



The Tenants' Forum

20th November 2024

The Guildhall

10am to 12 noon

	DISCUSSION	Action by
26	<u>Welcome and Introductions</u>	
26.1	The Chair opened the meeting and followed the usual format of housekeeping rules and fire evacuation procedures. She also informed the members that the code of conduct was in place and reminded people not to talk over others that were talking during the meeting and to put hands up if a question needed to be asked.	
27	<u>Head of Service – Access and Wellbeing Neighbourhoods and Housing</u>	
27.1	The Head of Service for Access and Wellbeing, and the Housing Access Manager for Neighbourhoods and Housing, gave a presentation to the Tenants' Forum (copies of the presentation are available on request). The following topics during the presentation were discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council housing – what you may have heard? • The Housing Act 1996 – Part 6 Housing Allocations • Hull City Council's Allocations Policy • Homelessness – the main duties (Housing Act 1996, Part 7) • Single homeless people • Homeless families • Our current position • Temporary accommodation • Challenges • Private rented sector and local housing allowance • What are we doing? • How you can help. 	
27.2	The following questions were taken from the floor:	



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27.3	<p>BP spoke in relation to homeless military personnel and asked if the Council gave priority to these people?</p> <p>Officers responded that in the Council's current policy does provide additional priority for military personnel right throughout, in that it gives them more priority than someone else in the same housing need as them. If deemed homeless and in priority need, they would be in Band A rather than Band B (where most homeless applicants are placed), however the whole individual's situation would be assessed.</p>	
27.4	<p>LG asked about the rules for single people living in a 1 bedroomed flat, if the person met someone and became a couple, would the Council offer alternative larger accommodation?</p> <p>Officers replied that no this would not be the case, but depending on personal circumstances, there is provision to allocate outside of the normal rules in exceptional circumstances.</p>	
27.5	<p>CW asked if the Council was working with other providers of housing in Hull, and offering their properties to people on the waiting list?</p> <p>Officers responded that yes this was the case, as the Council had limited stock and a large waiting list, then people would be advised through the Council to look at the private sector and other housing providers. The Council is working closely with other social landlords in the city to improve nomination arrangements.</p>	
27.6	<p>GP asked if vetting took place of people given properties as the occupants of the bungalow next door to him were causing issues that were affecting the lives of the other residents.</p> <p>Officers responded that people were checked for past issues such as those mentioned, and there is provision in the policy to disqualify people from the list in certain circumstances, but we must be careful we are allocating in accordance with our policy. ASB checks are carried out. Officers also said that tenants in</p>	



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	<p>breach of their tenancy agreements should be investigated by ASB and dealt with accordingly.</p>	
27.7	<p>RF spoke about a property on his estate that had been empty for 9 months, but had received works from KWL the Council's contractor, and asked if the Council had bought the property for their stock?</p> <p>The Assistant Director for Neighbourhoods and Housing responded to explain the situation with some longer-term voids and turnaround times and took the address away to investigate (post meeting note – it is going to be occupied soon).</p>	
27.8	<p>SB said that in response to the number of people using Facebook to exchange properties and the low number of people using Council methods, why didn't Officers use alternative digital methods.</p> <p>Officers responded that they are trying to promote the House Exchange system and are hoping to run an event next year to invite tenants to. Officers commented that the Facebook page is not a council page and there are concerns that too much information was being shared by users in some cases. They advised that the Council site was the most secure. Officers agreed more needs to be done to promote this and help people to use it.</p>	
27.9	<p>LG asked in relation to children sharing bedrooms, what was the Council's take on ages where they had to have a separate bedroom?</p> <p>Officers responded that there are different calculations for benefits, bedroom size and occupancy rules under the Housing Health & Safety Rating System and associated guidance etc and that it is not a simple response. For the Council's allocations policy, extra points are awarded for needing an extra bedroom if a boy and girl are sharing over the age of 6, and if two children of the same sex are sharing over 10, however this doesn't mean the sharing is unlawful in any way and the priority doesn't mean a transfer to a bigger property will be possible unfortunately.</p>	



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27.10	The Officers were thanked for their presentation.	
28	<p><u>Assistant Director Regulatory Engagement</u></p> <p>28.1 The Assistant Director for Regulatory Engagement from the Regulator of Social Housing gave a presentation to the Tenants' Forum (copies of the presentation are available on request).</p> <p>The following topics were discussed during the presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context • Consumer standards • Assessing the providers against the standards • Transparency • Regulatory judgements and grades • Consumer grades – by type of publication • Consumer grades – by type of landlord • Learning from our consumer judgements so far <p>28.2 The following questions were taken from the floor:</p> <p>LG asked if the onus of the landlord was on contacting the Regulator if there were issues found or could the tenants also contact the Regulator direct?</p> <p>The Officer responded that it would be beneficial to the landlord to contact and seek advice from the Regulator if issues were found. Tenants can contact the Housing Ombudsman to investigate issues and if the Regulator found reoccurring trends of complaints, then the landlord would be contacted and assisted.</p> <p>28.3 The Assistant Director for Neighbourhoods and Housing confirmed that as previously shared with the Tenants' Forum, Hull City Council had referred itself to the Regulator on 3 issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock condition surveys 	



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<p>28.4</p> <p>28.5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-social behaviour • Decent homes <p>He confirmed improvement plans are in place to rectify these issues and conversations are taking place with the Regulator.</p> <p>SB asked if tenants were given satisfaction surveys by the Regulator to complete to gauge their views?</p> <p>The Officer responded by saying no this was not the case, the onus was on the landlord to carry out this function.</p> <p>The Chair of the Tenants' Forum stated that she and the Vice Chair were invited every 6 months to the Council's Scrutiny Commission to give updates.</p> <p>The Officer was thanked for her presentation.</p>	
<p>29</p> <p>29.1</p>	<p><u>Minutes and Matters Arising</u></p> <p>Due to time constraints this item was deferred.</p>	
<p>30</p> <p>30.1</p>	<p><u>Vice Chair of the Tenants' Forum update</u></p> <p>Due to time constraints this item was deferred.</p>	
<p>31</p> <p>31.1</p>	<p><u>Feedback from Groups</u></p> <p><u>Customer Access Focus Group</u></p> <p>PR provided an update on the following two items.</p> <p>Members of the Customer Access Focus Group expressed an interest in visiting the Hull City Council Call Centre, to understand the processes.</p> <p>2 sessions were organised to visit the Call Centre based at The Wilson Centre, with the first session being last week and the second session being tomorrow. Without spoiling the experience for others, the visit was very informative. PR was able to see live statistics on the call board, and I was also able</p>	



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<p>31.2</p>	<p>to sit with an advisor to see, firsthand, the process that they follow when providing information over the phone. Whilst there PR needed to report a repair, so was able to see how an advisor raises a repair request.</p> <p>The Call Centre Manager is happy to organise additional visits to the Call Centre for anyone who may be interested. If you like the sound of this and would like to take part, please speak to Theo and he will investigate booking in additional sessions.</p> <p>If you would like to join the Customer Access Focus Group to help review, monitor and scrutinise the performance of our Call Centre, Customer Service Centres, and our Community Hubs, please speak to the Tenant Participation Team.</p> <p><u>Publicity Project Group</u></p> <p>The group met in October to review the articles that are to be included in the Winter Edition of Hull Housing News. The group agreed that the main centre spread article should cover Cold Callers and the Do's and Don'ts, and the group also agreed that the newsletter should cover the myHousing App to encourage tenants to sign up. The newsletter will also be spotlighting the Publicity Project Group and the work that they do, so keep your eye out for more information.</p>	
<p>32</p> <p>32.1</p>	<p><u>Feedback from TARA's</u></p> <p>Due to time constraints this item was deferred.</p>	
<p>33</p> <p>33.1</p>	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>The Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing presented training certificates to members of the Tenants' Forum.</p>	
<p>34</p> <p>34.1</p>	<p><u>Close of Meeting</u></p> <p>The meeting closed at 12 noon</p>	



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Estimated cost of meeting.

Postage, paper, photocopying: £73

Refreshments: £79.60

Expenses: £15.31

Taxis: £0

Room Hire: £0

Miscellaneous: £0

No of invite letters sent: 120

TOTAL COSTS £167.91

Savings: by emailing, not using headed paper and no cost of room booking £115

Details of Meeting.

No of Staff at meeting: 13

No of guest speakers: 1

Councillors at meeting: 0

Forum Quorum: 12

Tenant members: 16

Resident members: 11

None members: 0

TOTAL No of Volunteers at Meeting: 27

Duration of Meeting: 2hrs

Pre meeting: 12hrs

During meeting: 54hrs

TOTAL: 66hrs