

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

TENANTS' FORUM

Meeting held – 12th September 2019

Present: Councillors Mark Rowley (Chair), Maggie Don,
Andrew Dutton

Tenant Representatives:

Martyn Lund	(Highfield Road)
Steven Soper	(Sackville Street)
Peter Harvey	(Dahlia Road)
Brian Kimpton	(Counties)
Josephine Copson	(Alfred Street)
Reg Carvell	(Highfield Cres.) - Leaseholder
Lindsay Wooldridge	(Sackville Street)
Steven Panther	(Sackville Street)
Everlyn Odame	(Athelstan Road)
Karol Hall	(Burton Latimer)
Simone Sheldrick	(Weston by Welland)

Also Present:

John Conway	(Housing)
Dean Mitchell	(Finance)
Leona Mantle	(Housing)
Dan Hannam	(Housing)
Callum Galluzzo	(Democratic Services)

19.TF.16 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mike Tebbutt, June Derbyshire and David Howes. Apologies for absence were also recorded for Moira Brown. Peter Matsa, Srlina Radford and Brent Woodford.

19.TF.17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Maggie Don declared an interest in item 6 as a trustee of KCU

19.TF.18 MINUTES

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th June 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

19.TF.19 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

18.TF.71 Homelessness Solutions

It was noted that the number of households living in temporary accommodation had risen from 209 as reported at the last Tenants Forum to 233 at its peak, members heard that this figure has been reduced to 217 due to a number of complex long term cases being resolved.

18.TF.126 Reinventing Repairs & Voids Update

At the previous Tenants Forum it was reported to members that there were 74 void properties under maintenance and repair work, this number as of Thursday 12th September 2019 remained at 29.

19.TF.20 MATTERS RAISED BY TENANTS' FORUM REPRESENTATIVES

None

19.TF.21 RECYCLING ITEMS LEFT IN VOID PROPERTIES – PILOT PROJECT WITH KCU

The forum was presented with proposals regarding a pilot project scheme that Kettering Borough Council were looking to roll out in cooperation with Kettering Community Unit (KCU).

Members of the forum heard that there was a major time, cost and environmental impact associated with the removal of items left in void properties. Other impacts such as tenancy sustainability and households that need to move quickly also have an impact on items being left within properties.

It was heard that KCU had recently launched a “Dignity in Crisis Project” which aimed to meet a gap in basic needs support which also respected people’s dignity through building on the existing food bank model to include provision of essential household packages. The project would also contain an outreach advice service to help engage with other organisations and services earlier to address the causes leading to the need for crisis support and to prevent people from escalating into further difficulties.

Officers had amended the NTQ to enable the Council to recycle furniture and an agreement was in place with KCU regarding the essential household items required for the project. It was confirmed that Kettering Borough Council was awaiting a decision in it's first property with the Pilot Scheme.

Members of the forum then heard that as part of the scheme Neighbourhood Managers, Support Workers and Scheme Managers would be passing information to tenants and applicants regarding how to donate and how to ask for help.

19.TF.22 INTRODUCTION OF DAN HANNAM, PROPERTY SERVICES MANAGER

Members of the forum were presented with details regarding the new property services manager. Dan Hannam introduced himself to members of the forum stating that he had replaced Simon Haile who had now left his post within the Council.

It was heard that the property services team moved from Environmental Care to Housing in September 2017 which provided officers with an opportunity to rethink how the repairs service was delivered resulting in the creation of the Reinventing repairs project. To date a number of significant improvements had been made including:

- A significant reduction in the number of empty homes from 120 to 27 properties.
- Successful recruitment to new management roles as part of the Reinventing Repairs service improvement project.
- Improving links between housing management and repairs teams, and reviewing roles where needed to make the service more efficient.
- Introducing new contracts to ensure the council is compliant with regards to asbestos and legionella.
- Improving the process for replacing gas boilers and now only using two standard types.
- Undertaking an audit of the gas and electrical service and implementing the recommendations.

It was stated to members that areas that had been identified as initial priorities for the Property Services Team over the next 6 months included staffing, gas services, out of hours services and the Council's Asset Management Strategy

19.TF.23 FIXED TERM TENANCIES – REVIEW OF TENANCY POLICY

The forum was presented with a brief update on the progress of the Tenancy Policy.

It was heard that the Policy was due to be put before the Executive Committee and if approved would then be presented to Full Council in December for further comment and approval.

Members heard that the policy was being reviewed to make the best use of Council resources and to ensure that all tenants receive the right amount of support in order to sustain a tenancy.

It was heard that further updates would be brought before the forum once approval had been received by the executive committee.

19.TF.24 HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The forum was provided with the latest asset management report.

It was noted the Aids and Adaptions Project was currently on site with 8 jobs with focus now being on the waiting list for level access showers. 38 installations had been completed in the current financial year.

The next phase of the Door Entry System was due to be completed within the next month. Another 2 years of work was due to be completed including a renewal for the contractors which is due to expire within the next month.

Updates were also provided with regards to ongoing projects at Hamilton House and within the Roofing project.

19.TF.11 CONNECT

An update was provided regarding the forthcoming edition of the Connect magazine.

It was heard that the next edition was due to be release imminently and that suggestions were being taken regarding this years Christmas edition of the Connect Magazine.

It was suggested that the KCU Pilot Project be included within the next edition along with promotion for the 100 years of social housing celebrations.

19.TF.12 TENANT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

An update was provided to members of the tenants forum regarding the ongoing work being undertaken by the Tenant Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

19.TF.13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Details were provided to members with regards to a fundraising event being undertaken by a member of the Tenants Forum

19.TF.14 PRIZE DRAW

The winner of the prize draw was Lindsay Woodbridge

19.TF.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the provisional date for the next meeting of the forum was set as 11th July 2019.

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and ended at 8.07pm)

Signed

Chair

DJP