Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum Action and Decision Log

8th October 2019, G0.3, Ground Floor, City Hall

1) Welcome and apologies

Forum members present: Wendy Biddles (WB), Joe Carroll (JW), Gwen Clifford (GC), May Jones (MJ), Peter Hookway (PH), Ann Green (AG)

Apologies: Jean Williams

Guest Speakers: Justin Haywood (Service Manager Partnerships and Housing), Ed Quick (Customer Support Manager), Alison Musgrove (Service Manager for Revenues and Customer Support), Suki Supria (Head of Service)

Facilitator(s): Gurjit Kaur Minhas (LCC) (GM), Russell Taylor (LCC) (RT).

2) Action Log feedback

GM provided the following updates:

a) MJ had requested Ian Craig to telephone her in relation to an unnotified repairs appointment. This has taken place and the issues addressed with the Works Planner.

b) Forum member meetings with Cllr Cutkelvin are in the process of being booked. Members will be advised of the dates when these are confirmed.

c) GM stated that a previous action to look at how good practice in the housing sector could be shared with Forum members is being investigated.

d) The Forum members request to visit new build properties prior to letting has been discussed with Simon Nicholls (Head of Service), who is overseeing this work. This request will be considered as the building work nears completion in July 2020.

e) JC had requested that gas repair appointments were given an AM or PM timeframe. Rob Webster, the Gas and Servicing Manager has confirmed this improvement is being taken forward through the new mobile working technology.

3. Presentation: Housing Need (The Housing Register and Homelessness
Justin Haywood (Service Manager – Partnerships and Housing)

Key points:

- During 2018 / 19 4,800 people came to the Housing Options service looking for help with their housing situation. Of these 2,650 made applications of homelessness
- Various reasons why people become homeless, which include money problems, domestic violence, leaving the army, evictions and mortgage repossessions.
- The two main reasons for people coming to Housing Options for help are people being evicted from private rented accommodation or being asked to leave their home by friend or family.
- The Council fund 299 temporary accommodation bed spaces for homeless people in the city.
- Our Homelessness Strategy aims to prevent homelessness and the cycle of homelessness.
- On the 1st October 2019 there were 6,178 applicants on the Housing Register, overcrowding is the biggest reason people join the Register

Action: RT to contact AG to discuss the report she had read about rates of homelessness in different areas of the country, for JH to consider

Action: AG asked for information on how many homeless people died.

Action: JC to provide details of particular ex-armed forces cases that are experiencing homelessness, so support can be offered.

Action: A copy of the presentation to be circulated to Forum members with the action log.

Action: Forum members showed an interest in the next rough sleeper count. Members to be advised of the date and arrangements for the next count.

4) The role of Tenancy Management and service contact
Suki Supria (Head of Service), Alison Musgrove (Service Manager for Revenues and Customer Support) and Ed Quick (Customer Support Manager)

A discussion took place about the role tenancy management, in particular the role of Housing Officers, and the way service contact enquiries are dealt with by Customer Services.

Action: AG requested a document that outlined the roles and responsibilities of Housing Officers.

Action: WB and JC requested that Forum members visited the Customer Services Centre to see how it operated.

Action: Forum members requested a copy of the on-line Repairs Handbook.

Action: WB and PH to be involved in testing new on-line Housing services prior to these being implemented.

5) Any other business

ACTIONS:

a) A letter to be sent to Forum members in relation to attendance at the meetings.
b) GM to arrange for WB and JC to visit the Brite Centre and Eyres Monsell community centre to promote the Forum.
c) AG requested a copy of Peter Kandola's presentation from the previous meeting in relation to house building.
d) AG requested that while communal painting was taking place within the Aikman Avenue flats, could the spikes that deter pigeons be re-fixed to the top of the buildings.
e) AG requested that 30 mile per hour speed signs were installed on Aikman Avenue to deter speeding.
f) AG requested feedback on action to address a local rat issue in New Parks.
g) As a result of a blocked drain in the Evington area GC requested a letter was sent out to all tenants reminding them not to put inappropriate items down sinks and toilets.
h) Investigations to take place into an issue raised by PH that people in his area are not receiving appointments for gas services and operatives are visiting properties unannounced.
i) JC requested the current kitchen and bathroom refurbishment schedule is circulated to Forum members.
j) Issues in Ethel Road, raised by GC, in terms of dumped rubbish and blocked guttering to be investigated.

7) Date of next meeting

Thursday 5th December 2019 at City Hall (room to be confirmed, please report to reception)
The meeting will run from 11.30am – 3.30 pm (tea and coffee provided at 11.30, lunch at 12.30)