

HOUSING STANDARDS BOARD (HSB)

Minutes

26 June 2023

2.00pm – 3.20pm

PRESENT:

Committee Members

Cllr David Carter (DC) – Chair
Cllr Tony Edwards (TD) –
Labour Group representative.
(arrived 2.15pm left 3.00pm)

Tenancy Standards Panel:

Leaseholder Standards Panel:

Frank Feldman (FF)

Tenant & Leaseholder

Representatives:

Property Standards Panel:

Hugh Hoad (HH)

Officers:

Cara Stevens (CS)

Neil Euesden (NE)

Jenny Pearce (JP)

		Action
	<p><u>Note:</u></p> <p>The meeting was not in quorum but proceeded as there was no decisions to be made. Agreed by all in attendance. Quorum was met between 2.15 to 3.00.</p>	Noted
1.	<p><u>Apologies</u></p> <p>Wendy Makepeace (WM), Zulfi Kiani-Mackintosh (ZKM), Selina Ellis (SE).</p>	Noted
2.	<p><u>Declaration of Interest</u></p> <p>There was no declaration of interests.</p>	Noted

<p>3.</p>	<p><u>Minutes of last meeting (15.05.23) and Matters arising</u></p> <p>The minutes were agreed subject to minor amendments. Updated minutes attached.</p> <p><i>Matters Arising:</i> <u>Gas Safety Inspection process:</u> The gas safety inspection process is that HTS checks the pipework, flue and carries out a flue gas analysis of the boiler. A cooker is tenants responsibility, both to install and maintain, so they are not inspected or serviced by HTS, but issues can be picked up when the gas pressure is checked: Low pressure can indicate a faulty appliance, and if determined to be the cooker, it will be capped off and a warning notice attached. It would be the tenant’s responsibility to resolve.</p> <p><u>Formal questions and answers by Hugh Hoad:</u></p> <p>Improvement Works – The Hides - The improvement works carried out at The Hides did not replant the flower beds at the side of the road. It has been confirmed that this area will be tidied up. UPDATE: <i>An update will be available at next meeting.</i></p> <p>Five Acres: TE advised that the financial details were requested at Cabinet meeting in March but was not given the level of detail provided within the minutes of last Board meeting. He asked why this was shared with the tenants and not shared with Councillors when asked. CS advised that the</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>WM</p> <p>WM (Completed)</p>
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major works procedure had also been reviewed from the learning of Five Acres. TE wants to know if there an update to the process and what the learning was.

UPDATE: *Councillor Gunn provided what information was known. More detailed information was available in May and was presented to both members and tenants at the Housing Standards Board.*

The Major Works process has been updated and is with the CEO Andrew Bramidge. A meeting is due to be diarised for final sign off with both the Leader of the Council and Housing Portfolio Holder.

The review concluded that the Business Process is robust and aligns to the Council's statutory requirements and whilst addressing the issues raised by Leaseholders regarding cost of works and consultation processes. Officers reviewed the process in line with the statutory requirements of Section 20 Leasehold consultation and have enhanced both the consultation process, prior to works commencing, during works and post works. In addition to introducing two internal reviews of the proposed scope and scheduling of works, along with a review of the scope which now only focuses on component failure.

A summary of the key changes are:

Review of the scope of works

CS
(completed)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Due to escalating cost of works, the scope of works will only include component failure, so a move away from the Housing Investment principles of total block refurbishment.</i> • <i>Built into the process are now two opportunities to review the scope and if required value engineer the scope aligned to consultation feedback, except for any work relating to health and safety requirements.</i> 	<p>WM (completed)</p> <p>WM (completed)</p>
<p><i>Engagement and Consultation</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Earlier engagement on works planned with all residents, enhanced engagement whilst works are in progress with the introduction of a newsletter and closure letter post works.</i> 	
<p>Decommissioned sheltered housing scheme – HH was advised that the guttering at the Greenhills sheltered scheme common room still had not been cleared and is causing damp to the walls of the common room. UPDATE: <i>Housing has raised an order for this work to be carried out.</i></p>	
<p>In addition, the flowerbeds to the front of Greenhills are not maintained. HH asked whether this area could be changed into parking spaces: UPDATE: <i>If the area in question is to the area to the side of 1 Greenhills, unfortunately there numerous pipes belonging to Thames Water pipework running through these areas which pose a risk to any potential project, in addition to two very mature trees which would make it unsuitable for parking</i></p>	

	<p>Flat Block including 68 Potter Street – Scaffolding has been up for 2 ½ months front and back however, no work carried out. FF would like an update on this, as leaseholders pay for this.</p> <p>UPDATE: <i>Instruction was given last week to drop the scaffold. There were a number of roofing repairs that had to be undertaken.</i></p>	
4.	<p>Cabinet Forward Workplan 2023/24 – Publication Date 14 June 2023</p> <p>The work plan was noted.</p>	Noted
5.	<p>HSB Workplan 2023/24</p> <p>The work plan was noted.</p> <p>HH raised the need for more tenants to be involved in the Panels. A future article will be included in Harlow Times.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>ZKM</p>
6.	<p>HRA and Capital Outturn Reports for Quarter 4.</p> <p>No papers were available for the meeting. However the Board were advised that there is now going to be pre-meetings before Cabinet to consider the draft reports with Portfolio Holders. The Housing Standard Board dates will be changed to occur as soon as possible after these pre-meetings but before final documents are produced.</p> <p>HH asked if the Council could provide HRA finance training again, specifically around the Quarter Revenue and Capital Finance Reports.</p>	ZKM

7.	Joint Finance Performance Report for Housing year end. The report was noted.	Noted
8.	Current Consultations None	Noted
9.	Formal Questions and Answers None	Noted
10.	Any other Business Request for ZKM mobile number to be included in paperwork so an additional number is available for Representatives to be able to contact to advise that transportation is required.	ZKM (completed)

The Date of the Next meeting: August 2023.