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| SOUTH LAKES HOUSING TENANTS’ COMMITTEE MINUTES 12pm 18th May 2023 Windermere Room |

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| Present: | Lesley Peters  Paul Athersmith  Pauline Vaughan  Henry Semple (observer)  Nick Harrison (observer)  Sue Layfield  Sarah Benjamin  Gaynor Aplin  Silas Heys – Board Director (Observer) |  |
| Guests | N/A | |
| Officers in  attendance: | John Mansergh – Director of Business Improvement  Lyn Richardson – Customer Engagement Partner  Emma Wilson – Corporate Support Assistant (Notes)  Susan Claxton – Head of Assets & Building Safety (virtually - part)  Stephen Roe – Head of Transformation, Digital and Data (virtually - part)  Paul Aitken – Systems and Change Lead (part)  Zarina Chowdary – Customer First Manager (virtually)  Niki Stockton – Director of Customer Experience (virtually) | |
| Apologies: | Loraine Birchall  Charles Howarth  Dorothy Dixon  Carol Anderson  Jim Layfield | |
| Circulation: | As above include all managers | |
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| **1**. | **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** | | |  |
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| 1.1 | Members of the Committee approved the Minutes 16th March 2023 as a true and accurate record. | | |  |
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| 1.2 | Lyn welcomed observers to the meeting and introductions took place. Silas Heys Director of the SLH Board also joined the meeting. | | |  |
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| **2.** | **PERFORMANCE & GOVERNANCE UPDATE** | | |  |
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| 2.1  2.2  2.3  2.4  2.5  2.6  2.7  2.8  2.9 | (John M provided the update)  ***SLH update***  National policy changes to the Regulator of Social Housing’s Consumer Standards – the Regulator’s new TSM’s (Tenant Satisfaction Measures) have started which is intended to make it easier for social housing tenants to hold their landlords to account. Social Housing Providers must begin to collect data on how they are performing in areas such as repairs, complaints, and safety checks. The data collected will be reported at the end of this financial year and will allow for comparisons. There will be a regular programme of inspections.  The ‘Decent Homes Standard’ is being reviewed by Government with the potential to extend this to the private rented sector. The review will include additional features such as energy efficiency improvements to homes.  There has been a Government announcement that all relevant staff and senior managers must be qualified to protect residents, and this will be made mandatory. Changes will be made through amendments to the Social Housing (regulation) Bill which will improve standards in the sector and hold landlords to account. It follows Awaab’s Law introduced earlier this year following the tragic death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak, which will force social landlords to fix damp and mould within strict time limits. SLH Board are working through these new regulations and what it means for SLH and what is required to meet the new standards.  The IDA (In Depth Assessment) is now complete, all evidence has been submitted to the Regulator and this will be used to form the Regulatory Judgement. The Regulator has observed the May Board meeting and met with the Chair of SLH Board and the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, and separately with the Executive. SLH are hoping to maintain the current G1 V2 rating which is based on the Governance and Viability Standard.  SLH Board are trying to understand how best to engage with tenants and ensure they have a voice. Currently the SLH Board doesn’t have a tenant on the Board with the recent resignation of Lesley. Silas will be attending the TC meetings to help bridge the gap in the short term listen to tenants and feedback to the Board. There will be further opportunities to reshape engagement and involvement in governance, and this will be discussed together over the summer period of meetings.  ***Performance Update***  SLH have good year end performance we have improved relet times and sickness which were hampered by covid last year. Financial performance is also good with the income team supporting tenants struggling to meet rent payments.  Complaints – SLH have received more this year due to damp & mould. We have a dedicated team working on complaints and have improved the internal process and implemented a learning loop. The desired outcome is to improve the customer experience when making a compliant.  SLH delivered and achieved 100 home delivery and delivered the passivhaus scheme at Halton.  ***Expenses Policy***  TC members were happy to endorse the policy following approval at SLH Board. | | |  |
|  | *Paul joined the meeting at 12.30pm* | | |  |
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| **3.** | **ICT AND CYBER SECURITY POLICY** | | |  |
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| 3.1  3.2  3.3  3.4 | Paul introduced himself as the Systems and Change Lead for SLH and explained he has overall responsibility for cyber security and ICT across the business. Additional information has been added to the policies to improve best practice and ensure we keep up to date with latest security. Paul added there has been a lot of investment into cyber security recently. All colleagues must complete training as part of their induction; IT also send out test emails to try and improve colleague awareness. John suggested an awareness training session for TC members to keep them safe when using IT.  SLH will be removing Kaspersky and moving to Microsoft Defender. This will support benchmarking of security against other organisations.  Henry asked if passwords are regularly changed by colleagues. Paul responded this is an excellent suggestion. Colleagues are asked to set complex passwords and change their passwords on an annul basis, but we also have multi-factor authentication. John explained that we need to get the right balance of security across the business whilst not overly complicating the process so that it is too hard to use. If we requested colleagues change passwords more often colleagues could potentially start to write passwords down and would be more likely to forget them which is also a security risk.  Henry asked how secure is customer data? Paul responded we are not aware of any vulnerabilities however we do have some small risks on the portal. These are not deemed to be high risks. SLH is working with its supplier to upgrade the system. There have been two recent internal audits of cyber security and data privacy. Both flagged recommendations that have since been implemented and we are working towards additional layers of security.  Some TC members raised an issue with SLH emails going directly into their spam accounts. Paul said he would be happy to investigate. | | |  |
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|  | *Paul left the meeting at 12.45pm* | | |  |
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| **4.** | **TENANT SCRUITINY RECOMMENDATIONS** | | |  |
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| 4.1 | John M explained that monitoring of the TS (Tenant Scrutiny) Recommendations is delegated to the Audit and Risk Committee. Tenants scrutinise various areas of the business reviewing processes and asking managers to provide evidence. Where they feel improvements can be made recommendations are made.  The Committee were happy to approve the latest updates and agreed to revised targets where appropriate. | | |  |
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| **5.** | **ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY** | | |  |
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|  | *Susan Claxton joined the meeting 12.55pm* | | |  |
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| 5.1  5.2  5.3  5.4 | Susan introduced herself as the Head of Building Safety and shared a presentation on the Asset Management Strategy. The vision is to improve customer experience, understand and manage SLH assets and maximise resources. The strategy links with other strategies around the business and aims to provide ‘quality homes a platform for life’. Other areas the strategy links to is SLH policy changes on decent homes, neighbourhood plans, improving all properties to achieve EPC C and moving towards net zero by 2050.  The Grounds maintenance contract is due to be procured 2024 this will be data led with information being gathered and inputted into the system before consultation starts.  Susan explained that we need to ensure data is fit for purpose and can provide SLH with the information needed to report on. The team have been working hard to cleanse and improve data.  Building safety is monitored through KPI’s (key performance indicators) that link to the regulators TSM’s. Penningtons have been appointed to undertake fire risk assessments. | | |  |
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| 5.5 | Pauline said she had a survey to do with energy efficiency at her home in January. She asked when tenants get feedback from the report. know their homes the best and where improvements can be made. Susan said she would investigate and feedback. | | | **LR** |
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| 5.6 | Lesley said she had a survey completed by ‘cosy homes’ – they had suggested loft and cavity wall insulation to improve her home. She asked when the work would be completed. Susan will investigate and feedback. | | | **LR** |
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| 5.7 | Henry added communication seems to get lost between departments and takes time for things to happen. He asked why the departments don’t know what is happening in another department. Susan responded we are working to improve communication across the business but agreed further work is needed. Henry also raised lighting on communal blocks – this never seems to go out and could save energy. The lights get brighter during the day even though they are on sensors. | | | **LR** |
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|  | *Susan Claxton left the meeting at 13.35pm* | | |  |
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|  | *Stephen roe joined the meeting at 13.35pm* | | |  |
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| **6.** | **KPI DASHBOARDS** | | |  |
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| 6.1 | Steve shared the KPI dashboards with TC members, which are aligned to the TSMs referred to earlier. He asked members to consider how SLH should share the data to the wider customer base and if they are happy with the current format.  Feedback from tenants was positive they liked the format and felt that it was good visually with both graphs and numbers to explain the data. Pauline suggested edited highlights on the SLH facebook page as well as the SLH website. | | |  |
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|  | *Stephen left the meeting 13.50pm* | | |  |
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| **7.** | **CUSTOMER FIRST MANAGER INTRODUCTION** | | |  |
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| 7.1 | Zarina introduced herself to TC members as the newly appointed Customer First Manager, she started with SLH early March. Zarina has worked in housing for the last 13 years with oversight and delivery of the customer voice in her previous role. Zarina has been working with the operations team to improve repairs and wants to get this right first time.  There is lots of work going into improving compliant handling and the learning loop. Zarina would like to test improvements coming out of the learning loop to ensure they have been effective and are properly embedded within new processes around the business. Zarina is keen to engage with customers to gather feedback and make improvements. There is work happening to improve feedback around satisfaction and what this should look like.  Zarina thanked tenants for their feedback and said she would update them on progress with actions raised during the meeting. | | | **EW** |
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| **8.** | **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** | | |  |
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| 8.1 | Tenants were asked if they were happy to vote Henry Semple, Nick Harrison onto the committee. All TC members unanimously agreed. | | |  |
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| 8.2 | Apologies from Henry for the July meeting. | | |  |
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| 8.3 | Pauline wished to raise the terminology of how tenants are referred to. Sometimes it’s ‘customer’ Pauline would like to be referred to as a tenant or a resident of SLH. Silas added this is a great topic the Board tend to use the phrase ‘customer’ as they have the idea that if people had a choice would they chose SLH as their Landlord. Pauline added the Board need to be realistic often tenants don’t have a choice therefore should be referred to as a tenant or resident. Silas will feed this back to the Board. | | |  |
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| 8.4 | Sarah asked SLH for support in challenging the management company where she lives. Tenants are paying a service charge for communal areas to be kept neat and tidy and currently the service is poor or non-existent. John asked SLH representatives Lyn and Emma to liaise with the neighbourhood partners to see if anything can be done. | | |  |
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| 8.5 | Lyn asked tenants if they would be happy to hold future meetings in different locations to allow others who may not be able to travel attend. TC members were in favour of doing this. | | |  |
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| **9.** | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 13th July 2023** | | |  |
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