

**HOMES' CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON  
THURSDAY 20 JUNE 2019  
KENSINGTON TOWN HALL AT 6.30 PM  
(MEETING TAPEDE)**

**PRESENT**

**Resident**

Miss Caroline Charles  
Mr Michael Gazley  
Mr John Hebditch  
Miss Gaenor Holland-Williams  
Ms Lyda Marina Chavez Auliar  
Ms C A Mcoughlin  
Ms Rachael Pattinson  
Mrs D Shahi  
Dr Robert Thornbury  
Mrs Mary-Louise Thornbury

**Council Officers**

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Doug Goldring | Director of Housing Management                   |
| Mary Larbie   | Interim Assistant Director of Housing Management |
| Keith Edwards | Consultant                                       |
| Grazyna Wilk  | Business Support                                 |
| Joie Gormlie  | Admin Support (minute taker)                     |

**1 MINUTES AND AIRISING**

- 1.1 There were introductions from residents and RBKC officers.
- 1.2 Keith Edwards (KE) went through minutes from last meeting for accuracy. There were no issues.
- 1.3 John Hebditch (JH) asked what the Council can do about ASB. Doug Goldring (DG) said this was discussed at length at the last Homes' meeting.
- 1.4 Gaenor Holland-Williams (GHW) stated that Traverse would be uncontactable from Sunday 30 June. DG said he is to look at issues with communication from Traverse. DG said he has spoken to legal and everyone will be written to about future management issues.

## **2 REPAIRS POLICY**

- 2.1 DG said the Task and Finish Groups gave suggestions on how to deal with repairs before the survey was sent out to residents. We have received 792 responses. 77% of responders supported the policy. The main point to come from it was that there should be a change in how the Council delivers repairs, i.e. bringing in a handypersons service. DG described the results of the survey shown on the presentation slides. DG also stated that it is important that the responsibilities of leaseholders and landlords are clearer.
- 2.2 Robert Thornbury (RT) asked if there has been a surge in requests since the questionnaire. DG stated there had not been a rise in day to day requests, but there had been requests for adaptations and redecoration for elderly.
- 2.3 JH said that following his deep clean complaint, there has been a thorough deep clean on his block, but not the others. DG said that because of the success of the new approach, the other blocks will be deep cleaned in the same way.
- 2.4 Marie-Louise Thornbury (MLT) asked if it is clear how to manage repairs when leaseholders are nearby, in terms of access. DG explained there is a legal process to go through that has been effective; when needed the Council may force entry depending of the risks.
- 2.5 DG said the Repairs Policy is going to Leadership on Tuesday 23 July to be officially signed off.
- 2.6 JH asked about the new repairs vans not having numbers on them that could be used for queries. DG said he would look into this.
- 2.7 GHW said that under the old Housing Management, residents were given a couple of months to talk to the Managing Director. DG said that it has been suggested that the Council continues with a Repairs Forum which would meet a couple of times a year and focus on improving repairs services. KE said the time before Homes' meetings can also be used for individual casework.
- 2.8 D Shahi (DS) asked about the handyperson service and how it can be easily accessed by vulnerable people. DG said this is exactly who it is aimed at. The handyperson service is to be advertised and launched in Autumn.

### **3 COMPENSATION**

- 3.1 DG described the Compensation Policy which is to provide the compensation/reimbursement amount depending on the service failure, and the length of time taken. DG said he had spoken to the Ombudsman and received legal advice. DG said it is important to remove the 'compensation culture'.
- 3.2 JH asked about the compensation policy for lift failures. DG said he will have to check, but believes it includes the ground floor.
- 3.3 Caroline Charles (CC) asked if compensation is given to tenants and leaseholders. DG said it is.
- 3.4 Rachael Pattinson (RP) asked if it is correct that compensation is given to lift failures. DG said that because lift failures can be heavily inconvenient, they will be included in the new policy.
- 3.5 GHW said that residents of different floors are affected by lift failures for different reasons.
- 3.6 KE explained that there will still be some discretionary payments involved. DG said that for block failures, compensation payments should be made and the Council be upfront about the failure. In regards to rent arrears, if the resident is out-of-pocket they should be compensated, if not it will go on their rent account. DG explained betterment payments and compensation can be given for missed appointments, but it is also important to monitor who is missing the appointments. DG stated that we are changing our systems to make sure they are communicating properly; this needs to happen by August 2020.
- 3.7 RT asked about equal opportunities in the Compensation Policy for people with language issues. DG said equalities goes across all sections of Housing Management. Publications are being changed so that people are clearer. There is also someone that has been employed to deal with equalities to ensure the equalities act is not breached; this will be worked on.
- 3.8 C A McLoughlin (CAM) said that some missed (by residents) appointments will be because Repairs turn up when the appointment has been cancelled. DG is aware of this issue and there will be a change of computer system to improve this. Currently Repairs and Neighbourhood Management are on separate systems and this needs to be integrated. DG said a new Head of ICT has started and will move this forward.
- 3.9 JH said that sub-contractor attending his block did not have a parking pass. DG said this is to be sorted.

3.10 DG said the Compensation Policy is to be signed off as a key decision by the Lead Member. KE highlighted that this is the end of a process that started last October.

#### **4 TCC TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- 4.1 KE explained that the TCC had been looking at the draft Terms of Reference which had been developed and included comments. A questionnaire was sent out to TCC members for comments on the TCC Terms of Reference.
- 4.2 GHW thanked DG for including the Terms of Reference on the agenda and asked for questionnaires to be sent to the Homes Group. DG agreed this would be sent.
- 4.3 KE said that the TCC should focus on the big issues of how service is delivered and how it should be in the future. KE read through the TCC Terms of Reference questionnaire.
- 4.4 MT asked the TCC's requirements to report back to their RAs/Compacts. KE read through the 'resident' section of 'Our Joint Commitments' in the Terms of Reference. KE added that the Council will provide support for this.
- 4.5 GHW asked if councillors will come along to regular TCC meetings. DG said the previous Chair of Housing and Property Scrutiny Committee, Cllr Press, asked that councillors are invited to the TCC; DG said this should be addressed to housing specific councillors and he will suggest this to the new Chair.
- 4.6 RT said he had asked Amanda Johnson what long-term research has independently taken place and it is important that the TCC have long-term access to this sort of data. DG said LSE is predominantly focussed on Lancaster West Estate, but their work may be worth expanding.
- 4.7 KE asked if two Homes reps at the TCC is enough. DG stated that 25% of the Council's stock are not represented by RAs/Compacts and added that a Task and Finish Group is to be launched next week to look at constitutions etc.
- 4.8 GHW said her email address had been sent out, but she has not heard back from many people. DG said this is ok; a large amount of residents invest time. JH said 40-50 people out of 9000 does not seem like a lot. DG stated that it is in comparison to other Councils and that there are more people at local meetings than strategic meetings. DG said there are changes happening or planned in every element of the service.
- 4.9 DS asked how to encourage people to form Residents' Associations. DG said he will send information and put DS in contact with someone to help with this.

- 4.10 KE explained that it has been suggested that the number of Homes reps at TCC meetings increases. GHW agreed as it is important to be represented. DG agreed that it is important to represent the Homes view in TCC meetings.
- 4.11 MT asked if 10 representatives is proportionate representation. DG said it is. JH explained different issues will arise from the Homes' meetings.
- 4.12 RT asked what the remit of the TCC is. DG explained that ultimately the Leadership make decisions; most will consider TCC suggestion, although it can be opposed with valid reasons. KE stated that the ultimate responsibility rests with the statutory authority, but the TCC can generate issues to make change. DG stated there will be a residents' conference in October about generating ideas and to showcase good work that has already happened.

## **5 HOMES TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- 5.1 KE read through the Homes Terms of Reference and explained it is similar to the TCC Terms of Reference, but with less joint commitments.
- 5.2 JH said it should be explained at the start of each TCC meeting that minutes are the key points and actions. KE agreed that this would be worth repeating.
- 5.3 GHW asked if Task and Finish Groups are going to be open to anyone. DG said this will be discussed. DG explained that a new Task and Finish Group will be set up around Resident Engagement. Iago Griffith, new Head of Community Investment, will chair this and other resident engagement meetings.

## **6 RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

- 6.1 Mary Larbie (ML) explained Iago Griffith will take resident engagement forward and it is a good moment to improve the resident engagement team. DG stated that resident engagement is embedded in every aspect of the Council and should be used more to scrutinise performance. DG explained that resident engagement can impact on timescales but is important for major policies; for example, the Disability Forum gives a completely different perspective.
- 6.2 ML explained that it is important for residents to be alongside staff during training, i.e. ASB training. DS asked if the residents training will be during the day. DG explained that they have to be during the staff working day, but the training on becoming a RA is outside of office hours.

- 6.3 GHW suggested an elected representative from the Disability Forum automatically hold a place at events and conferences. KE stated the Disability Forum should have its' own Terms of Reference.
- 6.4 ML explained that Task and Finish Groups have visited other providers and can pick up aspects that would be good to replicate.
- 6.5 ML explained data on customer profiles is to be continually updated.

## **7 AOB**

- 7.1 This is KE's last Homes' meeting.
- 7.2 JH asked DG about the basements on Danvers Street. DG stated that action had been taken.
- 7.3 GHW asked how to apply for the Resident Engagement Strategy T&F group. DG said this can be done through housing consult. DG explained the new Task and Finish Group will be intensive, monthly meetings for a while; it will come up on the next TCC.