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Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Housing Liaison Board on 22 April 2025

Agenda Item 9: Challenge and Change Process

Classification:	This report is Public
Report By:	Assistant Director of Housing Management & Enforcement Housing Strategy and Development Officer

Purpose of the Report

To clarify the Challenge and Change process and how topics are chosen.

Background

The Challenge and Change process was introduced in early 2023 with existing involved tenants who were involved in the Repairs Action Network Team (RANT) meeting at the time. The first review started early in 2023 but took a lengthy period of time to complete due to scheduling of meetings/visits around other tenant commitments. Towards the end of that review a number of new tenants had been recruited which has helped to progress the tenant challenge process (scrutiny) further, allowing for more regular meetings.

The Review Process

The following step-by-step guide sets out the review process, other bodies engaged and how decision-making occurs.

Prioritisation of Review Topics

- (1) Tenants complete Topic Suggestion Form (attached at appendix 1d) and submit to Tenant Engagement Officer (TEO), or respond to contact from TEO when they are consulting on suggested topics. This is then presented to Housing Liaison Board (HLB) for discussion on an annual basis, to set priority topics for review for the coming year.
- (2) If the topic suggestion is in-year, submit the completed form to the TEO.

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- (3) Discussion by HLB Members of the topics and score the topics using the prioritisation aid (to be shared at meeting). HLB members agree priority order for topics suggested.

Recruitment of tenants and agreement of objectives

- (4) TEO recruits a panel of 8-10 tenants from those on database and invites to next scheduled Challenge and Change meeting.
- (5) At first meeting for new topic, tenants agree the review objectives (scope) and the method of review from the following.
- i. full review (in-depth Task & Finish by tenant panel) – likely 3-6 meetings, but could cover up to a year.
 - ii. mini-review (short Task & Finish by tenant panel) – likely 2-3 meetings
 - iii. Agree presentation or briefing to HLB is sufficient at this time, with potential for a review at a later date.
- (6) If a full review or mini review, complete standard Scoping template

Delivery of the Review

- (7) Gathering of evidence by tenants involved in the Review. This could be via face-to-face meetings or gathering evidence via site visits.
- (8) Specific meeting to consider summary of evidence gathered and tenants agree short-list of recommendations.
- (9) Circulation of draft report and recommendations to officers/witnesses engaged during the Review; relevant Senior Mgmt; and Service Response to the proposed draft recommendations gathered.
1-2 tenants on the panel to act as representatives of the group and engage in report drafting.
- (10) Final meeting of tenant panel to agree the Final Draft Report.
- (11) Final Report presented to Housing Stock Management Group by 1-2 tenants, for acknowledgement/agreement by operational staff.
- (12) Final Report presented to next available Customer Service Scrutiny (for information only) to ensure link between Cllr and

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Tenant scrutiny of Housing Services, and to reduce duplication in service review. Presentation to be by 1-2 tenants

Monitoring of Recommendations

- (13) Housing Liaison Board commence a 12 month Post-Scrutiny Monitoring period, with an Interim Update at six months.

Review of The Void Process

Attached at appendix 1a is the action plan outlining the agreed recommendations and progress against them. All recommendations have been implemented and a site visit is planned for RANT members to review current void sites in June. Attached at appendix 1b is the revised Welcome to your Home leaflet which reflects the new lettable standard and appendix 1c is a sample of the decorating voucher.

Members are asked to review this information and agree whether they feel that the review has been fully delivered.

Future Review Ideas – Consultation

As part of the decision-making process, we recently contacted all tenants that have either been involved with Challenge and Change or expressed an interest in involvement in decision-making.

At the time of this meeting the consultation is still in progress, however the Tenant Engagement Officer can guide members of the Board through the suggestions so far.

Members of the Board are requested to choose the next priority topic for review.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That members of the Board review the process for choosing topics and delivering reviews as set out in the report, and approve for future review work from April 2025 onwards.
2. That members of the Board review progress against implementing the recommendations from the Review of The Void Process, and associated appendices (1a-1c) and agree if they are satisfied that the Review has been fully delivered.
3. That members of the Board acknowledge the verbal update on progress of the Review of Ground Maintenance on Council Estates.

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4. That members review existing suggestions for Challenge and Change Reviews and choose the next priority topic.

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment and Housing

Ambition: Housing

Priority: Maintaining and improving property and housing management standards and ensuring that standards and living conditions in the district contribute towards better health outcomes for all

Target HOU4: Work towards compliance with the Social Housing Consumer Standards, ensuring tenants' voice is key when developing new council housing policies, procedures, and improvements.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
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1a.	Recommendations – The Void Process
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1b	Welcome to your New Home leaflet
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1c	Decorating Voucher Scheme
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1d	Topic Suggestion Form
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