

NOTES

Meeting title: Residents' Panel

On: 11 August 2020

Held at: via zoom

Present: Lilian Birchall, Celia Rowe, Steve Southwell, Frances Rainey, Carol Gatford, Jacqueline Burke, Siobhan Capella, Dave Godfrey (in part)

In attendance: Clive Cavanagh, Community Development Manager, Ruth Pollard, Resident Engagement Officer, Emily Waters, Governance and Training Officer

Action

1 Governance training with Emily Waters

- 1.1 The meeting started with a 30 minute training session with Emily Waters Governance and Training Officer. Ruth will send Emily's presentation with the notes. Emily stated that the main reason why we have governance is so that we are ethically and legally compliant and it is in the company's best interests. If anyone has any questions about governance please either let Clive or Ruth know and they will pass on to Emily. Emily gave some feedback and stated that residents have asked for Worthing Homes (WH) to be more transparent so decisions made by the Board are now posted on the WH website for anyone to see (not the minutes as these are for the Board). Jackie asked if the positions on the Board are advertised and are they salaried or voluntary positions. Emily informed Jackie that they are salaried positions. Emily stated that each Board member brings a different set of skills and it is important for WH that Board members bring different qualities and skills to the Board.

Ruth

2 Apologies and thank you to Dave Godfrey

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Ann Humphries and Cheyenne Greaves. Steve as Chair thanked Dave Godfrey for his time on the Residents' Panel and his valuable contribution over the last few years. Clive also

thanked Dave for stepping in to be the Chair of the Panel initially at short notice when it was rejuvenated a few years ago due to the new Chair leaving. Dave thanked everyone and said he had enjoyed his time on the Panel and would miss everyone but would see some Panel members at the block reps meetings. Dave then left the meeting.

3 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

- 3.1 The minutes from the February meeting were discussed at the catch up meeting held in June and Steve recapped on what had been discussed at the previous meeting in February.

4 Scrutiny update

- 4.1 Steve gave a presentation to the Residents' Panel of what has happened so far with regard to the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Scrutiny and what was outstanding to be actioned. Carol asked Steve that if a resident has dementia would they be reading WH literature. Steve informed Carol that he wasn't sure but WH should be everything to everyone even if it is a family member, friend or carer reading the literature it should still be easy to read. Carol also said that residents with learning difficulties would have the same problem. Steve said that all WH literature looks the same, for example if you were looking for a pet policy it would be nice to see a policy that had a picture of a cat, dog or budgie on the front. Carol then said you need someone with dementia and learning problems to look at WH literature. Steve informed everyone that it would be good to invite anyone with these qualities to help with this and Lilian has been looking at WH literature from a dementia friendly point of view. Ruth suggested that for those residents who have visual impairments and poor literacy skills the booklets could be available on audio through U tube on WH website. Steve said he had seen a housing association where they have all of their booklets/information/flyers on audio. Ruth would suggest this to Suzanne. Clive asked Steve how long he thought it was going to take to finish the scrutiny. Steve replied he would like to see it finished by mid-September.

Ruth

5 New ways to engage with residents

- 5.1 Ruth gave a presentation on new ways to engage with residents now and in the future. Presentation attached. Regarding the gardening comp Clive suggested making a short video for gardeners' world. Jackie also suggested a competition at Christmas as many residents where she lives make a lovely display inside and outside their homes.

Ruth

6 Chair Vice-Chair and responsibilities of the Residents' Panel (including induction programme and ongoing training)

- 6.1 Cheyenne had been the Chair of the Residents' Panel for 2 years and in October 2019 she agreed to continue for one more year. Clive informed everyone that he would like to begin the process of an election to identify a new Chair. Anyone who wishes to stand could they please get in touch with either Clive or Ruth. By the time of the next meeting, 13 October, we will announce who the candidates are. If there is only one candidate and there are no objections we would look for that person to be elected however if there were more candidates a vote would take place so by the meeting on 8 December we would have a new resident to take Cheyenne's place. Jackie asked if there was a role profile for the chair position. Ruth will email the Chair job spec to everyone. The closing date for nominations is 1 September. Jackie asked who is the Vice-Chair and Clive informed Jackie that to date we have not had a Vice-Chair but it would be good to have someone in this role so they could step in if needed. If anyone would like to apply for this position or for both positions could they please get in touch with Clive or Ruth.
- 6.2 Clive informed everyone that he feels an induction is important for new members of the Panel as you would get to meet key members of Worthing Homes. We are also looking at courses for new Panel members to do as they join as opposed to courses that may be available to Panel members who have been involved for quite a while. We are looking at an ongoing training programme. Steve has come up with a list of potential areas for training.

7 Feedback on the Value for Money Self-assessment

7.1 Clive went through some highlights of the VFM statement that had been sent to Panel members. Clive informed everyone that it shows a number of key outcomes and how we plan to ensure that we maximise our resources to achieve them. Clive highlighted a few areas of interest and reiterated that this document was for the Panel to look at and give feedback on or ask questions about any areas they were concerned with. Jackie mentioned the void maintenance costs that are £50k higher than budget as mentioned at 8.1. Jackie believed that £50k is a lot of money and suggested that WH could take someone on, on a P/T basis to do regular inspections of the properties so that residents are aware that they have got to maintain them. She believed that WH should be doing more preventative work which would reduce costs. Celia mentioned that residents don't have to let a member of staff in to their property, a discussion ensued as some members thought that WH would have rights to enter properties to do gas checks, six monthly inspections etc. Jackie gave an example of where she lives that a flat has been vacated and needed attention before it is re-let. Jackie asked why are WH letting people leave properties in such a state, the £50k could be put to better use. Steve mentioned that he was surprised when he moved into his flat not to have a property inspection with someone and he has not had one yet. Both Jackie and Siobhan believed that it is not unreasonable to ask that a property inspection is carried out and it will keep residents on their toes a little bit. Clive appreciated their comments and will take them forward.

Clive

7.2 Steve mentioned on page 3, the procurement of cleaning services stating '*the contract will be designed to better meet the needs of residents and include for performance monitoring*' Steve asked who is going to be doing the monitoring. Clive said that both he and Ruth had made efforts to ensure that residents are involved in this procurement but he agreed that this should also include sight of the contract once in operation.

Clive

8 News from the Board

- 8.1 Celia gave an update ... Davison House is now open to colleagues that are unable to work from home following the appropriate safety measures being put in place and colleagues will soon be able to use the office by appointment where work cannot be undertaken in their own home. Staff who wish to go in for a couple of hours can now do so. Upstairs will become available if teams wish to get together but only one team at a time and they need to book in advance. Colleagues are still being encouraged to work from home and ultimately going forward staff will do a couple of days in the office and the rest from home.
- 8.2 The hardship fund which was set up by WH to assist any residents struggling due to the pandemic has spent most of the £15k budget. The majority of the money requested covered food, gas and electricity also some white goods.
- 8.3 Financial inclusion co-ordinations continue to advise residents on Universal Credit and other financial benefits. Over the year WH has invested in existing stock including additional fire safety works as well as planned maintenance. The customer portal is now launching which offers a self-service option.
- 8.4 There is a 5 year project tackling climate change and our carbon footprint. WH aims to use greener materials and respond positively to the climate change agenda. Reducing the use of single use plastics in the workplace and looking into switching to electric vans. WH will be engaging a consultant to assess if we can put in retro fittings of new heating, insulation and other systems into our existing homes. WH are also aiming to phase out the current practice of replacing old gas boilers by 2025 they are look at what different types of systems will be best in different types of homes.
- 8.5 Twenty-seven homes have been completed since April 2020 and land has been purchased at Toddington Lane, Littlehampton. There are 5 schemes currently forecast to deliver 76 homes during the remainder of 2021.
- 8.6 Clive added that WH has 7 sheltered schemes one of which is Elizabeth House, and at the moment WH are looking to do something called Sheltered Plus. WH are in discussion with WSCC for them to take on a few of the empty flats to be able to offer a higher level of service which

is not extra care but is also not basic sheltered so the residents in these flats will receive extra support and some nursing and caring too.

9 AOB

9.1 Nik asked Celia about the replacement of boilers with something more eco efficient by 2025 and asked her to expand. Will they be replacing the gas combi boilers with something else. Celia replied that as boilers go wrong or are not repairable, they will have to be replaced by some other form of heating. Nik commented that if the Board decide to change the gas boiler for an electric boiler where an electric boiler would be more expensive to run what would that mean for residents. Celia replied that the Board are looking at lots of options including solar panels and environmental friendly replacements. Celia said that when she hears more on this subject she will update the Panel. Ruth suggested that this could be a topic for a future meeting on what the options are going to be.

Ruth

9.2 Clive informed everyone that he is interviewing staff for the National Lottery Community Fund project in Arun and also for roles at Community House and he is hoping to open the house in mid-September. The house will be very different to how it used to be because of the pandemic and ensuring social distancing is going to be difficult as the rooms are quite small.

9.3 Ruth informed everyone that the meeting dates that had previously been given have now changed and the new dates are 13 October, 8 December, 9 February 2021 and 20 April 2021.

9.4 Nik informed everyone that he will not be available for a few months due to health reasons.

9.5 Steve mentioned that Timpsons are cutting master keys for residents even though it says on the key 'do not duplicate' which is a mass security issue. WH are aware of this and it is being looked at.

9.6 Steve has joined the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme for Cambourne Court and informed everyone that you have to go through a police check to be a coordinator and is waiting to hear back on that. Steve is hoping to recruit a few residents to be part of the neighbourhood watch team. Clive asked Ruth to publicise this in the Home News magazine to

Ruth

encourage other residents to either join a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme or set up their own.

Signed .  . Chair Date: 09th September 2020