

Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum Action and Decision Log

25th November 2021

1) Welcome and apologies

Forum members present: Wendy Biddles, Phillip Allen, Peter Hookway, Jean Williams, Jill Rhys,

Apologies: Joe Carroll, Ann Green

Also present: Gurjit Minhas, Simon Nicholls, Helen McGarry

2) Actions from previous meeting

At the last meeting Chris Burgin stated that the estate work required, as a result of his recent visit to the Thurnby Lodge area, had been passed to the tenancy management service to progress. Helen McGarry to ask for an update on how this work is progressing.

Gurjit Minhas has spoken to Phillip Allen about incidents of anti-social behaviour and this has now been reported to the police.

Issues reported by Peter Hookway about the service received at an annual gas safety check have been dealt with by the Gas and Heating Services Manager. Peter has also received information relating to the ownership of parking land in the Beaumont Leys area.

3) The role of Housing Officers and Neighbourhood Housing Assistants

Gurjit Minhas, Head of Service for Tenancy Management, attended the meeting to give an overview of the Housing Officers and Neighbourhood Assistant roles.

Housing Officers carry out approximately 35 different activities. However, the activities that require most of their time are:

- Investigating and acting on reports of anti-social behaviour
- Undertaking welfare visits to identify the support needs of tenants
- Taking enforcement action where tenancy conditions have been broken

- Progressing property and estate issues, such as investigating reports of abandoned properties and abandoned vehicles, dealing with communal cleaning issues, supporting gas gain entries, issuing keys for door entry systems, providing a range of advice, for example on condensation and pests
- Housing Officers are involved in patch works with local tenants, councillors and the police to help identify environmental improvements
- Housing Officers are also Building Responsible Officers for our flats and maisonettes. They must ensure that any actions identified from fire safety inspections are completed.

Neighbourhood Housing Assistants main duty is to carry out fire safety inspections. These involve checking way lights, fire alarms, signage and to ensure items are not left in communal areas that may cause an obstacle if the building needs to be evacuated due to a fire. The Neighbourhood Housing Assistants also report incidents of fly tipping to the Estate Wardens for removal.

Gurjit Minhas advised the meeting that the Housing Scrutiny Commission task force set up to look at the way we deliver anti-social behaviour services has been completed. A proposal will now be considered in early 2022 to set up a centralised Housing team to initially investigate reports of anti-social behaviour by council tenants. Where enforcement action is required these cases will be progressed by the Councils Crime and Anti-social Behaviour Unit. Tenants will still be able to report incidents of anti-social behaviour to their Housing Officer.

Action – Jean Williams raised concerns that mattresses and furniture are continually being dumped in the St Matthews area. Work to continue by the Tenancy Management service to address the issues, to include promoting the Councils bulk rubbish collection service.

Action – Jean Williams suggested there was a need for a specialist mental health team within STAR to support the growing number of tenants with complex needs. As a longer-term action Gurjit Minhas to consider this suggestion.

Action – Jill Rhys raised a general issue of people throwing litter out of vehicles. Gurjit Minhas to pass these concerns to the Council's Environmental Services.

Action – Jean Williams stated people were experiencing difficulties contacting the Noise Nuisance Team, also that there was a shortage of equipment to monitor noise levels. Gurjit Minhas to contact the service to report these issues.

4) Update on District Heating

Simon Nicholls attended the meeting to provide an update on a project relating the district heating scheme, for which we have approximately 2,900 users across the city.

The Government has set a requirement for all organisations providing a district heating scheme assess whether it is cost effective for individual meters to be fitted into properties to record individual energy use. To meet this requirement the Council has employed consultants to survey a range of flats and maisonettes in the city to see if this is feasible. The Government has set a deadline of

September 2022 for this feasibility work to be completed. Simon stated he would return to a future Forum meeting with the findings of this work. He also stated that a Government requirement was that full consultation needed to take place with tenants and leaseholders on the district heating scheme before any work commenced.

5) Update of the Tenant Involvement Review

The report proposing a review of our tenant involvement activities was taken to the Housing Scrutiny Commission in October and agreement was given that this review takes place. Helen McGarry will be arranging a meeting with the Forum members in January to seek their views on current arrangements and areas for improvement.

6) Agenda items for the next meeting

It was agreed that topics for the next meeting would be improvements to Customer Service and the role of the Works Planner.

Topics for future meetings were identified as being:

- The role of the Leaseholder Officers, to include leaseholder charges
- The out of hours repairs service
- An update on the Voids service, to include void times and how long work takes when this is carried out by contractors

7) Any other business

Helen McGarry advised the Forum that consultation would shortly be starting on the Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme proposals for 2022 / 23. A meeting of the Forum will take place on the 16th December 2021 to present the proposals and seek the feedback from Forum members.

Action - Jean Williams raised concerns that a security door in St Matthews needs to be replaced as the PAC keys keep breaking down. Issue to be reported to the Repairs Service.

8) Dates of next meeting

16th December 2021 1.00 – 2.30 pm – Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme consultation

January 2022 – Tenant involvement workshop – Date to be confirmed

10th February 2022 1.00 – 3.00 pm – Tenant Forum meeting