

Service Delivery Sub Committee

Wednesday, 18th September 9:30 am

Russell Square | Service Delivery Sub-Committee

# Attendees

**Attended – Board Members**

Linda MCDonald (LMcD) Chaired the Meeting in Stuart Storrie’s absence, Cheryl Glen (CG), Jimmy Black (JB)

**Attended – Staff Members**

Linlay Anderson (LA) Director of Housing, Kevin Lynch (KL) Director of Asset Management, Jacqui Fleming (JF) Tenancy Engagement Assistant, Diane Finnie (DF) Tenancy Engagement Assistant, Katrina Kell (KK) Customer Service Advisor.

**Did Not Attend – Apologies**

Ian McDonald (IMcD), Stuart Storrie (SS), Hazel Farquhar (HF), Fred Jack (FJ), Craig Irvine (CI), Jeanette Gaul (JG).

Gail Robertson (GR) Chief Executive Officer

# Apologies, Conflict of Interests & Notifiable Events

Purpose - For Noting

Ian McDonald (IMcD) submitted questions and comments through Decision Time prior to the meeting, which were dealt with as we progressed through the agenda.

**Minute** by Katrina Kell

This meeting started at 9.36am. JF left the meeting at 10:43am. The meeting came to a close at 11.23am.

Apologies were received as above.

There were no conflicts of interest or notifiable events noted.

# Minutes of the Service Delivery Sub Committee Meeting held on 15th May 2024

Purpose - For Approval

**Minute** by Katrina Kell

The minutes are still to be ratified by board as only 3 board members were present today which does not meet quorum.

Document – Decision Time Minutes of Service Delivery Sub Committee – 07 Feb 2024. IMcD noted a question on page 2, has this now been implemented?

IMcD noted on page 6 asking if there is any progress on this issue.

# Matters Arising

Purpose - For Information

**Minute** by Katrina Kell No matters arising.

# Asset Management Report

Purpose - For Approval

**Minute** by Katrina Kell Day to Day Repairs

There is an overspend of £75,873 against budget. As at previous meetings it was noted that there are coding errors negatively impacting on the overspend. This has been discussed with Maintenance and Finance with Maintenance having 1-1 meetings to highlight any training issues required on codings. The actual overspend once codings are corrected is down to

£30,000.

Contractor performance is 100% for attending emergency repairs within 3 hour target. Work is ongoing with contractors to close down emergency work orders on attendance at repair and raise new work orders for any follow on work required.

Relet Budget

There have been less voids than budgeted for. 45 voids were budgeted against 36 actual voids with voids now starting to increase again. There is an underspend of just under £28,000. The average spend per void is £3108 against an allocated average spend of £3106. The use of decorating vouchers has reduced the spend on decoration costs to Painters.

Showers

The shower budget for Quarter 1 was £17,500. There is an underspend of £954. Maintenance Complaints

There were reactive repair complaints regarding the time taken for gas boiler repairs however this was due to older boilers requiring parts which are harder to source in order for the repairs to be completed.

Gas

There were no issues.

Gas Audit

Gas servicing remains at 100%. Improvement Programme

Taking information from the cyclical works, capital works and hub surveys carried out, KL highlighted that the budget each year doesn’t cover what is required. In 2023/24 4.5m was needed but the total was 2.7m. In 2024/25 5m was needed but the total was 2.8m. In 2025/26 5m is again needed but likely to get roughly the same as current.

Accumulatively this will create a backlog of around £6.2 million over 3 years.

JB queried on if not spending enough may cause future deterioration or greater future expense.

KL explained that if they can prolong the life of components by doing minor repairs then they will do this. Sometimes it has to be a full replacement which means this this would be classed as an early component replacement which pushes the budget over.

KL explained that if we delay kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors replacement works then we are pushing those costs into a future financial year with costs continuing to increase. For example, the recent tender for kitchens, bathrooms, heating in Mid Craigie costs are very high. Budgeting is set at previous financial year costs however these continue to increase.

JB will take this to FAR Committee to discuss. Post Inspections

Post inspections are above 10%.

KL advised that a list of post inspections where the Contractor has then been recalled to the repair will be created for the next meeting, to identify the reason for the recall.

Stage 3 Adaptations

KL highlighted no funding from Scottish Government. This is the same across Scotland and is

being raised by the SFHA and at Chief Executive Officer meetings. KL explained that some adaptations were done but this had to stop due to receiving no funding.

Long Term Voids

JB queried if air source heat pumps (ASHP) can be installed in flatted blocks and advised that another RSL is trialing these.

KL explained that the ASHP aren’t common yet in flatted blocks, they require planning permission and there is no place to site them for maintenance access. This would also involve associated works which may include upgrades to piping and radiators.

JB said the trial he is aware of uses space within a small thin cupboard in each individual home. New advances in technology may make installation in flats easier. JB will advise of which RSL is trialing this.

CG requested that the areas where voids are be added to the report, showing a map of where the void properties are.

Damp and Mould

KL advised that these are continuing to be monitored. Environmental sensors are to be fitted on 15th October as a free trial from one of the suppliers. KL will report back.

Energy Efficiency and Compliance

There were no issues Cyclical Painting

Work has been issued and contractors starting on these. Repair Satisfaction Surveys

There are some “Fairly Dissatisfied” responses for length of time taken to repair. One is for a property under defect period with Scotia which are difficult to manage as Scotia have already been paid. One was for a component piece which had to be specially ordered and added to the length of time taken. One was for a tenant who was unhappy that WRB had contacted them earlier than their booked appointment, WRB had contacted them due to having a space in their diary.

Other dissatisfied responses didn’t explain why they were dissatisfied.

# Housing Management Report

Purpose - For Approval

**Minute** by Katrina Kell

Anti-Social Behaviour Cases

ASB complaints have risen. LA explained that there is no trend to this and this sometimes happens with ASB. There are some issues in Monifieth after a period of quiet for 6 months following a court action. There are drug cases currently awaiting court outcomes. All serious cases are being managed.

LA explained there is a 14 day timescale for these but sometimes these may take longer because information or reporting has been requested from other agencies. The department sets its own targets rather than the Regulator, which are tight but achievable.

CG queried 54 cases on the graph and not 64. The 10 cases reported in the last 2 weeks of June don’t seem to have been included. LA will check the minutes with the Housing Manager to confirm the numbers.

LA highlighted that the hotspots for ASB this quarter are Brechin and Arbroath. JB noted that 33% satisfaction levels for ASB seems low.

LA explained that this can be due to expectations of tenants. Customer Service Advisor (CSA) Team initially deal with ASB reports and once recorded the tenant has an expectation the Association will act on their complaint once reported. However it isn’t always appropriate for the Association to take action as some complaints aren’t always ASB. LA advised the CSA Team had training in August and has asked the Housing Manager and Customer Services Team Leader writing a narrative for CSA Team to better manage expectations at the start of the process.

Estate Management Complaints

The Estate Management Complaints in Quarter 1 for this year are double those Quarter 1 of last year has seen double the number of complaints regarding bins and rubbish, double the complaints regarding CCTV (1 to 2), communal area complaints are up from 3 to 10, dog fouling complaints have halved, boundary fence complaints are similar, there are more parking complaints this year, pets and nuisance complaints have increased, private garden complaints have more than doubled. The main increase in complaints is private gardens, bins & rubbish and parking.

LA explained that there was a change to bins and collections in Angus Council (AC) local authority areas. Some traditional bin shelters don’t have space for additional bins. AC won’t take bins if the wrong items have been put in them. Some tenants have also been putting rubbish into other tenants’ bins and padlocks have been issued. LA will check in Q2 for any trends.

LA explained that regarding private gardens, tenants have been referred to Community Justice Team (CJT) for garden maintenance assistance. This service is only available if there isn’t an able bodied person at the tenancy. Although the referrals went through, CJT didn’t attend to the gardens until July/August.

LA explained that regarding parking, changes to estates mean that a lot of estates don’t have appropriate parking facilities. Curtilage parking means no visitor parking spaces on streets because the homes have driveways.

CG requested this additional information be added to the report for more narrative. Would be useful to see Quarter 1 for the past 4 years to see if there are trends or blips.

Environmental Improvement Budget

CG asked if maps could be included in the report so it can be seen as to how much is going to which areas.

LA said it may benefit from a map similar to the ASB one coding the spends against the map. Voids & Allocations

LA advised void figures for Quarter 1 are low but due to the number of terminations received figures are likely to be higher in Quarter 2.

CG queried that the percentage on the report doesn’t match the table for source of let.

LA explained that this is because the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) wants to see these percentages without any properties allocated due to mutual exchanges, assignations or successions so these are purely those allocated using the Association’s Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Policy.

LA further explained that the number of mutual exchanges, assignations and successions are recorded elsewhere for SHR.

The Committee commended the Association on being 20 days below target.

CG queried the figure of 35 changing to 33 on the breakdown of priority passes for allocations.

LA explained that this is because the report only covers the voids which were allocated through These Homes as these are the ones given to SHR. There were 2 voids which were allocated outside of These Homes. 1 of these was a nomination and the other was a refugee nomination.

LMcD requested that this further narrative be included in the report so that it is visible to the Board how the department arrived at the figures. LA advised requested changes will be made for Quarter 2 report.

Arrears

The gross rental charge last year was £10.8m and this year is slightly higher and is projected at just under £12m.

The number of tenants with arrears over £1,500 dropped at the end of the last Financial Year.

LA explained that when a tenant gets to over £1,500 of arrears it is harder for the tenant to manage the level of debt. It can be as soon as at the start of month 4 of arrears that the tenant is already at this level due to the cost of rent increases. If tenants don’t pay at the start of each month and miss one payment, at the beginning of the following month they may already have rent arrears of £900. It can take months to receive a court date and further months for the case to be heard in court. Once, the decree is granted tenants only have a 6 months’ timescale to clear the arrears.

FIT

The FIT received a substantial number of funding requests to the hardship fund in Quarter 1, some off which are requests from repeat tenants. New procedures have been developed to ensure consistency when dealing with multiple requests for assistants from the Hardship Fund. LA advised the FIT still have access to the funds provided by the Remuneration Sub Committee last year.

Committee noted the really informative report with good case studies.

Tenant Participation

Committee commended TP Team.

JB highlighted that the events and activities are great examples of lateral thinking to involve tenants other than hosting meetings.

# Recharge - Current and Former Accounts Report

Purpose - For Approval

**Minute** by Katrina Kell No issues noted.

# Former Tenants Report

Purpose - For Approval

**Minute** by Katrina Kell No issues noted.

# All Owners Arrears Report

Purpose - For Approval

**Minute** by Katrina Kell No issues noted.

# Housing Management Work Plan

**Minute** by Katrina Kell No issues noted.

# Asset Management Work Plan

**Minute** by Katrina Kell

KL noted that there are outstanding Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) works.

The Association’s Business Support Analyst is undertaking a review of housing stock identifying

the reactive repairs costs over the past ten years. This will also highlight properties with high void turnover. GR is keen to get software for this, Power BI being one option.

Equality Impact Assessment is outstanding and will be updated for the next meeting.

# Choice Based Lettings Policy

Purpose - For Noting

**Minute** by Katrina Kell

LA noted the Association is starting to be firmer on refusals of offers for applicants who bid on properties and don’t then view.

JB queried if applicants know the sizes of the properties before viewing. LA explained that there are videos for some voids, but it can be hard to see the sizes of rooms, Housing Officers can use their discretion if a refusal is due to the small size of rooms and not suspend if there is a valid reason for a refusal.

JB queried if room sizes can be measured by Maintenance Officer (MO) at pre inspections.

KL explained that the Association has floor plans for newer properties but not for older stock. Room size measurement should be easy enough to do at pre inspection but floor plans take more time. The Asset Manager has been tasked with tidying up the Association’s asset management information.

# Suspension Policy

Purpose - For Noting

**Minute** by Katrina Kell

This policy was updated to mirror the CBL Policy. CG noted 3 grammatical errors in the report.

IMcD noted the attachment on Page 1 should be included in item 12. LA confirmed that this was attached in error.

CG noted at the first bullet point on Page 9 there may be a typo which should be “used as a home”.

CG noted on Page 11 at the sentence under 5.1.5 the word date should be debt. CG noted on Page 14 at the sentence under 6.1 perhaps should read “imposing”.

# Pet Policy

Purpose - For Noting

**Minute** by Katrina Kell

This policy was updated to reflect current legislation on XL Bully dogs. The Legislative changes introduced by the Scottish Government have added to the policy, this includes the requested documentation for owning an XL Bully dog in Scotland. Tenants who own XL Bully dogs are requested to provide the appropriate documentation which is recorded on a register for information purposes. Prior to the Legislation being introduced the Association wrote to every tenant to ask them to inform the Association if they have an XL Bully dog.

LA advised that there have been cases where the Association has sought advice from other agencies, Police Scotland and the Local Authority Animal Control Officers.

# Rent Protection Policy

**Minute** by Katrina Kell No issues noted.

# Subletting Policy

**Minute** by Katrina Kell

The Association reviewed the Subletting Policy but no changes were made.

# CCTV Policy

**Minute** by Katrina Kell

Reviewed by the Association’s Data Protection Officer and complies with legislation.

# Tenant Alterations and Improvements Policy

**Minute** by Katrina Kell

The Association reviewed the Alterations and Improvements Policy but no changes were made.

# AOB

Purpose - For Information

**Minute** by Katrina Kell Eviction Approvals

Eviction approvals can’t be ratified as the meeting doesn’t meet quorum.

CG queried if the Association can notify Board that there are evictions to be looked at. LA will investigate if IT Department can set up a notification process to Board.

LA will resend current requests for eviction approval with approval sought by Friday 20th September.

# Date of Next Meeting

Purpose - For Information

**Minute** by Katrina Kell

The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 13th November at 9:30am. LMcD will be on holiday.