

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

12:30pm 14<sup>th</sup> July 2022 Windermere Room

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

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  
Aimee Wood – Independent Living Lead

Apologies: John Short  
Gaynor Aplin  
Sarah Benjamin

Circulation: As above include all managers

## **ACTION**

### **1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022- MATTERS ARISING**

1.1 Members of the committee approved the Minutes 19th May 2022 subject to the following amends.

**7.3** amend the sentence thanks to be passed onto the contractor that did the path.

**4.** Recruitment spelling

**7.** Business spelling

**EW**

### **2. Q1 PERFORMANCE & TENANT BOARD DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT**

2.1 The contract for the ground floor office space is due for renewal, we have decided not to renew the contract and make better use of the upstairs space. If there is a large meeting, we can hold this externally and hire a room. Mobility issues will be considered when booking external facilities. Consultation is taking place with colleagues to establish what is needed to make it a more attractive working environment. Stephen suggested making use of the Croftlands community centre for larger meetings.

- 2.2 Recruitment is still a challenge across a range of roles within the business, as is the case elsewhere. Added pressures are rising fuel costs and the cost of living crisis are having an impact. We have recruited several trade colleagues and continue to advertise available positions. We will be interviewing for the Head of Governance and Risk next week, depending on his/her skill set we may need to outsource additional Health and Safety advice.
- 2.3 John is working on producing a visual performance report that is relatable and meaningful to tenants. The Committee agreed to help shape future performance reporting which would also be published on the website as per the requirement of the social housing white paper.
- 2.4 Repair completion times are improving with recruitment on the increase. We are also recruiting to more apprentices.
- 2.5 Sickness management is improving, covid is again on the increase again but most colleagues can continue to work from home.
- 2.6 Rent collection is doing well considering the cost of living crisis, this is likely to dip particularly in the winter months. Whilst the government is providing support packages, tenants have been contacting the Income Team asking for help. This issue is not just a challenge for our tenants but colleagues too.
- 2.7 The Building Safety team having been struggling to gain access to a small number of properties for gas servicing and electrical inspections. Charles highlighted should tenants not allow access they are in breach of their tenancy agreement and at risk of eviction. Niki responded explaining we try to work with tenants to gain access using positive messages before imposing sanctions such as court action. Pauline asked how much notice should be given as she had less than a week by the time the letter was received in the post. EW to review with SC and she feedback at the next meeting.

EW

## 2.8 **Tenant Board Recruitment**

John outlined the progress made since the last meeting and agreed process with the Committee and in line with the Board Recruitment Policy and Resident Engagement Strategy. The process aligns with the wider Board recruitment exercise, apart for an additional few weeks for tenants to submit their interest. The following actions are in place;

- w/c 18<sup>th</sup> July the SLH website will be launched to advertise for board membership - tenants then will be able to download a pdf role pack and access a video starring Loraine and Stephen. This will also be on the site beyond the initial recruitment, to encourage interest and aid succession planning.
- Applicants will be invited to provide a covering letter outlining their interest in the role and any relevant skills and experience. We will also accept CV's if they are preferred. The deadline to respond is 31st August with applications to be sent to [community@southlakeshousing.co.uk](mailto:community@southlakeshousing.co.uk)
- The Community Engagement Partner will be on hand to help applicants with covering letters/CV's and applicants can also speak to the Company Secretary.

- The Community Engagement Partner will also target tenants who are already engaging with us e.g., Tenants Committee members, Residents Associations, community champions etc.
- Advertise on linked in, facebook, any free community papers.
- Review applications against shortlisting criteria (Lyn, Emily & John), and provide applications to TC/Selection Panel - do any TC members wish to be part of this? (Lesley & Charles expressed interest)
- Tenants' Committee will be kept up to date on progress including and a selection panel will be formed if we receive several applications. 7th September provides the opportunity for the Committee to speak to applicants and select their preferred candidate to be recommended to the Board.
- Board decision- 22 September, also AGM notification on the same day.

2.9 ***Tenants Cttee members fully endorsed the approach to Board recruitment and selection.***

3. **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

3.1 The H&S Policy has been amended to reflect changes in personnel we no longer have a Health and Safety manager role. We want all colleagues and managers to be accountable and responsible for health and safety within the business, this will mean additional investment in training and competency. This has also been reflected in the new job descriptions and aligns with the values and culture SLH wants to create and embed. The policy reflects building safety changes and regulation updates. The Social Housing White paper states that all RP's must have a H&S lead so that tenants know who to approach and discuss related matters with. Richard Hayes has been appointed as the SLH H&S lead, as Director of Homes.

3.2 ***Tenants Cttee members endorsed the policy prior to final sign off by the Board.***

4. **OLDER PERSONS STRATEGY**

4.1 Aimee shared an update with TC members informing them that there will be a review of sheltered housing. The review will consider individual scheme condition and how they perform in terms of energy efficiency. We will consider Adult Social care step up step down care and bed blocking. We need to think about partnership working and what SLH role should be, can we provide additional support? Data is being gathered about the environment and neighbourhood of the schemes We need to consider working with other agencies in collaboration. Service charges will also be reviewed. We will consider how many properties what the demand is.

4.2 Dorothy asked which schemes have been de-sheltered. Aimee responded only Yewbarrow has been de-sheltered. We do have some individual property addresses within the schemes that have also been de-sheltered mainly where they are upstairs flats and they have been hard to let.

6.2 There will be various ways of capturing feedback from tenants and neighbourhoods. We will hold coffee mornings and information will be shared

in written format as well as online. We will also be out and about just talking to people.

- 6.3 Charles asked will you be reviewing bed blocking when people can't be discharged as they need short term care. Aimee responded this will form part of the review we did trail a respite care facility but there was poor take up. Charles felt the location wasn't ideal and needs to be thought through if this is what we are offering. Aimee added we have no preconceived ideas at this stage everything is up for review.
- 6.4 Loraine asked that a timeline for consultation and feedback be set out and shared with tenants, previous experience was not great. Loraine also felt that as a HA's we are not here to provide care we are here to provide housing and the two should not be merged.
- 6.5 Pauline shared her knowledge of integrated communities and how this had worked well in another country. There were no reported ASB cases, this should be considered.
- 6.6 Should anyone have any ideas or would like to share their thoughts email Lyn.

## 7. CUSTOMER FIRST COMMITMENT

- 7.1 Niki shared a presentation on the Customer First Commitment these are the key points moving forward and delivering the strategy.
- Customer Experience Strategy
    - A Plan
    - Customer First Training
    - Customer Service Standards
    - Complaints Handling & Resolution
    - STAR – Action Plan
    - Neighbourhood Plans
    - Estate Walkabouts – visible local presence
    - Sheltered housing review
  - My Account
  - Omni-channel
  - Resident Engagement Profiling & Insight

## 8. ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

- 8.1 Lyn updated Tenants Cttee members with what has been happening.
- Swan Street is looking great with wildflower planting.
  - Yewbarrow estate – work has started the contractors are doing an excellent job.
  - High Greenbank – bin storage is due to be created.
  - Hallgarth – Lots of work happening linking with the community doing a litter pick and consultation happening around a garage site.
  - Lancaster Square – tidy up happened with 6 out of 8 residents taking part to clear waste land a bench will be added. Lots of positive feedback from the community coming together to take part. The

Customer Insight partner conducted a survey after the event which was helpful to review feedback on how the community event was planned and organised.

- Scrutiny group- The ASB scrutiny review is currently delayed as waiting for data to be able to send out a survey to tenants who have been affected by ASB int eh last 2 years. This has had a knock on effect and delayed the VOIDS scrutiny until September. However an initial meeting has taken place to discuss Voids.
- STAR tenders have been sent out to 8 companies, Lyn will require tenants to go through tenders and to propose questions. Lyn will email TC members directly.
- Lyn working with Chris Parks and Cold to Cosy homes to produce short podcasts on heating and energy efficiency, going well so far.
- Garden Comp is now complete and the winners will be announced in the coming week.

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022 Venue TBC**