

SOUTH LAKES HOUSING TENANTS' COMMITTEE MINUTES

12:30pm 19th May 2022 Windermere Room

Present: Sue Layfield
Jim Layfield
Charles Howarth
Stephen Bolton
Loraine Birchall
Dorothy Dixon
Lesley Peters - Observer
Pauline Vaughan
Sarah Benjamin

Guests N/A

Staff in attendance: John Mansergh – Director of Business Improvement
Lyn Richardson – Customer Engagement Partner
Emma Wilson – Corporate Support Assistant
Niki Stockton – Director of Customer Experience

Apologies: John Short
Paul Athersmith
Gaynor Aplin

Circulation: As above include all managers

Introductions took place around the room including newly appointed SLH employees and Tenants' Committee members.

Niki Stockton shared a brief update on what her role will include she will be learning a lot about the business over the next 3 months and working closely with TC members to shape and improve services. Niki will be developing the 'Customer First' service and is hoping to engage more tenants including those from a younger demography to get wider insight into what's important to our customers. Niki shared information about her previous job roles and explained she had worked in the housing sector for over 30 years.

ACTION

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 16TH MARCH 2022- MATTERS ARISING

- 1.1 Members of the committee approved the Minutes 16th March 2022. Emma to issue expenses form and parking permits with future papers.

EW

2. Q4 PERFORMANCE REPORT UPDATE

- 2.1 John shared an update from the most recent Board meeting held on the 12th of May. The Board approved the Long Term 30 year Financial Plan. SLH have a target to deliver 500 homes by 2025. We have secured new funding to support the delivery of the new homes some of which will be for affordable rent and some for shared ownership. This means that SLH is more exposed to housing

market volatility. Financially the organisation is a good place, however the financial plan is tighter than it has been previously this is due to inflation and the rise in cost of living, as well as ensuring more homes get developed and more investment into existing homes. This included energy efficiency and there is a plan to improve all properties so that each one is rated C and above by 2025, ahead of the Government target by 2030.

- 2.2 Nicki highlighted we need to ensure we provide good customer experience across the business. We will be implementing training across the business to support this and ensure we get it right.
- 2.3 Charles raised concerns around Radon feedback. The Head of Building Safety attended the previous meeting to share an update and is reviewing all communications around Radon. Niki and John will review this with the Head of Building Safety. TC members suggested a letter should be issued with results of the Radon readings and attached to the MyAccount for future reference. TC members feel that no feedback is not reassuring enough to suggest that no Radon is present they requested this to be formalised in a letter. John added Building Safety is an area of Transformation for SLH and TC members will have an opportunity to shape the service and share their thoughts. The Chair suggested that the gas safety certificates also be added to MyAccount.
- 2.4 Charles asked if new properties that are under construction are being future proofed to prevent retrofitting and changing of boilers in the future to meet the government net zero target. Niki and John responded we are working towards this when we develop our own properties, we have a development of Passivhaus properties at Halton where we can reduce energy costs, and ensure all living aspects are green. With Section 106 properties we have less influence over the design but have worked with contractors to improve EPC ratings by paying more for the developments and requesting a high specification.
- 2.5 John explained following the STAR survey feedback we plan to set up a working group of tenants to work through actions and make improvements.
- 2.6 Lyn reported the Tenant Scrutiny group will be reviewing the voids process and how quickly we relet our homes. Improvements have been made by the team and we are getting our relets turned around much quicker.
- 2.7 We also have adverts out to recruit trade operatives to improve repair times and get these done much quicker.

3. PROBITY POLICY

- 3.1 John updated TC members as to why the organisation needs such a policy, this is to declare any interest of a nature whether it be a Board Director or engaged tenant. There is a conflict of interest process we all need to be transparent and open.

4. RECRUITMENT TO TENANT VACANCY

- 4.1 The Board will have 4 vacancies within the next month with one being reserved for a tenant. The ideal candidate will have skills and experience of being a tenant to support the Board with decision making and to influence the

direction of the organisation. We are working on how we can recruit and what the recruitment should look like. The Communications and Marketing Partner is supporting with the design of the recruitment offer. John highlighted there is nothing set in stone, and we would like Tenants' Committee members to be involved. The Chair and Lorraine have had some input. Sarah suggested flyers be handed out when tenants are engaged and doing things. Dorothy suggested adding to the Face Book page and posing the question of who you would like to see on your Board. Pauline asked is the diversity of age reflective of the users of SLH on the Board. John responded data is being assessed within the business. Pauline asked if geographical areas and the type of accommodation have been considered when appointing a tenant to the Board. Apply different thinking to recruit in a different way.

5 ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

5.1 Lyn provided the following update.

- Estate improvements are going well all work is in conjunction with Groudworks. They are working on several areas within neighbourhoods consultation with tenants has gone really well.
- The Scrutiny group is going well, they are currently reviewing ASB. A second meeting with managers has been set up. Charles will be a mystery shopper to gather info from CST.
- There are several residents associations we are supporting and working with, Kirkbarrow, Sandylands and Hallgarth.
- The garden competition has been launched through social media there will be additional comms issued within the next week to gain a wider audience.
- Jubilee packs will be issued there were 10 to give out 19 people applied.
- Pod casts are taking place to inform tenants about what is happening.
- Estate walkabouts have been taking place – we need to ensure we let are customers know when we will be in the area. Lyn is working towards additional invites of MP's and local community champions.
- SLH 10th Anniversary – there will be an employee away day and some tenants are having tea parties.
- 10 days of giving and 10 days of thanks.
- 2 tenants have applied for bursaries we hope that these will be successful.

6. STAR SURVEY UPDATE

6.1 The STAR Survey is completed every 2 years but this is set to become an annual Survey in line with the TSM's (Tenant Satisfaction Measures). All managers attended a meeting to review the results and discuss how they can improve services in their areas. Tenants will also be involved in identifying areas and monitoring with the implementation of an action plan. Tenants will hold managers to account and ensure the actions are embedded. We are in the process of reviewing how we share the information externally to ensure we

reach all our tenants. A draft of the action plan will be brought to the next TC meeting.

- 6.2 Charles requested a N/A response to the ASB question. John added that the Regulator has added this in the draft technical guidance.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 7.1 Dorothy informed TC members that Cumbria and North Lancs and Residents Association is no longer in action. This has been dissolved due to a lack of volunteers. The new funding has been split 3 ways to be able to close the bank account. There was a small balance left over this will be donated to the Ukraine fund.

- 7.2 John S emailed through some questions – John M and Niki to respond directly.

JM/NS

- 7.3 Charles asked for his thanks to be passed onto the external contractor that did work to his path.

- 7.4 Charles gave an updated on his interest and frustrations in registering for the UK Government's 'Homes for the Ukraine' scheme.

- 7.5 Estate walkabouts are taking place. Sue added there was an inspection done at Lunefield gardens of the exterior of the property it would have been good to know that SLH were sending someone out so that tenants could have pointed out known issues such as the moss on the roof. LR to follow up with assets.

LR

- 7.6 Tin can cook government challenge in place around cooking at home.

- 7.7 TC members thanked Dorothy for all her support over the years with her attendance at the Cumbria and North Lancs meetings.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 15th July 2021