

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**REGENERATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CABINET
BOARD**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMISSIONING & SUPPORT SERVICES –
A.THOMAS**

23 JULY 2018

SECTION A – MATTER FOR MONITORING

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

TAI TARIAN PROGRESS REPORT – TO JULY 2018

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to provide members with an overview of progress made by Tai Tarian in respect of the promises made to tenants in the Council's Offer Document.

Tai Tarian has also taken the opportunity to provide a few examples of other initiatives being progressed, these are included in the Business Update section.

Background

The Council transferred its housing stock to Tai Tarian on 4th March 2011.

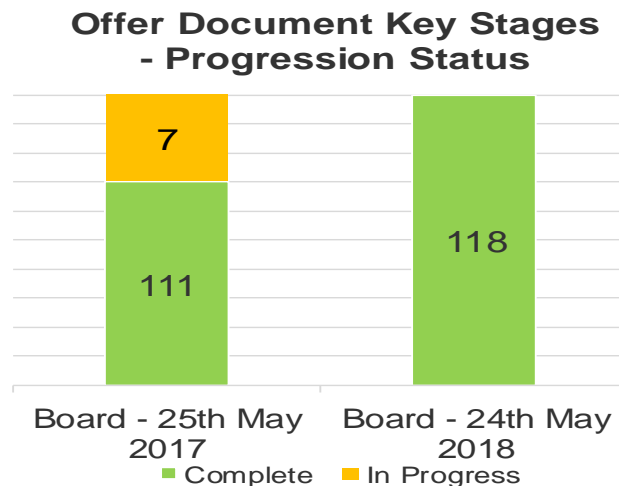
As part of the Transfer Agreement, Tai Tarian committed to providing update reports to the Council's Social Care, Health and Housing Cabinet Board (which has since been replaced by the Regeneration and Sustainable Development Cabinet Board) on progress made in respect of the delivery of the Offer Document Promises to tenants.

Delivering the promises made in the Offer Document – Progress update

The last report to the Regeneration and Sustainable Development Cabinet Board was provided on the 21st July 2017, where Tai Tarian reported that of the original 118 promises, 111 had been delivered. Following delivery of the 7 outstanding promises a final report would be presented.

The Offer Document Promises Tracking Document, is attached as Appendix 1 and is in a format agreed by the Social Care, Health and Housing Cabinet Board on 28th July 2011. The report uses red, amber, green (RAG) reporting to show the status of the promises – those completed (since the last report) are green.

We are pleased to report that the final 7 promises have been delivered and are set out in Appendix 1. This marks the completion of the Offer Document Promises.



Completion of the 118 Offer Document promises is a significant achievement for Tai Tarian. One of the key elements of the Offer Document was completion of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) works programme. This was achieved by 31st March 2017 with Tai Tarian delivering an extensive improvement programme to homes across the Borough which included new kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors, roofs, heating systems and more.

All of the major works programme contracts contained contractual obligations and for every £1.00 spent on the major improvement programme Tai Tarian have created a further £1.99 in the local economy.

Throughout the major works programme Tai Tarian worked with contractors and local agencies to create training and job opportunities. By the end of Tai Tarian's six year WHQS programme 121 jobs had been created. Tai Tarian has also developed partnerships with Career Wales and NPT College to provide apprenticeship opportunities.

In addition to the delivery of WHQS, other significant achievements were made to deliver the Offer Document promises over the six years since transfer.

Tai Tarian moved into Ty Gwyn, the new central office which provides a customer contact centre for all services to tenants and leaseholders. Tai

Tarian also continues to deliver its services to tenants and leaseholders via town centre offices and in tenants' homes and local communities. The town centre offices have enabled Tai Tarian to deliver a considerably improved face to face interaction with tenants.

An Anti-Social Behaviour co-design project was completed in 2017, where Tai Tarian worked in partnership with tenants and other stakeholders including the Police, Fire and Rescue and the Local Authority to complete a co-design review of the anti-social behaviour policy and procedure. The new policy, procedure and toolkit was launched in April 2017.

All new tenants receive a new let visit during the first six weeks of their tenancy to ensure they have settled in to their new home. This provides an opportunity for the tenant to raise any issues and for any tenancy issues to be addressed.

Tai Tarian issues all tenants with Allpay and PayPoint cards for use in all Post Offices and many local shops across the Borough. Internet and phone payments with debit cards were made available from the first day of transfer. This provides tenants with as many ways as possible to make their rent payments.

Tai Tarian's Neighbourhood Team undertakes all grounds maintenance on transferred land. Since transfer the cycle of cuts has improved from around 6 weekly to 3.9 weekly during the summer months. Through the winter months additional work is undertaken in communal areas of blocks/schemes (hard pruning of shrubs, path edging, moss removal, weeding, power washing etc.).

Business Update

Copper Foundation

One of Tai Tarian's corporate objectives is to continue to invest in their homes and communities. One initiative, the Copper Foundation, will see Tai Tarian develop work opportunities to those at a distance from the labour market. Since the project commenced in 2017, twenty three individuals have been given the opportunity to join the Copper Foundation, seven were recruited onto phase 1 in June 2017, eight onto the second phase in February 2018 and eight onto phase 3 which commenced work on July 2nd 2018. Tai Tarian officers have worked with staff internally as well as in partnership with the DWP, LIFT and Communities for Work teams to identify individuals who require support to obtain employment within the community. Tai Tarian are

very pleased that all of the individuals employed in phase 3 are living in one of their homes.

The project aims to provide entry level jobs in a supportive environment which will lead to greater opportunities of sustainable employment. In addition to the practical skills individuals have gained through their employment, they are also provided with support in preparing CVs, job applications and interview training, as well as help and guidance in relation to the softer skills of team working, social skills and confidence building. When their twelve month contracts come to an end with Tai Tarian there is option to trigger our community benefit clauses which requires our contractors to offer opportunities for employment.

The project has already started to see positive outcomes as five of those employed in the first phase have gone on to further employment. One of the individuals who has moved on to a permanent job for another company spoke about his experience;

“I decided to join the Copper Foundation last year to try and make a better life for myself. I’ve really enjoyed my time with Tai Tarian and have learned so much. My confidence has improved and I’ve gained lots of new skills. I’ve had lots of help from my supervisors and other colleagues, who have provided me with a great deal of advice and support. I’m really grateful for the opportunity the Copper Foundation has given me.”

High Cost Credit

During March Michael Sheen launched the ‘High Cost Credit Alliance’ which will work to promote more affordable ways of borrowing money. Tai Tarian featured in the media as one of the organisations to work with the Alliance to find ways to make the change happen.

Evidence suggests that high cost credit is particularly problematic for Tai Tarian tenants and, with the introduction of Universal Credit, it is important that tenants have a choice when selecting financial products. It’s important that Tai Tarian understand the financial landscape their tenants operate within so that meaningful and sustainable interventions can be made. Taking a multi-partner approach, this initiative aims to provide a research paper on the issue of high cost credit and examine the feasibility and opportunity to pilot suitable alternatives.

Following initial research with partners, Tai Tarian have now extended the scope of this initiative to include appointing an external organisation to speak with tenants about their debt issues. This is providing invaluable information which will inform any models developed for pilots which will address the need for alternative credit. A 'sandbox' trial has been approved by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). This 'sandbox' will now enable Tai Tarian to look at credit models to pilot. Whilst Tai Tarian recognise there are a number of obstacles and challenges to overcome, they are confident that they have the right partners in place to move forward with the initiative.

Next steps will see Tai Tarian developing the pilots for approval by the FCA in the summer of 2018. If approved Tai Tarian will move into phase 2, which will see them establishing the 'sandbox' pilot and exploring the use of health data, which will help them to understand whether there is a link between debt and poor health.

Energy Costs

Between 25% and 30% of the citizens of NPT Borough are in fuel poverty and a high number within these percentages will be tenants. Given the wider financial pressures and the increasing impact of universal credit, coupled with an intention to reduce carbon emissions, Tai Tarian is looking to develop a 'Community Energy Strategy' which will provide options for intervention. A significant number of tenants are likely to be in fuel poverty as they are within areas of the bottom quartile of communities within the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (indicators for this include deprivation in income, employment, health and education). This is compounded by the high levels of pre-paid meters and volume of off gas energy provision.

This initiative will explore the feasibility of providing energy efficiency advice, look to size the problem of energy costs and its effects on tenants and, if appropriate and funded, capital works.

As part of the strategy Tai Tarian will explore energy grants to deliver initiatives which will alleviate tenants in fuel poverty and promote an understanding of energy efficiency. Tai Tarian will also explore the appropriate use of the Feed in Tariff income from solar panels on our properties to fund or match fund necessary interventions.

Through the Warm Homes Fund Tai Tarian have been successful in securing funding to pilot sustainable energy interventions in a number of our homes, this will include air source heating, solar power, LED lighting and energy advice. Tai Tarian are currently developing a plan to deliver these

interventions with the Warm Homes Fund and anticipate launching the pilots over the coming months.

Tai Tarian are also exploring the possibility of introducing low cost energy to tenants and are in discussion with a not for profit organisation that provides low cost energy, guarantees to be within the lowest quartile on costs, does not charge more to tenants using pre-paid meters and would also provide energy to Tai Tarian staff. Tai Tarian are now preparing a full business case with a view to taking this opportunity to the next stage.

Board Remuneration

To date, Tai Tarian's Board members have been volunteers and have received no remuneration for carrying out their role as Board members.

In October 2017, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children, issued a letter to all RSLs advising that payment of Board members is now permitted. This decision was based on a recommendation from the Public Account Committee (PAC) Inquiry into Regulatory Oversight of Housing Associations, see below extract from the letter in October 2017;

The Public Accounts Committee also recommended that RSLs should be able to decide whether or not to pay their Board members, I am convinced that independent, autonomous Boards should be able to take the action necessary to secure the highest quality governance, bringing individuals with the skills knowledge and experience the sector needs onto Boards. I am therefore content to allow the sector to decide for themselves on payment of board members.

Tai Tarian is now in discussion with their Board and stakeholders on remuneration of Board members and will be consulting with tenants and staff in July on their intention to remunerate Board members.

Regulation of Registered Social Landlords (Wales) Bill

The above Bill received Royal Assent on 13th June 2018 and one of the changes within the Bill is around Local Government Controls. The Bill introduces a number of provisions, one of these is on the number of nominees a local authority can appoint to an RSL's Board;

Section 118. Under section 7B, no appointment may be made to a board of an RSL, which would result in local authority appointees amounting to more than 24% of the board members of the RSL.

This will now see a reduction in the number of Local Authority nominees on Tai Tarian's Board from four to two. The Local Authority will therefore be required to advise Tai Tarian of the two nominees to continue of their Board.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

Equality Impact Assessment

There are no equality impacts associated with this report.

Workforce Impact

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report

Legal Impacts

There are no legal impacts associated with this report

Risk Management

There are no risk management issues associated with this report

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the content of the report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Offer Document Promises - Tracking Document.

List of Background Papers

None.

Officer Contact

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Appendix 1 - Offer Document Promises Tracking Document



Key:



Complete



In progress



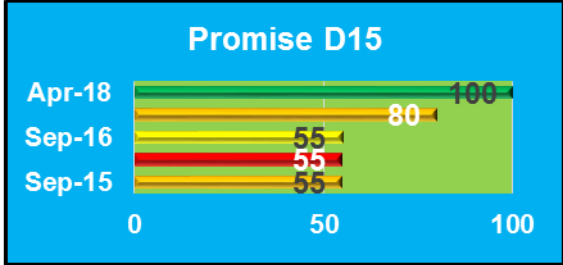
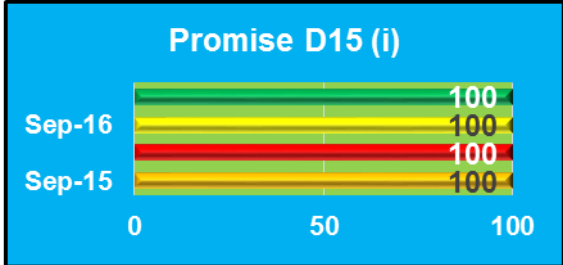
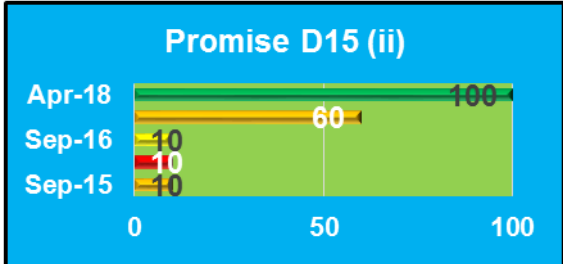
To be commenced

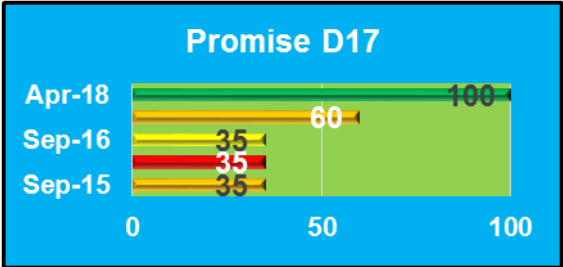
Promise No.	Nature of Work	To be commenced	In Progress	Complete	Comments
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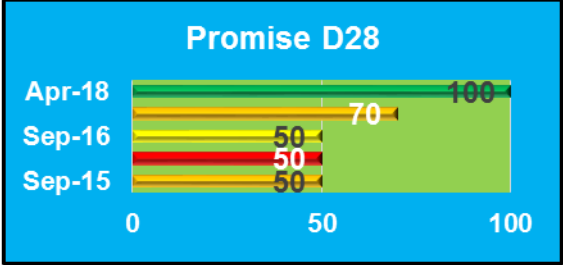
Part D	Improving and repairing your home				
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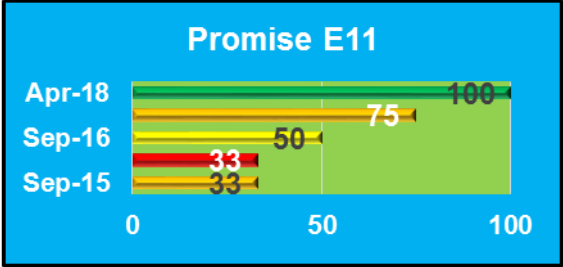
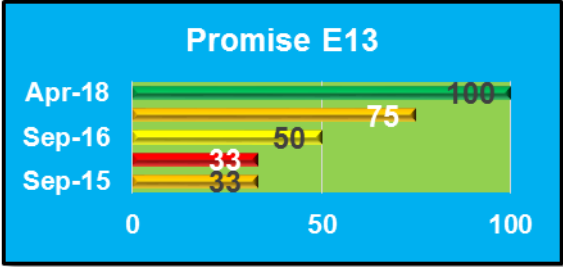
	Planned maintenance and Improvements				
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	Security –				
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D15	<p>Tenants would be offered (where appropriate):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (i) front and rear external entrance lights; - (ii) Tai Tarian would have a budget for improvements to fences and gates. 			✓	 <p>Promise D15</p> <table border="1"> <tr><th>Date</th><th>Completion %</th></tr> <tr><td>Apr-18</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>Sep-16</td><td>80</td></tr> <tr><td>Sep-15</td><td>55</td></tr> </table>  <p>Promise D15 (i)</p> <table border="1"> <tr><th>Date</th><th>Completion %</th></tr> <tr><td>Sep-16</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>Sep-15</td><td>100</td></tr> </table>  <p>Promise D15 (ii)</p> <table border="1"> <tr><th>Date</th><th>Completion %</th></tr> <tr><td>Apr-18</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>Sep-16</td><td>60</td></tr> <tr><td>Sep-15</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	Date	Completion %	Apr-18	100	Sep-16	80	Sep-15	55	Date	Completion %	Sep-16	100	Sep-15	100	Date	Completion %	Apr-18	100	Sep-16	60	Sep-15	10
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Promise No.	Nature of Work	To be commenced	In Progress	Complete	Comments
D15 Cont.					<p>Security lights form part of D14 rewiring works which has previously been signed off as complete.</p> <p>The provision of gates and fences has been delivered as part of the investment outlined in D17.</p>
	Environmental and Security Improvements				
D17	<p>Tai Tarian would have a budget of £13.5 million within its investment programme for environmental and security improvements in the first six years alone - over £10m on estate and environmental improvements and over £3.5m on security.</p> <p>Examples of improvements that could be provided for each estate include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improved estate car parking; - fencing, walls and railings around communal blocks; - improved external lighting and security lighting; - repairs to walkways, pathways and other hard landscaping; - enhancing the landscaping features around the homes; - reviewing the use of and improving 			✓	 <p>Over the last 7 years a minimum of £12,278,301 has been invested in environmental improvements and £4,093,426 in security improvements.</p>

Promise No.	Nature of Work	To be commenced	In Progress	Complete	Comments								
	communal drying areas; - reviewing the use of underused garage sites and rationalising their provision; and - play areas.												
	Planned Maintenance Programmes –												
D28	Decorate internal communal areas in sheltered schemes and blocks of flats.			✓	 <p>Promise D28</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Progress (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Apr-18</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep-16</td> <td>70</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep-15</td> <td>50</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>All decoration works have been delivered as promised.</p>	Date	Progress (%)	Apr-18	100	Sep-16	70	Sep-15	50
Date	Progress (%)												
Apr-18	100												
Sep-16	70												
Sep-15	50												
Part E	Service for older people and sheltered housing services												
	Improvements to Sheltered Schemes:												
	Tai Tarian would plan the following improvements to sheltered schemes:												

Promise No.	Nature of Work	To be commenced	In Progress	Complete	Comments								
E11	Where appropriate, and subject to resources being available, give a choice of a replacement of bath with shower or a walk-in shower to tenants with mobility problems when bathroom replacement programmes are carried out.			✓	 <p>Promise E11</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>Completion Rate (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Apr-18</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep-16</td> <td>75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep-15</td> <td>33</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Within our sheltered schemes a decision was made to install shower/wet room upgrades as standard. Where feasible, in some of the schemes we have also installed an assisted bathing/communal bathing facility.</p>	Period	Completion Rate (%)	Apr-18	100	Sep-16	75	Sep-15	33
Period	Completion Rate (%)												
Apr-18	100												
Sep-16	75												
Sep-15	33												
E13	Ensure accommodation is more accessible where possible by automotive doors to communal areas.			✓	 <p>Promise E13</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>Completion Rate (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Apr-18</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep-16</td> <td>75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep-15</td> <td>33</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Where possible all schemes have had automatic doors installed for communal areas and entrances. Residents have been provided with fobs to ensure ease of access and security to the scheme.</p>	Period	Completion Rate (%)	Apr-18	100	Sep-16	75	Sep-15	33
Period	Completion Rate (%)												
Apr-18	100												
Sep-16	75												
Sep-15	33												
	Scheme Managers												

Promise No.	Nature of Work	To be commenced	In Progress	Complete	Comments								
	Tai Tarian would also aim to improve services provided by the scheme managers in order to meet the needs of older people. It would consult with tenants on a range of possible improvements which, for example, could include:												
E14	Introducing a tenants' handbook specifically for tenants of sheltered housing.			✓	<p>Promise E14</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Completion %</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Apr-18</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep-16</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep-15</td> <td>75</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This was postponed for a number of reasons, first the co-design of the Haven service, then the name change and the Supporting People Grant tender.</p> <p>Following all of the above, the handbook is now in place within our sheltered schemes.</p>	Date	Completion %	Apr-18	100	Sep-16	80	Sep-15	75
Date	Completion %												
Apr-18	100												
Sep-16	80												
Sep-15	75												
	Other improvements:												
	Additional improvements could include:												

Promise No.	Nature of Work	To be commenced	In Progress	Complete	Comments								
E24	<p>Within its investment programme, Tai Tarian would have a budget of up to £5.5 million in the first six years after transfer for improvements and re-modelling work in sheltered schemes. This work would be undertaken in consultation with tenants to provide self-contained flats with their own bathrooms and to upgrade bedsit flats to provide separate bedrooms and living rooms.</p>			✓	<div data-bbox="1552 288 2112 595" data-label="Figure"> <table border="1"> <caption>Promise E24 Progress Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Completion Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Apr-18</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep-16</td> <td>75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep-15</td> <td>33</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p>All internals of the schemes have been remodelled to provide tenants with their own self-contained flats to include wet rooms and separate living space to bedrooms.</p> <p>The total investment for this work was £13.4m.</p>	Date	Completion Percentage	Apr-18	100	Sep-16	75	Sep-15	33
Date	Completion Percentage												
Apr-18	100												
Sep-16	75												
Sep-15	33												