



HOUSING MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD

Date: Wednesday 3 January 2018

Time: 6.00 pm

Location: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Contact: Lisa Jerome

Tel: 01438 242203

Present:

Resident Members: Jon Thurlow (Leaseholder) (Chair), Christine Anderson (Tenant), Kerry Gibson (Tenant), Fiona Plumridge (Tenant), Len Saunders (Tenant), Lesley Storey (Tenant)

Councillors: P Bibby (Vice Chair), L Martin-Haugh

Staff Members: Jaine Cresser (Assistant Director Housing & Investment), Craig Miller (Assistant Director Direct Services)

Start Time: 6:00pm

End Time: 8:00pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Latif. The Chair expressed his concern regarding the lack of attendance at meetings by some councillors who were not submitting apologies for the meetings.

The Resident Involvement Manager informed the meeting that Resident Member Lesley Storey would shortly be undergoing surgery and would not be attending Board Meetings during her recovery period. The Chair wished her well.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES - 23 NOVEMBER 2017

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Council meeting of 11 July be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Lesley Storey provided a written update on the meeting to review the services of the gas service contractor (Liberty). She also confirmed that the website had been updated to include information on gas safety.

The report was noted.

4. DRAFT HRA BUDGET AND RENT SETTING PROPOSALS

The Assistant Director Finance, Clare Fletcher, gave a presentation to the Board on the draft HRA Budget and Rent Setting Proposals.

The Chair requested that more narrative be provided to leaseholders to clarify the calculation of service charges to leaseholders and council tenants. Board Members also sought clarification on:

- Funding of the capital projects
- Changes in the calculation of the rent formula
- Borrowing options for new houses

The Board was informed that rental income was the main source of funding for capital projects. The Assistant Director Finance clarified that not all service charges had increased and acknowledged the need to provide clear communication on any changes in service charges. Members were informed that borrowing options were reviewed periodically to take into consideration economic and risk factors. The Board was informed that risk factors such as potential effects of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 on the budget had been taken into consideration.

It was noted that the Final Budget report would be submitted to Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to the Special Council meeting on 30 January 2018.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- the presentation be noted
- the Assistant Director Finance include details of the cost of borrowing in the Medium Term Financial Strategy Report

At this point, the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment) informed the Board that recruitment of the Housing Operations Managers had been completed.

5. ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Housing Operations Manager (Investing in Homes & Properties), Andrew Garside, gave a presentation to the Board.

The Board was informed that there were plans to re-introduce the Asset Management Group in February or March 2018. Membership of the Group would be drawn from tenants and leaseholders.

In a response to a question, officers advised that Members should let them know of any empty properties they came across during the course of their ward duties and they would be followed up.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- the presentation be noted
- the Asset Management & Major Works Manager circulate a draft Asset Management Strategy document for comments by the Board Members
- the Resident Involvement Manager was to provide regular updates of the Asset Management Group once it was in operation

6. MAJOR REFURBISHMENT CONTRACT

The Project Leader (Investment), Paul O'Donnell presented Part II papers in respect of the major refurbishment contract and other documents for review by the Board.

The Board sought clarification on quality checks on work completed by the contractors, arrangements for inspections, additional staff costs and section 20 challenges. In response to the questions, the Project Leader (Investment) informed the Board that:

- there was no guarantee of income for the winning contractors – orders would be placed on a block-by-block basis
- the Inspection Team would monitor quality for the duration of the contract
- there would be transparency in the costing of jobs. Each leaseholder would receive a pack with details of work schedules and work done on the properties
- the team had planned for potential section 20 challenges
- the Council had an obligation to recover costs from leaseholders

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- the presentation be noted
- Board members were to submit additional feedback to Maureen Herdman or Paul O'Donnell by Wednesday 10 January 2018
- Paul to include HMAB comments and queries in his report to Executive on 23 January
- Project Leader (Investment) to provide regular updates on the major refurbishment contract to the HMAB
- Resident Involvement Manager to circulate an up-to-date payment options paper to Members

7. REPAIRS AND VOIDS UPDATE

Craig Miller, the Assistant Director (Direct Services) informed the Board that following the appointment of the new management team, the first phase of a review of services had been completed. The team was working on the first draft of the second phase which involved a comparison of findings and expectations contained in the previous programme. It was confirmed that the Direct Services team was working in collaboration with teams from Housing and Investment services and others in drafting a programme of action and setting

key performance indicators (KPIs). It was reported that KPIs were being reviewed to align them to service delivery standards expectations.

The Board was informed that Direct Services had received good feedback on the reactive service review. The team was focussing on timely and quality delivery of services. The Assistant Director indicated that there had been positive results for some of the team's recent initiatives such as the introduction of Personal Digital Assistant (PDAs). PDAs had been well received by the Repairs team and officers were now spending less time doing paperwork. This initiative was going to be expanded to the Voids team and other sections.

In response to a question about skills and attitudes of operatives, the Assistant Director informed the Board that the department had introduced measures such as improving communication within the team, maintaining communication with customers and giving operatives ownership of the projects they were involved in and increasing the number and frequency of internal quality checks.

The Assistant Director informed the Board that a change of suppliers would be considered if there was a genuine need. The department was ensuring that there would be robust management of the contract with Travis Perkins – the current supplier. The team had improved stock replenishment by adopting an application that links requests by operatives directly to the supplier's stock control system.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Assistant Director report to a future HMAB meeting following his review of KPIs for the service.

Chair