

**TENANTS PANEL
30 AUGUST 2016
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WEELEY**

Attended by: Dennis Smith (Chair), John Johnson, Dorothy Clark, Ron Weyda, Brenda Bragg, Judy Heath, Iris Peacock, Linda Bradnum, Angie Payne, Tony Williams, Patrick Gafney, Barbara Campbell, John Read, Gill Williams and Jon Langfield.

Also in attendance: Tim Clarke (TDC), Damian Williams (TDC), Emma Norton (TDC) Steve Pearce (TDC), Matthew Wicks (TDC), Claire Bryant (TDC) and Alan Potter (Roalco Ltd – items 1-4 only).

1. Welcome and introductions

Dennis Smith welcomed everyone and thanked Panel members and other representatives for attending the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Emma Norton advised that apologies for absence had been received from Hazel Harris, Muna Smith, Teresa Retter, Carol McDougall, Pauline Kent, Graham Brand, Sid Payne, Roy Payne, Christian James and Michael Wyatt.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 28 June 2016

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record

4. Responsive repairs contract

Alan Potter, Managing Director of Roalco Ltd introduced himself to the meeting and invited questions from Panel members regarding the day to day repairs service.

Tony Williams referred to a number of issues that had arisen following the installation of a new kitchen in his property and the subsequent delay in getting these resolved. Alan Potter advised that a significant number of new kitchens are installed by Roalco Ltd and that there are usually not any problems with these. However, mistakes can sometimes occur and he apologised for any delays and inconvenience experienced. Alan Potter also advised that all works are now subject to post inspections which should identify and resolve any remedial works that are required.

Judy Heath advised that satisfaction surveys are not always being left by the contractors undertaking the work and this was supported by a number of Panel members. Alan Potter advised that the contractor visiting the property should always leave a satisfaction survey and that a further form was introduced, signed by the tenant, confirming that such a survey had been left. These signed forms are returned to Roalco Ltd and passed on to the Council as evidence that surveys are being left. However, Alan Potter undertook to remind all staff working on the contract to always leave a satisfaction survey with the tenant for completion.

In connection with this, Jon Langfield asked whether a satisfaction survey could be completed via the operative's PDA and this sent to Roalco Ltd and TDC at the same time. Alan Potter advised that, once the IT interface is in place, this would be possible but that tenants locally had wanted there to be a separate survey sent to be sent independently to the Council. The reasons for this were that tenants may feel

under pressure to give positive feedback when the contractor is present and also that they may not have had the time to check that the repair has been carried out properly.

In response to a query from Linda Bradnum, Alan Potter advised that his operatives should be leaving cards with contact details on if they visit a property and the tenant is not in or does not answer and a reminder will be issued to all staff in connection with this.

Linda Bradnum also referred to recent works carried out in the communal areas where the operatives had not cleaned up once the work had been completed. Alan Potter confirmed that operatives are provided with hoovers and dust pans and brushes and should tidy up after each job.

In response to a query from John Read, Alan Potter advised that operative's time is allocated but that this does not provide sufficient time for the job to be completed. If, once on site, it becomes clear that a job is going to exceed the allotted time, then contact should be made with the office to reschedule other appointments. It is only in emergency situations that time could become an issue.

Steve Pearce agreed to investigate specific complaint raised by Gill Williams regarding a recent disabled adaptation.

Alan Potter agreed to investigate complaint made by Linda Bradnum regarding delay in carrying out works to void property.

In response to a comment from Angie Payne, Alan Potter confirmed that, where Roalco Ltd are late in paying any of their suppliers, this would impact on their ability to obtain any materials required but that there are a number of suppliers used and they take all steps to prevent this from happening.

Following a general discussion regarding these issues, it was agreed that:

Tenants Panel Repair Representatives would, at least in the short term, be invited to each monthly meeting that the Council holds with Roalco Ltd.

Angie Payne, Tony Williams and Dennis Smith be invited to attend a toolbox talk meeting with Roalco Ltd's staff to reinforce the reminders about surveys, calling cards etc.

An item to be included, at least in the short term, on each Tenants Panel agenda to discuss responsive repairs and Roalco's performance.

5. Housing Investment Programme 2015/16 outturn

Damian Williams advised members of the Panel of the outturn of the Housing Investment Programme for 2015/16 and the role that the Tenants Panel representatives had in relation to this.

In response to a query from Brenda Bragg, Steve Pearce explained the current position regarding external decoration but confirmed that a property inspection would be carried out.

6. Tenancy Fraud Initiative

Matthew Wicks reminded Panel members of the background to the Key Amnesty held in March and confirmed the outcomes of this (see attached presentation).

In response to a query from Gill Williams, Matthew Wicks advised that having a property elsewhere would not result automatically result in possession action being successful as this would depend on a judge's interpretation of where a tenant's only or principal home was. Matthew Wicks outlined a recent case where possession action was taken by the Council but was not supported by the judge as he determined that, although the tenants spend some considerable time away from their property each year, it is still their only or principal home.

However, Matthew Wicks advised that all cases are assessed on their individual merits and encouraged members of the Panel to report any suspicions of tenancy fraud for further investigation.

7. Senior Management Restructure

Tim Clark outlined the main changes that had taken place as part of the recent senior management restructure in the Council.

8. Housing and Planning Act 2016

Tim Clarke outlined the main changes included in the above Act that would have an impact on social housing. Although this Act is now in place, the detailed regulations regarding each of the elements discussed has yet to be published and further details will be provided as and when this is produced. Dennis Smith also advised that that these provisions will be discussed at the ARCH Tenants Conference being held in September, which is being attended by 5 Panel members.

9. Feedback from themed sub groups

Iris Peacock provided feedback on the planned maintenance and improvement programme meeting held on 23 August 2016.

No one was available to provide feedback on the Tenant Performance and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 2 August 2016.

10. Any other business

In response to a comment, Emma Norton confirmed that a replacement gavel will be made available for the Chair's use.

Next meeting of the Tenants Panel to be held on Tuesday 25 October 2016 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Weeley commencing at 2pm.