

## Borough Wide Tenants Forum

### Minutes of the Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 11am

**Present:** Roger Price, Sue Healy, Percy Rooke, Jenny Harvey, Kath Wilkins, Sandra Holt, John Holt, Denise Baum-Pick, Angela Coates Director of Housing, Helen Parton Housing Services Manager, Julie Richardson Neighbourhoods & Tenant Involvement Officer

**Apologies:**

	The meeting commenced at 11.00 am with Roger in the chair.	
	<b>Welcome &amp; introductions.</b>	<b>Roger</b>
	<b>Apologies</b> As above	
<b>47.23</b>	<p><b>Minutes from the last meeting</b> The minutes of the last meeting were agreed by Percy and Jenny</p> <p><b>Matters arising.</b> 37.23 Cost-of-living sessions - Helen advised that Community groups should contact Mandy Bygrave directly to arrange cost-of- living sessions. Information and contact details will be included in the tenant's newsletter.</p> <p>37.23 Damp and Mould Policy - The policy will be revised and brought back to forum.</p> <p>Sue was expecting performance on the agenda and requested performance figures are brought to the next meeting. This will be added to agenda items.</p>	<b>Angela</b>
<b>48.23</b>	<p><b>Feedback from Community Panel meetings</b> Sandra will look at dates to arrange a meeting with Mancetter Community Panel. Percy and Jenny have been encouraging attendance to coffee mornings at Drayton Court and will continue to encourage a restart of their meetings. Tenant's meetings are continuing around the borough giving an opportunity to meet with tenants to gather feedback on community issues and housing services. Tenant's meetings have taken</p>	

	<p>place in Kingsbury and Polesworth since the last forum meeting. During the meetings handouts are made available for tenants to take away including the updated Tenant Partnership Agreement. Roger asked whether the meetings are well attended. There haven't been large attendance numbers, however feedback at the meetings has been valuable and there are some similarities in issues being raised. There has been further interest in tenant involvement with additional information given out following the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>49.23</b></p>	<p><b>Sheltered Scheme Allocations Policy</b>  Angela gave an overview of the Sheltered Scheme Allocations Policy.</p> <p>The Local Authority must have a published policy/ Lettings Scheme which sets out transparently how it will let its properties.</p> <p>The Lettings Scheme must meet certain legislative criteria (eg reasonable preference categories for particular needs groups) however the Local Authority can also set out how it intends to meet local housing need using its policy. It must act to assess applicants and let vacancies in accordance with the published policy. The Lettings Scheme states how applicants are selected from short listing to meet their needs and matched to suitable accommodation, while making best use of stock.</p> <p>The Council has a mix of general-purpose bungalows and sheltered housing bungalows. There are 18 schemes which are let as sheltered housing because they have a communal room, it's a small part of the housing stock available for applicants over 60 to be matched with. The Lettings Scheme aims to seek a balance between giving applicants a choice over the area in which they wish to live and the size and type of that accommodation whilst having an overview of the needs of all applicants registered and being able to meet needs fairly given the limited number of vacancies available.</p> <p>Bungalows are not available on Right to Buy.</p>	
<p><b>50.23</b></p>	<p><b>Silent Voices Workshop Proposal</b></p>	

	<p>The Borough Wide Tenants Forum requested training with Tpas on 'Finding your silent voices' A proposal for the workshop has been circulated to the forum for discussion. A date for the workshop has been agreed for Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024, and will be confirmed with Tpas.</p> <p>The training is to help identify tenants who are not contacting the Council and how we identify these tenants by considering various options. The workshop will help us to understand the background of silent voices and the different reasons why people are silent and the best way to engage.</p> <p>Some tenants are not contacting the Council when they are unhappy with something, this then escalates and eventually becomes a complaint. Some complaints/service requests can be dealt with quickly by officers before reaching Stage 1 complaint. Sue suggested targeting small areas with a letter to tenants to ask whether they are happy with the housing service or if they are unhappy to let the Council know.</p>	<p><b>Helen</b></p>
<p><b>51.23</b></p>	<p><b>Tenant Led Scrutiny</b>  Sue has been looking at Tenant Led Scrutiny, to update terms of reference etc and has forwarded information and suggestions to Angela. The general suggestion is to go back to how Tenant Led Scrutiny worked previously and to look at getting more people involved in the exercise.</p> <p>Following discussion, it was decided a Forward Work Plan for scrutiny would be the best way to move things forward, and an initial meeting arranged in December for Sue and Roger to attend. A Forward Work Plan would be drafted following the meeting and brought to the Borough Wide Tenants Forum meeting in January.</p> <p>It was agreed that Tenant Led Scrutiny meetings will be held on alternate months to Borough Wide Tenants Forum meetings with plans to hold the first scrutiny meeting in February commencing with ASB as first on the Forward Work Plan.</p>	<p><b>Helen/Angela</b></p>

	Meeting dates 2024-2025. Julie will put together a schedule of meeting dates to agree at the next forum meeting.	<b>Julie</b>
<b>52.23</b>	<p><b>Forward Work Plan – next steps</b></p> <p>Helen gave a progress update and discussed next steps.</p> <p>1.A comprehensive review of the Tenant Partnership Agreement was completed last year. A further review will be completed by the end of March 2024. A summary leaflet of Tenant Involvement options will also be produced.</p> <p>2.Information on the website has been reviewed and updated. Information will be transferred over to the new website as part of a corporate upgrade ready for launch January 2024.</p> <p>3.Information has been collected throughout the year to produce an impact assessment to evaluate tenant involvement and scrutiny activities and will be ready to review in January 2024.</p> <p>4.Damp and mould policy - was considered by the forum in March and April and has been completed. Sue mentioned the spotlight reports and to recent changes in guidance. Once the policy has been revised Angela will bring it back to forum.</p> <p>Complaints and Compliments - new procedure has been introduced and steps are being taken to publicise this in our communications (Tenants newsletter, Tenants Handbook, and the website).</p> <p>Compliments and Complaints Performance information - was presented in July and considered in detail.</p> <p>Anti-Social Behaviour/Noise Complaints – The policy and procedure are being reviewed and updated ready for discussion with the Forum in February 2024.</p> <p>Interactive Application – options are being considered for discussion.</p> <p>Sue asked for consideration to be given to Whatsapp as an application. From previous experience using the application at various organisations feels it may be the way forward. There were concerns with using this application due to peoples contact numbers being visible to everyone, it would require further investigation.</p>	

	<p>5. The Asset Management Plan was presented and reviewed by the BWTF in March, the Action Plan will be monitored.</p> <p>6. Performance Reports will be considered every quarter. Quarter 1 performance information was presented at the September meeting.</p> <p>7. Work is ongoing to consider the impact of the cost of living rises and the energy crisis on NWBC tenants and ensure that tenants are aware of the support and information that is available to them. Information is on the website and will be included in the newsletter.</p> <p>8. The Climate Change Officer gave an update during the meeting on work undertaken and progress being made.</p> <p>9. The Annual Report for 2022-23 is drafted, ready for publication.</p> <p>10. Content for the Newsletter has been reviewed by the BWTF and will be mailed out early December. It was agreed for the Newsletter to be sent out at different times this year. Feedback received at local tenant's meetings about the newsletter has been positive.</p>	
<p><b>53.23</b></p>	<p><b>Agenda items for next meeting</b>          Tenant Led Scrutiny Forward Work Plan          Performance Quarter 2          BWTF &amp; Tenant Led Scrutiny meeting dates 2024-2025</p>	
<p><b>54.23</b></p>	<p><b>Climate Change Agenda</b>          Robert Snape, Climate Change Officer for North Warwickshire Borough Council gave an informative presentation to the Borough Wide Tenants Forum on the Climate Change Plan.          The presentation covered the effects of Climate Change and what action we can take to stop it. It raised awareness of some of the opportunities but also challenges that will come with decarbonising the housing stock.           Questions and discussion followed.</p>	
<p><b>55.23</b></p>	<p><b>Any other business</b>          John passed on his compliments for the repairs service for recent works carried out.</p>	

	<p>Contractors have been unable to contact a tenant for access to replace a fire door to the flat. It's believed the tenant isn't living at the property.</p> <p>The cooker has been removed from the communal room at Drayton Court, tenants are requesting a replacement.</p> <p>There is an issue with rats at Drayton Court around both bin areas. Holes and rat runs are visible at the front of the flats.</p> <p>It was reported during the last meeting that refuse bins are being left outside the front of a property. All 3 bins are still in situ making it unpleasant for the neighbours.</p> <p>The next meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 11am</p>	<p><b>Helen</b></p> <p><b>Julie</b></p> <p><b>Julie</b></p> <p><b>All Members to note date of next meeting</b></p>
	<p>Roger thanked everyone for attending. The meeting closed at 1.45pm</p>	
	<p>Signed, to confirm that these minutes are a true and accurate record of the Forum Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023</p> <p>.....</p>	