Aids and Adaptations overview. It was pointed out that Disability Living Allowance may cover some or all of increased service charges. The Board was informed that Aids and Adaptations work is considered the same as repairs and therefore forms part of rent. It was indicated that service charges mainly cover the installation of stair lifts, hoists and Closomat water closets and any other items of equipment that will require regular servicing and maintenance.

In response to a question about the servicing of stair lifts, it was indicated that stair lifts were high maintenance units, and failure to carry out regular servicing can result in serious injury or worse. Members were informed that SBC was looking to cover stair lifts with a three star type annual service that would include all call outs, parts and labour for repairs including two service visits a year. This is generally in line with Health and Safety practices, insurance requirements, manufacturer's instructions, and warrantee terms and conditions.

The Board was informed that a new team had been established to bring forward the delivery of the Aids and Adaptations service and implement and develop policy procedures that were recently presented to the Board. The introduction of Framework and Housing contractors has already seen some improvements in the delivery and completion works.

It was **RESOLVED** that the questions and issues raised, and the responses given, be noted.

5 **VOIDS AND REPAIRS UPDATE**

The Assistant Director (Direct Services) provided an update on Voids and Repairs performance. The Assistant Director indicated that overall, performance was improving. The Board was informed that holding weekly team meetings and using hand-held devices had contributed to improvements in the performance of the Repairs team. It was pointed out that Voids turnaround times were improving. Voids performance had been affected by legacy cases. Voids losses were 0.6% above the budgeted position.

The Assistant Director provided an update on the engagement of a Commercial Contracts Manager. It was confirmed that performance monitoring and service standards clauses were now included in repairs and voids contracts. The Assistant Director indicated that the next Repairs and Voids Report would include performance trends.

It was **RESOLVED** that the questions and issues raised, and the responses given, be noted.

6 HOUSING ALL UNDER ONE ROOF UPDATE

The Assistant Director (Housing & Investment) provided an update on the Housing All Under One Roof Programme. The Assistant Director highlighted the following:

- Recruitment of three Housing Operations Managers
- Restructuring of the Housing and Homelessness services in preparation for the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Purchasing of Northgate modules for Housing Advice and Housing Support
- New ways of working as a result of the introduction of Task Manager and work flow systems

The Assistant Director pointed out that the next phase of the Housing All Under One Roof programme would be the introduction of hand-held devices. The Board was informed that a pilot on rent arrears letters had seen a reduction of up to two thousand letters per week and a reduction in rent arrears.

The Board received an update on Housing and Investment Staff Survey that was conducted at the Away Day in February 2018. The results showed less satisfaction compared to the previous year in the following areas:

- Being valued at work
- Workload
- Council communication
- Appraisal system

It was noted that some responses were affected by managerial changes within the organisation. Members raised questions about the nature and frequency of surveys and promotion criteria for managers. In response to these questions, it was indicated that staff surveys were currently done once every two years but there were plans to conduct the surveys annually. The Housing and Investment team carried out quarterly surveys, anonymous feedback and informal surveys. Members were also informed that the Council was using management competencies as part of the promotion criteria for managers. Officers were also offered mentoring before promotion. It was indicated that responses to the survey would be included in the May issue of the Housing and Investment newsletter.

It was **RESOLVED** that the questions and issues raised, and the responses given, be noted.

7 RIGHT TO BUY RECEIPTS

It was **RESOLVED** that this item be deferred to the next meeting.

8 FEEDBACK FROM EXECUTIVE

In view of the absence of the Housing, Health and Older People Executive Portfolio Holder, it was **RESOLVED** that the item be deferred to the next meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Allocations Policy – Mutual Exchange/Local Connection

The Assistant Director (Housing and Investment) sought feedback from the Board regarding a proposal that those who have mutually exchanged into Stevenage, and who do not have the 5 year connection, be allowed to reapply for housing if their circumstances change and they require a different housing solution AND they have been living in Stevenage for twelve months.

Currently the Local Connection rule is five years. Following a recent Allocations Policy review, the Local Connection rule has been amended to five out of the last seven years, with no more than two occasions outside of the Borough.

This Local Connection rule is applied to ALL applicants including those that are Stevenage Borough tenants. Consequently a tenant who has mutually exchanged into a Stevenage Borough Council property from outside the Borough, who has never previously lived in Stevenage, would have to wait five years before meeting the Local Connection rule allowing then to apply for rehousing.

The Board was informed that under the current arrangement, if a couple exchanges into a one bedroom flat and have two children over the next two or three years, they would not be eligible for re-housing for a further two or three years until they have five years local connection. Stevenage Borough Council could therefore be challenged for 'forcing' a four-person household to stay in a one-bedroom flat.

This example could also be applied in the case of a household who have mutually exchanged into a second floor flat with no lift and one member develops mobility issues in the first year of mutually exchanging. Under current rules, the household would have to wait four years before being eligible to apply for housing. Again, Stevenage Borough Council could therefore be challenged for 'forcing' a disabled person to stay in a second floor flat with no lift.

It was indicated that either case could be brought to the Housing Panel, with it being highly conceivable that the Panel would agree to a move. The Housing Panel decisions set precedent so each case after would automatically be accepted and this justifies enshrining the Mutual Exchange exception in the Allocations Policy.

It was pointed out that Mutual Exchanges are a statutory right open to all permanent social housing tenants and therefore an exchange cannot be declined on the basis of Local Connection.

The Board sought clarification on the current criteria for Mutual Exchange and options available to overcrowded households. Members were informed that cases of overcrowded households were referred to the Housing Panel. It was indicated that:

- Those seeking to exchange need not necessarily have the same landlord
- Parties to a mutual exchange were permitted to have one room than they needed

- The council can refuse a request for a mutual exchange if either party to the proposed exchange has rent arrears or has had action taken against them in respect of anti-social behaviour

The Board indicated that allowing the Mutual Exchange exception could be used to circumvent the Local Connection requirement. Members highlighted the obligation to prioritise local residents and the risk of fuelling perceptions of housing queue jumping.

North Road Update

Members indicated that they had not received updates on the North Road site in recent months.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- That the Assistant Director provides Mutual Exchanges feedback to the Empty Homes Manager
- That the Assistant Director (Housing Development) be contacted for an update on the North Road site

10 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 21 June 2018, Shimkent Room at Daneshill House

CHAIR

Housing Management Board - Terms of Reference	
Author: Resident Involvement	
Owner: Resident Involvement Manager	Last update: June 2014
Date Created: 10 March 2017	Next Revision Date: March 2020

The role of the Housing Management Board (HMB)

The Housing Management Board (HMB) is a group of council tenants and leaseholders, councillors and staff who work in partnership with the Council's Executive and other relevant committees and acts in an advisory role on housing related decisions.

The HMB makes recommendations to the Portfolio holder for Housing, Health and Older People, the Council's Executive and Full Council as appropriate acting as the link to other involved housing customer groups including the Customer Scrutiny Panel (CSP).

The HMB's work includes:

- Involvement in the development of housing related strategies.
- Involvement in the development of the housing business plan, how this is delivered and the key projects identified within the plan.
- Involvement in budget setting for housing
- Reviewing overall, high level performance.
- Regular review of the Business Plan and associated Capital and Revenue Budgets.
- Review and comment on draft reports on key decisions to be taken by the Executive.
- Involvement and ability to comment on key changes to strategy, key policies, significant service changes and development proposals.

The HMB is not involved with day-to-day operational matters or matters of detailed service delivery or performance. It will monitor key performance indicators using a red/amber/green system to highlight areas of concern, where concerns are related to operational matters they may be discussed.

Contents of the Terms of Reference

1. Mission
2. Vision
3. Values
4. Responsibilities, objectives and functions of the Housing Management Board
5. Membership
6. Election of Chair and Vice Chair
7. Training and induction
8. Access to information
9. Accountability

- 10. Governance and support
- 11. Communication
- 12. Meetings information

1. Mission

- 1.1 The Housing Management Board is committed to working to improve housing services for customers through ‘co-regulation’, involving tenants and leaseholders in decision-making and scrutinising housing services.
- 1.2 This supports the Council’s corporate objective to be a “co-operative council”.
- 1.3 The HMB is actively involved in shaping the future for housing services through early involvement in policies and strategies and important business decisions.

2. Vision

- 2.1 The vision is for council housing services to be effective and accessible; meeting the needs of customers and the local community.
- 2.2 The HMB’s strategic direction, challenge and advisory guidance will promote continuous improvement and value for money in housing services.

3. Values

- 3.1 HMB will be professional and transparent in its activities.
- 3.2 HMB will reflect the needs of all customers, including internal customers, showing respect for all regardless of background, ethnicity or orientation. This is in line with the Council’s Equality and Diversity Framework.
- 3.3 The work of HMB will be representative of the Council’s corporate values.

4. Responsibilities, objectives and functions of the Housing Management Board

- 4.1 HMB commit to the following to achieve the mission and vision:
 - a. A key strategic overview of the management of the Council’s Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business, including the 30 year plan and associated strategies
 - b. Early involvement and influence in the creation of key strategic policies and strategies
 - c. A key consultation mechanism and representative voice between the Council’s Executive and customer engagement structure on all HRA management matters including, but not exclusive to, rent setting, capital programme, service level performance
 - d. To represent tenants, residents and leaseholders, to ensure that the Council provides high standard housing services that meet resident needs
 - e. To operate in the interests of the whole borough and not as individuals or areas
 - f. To challenge and question staff who manage and deliver the service
 - g. Make strategic recommendations on how housing services can be improved
 - h. To commission (as appropriate) and receive Service Reviews and reports from Customer Scrutiny Panel (CSP)
 - i. To monitor the service improvement plans agreed after CSP reviews on a six monthly basis. The CSP representative will be responsible for this item.
- 4.2 HMB will not cover the following:
 - i. Operational staffing concerns (although strategic reviews of structures will be received)

- ii. Procurement decisions (where staff are already delegated to take decisions),
- iii. Individual cases (which are best handled through other mechanisms)

5. Membership

- 5.1 The membership of the HMB will comprise of up to ten housing customers (tenants and one resident leaseholder), five councillors and two Stevenage Borough Council Housing staff - the relevant Assistant Directors dealing with housing, investment and repairs
- 5.2 Staff may be co-opted onto HMB provided they have relevant knowledge.
- 5.3 One of the customer members will be a member of the Customer Scrutiny Panel (CSP), elected by the full CSP.
- 5.4 Councillors are elected by their political party after public elections (usually in May) to the HMB and subject to party selection processes they may stay on HMB for the remainder of their term as a councillor.
- 5.5 To remain a member of HMB, tenants/leaseholders must
 - Be a current tenant or resident leaseholder of Stevenage Borough Council;
 - Be within the terms of their tenancy/lease without any breaches;
 - Not be an employee of Stevenage Borough Council
- 5.6 To remain a member of the HMB, staff must
 - Be a current employee of Stevenage Borough Council;
 - Not become a tenant or leaseholder of Stevenage Borough Council;
 - Not be subject to any disciplinary action in their capacity as a member
- 5.7 To remain a member of the HMB, councillors must
 - Be a current councillor of Stevenage Borough Council
- 5.8 All HMB members must adhere to the code of conduct.
- 5.9 Recruitment is carried out using the Council's website and via an interview with existing HMB members.
- 5.10 Members must send apologies via the Chair if they cannot attend a meeting. Missing three consecutive meetings without sending apologies will result in a resignation being assumed.
- 5.11 The quorum for meetings is six HMB members, with three customers, two councillors and one member of staff. This is proportional.

Term of office for HMB members

- Councillors may remain on HMB for the term of their councillor office (four years). Councillors may serve two terms on HMB. A maximum of 8 years.
- Tenants and leaseholder members of HMB serve a term of four years. Tenants and leaseholders may serve two terms on HMB. A maximum of 8 years.
- Staff HMB members remain in post during their employment in the position related to HMB membership.

6. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

- 6.1 The positions of Chair and Vice Chair will be elected annually at the Away Day.
- 6.2 The Chair should either be a tenant or a councillor, on a yearly rotation with the Vice Chair as the opposite.
- 6.3 Either the Chair or Vice Chair can attend the Executive meeting; alternatively another member can be co-opted to attend.

7. Training and induction

- 7.1 HMB members will receive induction training.
- 7.2 This will be a minimum of basic housing law and introduction to social housing.

8. Access to information

- 8.1 The board will adhere to the requirements of the data protection act.
- 8.2 The board will only access information that is applicable to their activities.
- 8.3 All information will be kept confidential; breaches in confidentiality will result in exclusion from the HMB.
- 8.4 Confidential information will be heard as “part two” items and identified by printing on pink paper. This information will not be available to the public.

9. Accountability

- 9.1 The Board are accountable to tenants and leaseholders and the council’s Executive.
- 9.2 Declarations of interest should be made at the beginning of each meeting under “Introductions.”
- 9.3 The Portfolio Holder for Housing is invited to attend the meetings of the HMB. They will observe, respond and report back to the Executive. They are available to answer queries and inform HMB on policy decisions.

10. Governance and support

- 10.1 The Resident Involvement Team and Housing Performance and Improvement Officer will provide support for HMB, providing appropriate resources to help it operate effectively, for example:
 - relevant training;
 - administrative support including distributing papers and providing minutes;
 - access to IT equipment;
 - expenses to cover any HMB-related activities.
 - Updating the tracker.
- 10.2 These terms of reference will be reviewed every three years. (Next renewal due 2020) or where structure changes in the council require this to be necessary.

11. Communication

- 11.1 The HMB will publish information about their work and meetings on the Stevenage Borough Council website and in their annual report, this will include the generic email address.
- 11.2 The tracker will be available on the website and updated monthly.

12. Meetings information

- 12.1 Decisions will be made by show of hands, and the Chair shall have the casting vote. A simple majority in favour will carry a proposal. HMB members may abstain from voting.
- 12.2 HMB will meet monthly. Papers will be sent seven days in advance.
- 12.3 The Away Day will take place in July; this will review the work over the past year and be an opportunity to set the work plan.

- 12.4 The work of HMB is linked to the Council's forward plan (Future Town, Future Council) plus the wider housing arena.
- 12.5 By prior agreement, the public may attend part one of HMB meetings in an observer role only.

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Housing Management Advisory Board - Terms of Reference	
Author: Resident Involvement Manager	
Owner: Resident Involvement Manager	Last update: 21 June 2018
Date Created: June 2014	Next Revision Date: March 2020

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The HMAB makes recommendations to the Portfolio holder for Housing, Health and Older People, the Council's Executive and Full Council as appropriate acting as the link to other involved housing customer groups including the Customer Scrutiny Panel (CSP).

The HMAB's work includes:

- Involvement in the development of housing related strategies.
- Involvement in the development of the housing business plan, how this is delivered and the key projects identified within the plan.
- Involvement in budget setting for housing
- Reviewing overall, high level performance.
- Regular review of the Business Plan and associated Capital and Revenue Budgets.
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- Involvement and ability to comment on key changes to strategy, key policies, significant service changes and development proposals.

The HMAB is not involved with day-to-day operational matters or matters of detailed service delivery or performance. It will monitor key performance indicators using a red/amber/green system to highlight areas of concern, where concerns are related to operational matters they may be discussed.

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2. Vision
3. Values
4. Responsibilities, objectives and functions of the Housing Management Advisory Board
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7. Training and induction
8. Access to information
9. Accountability

- 10. Governance and support
- 11. Communication
- 12. Meetings information

1. Mission

- 1.1 The Housing Management Advisory Board is committed to working to improve housing services for customers through 'co-regulation', involving tenants and leaseholders in decision-making and scrutinising housing services.
- 1.2 This supports the Council's corporate objective to be a "co-operative council".
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2. Vision

- 2.1 The vision is for council housing services to be effective and accessible; meeting the needs of customers and the local community.
- 2.2 The HMAB's strategic direction, challenge and advisory guidance will promote continuous improvement and value for money in housing services.

3. Values

- 3.1 HMAB will be professional and transparent in its activities.
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- 3.3 The work of HMAB will be representative of the Council's corporate values.

4. Responsibilities, objectives and functions of the Housing Management Advisory Board

- 4.1 HMAB commit to the following to achieve the mission and vision:
 - a. A key strategic overview of the management of the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business, including the 30 year plan and associated strategies
 - b. Early involvement and influence in the creation of key strategic policies and strategies
 - c. A key consultation mechanism and representative voice between the Council's Executive and customer engagement structure on all HRA management matters including, but not exclusive to, rent setting, capital programme, service level performance
 - d. To represent tenants, residents and leaseholders, to ensure that the Council provides high standard housing services that meet resident needs
 - e. To operate in the interests of the whole borough and not as individuals or areas
 - f. To challenge and question staff who manage and deliver the service
 - g. Make strategic recommendations on how housing services can be improved
 - h. To commission (as appropriate) and receive Service Reviews and reports from Customer Scrutiny Panel (CSP)
 - i. To monitor the service improvement plans agreed after CSP reviews on a six monthly basis. The CSP representative will be responsible for this item.
- 4.2 HMAB will not cover the following:

- i. Operational staffing concerns (although strategic reviews of structures will be received)
- ii. Procurement decisions (where staff are already delegated to take decisions),
- iii. Individual cases (which are best handled through other mechanisms)

5. Membership

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- 5.3 One of the customer members will be a member of the Customer Scrutiny Panel (CSP), elected by the full CSP.
- 5.4 Councillors are elected by their political party after public elections (usually in May) to the HMAB and subject to party selection processes they may stay on HMAB for the remainder of their term as a councillor.
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- 6.1 The positions of Chair and Vice Chair will be elected annually at the **Away Day**.
- 6.2 The Chair should either be a tenant or a councillor, on a yearly rotation with the Vice-Chair as the opposite.

Commented [FN1]: Suggestion: ...first HMAB meeting after Annual Council.

- 6.3 Either the Chair or Vice-Chair can attend the Executive meeting; alternatively another member can be co-opted to attend.

7. Training and induction

- 7.1 HMAB members will receive induction training.
7.2 This will be a minimum of basic housing law and introduction to social housing.

8. Access to information

- 8.1 The board will adhere to the requirements of the data protection **legislation**.
8.2 The board will only access information that is applicable to their activities.
8.3 All information will be kept confidential; breaches in confidentiality will result in exclusion from the HMAB.
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10. Governance and support

- 10.1 The Resident Involvement Team and Housing Performance and Improvement Officer will provide support for HMAB, providing appropriate resources to help it operate effectively, for example:
- relevant training;
 - access to IT equipment;
 - expenses to cover any HMAB-related activities.
 - Updating the tracker.
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- 11.1 The HMAB will publish information about their work and meetings on the Stevenage Borough Council website and in their annual report; this will include the generic email address.
11.2 The tracker will be available on the website and updated monthly.

12. Meetings information

- 12.1 Decisions will be made by show of hands, and the Chair shall have the casting vote. A simple majority in favour will carry a proposal. HMAB members may abstain from voting.

- 12.2 HMAB will meet monthly. Papers will be published five clear working days in advance.
- 12.3 The Away Day will take place in July; this will review the work over the past year and be an opportunity to set the work plan.
- 12.4 The work of HMAB is linked to the Council's forward plan (Future Town, Future Council) plus the wider housing arena.
- 12.5 The public may attend part one of HMAB meetings in an observer role only.

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Housing Management Board

Code of Conduct

Purpose

1. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to provide clear guidance to members of the Housing Management Board (HMB) on acceptable standards of conduct required of its members.
2. All members of the HMB must adhere to the terms of the Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference at all times.
3. This document should be read in conjunction with the HMB terms of reference, and the Nolan Committee "Seven Principles of Public Life" (see appendix 1).

Conduct - general

4. All HMB members should be familiar with the seven principles established by the Nolan Committee: selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; leadership.
5. In carrying out the day-to-day business of the HMB, members must be aware of their responsibility to act in a fair, open, transparent and responsive manner.
6. All members of the HMB will: actively engage in discussions; contribute positively; listen carefully; challenge sensitively; and, avoid conflict.
7. All members of the HMB recognise that others may have different points of view, and that all perspectives should be acknowledged. However, any differences should not impede discussion or prevent the HMB from carrying out its work.
8. In conducting day-to-day business all members of the HMB will respect confidentiality. Any confidential information discussed at meetings will be identified as such, and members should maintain the confidentiality of the information and never disclose it to anyone, except with the express permission by the person or persons concerned.
9. Members of the HMB are jointly responsible for their decisions and actions. Decisions will be taken by majority vote and recorded in the minutes. Once a decision is made, all members of the HMB must follow that decision, even if they did not vote for it.

10. Should any member of the HMB feel they require further guidance or training, they should approach the Resident Involvement Team for guidance or to explore training options.
11. If a HMB member fails to attend three consecutive meetings without giving accepted apologies, the member shall be deemed to have resigned from the HMB. Having missed two consecutive meetings without explanation the relevant council officer will write to the individual outlining the consequences of missing another meeting.
12. All HMB members have a duty to feed back at the first opportunity to the HMB any business they have undertaken on the HMB's behalf.

Conduct during meetings

13. The Chair, Vice-Chair, or whoever is presiding at the meeting shall have control of the conduct of the meeting.
14. Members will do their best to arrive at meetings on time and, if arriving late, should take a seat quietly and apologise.
15. Members must be polite and courteous at all times during meetings.
16. Members must respect others' perspectives, and allow each other to speak.
17. Members must always bear in mind that the purpose of the meeting is to benefit tenant and leaseholders of Stevenage Borough Council, and not specific individuals.
18. Grievances concerning conduct during a meeting should be brought to the attention of the Chair. In the event of a breach of the Code of Conduct, the relevant council officer will issue a warning. Should the warning not be heeded, the Chair will have the right to ask any attendee to leave the meeting.

Conduct – written communication

19. Written communication refers to any written communication both between members of the HMB and between the HMB and external individuals or bodies. It includes, but is not exclusive to: letters; emails; text messages; instant messenger; any VOIP communications (such as Skype); Facebook; and, Twitter.
20. Any formal communication on behalf of the HMB will normally be undertaken by the Chair, Vice-Chair, or a nominated officer of SBC.

Conflict of Interest

21. A conflict of interest may arise where a member's personal or family interests and/or loyalties may conflict with those of the HMB.

22. Accordingly, all members of the HMB must declare their interests, including any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role within the HMB with an estimated value of at least £25. New interests should be declared at the earliest opportunity, normally at the next HMB meeting.
23. If you are unsure as to whether you have a conflict of interest, you should raise your concerns with the Resident Involvement Team at the earliest opportunity.

Code of Conduct – dealing with a breach

24. Any member of the HMB should alert the rest of the HMB to a breach in the Code of Conduct either by raising the issue directly with the Chair or the Resident Involvement Team.
25. Any allegations of a breach must be backed up either by evidence or by at least two corroborating independent witnesses.
26. The process for dealing with a breach is set out below:
 - **Stage 1.** An informal discussion will be held between the Chair and the member who is alleged to have breached the Code. The Chair and member should discuss the breach and agree a way forward, such as an apology to the group or a written commitment from the member that they will not breach the Code again. It should be noted at the following HMB meeting that an informal discussion was held.
 - **Stage 2.** Following the informal discussion, should the breach continue, the Chair should issue a formal written warning to the member in question, and let them know that a continuation of the breach or a further breach will result in the case being referred to the HMB.
 - **Stage 3.** Should the breach continue after Stage 2, the case should be brought before a closed HMB meeting, convened as quickly as possible after the breach (ideally within 15 working days). The member under investigation should not be present at the closed meeting. HMB members must have at least 48 hours' notice of the meeting. The HMB will hear the case, and vote by simple majority to either suspend the member in question or to allow them to continue.
27. The suspended member would only be permitted to become a member again with the permission of the HMB, by majority vote.
28. If the suspended member wishes to appeal the decision, he/she should make his application to the Chair in writing within 14 days of the suspension. The Chair should then refer the case to senior management who will hear the case.
29. The senior manager/s should then hear the appeal within 28 days and vote whether or not to accept or reject the evidence presented to them.

30. The decision of the senior manager/s is binding and will have immediate impact. If the appeal is upheld, the member concerned can rejoin the HMB. If the appeal is rejected, refer to item 26.
31. Should the member alleged to have breached the Code of Conduct be the Chair, or should the Chair have an interest in the case, another member of the HMB will be nominated by three further members of the HMB to undertake the Chair's duties in the breach process outlined above.
32. This Code of Conduct shall not be altered except by agreement of the HMB where amendments must be carried by a simple majority of the members.

Appendix 1

Nolan Committee The Committee on Standards in Public Life

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Selflessness

You should take decisions solely on the basis of the values and objectives of the Association. You should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family or friends.

Integrity

You should avoid placing yourself under any obligations, financial or otherwise, to outside individuals or organisations that might influence you in the performance of your duties.

Objectivity

You should ensure that in the delivery of services, the appointment of staff or the awarding of contracts, you maintain impartiality and base decisions on merit alone.

Accountability

You must accept accountability for your decisions and actions and submit yourself to whatever scrutiny is appropriate such as by the boards of management or trustees, residents, the providers of public funds and other stakeholders.

Openness

You should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that you take. You should give reasons for your decisions and restrict information only when individual or commercial confidentiality clearly so demand.

Honesty

You must declare any private interests relating to your duties, and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that is lawful and protects the reputation, values and mission of the Association.

Leadership

You must promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

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Housing Management Advisory Board

Code of Conduct

Purpose

1. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to provide clear guidance to members of the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) on acceptable standards of conduct required of its members.
2. All members of the HMAB must adhere to the terms of the Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference at all times.
3. This document should be read in conjunction with relevant aspects of the Stevenage Borough Council Constitution, HMAB terms of reference, and the Nolan Committee "Seven Principles of Public Life" (see appendix 1).

Conduct - general

4. All HMAB members should be familiar with the seven principles established by the Nolan Committee: selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; leadership.
5. In carrying out the day-to-day business of the HMAB, members must be aware of their responsibility to act in a fair, open, transparent and responsive manner.
6. All members of the HMAB will: actively engage in discussions; contribute positively; listen carefully; challenge sensitively; and, avoid conflict.
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