

## Tenants View Forum

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 10:30am

### Summary Note

1.0 present:

Dougie Monaghan

Shona Dove

Monty Fatemi

Colleen Sharp

Liz Billet

Linda Jones

John Cameron, Director, Forth Housing

Angela Laley, Project and Communications Co-ordinator, Forth Housing

Rebecca Taylor , student

### 2.0 Apologies:

Mr & Mrs McAllister and Adam Moffat.

**3.0 Welcome and Introductions** - A Laley carried out introductions and outlined the agenda which was a focus on performance, charter reporting and budget and rent setting.

**4.0 Forth's Performance-** J Cameron carried out a power point presentation on the results of the key areas of performance (a hard copy of the presentation is available upon request). For each section the 2014/15 performance was noted and then it was compared to the target and the results for the current year: 2015/16. Categories such as: average time for emergency repair, average time for non-emergency repair, repairs completed first time, anti-social behaviour resolved in timescale and tendencies sustained for more than a year – were discussed. A key of faces was given to denote performance: a smiley was given for exceeding the target. By the end of this section it was shown that Forth had received 7 smiley faces, 1 middle face and 0 sad faces which gave them an overall pass. The one middle face was given to the non-emergency repairs. However, J Cameron explained that it was because some tenants do not give access to their house (they do not agree a time for access to contractors ). To overcome this problem, it was agreed that if the contractor makes attempts for access and is given no access the tenant will be written to. This will help to stop the figures being skewed. Also Repairs Completed First Time was discussed as Regulator has changed guidance. Eg if contractor called to repair broken window and does not clear up glass, used to be a failure. Now, just recorded as dissatisfied and needs to be tidied up. There was then a discussion to consider if the statistics matched tenants' perceptions. It was agreed that this was generally the case. Those attending agreed that the repair service was good and that the contractors are professional. Also, that prevention better than cure and Forth

trying to maintain high standards in developments. This was therefore reflected in low turnover and properties being let quickly.

## **5.0 Budget and rent setting**

**5.1- Budget Process** - J Cameron explained the budget process and how the process starts in October and tenants are consulted over the festive period. An article is included with the Christmas Newsletter. Some tenants said that they do not see the point in giving their feedback on the budget because decisions have already been made. But then J Cameron went on to explain that tenants' opinions can affect the budget because final decisions are not made until January. eg If a large number of tenants are against the rent proposal then this will be considered by Management Committee. Last year the rent increase was changed from 1.7% to 1.3%. Tenants don't always choose the lowest option. Most tenants go along with the recommendation made by Forth. However, Management Committee have the ultimate decision as they need to make sure that the organisation stays viable.

**5.2- Housing/Rent Costs** - J Cameron then showed 2 pie charts regarding the way total rent is divided up. It was shown that the more people who pay rent on time, the less rent will become, because it's spread across more tenants. A discussion took place regarding replacement kitchens. It was explained that this is normally between 16-20 years.

**5.3- Budget Allocation-** J Cameron discussed how Forth do not make profit but they need to make surpluses. M Fatemi asked the question of where the cost of building new houses came under and it was then explained that new buildings costs are not part of the budget, they are separate because Forth receive grants from the government. However J Cameron then highlighted that money that they have to pay back to the bank is included in the budget process. J Cameron carried on to explain why they need to budget and set aside money for things such as kitchen replacement etc.

It was explained that Forth produce a 30 year cash flow which predicts how much money we need to put aside for kitchens, bathrooms, roof replacement etc. The Management Committee look at balancing the books and good stewardship by planning head for expenditure. The group discussed how Forth don't make a profit but that they need to make a surplus to cover future costs.

J Cameron confirmed that Forth is joining a Procurement Club, through the Northern Housing Consortium, to save money on rent processing.

Also that Forth had considered employing their own Contractors, However, due to lack of infrastructure it was cheaper to employ external contractors.

## **6.0 Predictions for 2016/17**

A list was shown from the PowerPoint of the predictions for 2016/17 and this included things such as no additional staff, 32 new houses, to fit 56 new kitchens and that Forth have to set aside and save £600,000 for future works. J Cameron then showed the estimated figure of the rent rise next year which was at 1% increase (66p per week for one bedroom). L Jones then asked what the increase would be for a two bedroom house and J Cameron said that it would roughly be 70p, and that a 4 bedroom house would be £1.20 per week.

## **7.1 Next Meeting**

7.1 The group then agreed that the next meeting will be in April of 2016. J Cameron then outlined the items that will be on the agenda for the next meeting eg performance update and plans for 2016/17. C Sharp asked if there were any meetings held in the evening time because people who work full time are not able to attend the meetings. J Cameron then explained that if there was a high demand for the meetings to be held in the evening it potentially could be arranged.