

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
HOUSING MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 12 September 2018
Time: 6.00pm
Place: Autun Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: **Councillors:** P Bibby CC (Chair), S Barr, and L Martin-Haugh

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

Staff Members: J Cresser (Assistant Director – Housing and
Investment)

In Attendance: Councillor Jeannette Thomas (Executive Portfolio Holder - Housing,
Health and Older People) and Gurmukh Lota (Resident Involvement
Officer)

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
 End Time: 6.40pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from F Plumridge, C Miller and Cllrs L Kelly and S-J Potter.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) meeting held on 16 August 2018 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Update on Actions

Actions from the previous meeting were all complete or as detailed below.

Outstanding items carried over from 16 August 2018		
Agenda Item	Action	Progress
3. Liberty Gas Update	SBC website to be updated to include details of the annual gas check procedure and appointment	M & E Compliance Manager contacted for an update

	options for customers	
3. Liberty Gas Update	The M & E Compliance Manager to provide updates on the Gas Service Improvement Plan	M & E Compliance Manager to provide date of next update for HMAB
3. Liberty Gas Update	Members to submit gas complaints cases to the M & E Compliance Manager	M & E Compliance Manager to provide contact details for gas complaints
5. Tenant and Leaseholder Satisfaction Survey	The damp and mould review be shared with leaseholders	Leaseholders to be provided with damp and mould report after Community Select Committee revisit of review scheduled for 2018/19 Damp and Mould review

3 UPDATE FROM EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

The Executive Portfolio Holder (Housing, Health and Older People) informed the Board that the September Executive meeting had discussed a number of finance items including Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme for 2019/20 and General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

The Executive Portfolio Holder announced that there had been positive feedback from the Voids team regarding the recent move from Cavendish Road Depot to Daneshill House.

It was **RESOLVED** that the update is noted.

4 **HOUSING ALL UNDER ONE ROOF UPDATE**

The Assistant Director (Housing and Investment) provided an update on the Housing All Under One Roof (HAUOR) programme. HMAB members were informed that:

- The Transformation of Housing Advice and Homeless project phase had been completed
- New Housing Supply and Housing Options teams are in place
- Recruitment of managers of the for the Homelessness team was underway
- All Housing Operations Manager positions had been filled
- Review of the Tier 5 structure was at the project planning phase
- Motivational Interview and customer services training had been arranged for officers
- Homelessness team's policies and procedures had been reviewed to ensure compliance with the Homeless Reduction Act
- Recent figures showed a fall in staff sickness levels for the Housing and Investment team
- Sheltered scheme lettings were now being handled by Supported Housing Officers
- The Tenancy Support team had successfully transitioned to mobile working. This was aimed at reducing duplication of work and freeing up staff time
- The Council was now using Northgate's Supported Housing Module
- A Northgate self-service module had been purchased
- The Council had commissioned health checks on the Northgate system

It was indicated that a customer service training provider had been selected. Staff training was due to commence shortly. The Housing and Investment team was available to facilitate telephone consultations between Members and the training provider so as to provide insight on resident priorities and shape the training sessions. Members were informed that project documents would be used to monitor the progress of the business unit restructuring.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That Members contact the Assistant Director prior to commencement of the customer service training sessions
2. That the Assistant Director circulates the project initiation documents to the HMAB

5 **REPAIRS AND VOIDS UPDATE**

Prior to the meeting, the Chair had been informed that there were no significant repairs and voids issues to report. The HMAB had also received apologies for absence from the Assistant Director (Stevenage Direct Services).

It was **RESOLVED** that the Repairs and Voids update be deferred to the next meeting.

6 **TENANTS ANNUAL REPORT AND FUTURE PUBLICITY**

The HMAB considered the Draft Tenants' Annual Report "Housing Matters".

Members were informed that copies of Housing Matters were sent to community centres, libraries, sheltered accommodation properties and residents on the Customer Pool database. Hard copies were sent only to those residents who could not access the publication online. Members welcomed the £50 shopping voucher incentive that could be won by a resident who provided feedback on the publication. It was indicated that residents should be provided with a variety of options to respond to the publication.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That a link be added on the Council website for customer feedback on the publication
2. That arrangements be made to distribute the publication to customers who did not have internet access

7 **COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

A member sought clarification on whether it might be appropriate for a representative of HMAB to attend Community Select Committee (CSC) meetings as a guest to find out what was on the Committee's Work Plan for the year and if the HMAB could contribute on matters related to housing service. Members were informed that CSC meetings were open to the public except for confidential or exempt items. Several Members expressed interest in attending CSC meetings.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Community Select Committee be circulated to interested Members
2. That Councillor S Barr makes a formal approach to the Select Committee Chair for a discussion on possible collaboration arrangements

8 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair accepted urgent items on HAUOR Housing sessions and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan update. Members were informed that sessions had been arranged to update staff on the HAUOR programme. The one hour long sessions had been scheduled for 21 September and 14 December 2018 at 10.00am, 11.30am, 2.00pm and 3.30pm in the Council Chamber. The recommended dress code for the HAUOR session on 14 December was Christmas jumper or any item of Christmas clothing. Members were invited to the HAUOR sessions.

The Assistant Director (Housing and Investment) informed the Board that the HRA Business Plan update was due to be considered at either the October or November meeting of the Executive. It was indicated that ideally the HMAB would comment on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) update HRA 2018/19-2022/23 at a regular meeting before the date of the Executive meeting. There was a possibility that the MTFS report would not be ready in time for the October HMAB meeting.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the MTFS report be submitted to HMAB members by email for comments if the item was on the October Executive meeting agenda
2. That MTFS report be included on the November HMAB agenda if it was not considered at the October Executive meeting

9 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 25 October 2018, 6.00pm, Shimkent Room

CHAIR