



Meeting of the

Customer Panel

held

at The Minto Centre

on

24th April 2022 at 4.00pm

Present: Debbie Fox (WHA)
Susan Duxbury (WHA)
Julie Armstrong (WHA)
Andrea Sharp (WHA)
John Burrow (Tenant)
Colin Tooley (Tenant)
Marilyn Allison (Resident)

1. Apologies for Absence

Bill Reville, Andrew Hardcastle, Cheryl McGraffin

2. Purpose of the Group

Debbie Fox gave an introduction to the meeting.

Information will be circulated to those who couldn't attend.

Customer Panel Brief

Discussed the Customer Panel brief which sets out the purpose of the group and how we want customers to be involved. Panel members are expected to act as representatives for residents and bring their feedback to the Panel.

Westfields Engagement Strategy is on the website. Panel members are encouraged to have a look at this and see how people can become involved.

All the documents that are being discussed today were initially due to be drafted with the Panel members however due to covid we have drafted these documents, but these are just drafts. We would ask the Customer Panel to identify any gaps or provide feedback on what we have set out and if there are any changes required etc.

Main Duties of the Panel

Discussed the main duties of the Panel.

Performance – Debbie will circulate general performance figures for Panel members to have a look at.

Repairs performance figures were requested as a lot of issues are being raised :-

- Affects due to covid

- Struggling with materials

- Fire replacements

Debbie advised that we are looking at giving contractors access to our systems to enable them to report on completions etc.

We benchmark our performance against other similar size Housing Associations. Westfield Housing Association is a member of the Community Housing Association North West group – which is Housing Associations in the North West with less than 1000 properties so we can compare our performance to other similar size organisations and see how we are doing.

Customer Feedback would be considered the Panel i.e.) number of complaints, type and learning from the complaints as well as any compliments received.

Business Plan – Panel members could be involved in the annual review of the Business Plan.

Annual report – the Customer Panel can contribute to this and may come up with new ideas to be included in the annual report.

Customer offer – this will be discussed further into the meeting.

Planned Maintenance – may be involved in our planned maintenance programme. Could attend post inspections on work complete last year and pre inspections for work due to be carried out this year.

The Panel will consider applications to the Neighbourhood Investment Fund (NIF). Any applications received would be emailed out to the Panel members for consideration rather than wait for the next meeting.

The work of the Panel would be promoted in newsletters, on the website, annual report and whilst officers are carrying out home visits with tenants.

Debbie asked if anyone had any concerns about the brief and if there was anything that worried anyone?

Consensus was that it is OK and seems a fair assessment of what is expected.

3. How it will work

This will be a smaller more focused meeting compared to the Residents' meetings. This Panel will report back to Board and will follow a more structured approach.

Meetings will have an agenda and will be minuted.

Discussed if the Panel would like a Chair. This is to be considered by the Panel and if anyone is interested in the role of Chair then please let Debbie Fox know.

The Panel are to consider any services they would like to be involved in and if they have interest in a particular area then let us know and we can arrange that.

4. Neighbourhood Management Policy

This draft policy is for the Westfield Estate and St Mary's Court.

ACTION Can the Panel have a look through this and come back with any feedback in 2 weeks' time.

Debbie went through the policy

- Request to change point 6.1 – to say that **we will aim to remove fly tipping within 2 working days**

Consensus is that the Panel found it ok but will email any further information or comments once they have read through it again.

Customer Offer

This will be changed to Customer Offer, and it is for all residents not just the Westfield Estate.

Debbie discussed this and advised that again this was draft. We would report back on this offer to future Customer Panel meetings

Feedback was requested from the Panel as to whether these are valid issues, have we missed anything?

ACTION 2 weeks for feedback to be submitted.

Debbie asked the Panel to start thinking about future things that they could be involved with i.e:

- Service Standards
- Planned Maintenance
- Performance information
- Customer Feedback

5. Review of rent arrears process

Fed back to the Panel on the review of the rent arrears process which John Burrow was involved with.

Repairs and maintenance is the next area for review. This will take place on Tuesday 7th June and will be all day. If anyone would like to be involved then let Debbie know.

6. Any Other Business

Recruitment to the Panel

Can the Panel think of any way we can recruit additional members to the Panel or if they are aware of anyone that may like to be involved, please let us know.

Football Pitch

Project ongoing to put football posts on the park. The field needs additional work to level this off to make it suitable for use. Croziers have provided a quote to level the area, turf and put the football posts up - £12,180.00

Town Council have awarded £1,500.00 to the project

An application has been submitted to Cumbria Police for £2,500.00

This leaves £8,100.00 for Westfield Housing Association to contribute.

Panel asked if they would agree to this contribution from the NIF fund. After much discussion around the pros and cons of the project and as this was something that the residents had asked for - **the panel agreed to this contribution.**

7. Date of Next Meeting

August for next meeting and then December – dates to be circulated.

Other things will be circulated in between meetings.