

Housing Performance Panel
Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting
held on Thursday, 2 March 2023
from 1pm to 4pm via Zoom

Attendees: Peter Campbell (Head of Housing) – Chair
Cllr John Batchelor
Brian Burton
Les Rolfe
Patricia Hall
Paul Bowman

By Invitation: Elaine Phillips (Mears)
Geoff Clark (SCDC – Service Manager – Tenancy and Estates)
Eddie Spicer (SCDC – Service Manager – Housing Assets)
Grace Andrews (SCDC – Data Quality and Improvement Team Leader)
Dave Armitage (SCDC – Resident Involvement Officer Team Leader)
Bronwen Taylor (SCDC – Resident Involvement Officer) – Minute taker

Apologies: Eleni Koutso

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting at 1.02pm, especially Dave Armitage, the new Resident Involvement Team Leader.

Apologies were received from Eleni Koutso.

2. Quorum

The meeting was quorate.

3. Minutes of previous meeting – 1 December 2022

The Chair referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2022, which were approved by the panel.

4. Matters Arising from previous Meeting – 8 September 2022

4.1 Estate Inspections (item 5.4) (Item 4.1)

Geoff Clark advised that a meeting was held on 19 January 2023 with the tenant volunteers. He said that he had reviewed what had happened over the last few years and that the team had been slow at updating the Estate Inspections Records and Actions worksheet, however, he had met with the HSOs and had stressed the importance of keeping it up to date and recorded properly. He added that certain issues took longer to resolve.

Paul Bowman said that he was pleased to hear this and that he understood that certain issues were out of their remit, however, they did not know the outcome of these issues as they were not tracked properly. He added that an audit trail was needed by reporting when and to whom issues were reported.

4.2 Estate Inspections (item 5.4)

Patti Hall emailed the details of the communal hall issue on her estate to Eddie Spicer who requested Mears to carry out the repair, and although there was a delay with carpentry works due to a vacant post, this would be booked in as soon as possible.

Patti Hall had also advised that there was a damaged pathway which was investigated by SCDC, however, the responsibility fell with Cambridge County Council.

Eddie Spicer advised that SCDC would be making the repair in the interim as there was a delay with County Council.

5. Standing Items

5.1 Mears Group – Review of Quarter 3

Elaine Phillips, from Mears, referred to the report in the pack and advised that she had looked at and discussed the KPIs highlighted in red with Eddie Spicer, and would be discussing these at the monthly Performance Review Joint Working Group meeting. She highlighted the following KPIs:

- V3a – 1 void awaiting new electric meter over 9 months
- R3 – 2 weeks' worth of routine cancelled and rebooked due to service demand on emergencies
- R7 – new 2 hour appointment slots a challenge operationally

- R8 – pre-October 2022 average responses were 122 – average response for Q3 went down to 90 (ninety)

A lengthy discussion on the KPIs was held.

Les Rolfe said that when they saw a tenant move out, they assumed that that would be the start date of the void.

The Chair agreed and explained that in some cases, tenants moved out before their actual tenancy ended.

Eddie Spicer said that this report was only on work done by Mears and that in future the report would be in a new format.

Paul Bowman referred to an email he had sent to Eddie Spicer regarding the “opt out” option on Mears’ SMS survey and asked if this meant opting out for the one instance or for all future Mears visits. He asked for the data for the number of opt outs taken so far.

Eddie Spicer advised that it was part of GDPR to have the opt out option, however, we were still unsure if it was a once off opt out and were looking into this. He said he would reply to Paul Bowman’s email.

Les Rolfe referred to item 7.1 from the previous minutes, Essential winter items for vulnerable tenants, and said that it would appear that the Sheltered Estate Officers did not know what to do with the items.

Eddie Spicer said that there was ample provision and that he had met with the Sheltered Estate Officers in December 2022 to explain the reason for the warm packs, and that it was their judgement call as to how they were distributed.

The Chair said that that was not his understanding and that we would confirm how many packs had been distributed.

Cllr Batchelor said that he believed that all items had been distributed.

Action by: Eddie Spicer

5.2 Repairs contract – Performance Review Joint Working Group

Eddie Spicer referred to the report included in the pack and advised that two meetings had been held. He said that they were looking at Key Performance Indicators and overall satisfaction. He added that the meetings were useful and that the tenants feedback was valued.

5.3 SCDC – Review of Quarter 3 Performance Data

Grace Andrews went through a presentation on the Performance Data for Quarter 3, highlighting the key indicators that had either improved or declined, as follows:

- Housing Options and Advice – maintained – this had moved from a KPI to a LPI
- Void Properties – declined
- Satisfaction with response repairs – declined
- Non-emergency (routine) repairs – improved – however, not in target

Eddie Spicer said that the reason the December 2022 figures had dropped was due to routine repairs being cancelled during the cold spell in order to deal with urgent boiler issues.

- Rent Arrears – top performing
- Proportion of homes with a valid Gas Safety Certificate – top performing

5.4 SCDC – Review of Quarter 3 Complaints Data

Grace Andrews went through the Complaints and Compliments Data for Quarter 3 and said there was an increase in complaints this quarter, however, less complaints were received this year compared to the same time last year. She said that approximately 5 (five) complaints were received on average and the total for this year was 16 (sixteen).

Eddie Spicer said that there had been an influx of complaints on damp and mould due to the fuel crisis. He explained that the nature of complaints had changed and that it was not a drop in service levels.

Geoff Clark said that there was a definite trend as when a topic was in the news, we saw an influx in those types of complaints.

5.5 Estate Inspections

Bronwen Taylor referred to the draft Estate Inspection schedule included in the pack and advised that estate inspections would start in April 2023. She said that she was awaiting confirmation on some of the areas and would send the final schedule to the tenant volunteers in due course. She added that she had allocated tenant volunteers to the inspections based on where they lived in relation to the distance to the estates being visited.

6. New Matters

6.1 Community Activities

Dave Armitage advised that he had met with all the tenant volunteers earlier in the week and said that he was planning to arrange community activities, for example, litter picking, together with tenant volunteers, in order to make ourselves visible and to encourage residents to find out more about what we do. He said he would send be sending out a schedule of planned events.

6.2 Key Amnesty Campaign

Geoff Clark advised that the Key Amnesty Campaign had run during the month of February 2023. He said that letters were sent to all tenants explaining that it was an opportunity for them to either return keys anonymously or report tenants, who they thought were committing tenancy fraud, without consequences. He said that he was not aware of any keys being returned, however, it was a good way of raising awareness of tenancy fraud.

The Chair said that a review of the process was currently being conducted and would be presented at a future meeting.

7. Any Other Business (AOB)

7.1 Stock Condition Survey

The Chair advised that SCDC were in the process of appointing Michael Dyson Associates (MDA) to conduct a survey on the stock condition over the next year. He said that he had written to both the HPP and HEB advising them of the survey and that they would be included in the analysis of the figures. He added that MDA did offer social value projects and that tenants would be involved. He said that as this was a lengthy project, SCDC were being careful with the communication that went out and the plan was to advise tenants that the survey was taking place just before they moved to their properties or areas.

7.2 Tenant Satisfaction Survey

The Chair referred to the previous Tenant Satisfaction Survey and said that SCDC were planning to conduct this survey annually which reflected the requirements of the Housing Regulator. He said that an external provider would be used and that we would be going

out for tender. He added that as part of this process, an independent contractor would be used to gather satisfaction levels from the Mears contract.

Eddie Spicer said that third party satisfaction surveys would be conducted on all works, whether it was done by Mears or other contractors, and would give us a better overall view of the repairs side of housing.

Cllr Batchelor asked if this would apply to every job.

The Chair advised that it was not for every job. He said that the survey company would provide a report that was statistically accurate, giving an accuracy figure within 3% which was the government requirement. He added that we had requested them to inform us of the methodology used.

8. Proposed Meeting Dates for 2023 / 2024

The Chair referred to the proposed meeting dates for 2023 / 2024 as follows:

- 15 June 2023 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)
- 14 September 2023 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)
- 7 December 2023 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)
- 14 March 2024 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)

Bronwen Taylor said she would send out meeting invitations.

Action by: Bronwen Taylor

9. Closing

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 2.28pm.