

WOLVERHAMPTON FEDERATION OF TENANTS' ASSOCIATIONS C.I.C

Minutes of the General Meeting 7pm Monday 19th November 2018 at Coven Lodge.

Attendance: as per list.

Ann welcomed Angela Davies and Linda Middleton from Wolverhampton Homes (WHs) Board, Shaun Aldis Chief Exec WHs and Darren Bags senior officer from WHs and Melissa Green from W'ton City Council.

1. Apologies:

John Pemberton, Margaret Durber, Pam Betts.

2. Declarations of interest:

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting on 15th October 2018:

Agreed.

4. Matters arising:

- Andrew raised concern over the time period to eradicate rough sleeping. Darren said the Council aim within the 2018/2020 Homelessness Strategy is to eradicate it by 2022. Ann mentioned rough sleepers on flatted estates. Members asked that homelessness be put on a future agenda.

5. Rents and Service Charges – Darren Baggs WHs.

Darren explained about the housing revenue account. He said the forecast total income for 2019/20 is £95.4 million and expenditure £95.4 million. He said next year is the last statutory 1% reduction in rents. The managing agents fees will be frozen for next year. He said future investment will cover the capital programme, fire safety and new build.

He said the total capital budget for the next 5 years is £293 million of which there will be a £92 million provision for new build. Projects for next year are reroofing, Heath Town development, some electrical works at Ellerton Walk, and infrastructure work at Chetton Green. Some of these will continue into the following year with the addition of fire safety and new build spend. He said there will be no increase in service charges except for an increase on the heating improvement charge for gas. The increase to be 48p per week. As agreed previously the cost to go up each year until the charge reaches £4 per week. Stuart asked about reroofing at Poets Corner, Darren to look into this. Darren spoke about the importance of collecting rent and providing financial advice for tenants where needed. Dave Cocker said there are problems getting through to the Money Smart team, Darren said they should return calls within 48 hours, Dave felt this was too long.

Shaun said WHs had responded to the consultation on the Housing Green Paper as had the Council. WHs had taken the themes to the Get Togethers for tenants' views. They had also had responses via Facebook. He said we now await feedback from the Government. He expects that there will be a White Paper. He said it will likely lead to greater regulation over governance and performance management. Bob said he had responded on behalf of the Fed following a meeting with the Fed Board but said he wondered how much notice the Government will take of the responses. He said he is concerned about stigmatisation of Council estates and wonders if there will be fragmentation of services. Shaun said that attendees at the Get Togethers did not feel there was much stigmatisation in the area. Bob said key performance indicators on their own are of limited value. Graham spoke about the need for more Council homes.

Shaun spoke about progress on the vision for the housing service. He said WHs is working towards management improvement in particular income management. He said there is more work to be done on the 'tenants' deal', he wants to see a greater presence of housing officers on

estates. He said the new homelessness legislation poses a challenge and there is the new strategy on homelessness. They are also reviewing allocations and there is a programme of works on high rise to respond to the outcomes of the Grenfell inquiry. He said sprinklers are likely to be mandatory but will consult before any works are to be carried out. He said they are enhancing business support to ensure good governance and they are progressing the people deal that is about staff commitment to the company.

Mr Motawalla asked about rough sleepers in tents. Shaun said WHs work with the organisation P3 to seek to redress this. Darren said he had been out with officers from P3 and many of the rough sleepers do not wish to receive any support.

6. Correspondence: None

7. AOB:

- Ann said tenants need to be advised on how to best use their storage heaters
- Julie Spencer said the electric storage heaters are not serviced so why is there a service charge. Darren said the charge is for the installation that took place some 26 years ago but that he will take her comments back when reporting on the consultation to the Council.

Date/time next meeting: Monday 18th February 2019.