

Committee: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 24 April 2014

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Title: Tenant Regulatory (Scrutiny) Panel Update

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Item for Decision

Summary

1. This report provides a summary of the work of the Tenant Regulatory Panel to date as well as presenting the findings and recommendations of the Panel following their recent review of the Voids process.

Recommendations

2. That the Housing Board consider recommendations made by the Tenant Regulatory Panel in their Voids Review report.

Financial Implications

3. Limited. Through scrutiny reviews the Tenant Regulatory Panel may identify and recommend cost efficiencies or propose investment opportunities within the Housing service.

Background Papers

4. None

Published Papers

5. Localism Act (2011)

Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	Tenant Regulatory Panel members were recruited through a consultation process. Regular updates on activities are given through the Housing News publication
Community Safety	None

Equalities	All tenants were able to apply to become members of the Panel. Initially interviews were conducted to select members. Equalities training is
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	given to all Panel members.
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The Tenant Regulatory Panel supports the self-regulation principles outlined in the Localism Act (2011)
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

1. The TRP has now been in existence for over a year having been formed in November 2012. The panel currently consists of five members and a Chairperson. The key aim of the TRP is to scrutinise identified Housing processes and procedures whilst acting as an independent body on behalf of Uttlesford District Council's tenants. All work carried out by members of the TRP is on a voluntary basis.
2. The TRP completed in-depth Scrutiny training as part of their formation and have been attending relevant tenant-based training and information sessions to further develop both the team and individual members. Panel members have been continually supported and guided by an external consultant.
3. The Housing Business and Performance Manager is formally recognised as the TRPs main communication point between themselves and the Housing Service, but due to the requirement for the group to remain as independent as possible, this contact is minimal.
4. The first review that the TRP has undertaken is that of Void properties (the time that a property remains empty between re-lets). They have conducted extensive research and have spent time gathering information regarding this process and its current performance levels within Uttlesford. This has involved meeting and interviewing staff at various levels within the organisation as well as conducting site visits to empty properties.
5. The TRP presented their Voids Review Report (copy attached) to the Tenant Forum and Housing Service officers in March.
6. Officers are currently developing an action plan in response to the recommendations made by the TRP in their report. This action plan will be reviewed on a regular basis by both management and the TRP.
7. The TRP are currently drafting and prioritising a schedule of work for future reviews.

Risk Analysis

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Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That UDC are unable to retain and re-recruit TRP members	2 – some risk or impact	Independent Housing Scrutiny activities would be limited	Ensure the work of the Panel is regularly communicated and promoted and that these activities emphasise the importance of the TRP
That Tenant Scrutiny work is not undertaken	2 – some risk or impact	The housing Service would not be adopting some of the key principles of self-regulation	TRP fully supported by officers to ensure work is undertaken

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.