

Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum Action and Decision Log

6th June 2019, G0.3, Ground Floor, City Hall

1) Welcome and apologies

Forum members present: Wendy Biddles (WB), Joe Carroll (JW), Jean Williams (JW), Gwen Clifford (GC), May Jones (MJ), Phil Allen (PA), Peter Hookway (PH)

Guest Speakers: Simon Nicholls (Head of Service, LCC), Ian Craig, (Head of Service, LCC)

Facilitator(s): Justin Haywood (LCC) (JH), Russell Taylor (LCC) (RT).

WB announced today's meeting will focus on Repairs.

WB reminded forum members of the new enquiry process, and what is considered to be appropriate to raise.

2) Action Log feedback

WB asked for JH to provide an update on actions outstanding. JH provided the following updates:

- a) The Tenant Participation Advisory Service document "Jargon Buster – A guide to housing jargon for tenants and housing staff" has been sent to all members of the forum, along with the minutes from last meeting. Some forum members did not receive this. RT will bring these to the next meeting for distribution along with a copy of the Handy Persons Service leaflet. Some members said that they did not receive this.
- b) Forum members have requested additional information relating to foodbank usage.
Update: The experience of usage of foodbanks by some members may not tie in with the use information provided at the last Forum meeting as the Council supported foodbank has different use criteria to some other foodbanks in the city.
- c) Progress is being made on collating key council service contact services. This is to be circulated at the next meeting.

3) Fire Safety

Simon Nicholls (Head of Service) attended the forum and provided a presentation on Fire Safety.

Key points:

- Leicester City Council prioritise fire safety according to the level of a risk a type of building is assessed to have (for instance high rise blocks have a greater priority than houses).
- Fire safety is an absolute priority for LCC and we have a fire safety strategy to ensure a comprehensive approach. The Strategy includes: ensuring adequate resources are allocated to the area; regular inspections are carried out; block safety strategy is communicated to all tenants; an on-going programme of risk assessments; maintaining a good relationship with the fire service.
- £900k a year is spent on fire safety and work is carried out in priority order.
- The council does not have highrise flats with cladding and none with gas installed. A decision has been made to install sprinklers in our high rise blocks, a process that has already started with the high rise block refurbishment programme that has a focus on fire safety.
- Current projects include: fire escape doors on 3 story properties on St Marks; the ongoing door replacement programme; emergency lighting upgrades and training for operatives.

Actions

- a) SN to have GC's address so that he can look into the limited number of plugs in her home.
- b) GC wanted to know what is council tax allowance for low income / benefit households. RT to investigate and report back.
- c) JW would like to know when the conditions of tenancy are shown to prospective tenants – at the point of signing or before. RT to contact Voids and Property Lettings Team and ask them to contact JW to clarify.

4) Repairs

Ian Craig (Head of Service) attended the forum to give a presentation on key issues relating to the Repairs service.

Key points:

- Update on mobile working – the new software solution has been introduced – there have been some issues relating to repairs appointments which are being investigated.
- Work is progressing on developing an online repairs reporting function.
- The collection of information to establish tenants' satisfaction with their repairs has been introduced.

- The Handy Person Service is available to residents in all tenures, but applicants should be mindful of the criteria required to use the service.
- IC raised the issue of property access and how unfulfilled appointments impacted on costs and resources.
- IC talked about kitchens and bathrooms replacement and how this was part of the council's responsibility to meet the Decent Homes Standard.

Actions:

- a) PA to itemise his repair issues over the last three years, IC will visit him to discuss.
- b) MJ raised the issue of an older home she was aware of that had not benefited from modifications – IC to look into this.
- c) MJ raised the issue of the repairs service attending outside of given appointment slots. MJ provided an example, IC to investigate.
- d) PA asked what % of repairs jobs were completed correctly the first time. RT to find out and report back.

5) Introduction of the new Assistant Mayor for Housing

Councillor Cutkelvin, the new Assistant Mayor with responsibility for Housing introduced herself. She talked about her background, her interest in housing and her desire to make a positive difference to residents' quality of life in the city. She said that she valued the work of the Forum and would like to stay in touch with its progress. She stated her intention to meet with each of the members of the forum to find out about the issues in their areas.

Action

- a) Councillor Cutkelvin to personally visit everyone on the forum over the next 6 months. RT to arrange.

4) Any other business

- a) JW requested that the number on the key safe to her block be changed as too many people had access to it.
- b) PA asked when will the leaseholder handbook be published. RT to speak to the Leaseholder Liaison Team for an update.
- c) Concern was raised about the possibility of losing the Ian Marlow name when IMC closes. RT to escalate this concern.

6) Date of next meeting

Thursday 1st August 2019 at City Hall, G.03 Meeting Room 3, City Hall
.The meeting with then run from 1.00pm – 4.00 pm (lunch provided at 12.30)