

## Tenants' Voice

31<sup>st</sup> July 2024, 6pm - 8pm, hybrid meeting

### Present:

#### TV Members:

##### *In person –*

Pawla Cottage (PC) (Chair)	Tenant
Garry Harper (GH)	Tenant
Saleha Jafrin (SJ)	Leaseholder
Luigi Candela (LC)	Leaseholder

##### *Online -*

Gibran Afzal (GA)	Tenant
Daniele Lamarche (DL)	Leaseholder

### Observers:

##### *In person -*

Margaret Shea (MS)	Tenant
Kay Ballard (KB)	Tenant

### Staff:

##### *In person -*

Nojmul Hussain (NH)	Senior Resident Scrutiny Officer
Keith Stanger (KS)	Head of Neighbourhood Operations
Thea Baillie (TB)	Senior Transformation Project Manager
Jenny Fisher (JF)	Policy Analyst

##### *Online -*

Tracey Gray (TG)	Interim Director of Housing Management
Darren Reynolds (DR)	Interim Director of Neighbourhoods and Customer
Lesley Owen (LO)	Business Improvement and Development Manager

### Apologies:

Kabir Ahmed (KA)	Lead Member for Housing
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### **Summary of actions**

- DR to liaise with DL regarding vulnerable residents that pose a risk to residents
- DR agreed to speak to SJ to ensure the issue is investigated, i.e. service responsible for addressing neighbour who is fly tipping on her estate.
- KS/TB to share survey findings from the estate patrol service consultation with TV members by end of August.
- NH to forward SJ the organisational organigram.
- NH to amend workplan so that supporting vulnerable residents is discussed in September and asset management in November.
- NH to speak to lead Communications Officer to explore ways to engage residents that are digitally excluded.
- NH to forward link to the online tenant and leaseholder engagement consultation.
- LO to organise workshop around selecting performance measures with TV members.
- Members to pencil in the 28<sup>th</sup> September, 10am -12.30pm for training.
- NH to forward outline of the 28<sup>th</sup> September training to members. Members to inform NH if there are any further areas they wish to cover.
- NH to allocate timeslots against agenda items.

## **1 Welcome and Introductions**

- 1.1 TG opened the meeting and welcomed all members and observers. TG notified members that Forid Ali stepped down as a member due to ill health and thanked him for his time.
- 1.2 TG outlined the revised agenda which allowed TB and KS to present first followed by minutes and then selection of the Chair. TG explained once the Chair is nominated, TG will step down from chairing the remainder of the meeting.

## **2 Estate Patrol Service**

- 2.1 KS and TB presented the Council's new approach to tackling crime and anti- social behaviour which forms part of the Mayor's 'Empowering Communities and Fighting crime' commitment.

A £4m investment has been made towards this commitment which will introduce the following new law enforcement measures:

- 64 Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers (THEOs)
- 26 Council funded police officers
- Dogs patrol service
- More CCTV installation
- 16 dedicated ASB officers
- Statutory noise service

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2.2 KS explained due to the above investment and measures, the current contract with Parkguards will discontinue when it expires (end of September 2024). Subsequently, residents will no longer be charged for the provision of this service.

2.3 The Council is running consultation on estate patrols; TB outlined the consultation questions and asked members for feedback.

- DL raised concerns about residents that have wider mental health or vulnerabilities who pose a risk, DL felt the current measures does not help address this.

TG explained that residents should continue reporting any incidents and emphasised the distinctive role of THEOs, Housing management and / or the police, depending on the severity of the incident.

TG proposed that DR, as the responsible Director for Neighbourhoods, discuss the issue raised by DL regarding vulnerable residents who may pose a risk in more detail to see what further support the Housing team can provide to address resident's concerns.

**ACTION: DR to liaise with DL regarding vulnerable residents that pose a risk to residents.**

- SJ raised concerns around the difficulty she experienced trying to report fly tipping on her estate. SJ reported that staff over the phoneline were unhelpful, and she had been given mixed messages around which service was responsible for addressing the issue, i.e. ASB service or the estate officer. SJ was also unable to obtain contact details of her local housing officer.

**ACTION: DR agreed to speak to SJ to ensure the issue is investigated and addressed with the teams responsible for delivering the service, i.e. addressing the resident responsible for fly tipping on her estate.**

2.4 Discussion ensued around staff call handling so that incidents are responded to effectively. KS explained the triage process and how staff determine which service is required, e.g. Parkguard or THEOS. Some incidents are required to be managed by the Police.

2.5 LC enquired about staff training so that there is confidence in the skill level for managing cases. KS explained that staff are well experienced and work alongside a pool of talented officers which informs the appropriate response.

2.6 Further comments included:

- SJ advised providing key messages/information during in-queue messaging

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- SJ also recommended providing a reference number or a form of acknowledgement once a case is reported

KS advised that the ASB service holds intelligence around blocks/estates for logistical purposes. KS confirmed that there is an intelligence database which staff use.

- 2.7 TG proposed reporting findings from the estate patrol service consultation with residents and service managers to discuss outcomes and take on board further intelligence from residents to aid in estate patrol.

**ACTION: KS/TB to share survey findings from the estate patrol service consultation with residents by end of August 2024.**

### **3.0 Minutes and matters arising**

- 3.1 Members agreed the minutes from the May 2024 meeting.

- 3.2 TG outlined the progress of actions from the previous meeting, all actions except completion of the damp and mould sub – group meeting were completed. TG explained that the damp and mould task and finish sub-group meeting is a developmental area, which will be open to wider residents and health professionals. Thus, at present this action was rated as amber on the progress update sheet.

### **4.0 Selection of Tenants' Voice Chair**

- 4.1 PC was the only member to volunteer herself as Chair. PC was formally nominated by GH and seconded by LC. All then agreed PC as the new Chair of the Tenants' Voice group. Subsequently, PC took over from TG to Chair the remainder of the meeting.

### **5.0 Terms of Reference**

- 5.1 LO presented areas covered within the Tenants' Voice Terms of Reference. This included details around composition of the group, its scope and remit, the Code of Conduct and the group's links to the council's governance structure.

- 5.2 Discussion ensued around the governance structure, particularly around how feedback from the group is to be channelled to the Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee and decision makers.

It was felt that reporting to the Scrutiny Sub- Committee (at least annually) and Lead Member's attendance (minimum of two meetings a year) should be more frequent.

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TG explained that the Tenants' Voice annual update to the Scrutiny Sub-Committee would include all the yearly outputs of the group and feedback can go to the Committee or the Lead Member throughout the year, but might be best channelled via the TV Chair.

- 5.3 SJ requested an organigram which illustrates how Tenants' Voice fits in with the wider governance of the organisation. NH reminded members that an organigram was circulated following the May 2024 meeting and he would email this to SJ again. NH mentioned that due to changes in the organisation, an updated organigram would be required in future.

**ACTION: NH to forward SJ the organisational organigram.**

### 6.0 Annual workplan

- 6.1 Members were consulted on the annual workplan and agreed areas covered. The timetable for some of the agenda items was amended. This included:

- 'Supporting vulnerable residents' will be discussed in September 2024 rather than January 2025 following DL's emphasis on addressing the issue
- Asset Management Strategy to move to November 2024
- Providing digital accreditation was discussed, JF advised providing accreditation to active TRA members too
- SJ advised changing the name from engagement strategy to the specific name, i.e. Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy

**ACTION: NH to amend workplan so that supporting vulnerable residents is discussed in September and move asset management to November.**

#### 6.2 *Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement strategy consultation*

Members were concerned about excluding residents who are not digitally active from completing the online survey consultation. NH mentioned that face-to-face surveys will be offered during community fun days organised by the Community Partnerships Team. This aims to capture views from the wider community, including tenants and leaseholders who do not use online technology.

- 6.3 Some members and KB expressed further concerns at being unaware of the online consultation (including the estate patrol consultation), and the Community Fun Days. NH explained he was not placed to explain how the Community Partnership Teams publicised the community events. However, NH said he would raise the communication gap with senior officers which includes DR and TG (both present in

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the meeting) to look at wider communication channels, particularly for residents not digitally active.

**ACTION: Members concerns around communication gap, particularly engaging residents that are not digitally active (in relation to online consultation) to be noted. NH to discuss the issue further with the lead communications officer to address this issue.**

*\* The full breadth of communication channels for promoting the consultation was provided to members following the meeting. This included information on Our East End paper which goes out to all residents in Tower Hamlets and available at Idea Stores, local libraries and the Resident Hubs.*

6.4 DR requested that the online consultation link is emailed to all members. Further suggestions from members included:

- Using postal services for completing and returning surveys
- Using Idea Stores and Resident Hubs to promote the consultation

**ACTION: NH to forward link to the online tenant and leaseholder engagement consultation.**

## 7. Performance

7.1 To help inform the discussion around measures to assess performance of the housing management service, LO presented two sets of pre-existing measures including the Tenant Satisfaction Measures introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing; all social landlords must show performance/ compliance against these.

Members proposed a separate workshop before the start of the next meeting to discuss this in more detail.

**ACTION: LO to organise workshop around selecting performance measures with TV members.**

## 8.0 Complaints policy – for noting only

8.1 NH reported that the housing complaints policy was circulated to members and available online.

## 9.0 AOB

9.1 NH informed members that training has been scheduled for the 28<sup>th</sup> September, 10am - 12.30pm. The calendar invite for this has been sent.

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- 9.2 DL requested more in-depth training as 2.5 hours would not be sufficient. NH explained further training would be facilitated based on members' needs. NH also said he would forward the outline of the training and members can feedback if there are other areas they want to cover.

**ACTION: Members to pencil in the 28<sup>th</sup> September, 10am -12.30pm for training.**

**ACTION: NH to forward outline of the 28<sup>th</sup> September training to members.  
Members to inform NH if there are any further areas they wish to cover.**

- 9.3 SJ requested that time slots be allocated for agenda items.

- 9.4 Due to technical issues, the audio sound was poor during the meeting. Thus, it was noted to try and identify issues before the meeting.

**ACTION: NH to allocate timeslots against agenda items.**

### **10. Date of next meeting**

**25<sup>th</sup> September, 6pm – 8pm.**

**5.30pm – 6pm for members only (no staff).**