



Tenancy Services Service User Group
 (Formerly known as the Estate Management Service User Group)

MINUTES

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Location</i>
	29/02/2024	18:00	Zoom
Attendees			
Residents	Councillors		Staff
Alistair Boycee Chris Sweetham (CS) Clara Janet Browning Michael Foley Nigel Varley (NV) Pat Robinson (PR) Sibusiso Tim De La Rew (TDLR)			Mark Kempt (MK) Sam Robinson (SR) Mark Goodey (MG) Ilona Marciniak (IL) David Maggs (DM) Henry Murray
Apologies		Minutes	
		Henry Murray	

Agenda items

1. **Welcome & Introduction**
2. **You Said We Did**
3. **Energy Plan – Sam Robinson**
4. **Income Management – Mark**
5. **New Tenancy Standards – Mark Goodey**
6. **Future agenda items**

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions	Actions
1	Welcome and Housekeeping Mark Kempt gave presentation and announced name change to Tenancy Services Service User Group	

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	<p>CS: Asked if this SUG is still relevant to leaseholders.</p> <p>MK: Confirmed that yes, it is still relevant as leaseholders are residents.</p>	
2	<p>You said we did – David Maggs</p> <p>David Maggs gave an update presenting “You Said We Did” - actions taken on items raised in previous forum.</p> <p>CS: Asked if an elderly resident is not in supported accommodation, how they can find out about bathroom upgrades, as raised in DM’s presentation regarding You Said We Did.</p> <p>DM: Advised they will take their details and speak directly after the meeting. Advised that the council is aware that there are elderly residents in general needs housing in need of appropriate bathrooms.</p> <p>NV: Raised the Bristol Older People’s Forum. Advised they produced a cookbook for cheap and delicious meals.</p> <p>B: Asked if the pushback date for repairs due to Barton Hill have been updated.</p> <p>DM: Asked MK if they knew of an update.</p> <p>MK: Advised they do not have updates on new dates but that new trades have definitely started up again.</p> <p>DM: Advised they will get back about this point quickly.</p> <p>NV: Expressed opinion that there is a broad policy in place to offer compensation to residents of Barton House for bills.</p> <p>MK: Advised this is not technically correct and is down to individual circumstances.</p>	<p>DM</p> <p>DM</p>

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3	<p>Energy Plan - Sam Robinson</p> <p>Sam Robinson gave a presentation on an update for energy efficiency across Bristol housing stock.</p> <p>B: Asked about a paragraph in presentation about roof compatibility with solar panels and questioned the statement that some communal roofs are “low yield”.</p> <p>SR: Advised that not all blocks have low yield roofs but it is only sometimes possible to use a “Solshare” unit to share out the solar generated electricity to individual flats, but if the only option is to link to the landlords supply, then value to tenants and value for money may not be worth it. Advised that new technology allows for more efficiency which could make some roofs compatible but that some roofs simply won’t be viable with solar panels.</p> <p>B: Raised The Cheese Project, and expressed surprise that the council doesn’t use their service.</p> <p>SR: Advised their friend is the director of Cheese Project and they are very aware of their services.</p> <p>B: Explained how the Cheese Project measures efficiency and again expressed surprise that council doesn’t use them.</p> <p>SR: Advised that the council hasn’t started the program of efficiency measurement for council stock yet. Acknowledged that Boycee has raised good feedback and will take it on board.</p> <p>TDLR: Asked if it’s possible to replace the glass and not the whole window when upgrading them.</p> <p>SR: Advised on the carbon national guidance measurements they use to calculate the lowest cost financially and carbon footprint-wise, and it depends on the program being worked on.</p> <p>TDLR: Asked about certain type of window types and why they aren’t being used.</p>	SR

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	<p>SR: Advised they will take that feedback on board.</p> <p>CS: Asked about specific heating options for residents.</p> <p>SR: Responded that some suggested options wouldn't meet new regulatory requirements that are soon to become law.</p> <p>B: Expressed opinion that replacing window glass and seals is cheaper than replacing entire unit. Shared anecdotal information on materials process and an argument for cost saving, suggested that those steps are a "no-brainer" for council.</p> <p>SR: Advised that to receive a specific grant it is a stipulation that whole units are replaced. Asked for this to be added to YSWD to find out what more efficient ways can be discussed.</p> <p>NV: Shared experience of a particular type of window being used and the need for their replacement.</p> <p>SR: Agreed with Nigel's point.</p> <p>CS: Asked how close to bankruptcy BCC is.</p> <p>MK: Advised they wouldn't be able to answer that question as it is beyond the scope of their role.</p>	<p>SR</p> <p>DM/SR</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Income management – Mark Kempt</p> <p>Mark Kempt gave presentation called Tenancy SUG Income (HRA) Q3 on an update with arrears performance, income & collection.</p> <p>CS: Asked how collection rates can be more than 100%, pointing out figures from presentation.</p> <p>MK: Advised that if you have a month with 5 weeks of charges, the dates technically fall into the next calendar month and therefore some months go over 100% but that overall this equals out across the year.</p>	

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	<p>Mark Kempt gave an update as to why there has been a name change.</p> <p>NV: Raised concern about group being more focussed on rent arrears over development on sites and estates.</p> <p>MK: Advised they are very happy to avoid discussing rent arrears in the future but felt that it was relevant this month.</p> <p>CS: Asked if this forum is suitable for discussion about other departments that are struggling with funding.</p> <p>DM: Advised this subject would be raised in April.</p>	
5	<p>New Tenancy Standards – Mark Goodey</p> <p>Presentation by Mark Goodey on the Tenancy Standard which fits within the Social Housing Regulation Act which comes into effect April 2024.</p> <p>CS: Asked if existing tenants could be asked to move to make better use of housing stock.</p> <p>MG: Advised there are some initiatives that look to encourage tenants to move to more appropriate places based on their needs but that it isn't enforced strongly.</p> <p>CS: Asked about the initial 12 month period at the start of a tenancy before mutual exchange is permitted.</p> <p>MG: Confirmed that yes there is a 12 month wait period before there is a right to swap. Advised on checks that occur for ASB as a reason for a proceeding , but aside from those things swaps can occur.</p> <p>TDLR: Raised point that when they used to work at the Council, arrears were taken into account with mutual exchange checks.</p> <p>MG: Confirmed that approvals do require checks on rent accounts and that there is a threshold at which someone may or may not be approved.</p>	

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	<p>B: Expressed desire for new standard to bring improvements, citing ASB issues in their block. Expressed dismay that tenant with historic ASB issues was moved into their block and expressed concern that other blocks are subject to similar arrangements.</p> <p>MG: Advised that in some instances it is a directive that the council is required to comply with. Expressed opinion that it is a good thing that the regulators expect us to implement those directives.</p> <p>B: Asked if the act will allow council to be more decisive with ASB cases in terms of moving them to more suitable accommodation so that tenants can be protected. Cited a variety of issues, and asked again how much tenants are expected to put up with before council acts.</p> <p>MG: Advised that the regulation act will hold the council to a certain standard, which would make it easier for the regulator and tenants to scrutinise the council's performance and hold them to the ASB performance standard.</p> <p>B: Acknowledged it does seem like a large improvement.</p> <p>NV: Asked what the resource implications for the council will be within the new act. Asked if the housing officer service will be improved. Asked what happens if housing provider fails to meet these new standards. Expressed concern that private companies would be given ownership over social housing if local authorities fail to meet standards.</p> <p>MG: Advised on fines, supervision, more detailed scrutiny as part of conditions applied if council is not meeting standards. Admitted they aren't completely clear on the "nuclear" options for local authorities that are failing to meet new standards. Suggested they are most likely to be fines and potential merging to other authorities. Advised that the incentives are there as this will be the law.</p> <p>NV: Expressed belief that standards becoming law won't necessarily mean that council will always adhere to new</p>	

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	<p>standards, and suggested that improvements need resourcing.</p> <p>MK: Expressed agreement with Nigel. Advised that this Act brings housing to the forefront of council's priorities, and makes individuals within the council responsible by law to improve and work to standards.</p> <p>NV: Expressed concern that Bristol's housing stock would be sold off.</p> <p>MK: Replied they don't think this is likely to happen.</p> <p>DM: Advised that the standards had been formerly passed today (29/02). Advised that the new regulator for social housing is going to be significantly more active within the new standards, citing Ofsted as an example of the style of active regulation.</p> <p>MG: Raised that an increase of grading inspections and grounds maintenance will be top of list for Bristol going into new financial year. Asked about trial area for rewilding.</p> <p>DM: Advised that a broader discussion should take place about where and when the trial should take place for rewilding and how easily it can be done.</p> <p>B: Asked if tenants will be involved with estate visits and if so asked how they will be informed that a walkabout is taking place.</p> <p>MG: Advised that dates will be scheduled ahead of time and tenants will be made aware of walkabouts. Advised that where there is a noticeboard it will be popped on noticeboard.</p> <p>DM: Advised that Fiona Lester advised the Housing Management Board on 28.2.24 that timetable for all of the walkabouts to take place is being developed and it will be cascaded.</p> <p>NV: Advised on new tenant association being formed at Gilton House and asked for a liaison between TAs and</p>	

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	<p>council so that walkabouts can be communicated to TAs in a more formal way.</p> <p>MG: Expressed that they are more than happy to have tenant's associations get involved.</p> <p>NV: Asked if a list of TA's could be made and used for this process.</p> <p>HM: Advised that there is a current piece of work looking to collate all TAs in Bristol.</p> <p>NV: Advised that they feel they need to take part in the walkabouts of their estate. Cited previous walkabout many years ago which they happened upon the walkabout by chance but they weren't made to feel welcome.</p> <p>MG: Expressed agreement and advised that the idea is for walkabouts and inspections to be taking place on a regular basis.</p> <p>NV: Again asked for need for a liaison between TAs and council regarding walkabouts</p> <p>MG: Expressed agreement.</p>	
6	<p>Future items - all</p> <p>IL – Extended invite to residents to housing forums next month in which Bristol Waste will be attending.</p> <p>DM shared document with agreed future topics of future forums.</p> <p>TDLR – Asked about new legislation coming in April 2024.</p> <p>DM – Advised that due to time constraints in HMB last night not all this topic could be discussed but that it should be raised again.</p> <p>MK – Advised that this should probably be an ongoing permanent topic on the TSSUGs agenda due to scope and complexity.</p>	

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	<p>MG – Advised they would be happy to go through another standard at next TSSUG. Advised that the new regulatory framework (the Consumer Standards and Tenant Satisfaction Measures) will be transformative.</p> <p>TDLR – Agreed and expressed opinion that the changes seem profound.</p> <p>MK – Advised they will take this as future topic and break it down by sections across multiple SUG meetings.</p> <p>TDLR – Expressed pleasure with Bristol Waste attending next forums.</p> <p>DM – Advised they have to show up first [laughs].</p> <p>B – Asked for another update on Solar Panels in relation to topic discussed today.</p> <p>TDLR – Suggested looking at new horizontal wind turbines which they believe to be more efficient than SP.</p> <p>B – Raised issue of fitters turning up at their block to change door handles that they believe are identical to the door handles taken off. Asked about lack of communication and why this change was made as they believe it is a waste of money given they are the same type of door handles.</p> <p>CS: Asked if it would be possible to ask a question in advance of Bristol Waste’s appearance at next forum.</p> <p>IL: Advised for questions to be sent to TPU@bristol.gov.uk and they can make sure they are raised.</p> <p>TDLR: Asked to raise a complaint that managers are being sent questions/complaints from the Housing Scrutiny Panel(HSP) but that they are not being acknowledged. Advised they wanted to raise last night at HMB.</p> <p>MK: Clarifying that this is about questions not being answered by senior management.</p>	<p>MK</p>

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	<p>DM: Advised that if it is about a certain topic mentioned, that it is moving forward, and those questions have been dealt with. Advised they will communicate with Peter Edwards, Chair of the HSP.</p> <p>TDLR: Asked about training for tenants on Consumer Standards/Regulatory Framework.</p> <p>MK: Advised it has been raised and will be brought up again.</p>	<p>DM</p> <p>MK</p>
	End of meeting	