



NOTTING HILL HOUSING GROUP

West London Local Scrutiny Panel (LSP)

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 16th May 2017

Sussex Place

Present: Residents - GK , AH (stand in chair), MV, RG, GC, MG

Staff –CG, SA, MD, RM, DF

Apologies: Residents – MB (Chair), ET

Staff –CS, AS, ED

Minute Taker: AP

ACTION

1.	Welcome and Introduction	
	<p>AH stepped in as chair for this meeting as MB unwell. CG suggested that the LSP send flowers to MB.</p> <p>AH made reference to the governance review that will contribute to the way the LSPs work in future.</p> <p>AH mentioned that every quarter, chairs will be given the opportunity to speak to the board members of NHH to get an idea of what actually should be discussed at the LSP's.</p> <p>CG added that the ATB committee as it stands will no longer be there in the future.</p> <p>MB will follow up on this at the next meeting.</p>	
2.	Minutes of last meeting and matters arising	
	<p>Minutes from last meeting approved.</p>	
3.	Terms of Reference/Working Agreement	
	<p>AH referred to the terms of reference and working agreement.</p>	
4.	PRH Heating & Hot Water	

	This item was deferred until the next meeting.	
5.	NHHO Business Plan Presentation	
	<p>The Business Plan 2017 – 2022 was drafted by ED and presented to the ATB committee.</p> <p>MD gave an update on this to the meeting.</p> <p>NHHO relies more on properties that are sold so that this profit can be fed back into the business by looking at the reduction in grants for the PRH side. This has been difficult Brexit and the new ruling around right to buy, has left some uncertainty in the market which has impacted the sale of properties. Sales department sort opportunities abroad to sell to overseas investors.</p> <p>MD mentioned that at the end of the last fiscal year; NHHO didn't end with the amount of sales as desired but they were off by around 5 sales. She highlighted that going into the new year the Sales & Marketing team are working together to look at different ways to approach potential buyers, different tailored projects. Without spending too much money to get these things done.</p> <p>MD mentioned that there's a new Director of Homeownership; PFR, Head of Sales; JM (Acting) & Head of Leasehold; ED.</p> <p>MD said that there has previously been issues in feeding back down towards the Development team & Delivery team to make sure that the properties that are bought going forward are the right ones. In recognition of this the business has set up a Difficult Buildings Project Team who meet monthly, they feed back to Delivery & Development.</p> <p>Individual PMO's are hitting high records in their customer satisfaction results but as a department as a whole, this target wasn't met.</p> <p>NHHO are working more on communicating digitally to get news out and so digital noticeboards are being implemented in the communal area which has proved to be beneficial so far. The initial set up cost for this is around £2000.</p> <p>MD mentioned that previously, within the sales team, there was one team who dealt with brand new sales and another team who dealt with re-sales; the two elements are now managed jointly across two teams.</p> <p>MD made reference to the RAW (Royal Albert Wharf) transition in Beckton, Newham. This is the first NHHO development where there is mixed tenure so there is: PRH, Folio (Market Rent) & Shared Ownership and a managing agent has been appointed to manage on behalf of NHH. The area is under regeneration.</p> <p>MD implementing longer periods of off-site sales to help schemes like this extended to 12 months which will allow the money to come in and have less voids when the money comes in.</p> <p>RAW is being used as a trial in how defects are managed. A Defects</p>	

	<p>Coordinator has been employed in which there is one person to call to report all of your issues to. This means that they will be able to build a relationship with the contractors and customers.</p> <p>MD mentioned that NHHO won an award at the NLC (National Leasehold Conference) for Leasehold Best Service in Practice.</p> <p>MD highlighted that they have a new way of reporting customer satisfaction which is more accurate.</p> <p>NHHO are prioritising the sales targets for this year and going forward. Improving the moving in experience. Develop a clear vision of the large multi-tenure development. Improving customer satisfaction. Section 106 team will be split into two and which has presented an acting Up position to be recruited internally. There to employ within and that recruitment process will take place by the end of the month. We have also looked at incentives to develop and retain talented staff; empowering high performers and buddying them up with new-starters.</p> <p>GC made reference to Westgate House and if NHH has learnt from that mistake, trying to avoid it happening again. MD responded that Westgate House is a different setup to RAW as the issue was with how the leases were drafted. With Westgate House, they were given the control of managing the scheme; whereas with RAW, NHH have more control as they've told the managing agent exactly what they do or don't want to be done.</p> <p>MD made note of the Leasehold Guide which is available online.</p> <p>MD mentioned that customers prefer to have one person to talk to which is in approval of the ATB model.</p> <p>MD made reference to the managing fee. NHH doesn't cover the costs which they incur of managing these buildings. Smaller blocks who feel like they pay more than others whereas larger estates feel as though they get more value for money.</p> <p>NHH are subject to OJEU in which we have to go out to tender on big products (e.g. cleaning & gardening is a £12m project) in compliance with the European laws. MD mentioned that the estate management contractors has gone out to tender. An idea about quotes and the front-runners should be available by the next meeting. CH will be asked to give an update on this for the next meeting.</p> <p>AH asked if there was an organisational chart for the restructuring in NHHO. MD will send out a link for the organogram if it is online.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Transfer Changes</p>	
	<p>RM spoke about the changes in NHH lettings strategy for void properties that are not offered to the borough (roughly 200 lets yearly). The proposal is that instead of advertising these vacancies on Locata and giving our tenants</p>	

	<p>priority in bidding for them we will advertise properties more widely on services such as Right Move or Zoopla.</p> <p>Currently we have around 3000 people are on the transfer list. We assess each application and place them into four bands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A – emergency • B – urgent • C – need to move • D – no assessed need to move. <p>Last year we were only able to move 5% or 135 of those waiting. This is because demand far exceeds supply.</p> <p>In the PRH Business Plan we said that we planned to move away from the current system and start offering these properties on an external website open to the public.</p> <p>RM covered the following problems with the current system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the high volume in transfer applications and very low numbers of properties available • tenants can spend more time appealing against their banding rather than bidding on properties or looking for exchanges • there are roughly 717 people in Band A and B (emergency and urgent need to move); 578 of these haven't bid on anything in the last 6 months and 285 of these have never placed a bid • band C is the largest group and they are the ones with the most moves indicating that we are not moving those in most urgent need • a dependency in that people were registering for a transfer and not exploring the alternative option of mutual exchanges <p>RM highlighted questions around this change: Who will we let to? If we are letting to external residents, how are we going to determine their housing need? Are we going to still continue to prioritise our own tenants without replicating the banding system?</p> <p>RM explained that we are looking for a new way to evaluate those who in housing need, want to find a quicker way to do so and are considering how much choice we will allow people within that. We may allocate additional resources to help people with exchanges.</p> <p>RM said that there will be a working group and asked if anyone is interested in being part of this. There is likely to be a 2 hour session and we can arrange this at a venue convenient to the attendees.</p> <p>He asked if anybody has any suggestions on how this should work or questions about the proposal.</p> <p>In answer to a question SA explained that those who are overcrowded are in Band C and that Band A and B are for under occupiers and those with emergency and urgent needs. The latter would be those with urgent medical needs or in violence situations including threat to life, racial harassment, abuse, domestic violence etc.</p> <p>RM mentioned that we are trying to shift the responsibility onto the tenant</p>	
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	<p>to move rather than have them relying on us to transfer them. He said that hard-to-let properties would have a wider audience if we advertise on an external portal.</p> <p>RM mentioned that NHH are tied into nomination rights which means that about 75% of our lettings have to be given to the local Borough.</p> <p>CG mentioned that market rent, shared accommodation and other forms of lettings are all accessible online so the proposal would tie in with these other lettings.</p> <p>AH expressed concerns around fairness – how would that be achieved. Rm said that lettings are likely to be on a first come, first serve basis.</p> <p>GC asked what would be the option for those that want to transfer internally. SA answered that they would no longer be able to internally transfer but rather they would need to consider a mutual exchange.</p> <p>RM will send an email around letting everybody know details of the working group.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Performance Reports</p>	
	<p>SA highlighted that there is a new way of reporting as we are now using a Tableau reports which shows the data in graphs rather than tables as previously done.</p> <p>PRH Customer Satisfaction & Service Standards</p> <p>Hounslow: 75.9% for the whole year Ealing: 75% for the year</p> <p>Agreed that it would be good to include ease of access to Housing Officers in the data for next time.</p> <p>Estate Management</p> <p>Ealing: 96% estate inspections completed CG will be going out for an estate inspection at Drayton Bridge with two local councillors. This is done regularly, throughout the year.</p> <p>Hounslow: 100% estate inspections completed. Feedback: no targets on the graphs. This to be included in the data for the next meeting.</p> <p>Rental Income, Collection & Debt Management</p> <p>Ealing: Arrears were 7% against a target of 6.6% and rent collected as % of rent due was 100.80% against a target of 101%</p> <p>Hounslow: Arrears were 5% against a target of 5.13% and rent collected as %</p>	

	<p>of rent due was 100.54% against a target of 101%</p> <p>SA mentioned that HB pays directly to NHH but people on UC; payment is made to them causing a gap. SA highlighted that those who have more than 2 children will not be put onto UC.</p> <p>Empty Properties & Lettings</p> <p>Ealing: 26 days to re-let a standard relet, which was also the average for PRH overall, against a target of 21 days.</p> <p>CG mentioned that the team have a lot of sheltered properties which are sometimes difficult to let. She is planning an open day at a sheltered scheme (e.g. Sidney Miller Court) to encourage people to look at a sheltered property and to gain an understanding on why these properties have high refusals.</p> <p>CG also mentioned that a mutual exchange event is planned for the beginning of June.</p> <p>Hounslow: 15 days to re-let a standard void against a target of 21 days.</p> <p>Repairs</p> <p>Outer West is second place for repairs completed on time.</p> <p>Complaints</p> <p>Ealing: 93% were responded to in target. Fewer complaints in March. CG mentioned that they are having refresher courses in regards to complaints performance.</p> <p>Hounslow: 79% were responded to in target.</p> <p>Both teams underperforming in stage 2 complaints.</p> <p>Anti-Social Behaviour</p> <p>Ealing: CG updated the panel on the case of the drug/crack house. Possession was taken and a family has been re-housed in the property.</p> <p>Hounslow: SA updated the panel on the case where there were allegations that the tenant isn't living there and that there has been asb including an assault in the property. We attempted to gain possession on grounds of rent arrears but the tenant reduced her arrears to under 8 weeks so this was not agreed by the court. Arrears then went up and we applied to court again however the tenant counter claimed disrepair. We are taking advice from solicitors.</p> <p>SA reported that nuisance in the case of the tenant's son having parties when the mum wasn't there stopped following service of the notice.</p> <p>SA reported on a new case relating to drug use. Awaiting a report from the police about what they've done so that we know what to do next.</p>	
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	<p>Leasehold This item has been deferred until the next meeting.</p>	
8.	<p>Complaints Process</p>	
	<p>DF's presentation is included with these minutes.</p> <p>DF highlighted that a complaint is any dissatisfaction with NHH's service. It might be about a repair but it's not the repair itself but how we deal with it that can cause a complaint. It could be failure to respond to an initial enquiry; not being helpful, unclear advice given, policies & procedures are incorrect or deemed to be unfair, unhappy with actions or decisions.</p> <p>DF made reference to the complaints procedure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A complaint is received 2. Quick fix; 24 hours response (i.e. a talk with the tenant/leaseholder) 3. Stage 1 complaint (10 working days response target) 4. Stage 2 review (15 working days response target) 5. Housing OMBUDSMAN Service (9 – 12 months process) <p><u>Stage 1 Complaint</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complaint confirmed 2. Complaint logged on database 3. Complaint directly relating to member of staff? Yes; then team manager investigates issues and a formal response is sent to complainant. No; then HO/PMO deals with & investigates the issues and then a formal response is sent to the complainant. 4. Stage 1 complaint is marked as resolved on the database <p><u>Stage 2 Reviews</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stage 2 review confirmed. Database updated 2. Review pack compiled by line manager of stage 1 handler. Review pack includes background to the case, timelines, recommendation, salient emails/reports 3. Manager contacts independent reviewers with review pack and requests feedback 4. Independent reviewers supply feedback to manager 5. Manager considers feedback and issues formal response 6. Stage 2 review is marked as resolved on the database <p>DF stated that this information is in the policy which is online.</p> <p>DF mentioned that NHH don't receive any direct complaints on Twitter in which they will deal with on that platform. If so, the communications team will pick this up and direct them to their relative PMO/HO.</p> <p>DF mentioned that the rule of thumb for the stage 2 review is 6 months in which there will be 15 days for that to be dealt with.</p> <p>DF highlighted that if the complainant is not happy with the stage 1 response, then this escalates to a stage 2 review; this is to be dealt with by the same line manager of the stage 1 complaint.</p>	

	<p>DF stated that if this is not enough, then they can go to the Housing OMBUDSMAN Service who will act as a mediator at first but if not; this can take between 9 – 12 months.</p> <p>DF mentioned that the complaints team are backend staff for the frontline staff.</p> <p>DF stated that once complaints are confirmed then these are logged onto a database.</p> <p>DF highlighted that the complaints team are also responsible for logging compliments.</p> <p>The complaints team have regular meetings with the G15 in which the Housing OMBUDSMAN attend and give advice, insight & tips.</p> <p>AH asked if this information could be brought to the next meeting.</p> <p>DF explained that he would be able to get this data for the next meeting.</p> <p>RG stated that maybe complaints should be called something else like feedback in order for people to go through with it initially.</p> <p>DF explained that if a complaint is referred to as a complaint, then it can be dealt with accordingly and appropriately.</p> <p>DF mentioned that complaints are generally higher in the Summer and fewer complaints are received in the Winter.</p>	
9.	A2B Committee	
	No papers available. This will be deferred to the next meeting.	
10.	AOB	
	<p>SA & CG gave a tour of the building to several LSP members.</p> <p>AH made reference to the next meeting dates.</p> <p>5 September – Ealing Town Hall</p> <p>7 November – Sussex Place</p> <p>SA asked if there were any agenda items for the next meeting.</p> <p>People to go away and think about this for next time.</p>	
	Meeting closed	

NEXT MEETING: 5 September Ealing Town Hall, 6pm