

Present: Councillors Councillor Gary Hewson (*in the Chair*), Alan Briggs, Bob Bushell, Edmund Strengiel, Pat Vaughan and Loraine Woolley

Apologies for Absence: Debbie Rousseau, Barber and Christine Lamming

Also in Attendance: Sheila Watkinson

24. Confirmation of Minutes - 5 November 2018

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2018 be confirmed.

25. Matters Arising

The Chair requested that LTP representatives send a substitute to meetings that they were unable to attend.

Chris Morton, Resident Involvement Manager, responded that he would raise this at the Annual General Meeting.

The Chair referred to minute number 23 and advised that a report on repairs would be brought to the next meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee and Allocations had been added to the work programme to be brought to committee at the appropriate time.

Daren Turner, Strategic Director of Housing and Investment asked for clarification on which area of repairs should be covered in the report?

The Chair clarified that the report be on day to day repairs and why the numbers of repairs had increased given the amount of decent homes work that had been completed.

26. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Strengiel declared a personal interest in minute number 28 as he was a Director of the YMCA.

27. LTP Matters (Verbal Report)

Sheila Watkinson representative of the Lincoln Tenants Panel advised on the following main points:

- A meeting had been held in January with the Director and Portfolio Holder
- LTP would be monitoring the time taken to process applications
- LTP would be looking in to Estate Inspections.
- A meeting would be held in February to set the objectives for 2019.
- The AGM would be held on 22nd March 2019
- The ASB Team were monitoring the bins being left out and were reporting back to LTP.
- John Ranshaw had attended the ARCH meeting.

- A garden tidy up event would be held on the Ermine, if this was successful it would be rolled out to other areas.

Members asked for the Lincoln Tenants Panels view on the current Tenancy Agreement and if it was correct or required changes.

Sheila Watkinson confirmed that she had spoken with LTP about the Tenancy Agreement and it was felt that it was just right and did not require any changes.

Councillor D Nannestad Portfolio Holder for Quality Housing advised that a short summary version of the Tenancy Agreement was being developed and would be provided to tenants to read through in addition to the full Tenancy Agreement when they signed up.

The Chair requested that the short version of the Tenancy Agreement be brought to a Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee.

28. Portfolio Holder for Quality Housing Annual Report

Councillor D Nannestad, Portfolio Holder for Quality Housing

a) presented his report regarding activity and the achievements within his portfolio.

b) advised that the report covered the following main points:

- Homelessness
- Tenancy Management
- New Build / Allocations
- Housing Improvement Programme
- Housing Repairs
- Supported Housing

c) focussed his report on Allocations and highlighted the following main points:

- Yvonne Fox, Assistant Director of Housing had been tasked with looking at the whole allocations system to improve practices and procedures.
- The number of people on the waiting list had reduced due to a review of the waiting list that was taking place. which included removing people that had shown no signs of activity even though they had been contacted several times.
- A lot of applications were pending due to applicants not providing the correct documentation.
- A third of people on the waiting list were currently Council tenants but were looking to transfer to another property.
- Part of the review would look at ways to improve how people applied to be on the waiting list.
- The Allocations Policy would be revised.

Yvonne Fox, Assistant Director of Housing added:

- She would be looking at customer journeys throughout the whole process to understand how the system could be improved.
- The indicators that were used to measure performance were outdated as they were based on the manual allocations system that was previously used and did not reflect the updated online system, so these would be looked at.

d) invited committees questions and comments

Question - Could anyone apply to be on the waiting list?

Response – The requirement at the moment was that people had a connection to Lincoln, this did not have to be a close connection. The Local Government Authority advised Councils to look at how people were added to the list and this would be reviewed as part of the Allocations Policy.

Question: How many people were on the waiting list?

Response: There were currently 978 people on the waiting list.

Question: Referred to Performance Indicator number 171 in relation to the number of homelessness successfully relieved in the month and asked if this figure only included the Council or other Organisations as well?

Response: The indicator was when people approached the Council and presented as homeless. A personalised housing plan was produced for each person, they could secure a property with another landlord with advice received from the Council.

Question: What was the cost to the Council to place people in Bed and Breakfast accommodation?

Response: A significant proportion of the cost would be recovered from Housing Benefits.

Question: Did the Council have to have 4 bands within the Allocations Policy?

Response: There could be any amount of bands, it would be considered by the working group as part of the review of the Allocations Policy. Applicants needed to be provided with as much information as possible at the point of application to manage expectations.

Question: If people stopped bidding for properties would they be removed from the waiting list?

Response: If they did not bid during a 12 month period they would be sent a letter, if no response was received they would be removed from the waiting list.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

29. Work Programme 2018/19

The Chair

- a. presented the work programme for the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee for 2018/19 as detailed at appendix A of the report.
- b. advised that this was an opportunity for the committee to suggest other items to be included within the work programme.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.