

HOUSING PERFORMANCE GROUP

TUESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2021

Present: Councillor J C Patrick

Councillors: L A Ball BEM
B C Carr
S J Carr (substitute)
E Cubley
J C Goold
H G Khaled MBE
M R Radulovic MBE

Tenants: R D MaCrae
C Vincent
P Tillotson

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S A Bagshaw and R S Robinson.

12 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

RESOLVED that J C Patrick be appointed chair for the meeting.

13 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

14 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record, subject to the amendment of C Vincent being in attendance and not V Fox.

15 **UNIVERSAL CREDIT UPDATE**

The Group were updated on the impact of Universal Credit (UC). It was likely that arrears for tenants in receipt of UC would increase. The bad debt provision had been increased to reflect this but it is unlikely that the provision would be required as overall the arrears had reduced during the last 12 months.

The group requested that a representative from the CAB attend the next meeting to give a presentation on UC.

16 HOUSING ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

The group were updated on the engagement activities that have taken place since the last meeting. It was noted that social activities have recommenced at Independent Living Schemes and the first bidding round of the Community Fund has closed, and applications were being assessed.

17 GENERAL NEEDS CONSULTATION

The group commented on the proposal to introduce new services and charges to general needs tenants.

Currently general needs tenants were not charged for services provided, such as grounds maintenance and communal lighting. These were paid from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

There were also services which were not currently provided, which many landlords would routinely provide. This includes block cleaning and window cleaning. Currently tenants were jointly responsible for cleaning communal areas on their schemes. This leads to variations on the standard of blocks and an unfair expectation on tenants.

All services that were proposed as part of the service charge would be eligible for Housing Benefit and the rent element of Universal Credit.

18 RENTS AND CHARGES 2022/2023

The Group were informed of the rent increase for 2021/2022.

It was noted that rent and other charges would be increased annually by CPI + 1%. The CPI as at September prior to the April of implementation would be used. The CPI for September 2021 was 3.1% therefore rents would be increased by 4.1%.

Tenants would be given four weeks' notice in writing in accordance with the tenancy agreement.

19 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Housing Performance Group was confirmed to take place on 11 January 2022.