

TACT (Tenants and Council Together)
Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 23 March 2023, 10.30am
Walton Room, the Guildhall, Winchester

Attendance:

David Light (Chair)	Stanmore
David Chafe (Vice Chair)	Stanmore
Lin Mellish (Communications)	Kings Worthy
Carole Bull	Abbotts Barton
Gillian Gutteridge	Hyde
Sandra Salter	Winnall
Monica Gill	Central
Ted Shepherd	Denmead
Julian Perkins	Hyde
Doug Dobson	Winnall
Peter Beard	Hyde
Pat Haste	Winchester City
Victoria Pemberton	Kings Worthy
V Adcock	Stanmore
Chris Bone	Abbotts Barton

Guests:

Cllr Paula Ferguson	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community and Housing
Damian Roche	Housing Quality Network
Gillian Knight	Corporate Head of Housing
Dee Jenkins	Performance and Projects Manager
Amber Russell	Service Lead – Housing Operations and Community Safety
Janette Palmer	Housing Policy and Projects Manager
Janet Walton	Housing Policy and Projects Officer

		Actions
1.	<p>Welcome, introductions and apologies.</p> <p>Apologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cllr. Caroline Horrill, Shadow Portfolio Holder for Housing ▪ David and Linda Blyth ▪ Karen Alexander ▪ Josh and Lizzie Christian ▪ Sue Green ▪ Lucy Spence, Tenant Involvement Officer 	

		Actions
2.	Minutes of meeting on 19 January 2023	
2.1	Corrections None.	
2.2	True record Minutes proposed as being a true and accurate record. Agreed by all present.	
2.3	Matters arising - actions from meeting on 19 January 2023 Updates and feedback on actions from the previous meeting set out in an Addendum circulated at the meeting. The following queries were raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Was the cost-of-living information directing tenants to available support included in the rent increase letter as promised? Confirmed that this had been included. ▪ Publication of information in the tenants' newsletter about disabled facilities grants. It was noted that those tenants who do not access information online would be unable to receive this information. 	
3.	Consultation updates Janette Palmer, Housing Policy and Projects Manager The draft Housing Tenant Engagement and Communication Plan was considered by Business and Housing Policy Committee on 28 February. It reflected the following feedback received from TACT members at the meeting in January: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear cross reference of changes made based on TACT feedback – as follows - additions to the list of existing engagement options to include an event along the lines of a conference; new homes satisfaction surveys; talking to elected members; talking directly to a TACT representative; and one-off community events organised around a subject of local interest. ▪ The programme of visits to existing groups was renamed on the basis of TACT feedback to Coffee, cake and chat. <p>The Tenant Involvement Steering Group provided further benefits to being involved which were added to the plan including the suggestion of asking through a survey “tell us what went well, when have you felt listened to and when being engaged has made a difference”.</p>	

		Actions
	The final Plan will be presented to TACT at a future meeting. No further committee presentation will be required.	
4.	<p>Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2023 Janette Palmer, Housing Policy and Projects Manager</p> <p>A briefing paper (see copy attached to these minutes) was circulated outlining how the 2023 survey will be undertaken and explaining that this survey will be the first one to collect the Tenant Satisfaction Measures indicators data required by the Regulator for Social Housing to comply with the regulatory regime introduced in the 2020 Social Housing White Paper, <i>The Charter for Social Housing Residents</i>.</p> <p>TACT members were reminded that they may be asked about the survey by other tenants, and if so, they are asked to encourage them to complete and return the survey.</p> <p>The draft timetable is still to be confirmed and may be subject to amendment in the event of, for example, a postal strike.</p> <p>Questions and observations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the council keep a record of which languages are spoken and in particular those tenants who do not speak English? It was confirmed that it does, and that other needs are also recorded. E.g., letters and other documents required in large print. This information will be passed to ARP Research, who have been commissioned to carry out the survey, so that they can ensure that what they send to tenants reflects their individual needs. 2. Has the council considered incentivising tenants to complete their survey forms with the option of entry into a prize draw? A draw with three prizes will be offered to encourage returns however it is recognised that offering a prize can also act as a disincentive as tenants aren't aware how this managed given that survey responses are anonymous. The process involves ARP Research running a programme that randomly selects the winners and Arp Research notifies the council of the names and addresses only. 3. Cllr. Ferguson asked what will happen if insufficient survey responses are returned? One option would be to follow up with face-to-face or telephone contact but that this would be better undertaken by ARP Research rather than a housing officer. If there is still no 	

		Actions
	<p>representative sample, a statistical process called 'weighting' would be applied to balance the responses.</p> <p>4. A TACT member raised a query about a delay to the installation of an extractor fan. This will be investigated and feedback to the tenant, noting that this is the kind of helpful information that tenants can refer to as part of their survey response. However, ARP Research would only pass information regarding concerns raised by tenants with their consent.</p> <p>5. Cllr Ferguson asked whether the survey form includes free text boxes for individual comment. It was confirmed that currently the survey is structured around the TSM data. Cllr Ferguson said that a specific box for comments would be helpful, albeit that it might make analysis more difficult. This view was endorsed by two TACT members. This will be raised with ARP Research.</p> <p>6. Some tenants do not feel that it is worth their effort completing their survey form as it is unclear where and when the results will be available. The approach to publication of results was outlined including online and in the Annual Report, and that this information is included in the letter that goes to tenants with the survey form.</p> <p>7. What constitutes temporary accommodation? Temporary accommodation is made available to homeless households to whom the council has a statutory duty. There are approximately 60 units of temporary accommodation for single people and families.</p> <p>8. Is it possible to send out hard copies of the newsletter so that the survey results can be read off screen? Cllr. Ferguson noted that the sheltered housing tenants received a hard copy newsletter but also that there would be cost implications about making hard copy newsletters more widely available. Tenants have been previously asked whether they would prefer the annual report in hard copy and it was confirmed that a hard copy version is sent to those who have requested one.</p> <p>9. Would it not be appropriate to make the survey result available in the local press? Cllr. Ferguson endorsed this idea noting that a summary would probably be the most appropriate.</p>	<p>Andrew Kingston</p> <p>Janette Palmer</p> <p>Janette Palmer</p>
5.	<p>Service Delivery Group Feedback – 1 March 2023 Lin Mellish, TACT Communications Officer</p>	

	Actions
<p>Lin presented feedback from the combined SDG which met on 1 February:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quarterly complaints – an additional code to monitor damp and mould has been added as requests for visits due to damp and mould have increased significantly. ▪ From 1 April, complaints performance will be monitored by the regulator of social housing as part of the new performance measures. ▪ Current rent arrears – any day direct debit payments will introduce greater flexibility for tenants and hopefully improve performance. ▪ Digital switchover – a nationwide switch from analogue telephone lines to digital communications using broadband lines will take place over the next three years. Tenants will be invited to discuss different aspects of the switchover and how this will impact them. ▪ Two focus groups have been scheduled to discuss heating and hot water systems. ▪ 1600 tenants have been written to asking if they would like their insulation renewed as part of the retrofit ready programme. 807 have said that they would. Of those, all with single glazing and old doors will be updated. Energy assessments will be completed, and cavity walls will be checked. ▪ Out of Hours service – having been raised as an area of concern at a previous TACT meeting, the service is to be reviewed. Officers are talking to Housing Quality Network to understand if this is a service area review they can help with. ▪ Local Housing Authority Fund – the council has been awarded £2.7m to mitigate pressure on the service as a result of the Homes for Ukraine scheme. 16 houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) (ex-council properties) will be converted back to family homes. Cllr. Ferguson confirmed that the HMOs had been favoured over new-build homes in response to feedback received, and that the additional resources were in response to the high number of Ukrainian guests who have been welcomed into the Winchester district. Once no longer required, the properties will remain in the HRA and be available for households who have registered for social housing with Hampshire Home Choice. 	
6. Policy Update – stair lifts and garage policy	

	Actions
<p>Amber Russell, Service Lead – Housing Operations and Community Safety</p> <p>Stair lifts</p> <p>Due to health and safety considerations, no further requests for stairlifts in communal areas will be approved; and existing stairlifts will be scheduled for removal. This approach is not exclusive to the council, it affects all social landlords based on revised health and safety recommendations around fire safety and access for emergency services. Some stairlifts have already been removed and those remaining will be prioritised for removal based on the level of risk present.</p> <p>Amber reassured the meeting that this will not happen immediately and that those tenants who require a stairlift will be consulted about how their needs can best be met. This may involve considering options such as a move to ground floor accommodation or to a scheme with a lift.</p> <p>The issue is being highlighted in the sheltered housing newsletter that is due to go out shortly and Amber asked that if there were any concerns then tenants could either contact her directly or the Property Services Team.</p> <p>Questions and observations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will there be any help with rehousing costs? Amber confirmed that financial help could be considered on a case-by-case basis. 2. What is the definition of a communal area? Amber stated that it is any stairwell that is accessed by the tenant or more than one flat. 3. What about the fire risk posed by electric chairs, especially when stored within a flat? Amber reminded the meeting that the fire service is provided with secure information about which tenants in sheltered housing schemes would need to be prioritised in an emergency as a result of impaired mobility, and that they would respond accordingly. 4. Campaign for defibrillators in sheltered housing schemes. Amber suggested that this matter be discussed outside the meeting. <p>UPDATE – This suggestion has been passed to Sarah Turpitt, Sheltered & Extra Care Service Manager to progress.</p>	<p>Amber Russell</p>

		Actions
	<p>Garage Policy</p> <p>Following discussion at an earlier TACT meeting, garage applicants have been consulted and of a total 204, there were 56 responses. Applicants were asked the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Should council tenants be given priority for a garage? 60% said no, 40% yes. ▪ Should priority be given to an applicant who lives close to the vacant garage? 85% said yes, 15% no, with 62% preferring that the proximity should be within a mile. ▪ Should garages in high demand areas costs more? 66% said no, 34% yes. ▪ Should council tenants pay less for a garage? 60% said no, 40% said yes. NB: it was noted here that the majority of respondents were not council tenants. <p>The policy will now be amended for consideration during 2023/24.</p> <p>Questions and observations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why were the garages transferred to the General Fund? Amber confirmed that it had been a staged transfer with some garages remaining in the HRA. 2. Cllr. Ferguson noted that some licensees do not use their garages and that city centre garages are also attractive to commuters. 3. What is the approach when garages are used for business activity? Amber replied that under these circumstances the garage would be repossessed as this is prohibited under the licence conditions. 	
7.	<p>TACT Committee Election 2023</p> <p>The Chair reminded TACT members that all nomination forms should be submitted by 27 March.</p>	All
8.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concern was raised about the management of West View, which is transferring back to A2dominion from Two Saints on 1 April. This is causing considerable concern in the local community. Cllr. Ferguson 	

		Actions
	<p>confirmed that she has already met staff from A2dominion who have reassured her that the management of West View will be better resourced this time round. A further meeting has been requested for both officers and councillors so the concerns can be discussed in greater detail. Gilly Knight offered to follow this up and Amber Russell said that she would also raise it with the Community Safety team. Cllr. Ferguson advised TACT members that earlier in the week Cabinet Committee: Housing approved proposals to recruit an outreach worker, and that once in post, they would be able to liaise with A2dominion on a regular basis.</p> <p>UPDATE – Davina Domone-Hollands, ASB Officer will arrange a meeting at Hyde Gate to discuss the management of West View under A2 Dominion. Representatives from A2 Dominion, local members, Council Officers and the Police will be invited.- Awaiting confirmation for dates from NPT date tbc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Another TACT member reported disturbances in the West View area on both Sunday and Monday evening. A call to staff at West View had drawn an unhelpful response. Gilly Knight confirmed that she would refer this to staff in the Strategic Housing team for discussion with Two Saints. Amber Russell confirmed that CCTV will be installed in this area and that she would check when this was scheduled to be done. <p>UPDATE – Awaiting response from Ian Way for confirmation that cameras have been installed and are operational.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A further concern relating to West View is the volume of NHS traffic, which Amber Russell will ask Karen Thorburn, strategic housing lead, to raise with Two Saints. <p>UPDATE – Request sent to Karen asking for feedback on the Westview issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A TACT member raised a query about a light outside flat 2 Hyde Gate which has yet to be repaired. Amber Russell said that she would investigate. <p>UPDATE – Mark Corrigan, Sheltered Housing Officer is meeting on site with Mick Woodcock, week of 10th April to look at options/feasibility of installation. Mark will feedback directly to TACT member.</p>	<p>Gilly Knight Amber Russell</p> <p>Davina Domone- Hollands</p> <p>Gilly Knight Amber Russell</p> <p>Amber Russell</p> <p>Amber Russell</p>
9.	Forthcoming meetings	



Chair: David Light
Vice Chair: David Chafe
Communications: Lin Mellish

		Actions
	25 May 2023 – AGM at Middle Brook St Centre (formerly Hope Church).	

Briefing Tenant Satisfaction Survey TACT 23 March 2023

Introduction

Tenants will be familiar with tenant satisfaction surveys as these have been around for over 20 years. The government requirements in relation to this survey have changed over those years.

This year's survey will be first used to collect the Tenant Satisfaction Measures perception indicators data required for the Regulator of Social Housing to comply with the new regulation regime introduced through the white paper A Charter for social housing.

One of the changes is that housing providers are now required to carry out this survey every year when previously it was conducted every 2 years. Flexibility remains on the method that providers can use but the wording of the questions can't be changed.

Purpose of the survey

- Comply with the Regulator for Social Housing statutory annual data submission
- Find out the areas of the service where the council performs well and where improvements are needed
- Trends - comparisons with the council's previous satisfaction surveys
- Compare our performance with similar organisations
- Check whether any particular customer groups are less satisfied than others

Who is carrying out the survey?

ARP Research (an independent specialist housing research organisation) has been commissioned to conduct the survey

It is considered good practice to engage an organisation separate to the housing provider to collect the data; tenants may be more open in an anonymous survey managed by an independent organisation.

A company with an understanding of national trends which can distinguish between national and local trends is useful to truffle out meaningful recommendations for action.

ARP Research will conduct the survey for 2023 and 2024 and the council has the option to extend their contract to conduct the survey in 2025 too.

How many will receive a survey

All sheltered, extra care and temporary accommodation tenants will receive a survey.

Approx. 1/3 of tenants in general housing will receive a survey. A sample will be chosen by the ARP Research. The sample will be structured around achieving the best balance of a representative return, meaningful district level information and minimising what's termed 'survey fatigue'. This where households get tired of receiving surveys and the number of returns decline as a result. There is an increased risk of this as a consequence of the survey now being run every year.

Who is included in the survey?

All current tenants (general needs, extra care, sheltered, over 60s accommodation), residents of temporary accommodation. Leaseholders are not included.

Method

A mix of postal hard copy plus emails and SMS messages with links to make it possible to complete online. Personalised arrangements will be made for those within the sample for whom these standard approaches aren't suitable to make sure everyone has the opportunity to take part. Postal surveys will include a Freepost return envelope.

Draft Timetable – *please note to be confirmed*

- Survey opens – **week commencing 8 May 2023**
 - Hard copy forms emailed - 8 May 2023
 - Emails with online links – 15 May 2023
 - SMS Messages – 21 May 2023
- Reminders will be sent 3 weeks later
- **Survey closes 16 June 2023**

How can TACT Help?

- **Encourage tenants to return the survey**

If you speak to tenants please ask if they have received the form and whether they've returned it. If they have returned the form **please thank them**.

If they haven't explain that:

- their views are important
- their feedback will tell the council what their priorities are for service improvements
- use this opportunity to tell the council what you think

- **Explain the purpose of the personal questions**

It is possible that there will be concerns about the personal questions. It is important that confidentiality is stressed and that the council is using an independent company to carry out the survey on its behalf.

The objective of such questions is to check whether any particular group of customers are less satisfied than others.

If people are really unhappy about providing this detail, they can leave these questions unanswered but still complete the rest of the form and return it.

Your help is appreciated. Thank you

Contact details for further information

Janette Palmer – 01962 848 120. jpalm@winchester.gov.uk