

Scrutiny Bulletin: 17th July 2023

Title of Update: Launch of a new Tenant Portal

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1. What is the update about?

To inform Members that a new Tenant Portal for Council Tenants has just been launched. This is a secure, password protected system whereby tenants can access their rent accounts, pay their rents, arrange repairs to their homes and check on the status of repairs already raised.

2. Background

The Tenant Portal has been designed to be an add-on to the existing communication systems that we already operate; it is in addition to all other methods of communication to give tenants a wide range of methods of contacting us. The Tenant Portal has been carefully researched over a number of years to ensure the security of data and the ability of the system to link to the information we currently hold on other systems such as OPEN Housing. The Tenants' Voice groups were able to provide valuable feedback whilst the portal was in development and were the first to test the 'live' version.

3. Current position

Letters have been sent out to Council tenants across the city, ward by ward (to ensure that the system and support staff are not overwhelmed by demand) with log-in details and explanatory leaflets explaining how the portal will work. Drop-in sessions have been arranged so that tenants can find out more and be helped into logging on etc. Information is available in an accessible form on the Council's website and tenants can telephone for advice on how to access and use the system. Tenants, once they have registered, instead of telephoning officers just to check on progress/rent accounts etc will be able to undertake self-help which will enable officers to deal with people who are more vulnerable and unable to do this themselves.

4. Future position

In the future additional elements will be added to the Portal so that tenants will be able to raise further housing management issues and service requests.

5. Are there any other options?

As we move through digital shift towards more self-help, it enables limited officer time to be devoted to helping those needing more support in maintaining their tenancies.

6. Conclusion

We are excited about the introduction of the Tenant Portal and any comments received from Members about the system would be welcomed.