

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Notes of a meeting of the Void/Lettable Standard Task and Finish Forum held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 24 January 2014

Present:

Councillors:

Peter Sullivan (Vice Chairman)
Pauline Stott

Tenants:

Mike Berridge
Victor Kemp

Officers:

Dennis Boobier – Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Emma Charlton – Housing Projects Officer
Mark Dale – Senior Technical Officer (day to day repairs)
John Golding – Head of Housing
Stephanie Lewis – Assistant Democratic Services Officer
Alethea Thompson – Democratic Services Officer

Laurence Hughes – SW Operations Manager, MD Building
Services

Apologies

Councillor Jim Knight (Chairman)

The meeting started at 10.05am and ended at 11.45am.

***8 Minutes**

The notes of the meeting held on 10 January 2014 were confirmed as a true record.

***9 Declarations of interest**

Board Member	Minute number	Type of interest	Nature of interest
Mike Berridge		Personal	Family member lives in a Council owned property.
Peter Sullivan		Personal	Sheltered housing tenant.

***10 Draft void standard leaflet**

The Housing Needs and Strategy Manager circulated a draft void standard leaflet for the TaFF's consideration. The aim was to produce a clear, concise, understandable leaflet for new tenants outlining the standard of property they could expect to move into. A separate, more detailed document would be provided to contractors for void property specification. Both of these documents will be presented to the Housing Review Board (HRB) at its meeting in March 2014.

***10 Draft void standard leaflet (cont'd)**

A number of points were raised and issues considered; the void standard leaflet was amended during the meeting. The Housing Projects Officer requested that she be given permission to re-word the document to incorporate the principles of Plain English, where necessary. The leaflet would also be sent to the Tenant Scrutiny Panel in advance of their meeting on 11 February 2014, for their consideration.

- RESOLVED:**
- 1 that the Housing Projects Officer, in consultation with the Housing Needs and Strategy Manager, make minor amendments to the draft void strategy leaflet if necessary.
 - 2 that the draft void property standard document be presented to the next meeting of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel for their information.
 - 3 that the void property standard document, as attached to these minutes, subject to any further minor amendments being made by the Housing Needs and Strategy Manager, be presented to the Housing Review Board on 6 March 2014 for adoption.

***11 Draft void property specification**

The Housing Needs and Strategy Manager circulated a draft void property specification for contractors, which set out the minimum works that must be completed to a void property. In addition the contractor would undertake any work specified by the Maintenance Surveyor. The document was considered by the TaFF and it was noted that the Housing Needs and Strategy Manager would be meeting with the Senior Technical Officer (day to day repairs) and the South West Operations Manager, MD Building Services to finalise it. The void property specification would also be presented to the Housing Review Board for approval on 6 March 2014.

The SW Operations Manager, MD Building Services invited members of the TaFF to attend a first void viewing/technical specification meeting to better understand some of the challenges faced by the contractors. The Forum then briefly discussed void timescales and how these could be reduced.

- RESOLVED:** that the void property specification document, as attached to these minutes, subject to any further minor amendments being made by the Housing Needs and Strategy Manager, be presented to the Housing Review Board on 6 March 2014 for adoption.

The Vice Chairman of the meeting thanked formally everyone involved with the Void Standard Task and Finish Forum.