

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL
WEST AREA
17/8/2022 2PM
MINUTES**

Attendees:

Residents: Anne Tizzard, Joseph Macrae, Roy Crowhurst, Patricia Weller, Vic Dodd, Alison Grey, Murial Briault,

Councillors: Cllr Allcock (Chair), Cllr Barnett,

Officers: Janet Dowdell, Justine Harris, Rich Wheeler, Francis Mitchell, Sam Warren, Laszlo Gera, Natalie Beckwith, Graham Dawes, Geof Gage, Grant Ritchie,

Press: Felice Southwell,

1 – WELCOME, APOLOGIES & INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Atkinson and Cllr Bagaeen.

2.1 2 – ACTIONS AND MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Provide a written response to the next meeting regarding the invoices for Muriel's guttering repair.

2.2 Grant Ritchie stated that he can provide a written response to Muriel.

- a. **ACTION** – Grant Ritchie to provide a written response to Muriel regarding the cumulative costs for guttering repair.

2.3 Confirm with Rosemary Whitehouse that investigation of residents contaminated water supply has been actioned.

2.4 Geof Gage stated that he will follow up on this.

- a. **ACTION** – Geof Gage to provide update on this action to the next meeting.

2.5 Update to be provided at the next meeting regarding Estate Inspection routes and frequency

2.6 Janet Dowdell provided a verbal update at the meeting, stating a 12-week estate walkabout pilot had recently been completed with three estate walkabouts being carried out in each area. Janet Dowdell stated that there will be a period dedicated to reviewing feedback given by Councillors, residents and staff before estate walkabouts are rolled out across the city. Janet Dowdell also stated that each walkabout lasted for approximately an hour and a half to two hours and was focused on environmental improvements. Janet Dowdell stated that the intention is to restart estate walkabouts next October.

2.7 Cllr Barnett expressed concern about the condition of some estates and cited the importance of estate inspections.

2.8 Anne Tizzard stated that she had not been notified that estate walkabouts were being resumed and was informed that this was because walkabouts had not yet been held in her estate.

2.9 Muriel Briault was informed that Blakers Court was inspected.

2.10 *Martin Reid to follow up with Robert Walker to provide more detailed responses to questions on page 20 of February's agenda as published by Democratic Services. (Item 4.5: Weed Control Issue)*

2.11 There was no response provided to this question.

2.12 Sam Warren stated that there may have been an administrative error in getting some actions to relevant officers.

- a. **ACTION** – Sam Warren to ensure administrative error is resolved before next meeting.

2.13 *Sam Warren to ask a member of Parking Services to attend next meeting.*

2.14 As stated in the action log, this action is no longer needed as Parking is now open for longer and as such is no longer as much of an issue.

2.15 *Sam Warren/Richard Wheeler to arrange a meeting with CityClean regarding dog-waste bins in Greenleas Park.*

2.16 Laszlo Gera (CityClean Operations Manager) provided an explanation as to why there was an issue with dog-waste bins in Greenleas Park and outlined plans to increase capacity to reduce this issue, citing more bins in the park and more frequent visits from CityClean operatives.

- a. **ACTION** – Laszlo Gera to come back to a future meeting with details on improvements to bin collections in Greenleas Park and to answer questions residents may have.

2.17 *Justine Harris to look into more frequent responses in regard to Environmental Improvement Work.*

2.18 Justine Harris stated that this action had been responded to on page 41 of the agenda.

2.19 *Martin Reid to follow up on vacant homes and home relet times.*

2.20 The Chair stated that information relating to this action is available in item 3 of the agenda.

2.21 Keely and Rosemary to understand what information is being requested by Alison and respond to her list of questions.

2.22 2.13 Sam Warren stated that she would follow this up with Alison Grey outside of the meeting.

- a. **ACTION** – Sam Warren to follow up with Alison Grey outside of the meeting.

- b. Graham Dawes suggested that item 4.5 of the minutes of the meeting held on 18 May should also be an action.

- c. **ACTION** – Grant Ritchie to speak to Aaron Burns to confirm that tenants of non-Council social housing will be informed who to contact for emergency repairs.

3 – HOUSING COMMITTEE WORKPLAN PROGRESS UPDATE AND HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 2022/23 48:55

3.1 Justine Harris delivered the report for this item.

3.2 Cllr Barnett questioned whether it was possible to move residents into houses that were still awaiting refurbishment and was informed by Grant Ritchie that this would not be possible due to the nature of the work often required.

3.3 Justine Harris stated that there were 46 void properties in seniors housing and cited the reason behind this number being a large amount of studio flats which seniors generally do not want to move into.

3.4 Cllr Barnett stated one of the reasons that seniors may not move into a block is due to the fact that amenities such as shops are located far from the property.

3.5 Roy Crowhurst agreed with Cllr Barnett, emphasising the importance of transport connections from residences for seniors.

3.6 Justine Harris stated that due to more staff being available, it is expected that ‘customer service calls answered’ will increase from 83%.

3.7 Roy Crowhurst asked what the Council considers an emergency repair and was informed by Grant Ritchie that an emergency repair is a repair on anything detrimental to a residents health & safety or may cause property damage such as loss of power & water.

3.8 Alison Grey stated that her water bill rose by ~£200 due to her specialist toilet breaking down and was informed by Southern Water that the Council would have to refund this as the price rise was caused internally.

- a. **ACTION** – Grant Ritchie to investigate tenants financial costs due to delays to repair and the water costs for Alison’s specialist toilet caused by such waiting times.

4 – RESPONSES TO RESIDENTS QUESTIONS – 3 STAR

4.1 Oversight of Environmental Improvement Budget.

4.2 Justine Harris presented the response to this question and stated that the Environmental Improvement Budget is £500,000 per year, £400,000 of which is capital funding with the remaining £100,000 being Housing Revenue Account funding.

4.3 Alison Grey was informed that the purpose of the Environmental Improvement Budget is for the Council to improve estates and the Estate Development Budget is community and resident lead.

4.4 Roy Crowhurst was informed that he should contact Rich Wheeler if he would like to access the Estate Development Budget.

4.5 Graham Dawes cited that it was previously discussed that resident representatives may be granted seats on the decision panel for the Environmental Improvement Budget and stated that this had not yet happened.

4.6 Justine Harris clarified that the Environmental Improvement Budget was for Council use and that is why residents have access to the Estate Development Budget.

4.7 Estate Inspections/Estate Walkabouts.

4.8 Muriel Briault stated that she was happy with the response so long as it was guaranteed that every area would be inspected.

4.9 Janet Dowdell informed the panel that every area would be subject to Estate Walkabouts.

4.10 Cllr Barnett was informed that a rolling two-year programme would be produced.

4.11 Graham Dawes was informed that the difference between Estate Walkabouts and the former Estate Inspections is that Walkabouts would focus on the condition of estates and would not involve entering blocks and looking at repairs.

4.12 Geof Gage stated that a programme is being produced to undertake stock condition surveys over the next 6 to 9 months.

4.13 Cllr Barnett stated the importance of inspecting inside blocks and was informed by Janet Dowdell that the Estates Service will continue to provide this service.

- a. **RESOLVED** - The response was received as satisfactory, but the panel recognised that Estate Walkabouts do not cover the inside of blocks and requested communication to residents from relevant teams.

4.14 *Refurbishment of empty properties.*

4.15 Grant Ritchie presented the response to this question.

4.16 Cllr Barnett questioned why house-swap inspections could not be carried out via video link and was informed by Grant Ritchie that this could be an option for residents.

4.17 *Roof Extension.*

4.18 Geof Gage presented the response to this question and the panel had no questions.

4.19 *Long delays in repair work.*

4.20 Patricia Weller stated that while the work has been completed, she remains concerned about the amount of time it took to complete the work.

4.21 *Repairs.*

4.22 Anne Tizzard questioned why rents are increasing if services are not being provided.

4.23 Justine Harris stated rent setting will be looked at as part of the budget going forward.

4.24 Cllr Barnett was informed by Grant Ritchie that a specialist team would be bought in to deal with the backlog of 9600 repairs, with the aim to reduce the backlog to a 'normal work in progress figure' of 1500-2000 outstanding jobs by the end of the financial year, but this would depend on successful recruitment.

5 – RESPONSES TO RESIDENTS QUESTIONS – 2 STAR

5.1 *Grass cutting and grounds maintenance.*

5.2 Patricia Weller expressed concerns over neither Parks & Gardens nor CityClean taking responsibility for grass cutting and grounds maintenance.

- a. **ACTION** – Justine Harris to contact Patricia Weller regarding weed growth on her estate.

5.3 *Uneven grass area, Clarendon Road*

5.4 Janet Dowdell presented the response to this question.

5.5 Alison Grey stated that residents of Clarendon Road were not consulted regarding the installation of a pathway on their estate.

5.6 Justine Harris invited residents to contact Tenancy Services regarding the impact of the pathway on Clarendon Road.

- a. **ACTION** – Discussion between Community Engagement, Tenancy Services and Residents regarding improvements to Clarendon Road estate.

6 – POSITIVE COMMUNITY NEWS

- 6.1 Roy Crowhurst commended the decorating scheme and emphasised the quality of the work and the short time it took.
- 6.2 Anne Tizzard communicated that the Hangleton & Knoll Project had produced a leaflet that informs residents how to report anti-social behaviour to relevant departments.
- 6.3 Anne Tizzard also stated that community learning courses are free for all Council tenants and that there will be a five-week seasonal wellbeing course held on Tuesdays throughout August, October and January which will focus on connecting with nature.

7 – AOB

- 7.1 Roy Crowhurst stated that the Sheltered Housing Action Group (SHAG) would be restarting on September 9th, instead of the originally proposed date in July.