

## **SOUTH LAKES HOUSING TENANTS' COMMITTEE MINUTES**

1:30pm 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021 via zoom

Present: Sue Layfield  
Jim Layfield  
Charles Howarth  
Stephen Bolton

Guests N/A

Staff in attendance: John Mansergh – Director of Business Assurance  
Lyn Richardson – Community Engagement Officer  
Emma Wilson – Governance Support Assistant (minutes)  
Sean Ellam – Interim Tenancy Manager

Apologies: Dorothy Dixon  
Loraine Birchall  
John Short  
Paul Athersmith  
June Peckston  
Pauline Vaughn - Observer

Circulation: As above include all managers

### **ACTION**

#### **1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 18<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021- MATTERS ARISING**

- 1.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> March were approved as a true and accurate record subject to the Chair being added to present at the meeting. **EW**

#### **2. SOCIAL HOUSING WHITE PAPER**

- 2.1 John informed TC members that Susan Claxton is the new appointed Building Safety Manager. John suggested inviting Susan to a future meeting this will tie into the Social Housing White Paper commitment around Safety. Susan is also leading on the energy efficiency side of things within SLH, it would be good to combine both topics. Safety will be constantly reviewed alongside standards and updated legislation within the Social Housing White Paper. We need to evidence that SLH is listening and responding to Tenants and treating them with respect. **EW**
- 2.2 **Know how your Landlord is performing** – John highlighted key areas that TC members will need to consider.
- Key Performance Indicators need to be maintained and need to be published, the regulator will define the metrics. This will enable sector

benchmarking that will support Tenants to make informed decisions about how their landlord is performing.

- The STAR Survey will support with improving services and gathering Tenant feedback.
- 'Access to information' scheme will enable Tenants to have greater access to any information that they wish to seek. There is currently no real understanding of how this may operate other than what has been published in the White Paper.
- Landlords need to provide a clear breakdown of how their income is being spent.
- Healthy and Safety requires a named person as does Consumer Standards this is required at Director level.
- Reporting back on performance traditionally this has been in the form of the Tenant Annual Report. we need to consider how and what can be done to get information out there on a more regular basis.

2.3 TC members agreed that quarterly reporting on the SLH website seemed a sensible option and sharing the information via our website and the facebook page seems to fit with the Digital Transformation SLH are working towards. John would like TC members to help design and agree how the information should look and what it should contain at a future meeting.

ALL

JM

2.4 The Chair is involved with the Housing Ombudsman and has a place on the Resident's Panel. The Chair will share information gathered from the meetings he attends. John added damp and condensation is a topic that will be covered by the Housing Ombudsman.

### 3. PERFORMANCE & GOVERNANCE UPDATE

#### Performance

3.1 The delivery of services has been impacted due to staff sickness, shielding covid & lockdown 3. We are currently working to clear the back log of repairs. There are now only around 200 outstanding jobs down from around 600. The repairs service is now back up and running 'back to normal' other than clearing the back log.

3.2 Trying to gain access to people's homes to complete any outstanding electrical inspections there is now only 2 outstanding.

3.3 Rent collection and arrears is in a really good position however we are aware of a few hardship cases. SLH is in a similar position to last year even though we have not been able to use courts and eviction if Tenants are unable to pay rent. We will be looking closely at whether serving eviction notices helps as we have maintained good rent collection during covid by providing tenants with the right support at the right time to maintain rent payments.

3.4 There has been 187 relets +37 new homes have been added to SLH stock, with only 9 RTB's.

- 3.5 There has been a period where we were unable to do anything this has left some large underspends in the budget particularly on repairs (£1.5 million). This has been pushed into this year's planned maintenance and repairs.

### **Governance**

- 3.6 It will be John Holmes' last Board meeting tonight. He has served for a decade.
- 3.7 There has been an external governance review which happens every 3 years it has been suggested to remove the R&G Cttee, this will be delegated to the Board to avoid duplication. Recommendations have been made to consider the size of the Board there is a feeling it is too big. Nomination agreements will be discussed with SLDC. There is also a review around Board diversity.
- 3.8 The Board wishes to appoint Stephen Bentley to replace Maggi due to work commitments in Public Health. SLH will require additional funding for future development Steve has the treasury skills needed. Steve has been a co-optee on the Audit & Risk Committee.
- 3.9 Loraine's Term of Office is due to expire this year she will be asked to extend this due to the gender balance and also find time to engage others to join.
- 3.10 There are over 400 development units included in the Financial Plan, to be started or completed by 2025.
- 3.11 JM made TC members aware that we will be conducting the STAR Survey with Lyn is currently in the process of commissioning this. It will be interesting to see what the feedback is given following covid and lockdown. The questions will be discussed with TC.

LR

## **4. INTRODUCTION TO INTERIM TENANCY MANAGER**

- 4.1 Sean introduced himself to TC members, he lives in North Manchester and has worked in housing for 17 years. Sean is keen to engage with tenants to improve services particularly in terms of the Social Housing White Paper and customer satisfaction. Sean is working on getting to know SLH colleagues. He is keen to improve customer satisfaction and make it easier for customers to access SLH services.
- 4.2 Lyn provided some background as to when Sean might be required to attend TC meetings in the future, Policy updates and endorsement, Estate Walkabouts, GAP, and Tenant Scrutiny would be the main reasons.
- 4.3 *Sean left the meeting at 13:45pm.*

## **5 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

- 5.1 Emily presented the Customer Satisfaction document. At this point this is an ideas document and will work alongside the transformation work that Steve Roe is working on. The idea is we want to try and tie in key touchpoints to enable us to send customer satisfaction surveys at the right time. This process

also needs to be automated; we need to close the loop and make contact with the customer if they respond to say they are unhappy with a service. This is a working document that is part of the Leap Beyond programme.

- 5.2 Jim asked what the transformation programme was about? Lynn responded that this is about how we improve our people, processes and systems. She mentioned that work that has been generated from Tenant Scrutiny and trying to make services better for tenants.

## **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 6.1 The Chair requested feedback form the repairs questions that were asked by KD. EW to invite to the next meeting. **EW**

- 6.2 The Committee agreed that a virtual meeting or face to face meeting will be decided at a later date when we have more knowledge about what will be happening with covid. **EW**

- 6.3 Sue asked could we ask online if people would like to be involved in future TC meetings. Ask when they are free potential of an evening, we need to get a younger membership. The Chair suggested reviewing at the next meeting.

- 6.3 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021**