



GGHT Scrutiny Panel 11 July 2012 Warrington Disability Partnerships

Minutes

Attendance: Dot Thacker, Linda Booth, Jean Stringer, Jean Bullock, Mick Rivington
Carl Talbot-Davies, Sue Sanderson, Danny Parker, Charlie Martin

1. Apologies: Lynda Johnson, Ray Powell

		Action
1.	<p>Minutes of Meeting held on 13th June 2012</p> <p>Matters arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A few typos were highlighted in the minutes and CM agreed to amend these ❖ MR asked for an update on installation of PV panels. CTD advised that GGHT is currently reviewing funding opportunities for PV Panels. An update will be provided to members at the next meeting. ❖ JS advised that a Sure Maintenance engineer visited a tenant's property to repair a PV panel but did not have the correct tools to complete the job. SS advised that the repair may have been diagnosed incorrectly via GGD. SS advised that there were two types of panels: Solar Thermal Panels (to generate heat and hot water) and PV Panels (to generate electricity). The in-house team are responsible for PV panels and Sure Maintenance are responsible for Solar Thermal Panels. ❖ MR asked for an update on the allocations policy review. CTD advised that the review was still ongoing and an update will be provided at the next meeting. 	<p>CM</p> <p>CM</p>
2.	<p>Gas Servicing and Gas Repairs</p> <p>Sue Sanderson provided an overview of Gas Repairs and Gas Servicing.</p> <p>SS advised that gas safety is based within the investment team and that the gas team are responsible for gas servicing and repairs.</p>	

CTD advised that the gas service was due to be tendered at the end of the year. It is therefore timely for the panel to complete a review of the gas service and the Panel's findings will be fed into the new tender. However, CTD advised that it was important to balance the findings against what is achievable in terms of cost and practicality.

DT advised that she had been impressed with the conduct of an engineer that had visited her property. SS advised that all engineers are completing NVQ Level 3 in customer care

CTD advised that the issues identified following the recent internal audit have largely been resolved. An improvement plan has been developed and has had a positive impact, particularly around repairs.

DT asked whether the contractors were aware that the service would be re-tendered at the end of the year. CTD advised that the contractors were aware of that the contract will be up for renewal.

JS asked whether the tender exercise will focus on the Right First Time. SS advised that this is an ongoing priority. Van stock is currently being reviewed to ensure engineers have the right equipment when visiting properties. Further work is needed to ensure the contact centre staff are trained to diagnose repairs and provide contractors with accurate details.

DT asked what the 'Warrant Procedure' entailed. SS advised that this was the process through which GGHT can gain access to tenants properties. SS advised that warrants are less timely and less costly than injunctions and are currently used by other RSLs including Stockport Homes and Salix Homes. To obtain a warrant GGHT would need demonstrate to the legal magistrate that it has exhausted all other means of gaining access to a property. Warrants cost £18-20 per application.

SS advised that in the last financial year 16 legal actions cases had been actioned for gas. 4 of these 16 cases were referred to court. In 3 of these cases the properties were deemed to be abandoned. DT asked what action had been taken against the remaining 9 properties. SS advised that GGHT were unable to refer these properties to court hearing stage. However, GGHT was able to gain access to these properties.

JS asked whether GGHT had received many refusals. SS advised that GGHT have had a high success rate with warrants and have not yet received any refusals. Tenants must given 24 hours notice before GGHT is able to force access to a property. Warrants can only be served by the enforcing body, in this case WBC.

JS asked whether GGHT was able to access properties without the permission of tenants. SS advised that the warrants enable GGHT to force entry and change the locks on a property. A notice is then placed on the property to

<p>advise that legal action has been taken.</p> <p>LB asked whether GGHT recharged tenants for the associated costs of securing forced entry. SS advised that this is an option, however, tenant's are often unable to meet the costs of these charges.</p> <p>SS advised that contractors are now actively encouraged to gain access to property at the first, second and third attempt. This will ensure that there is increased pressure on tenants from the front end of the business.</p> <p>The investment team have facilitated 'no-access days' in which teams across the business are asked to contact tenants that have not received there annual gas service check. The Gas Team has also worked in partnership with the Rents team and this has enabled GGHT to identify trends between no-access properties and the level of tenant arrears. A key theme tends to be the high level of rent arrears attached to no-access properties.</p> <p>MR asked if Morgan and Lambert able to monitor engineer performance effectively. CTD advised that systems are in place to track the performance of individual engineers and this enables the contractor to identify areas and reasons for underperformance.</p> <p>CTD advised that smoke detectors are also checked as part of the annual gas cycle. GGD had carried out surveys with tenants to ensure engineers had checked the smoke detector as part of the gas servicing.</p> <p>LB asked what the procedures were for reporting missed appointments. CTD advised that tenants should report missed appointments to the contact centre. GGHT is entitled to charge the contractors for missed appointments. LB advised that this needed to be made clear to tenants and that an item should be included in News and Views.</p> <p>DT asked for clarification on the difference between urgent and emergency repairs. SS advised that a repair is deemed an emergency if the health and wellbeing of the tenants is at risk. Each repair will be categorized in accordance with the individual tenant needs.</p> <p>SS advised that loss of hot water would typically be classified as an urgent repair and GGHT would aim to resolve this within 5 working days. LB advised that seemed like a long time and asked whether these timescales could be revised. SS advised that tenants would still have access to electricity and that GGHT would aim to resolve the issue within 5 working days.</p> <p>CTD advised that GGHT's priorities for urgent and emergency works were agreed at stock transfer following a consultation exercise. LB asked whether properties with combi-boilers had showers. CTD advised that this was the case and that some properties had A- Rated condensing combi-boilers boilers installed.</p>	<p>SS</p>
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	<p>CM asked what provisions were in place for partially sighted tenants who were unable to read correspondences left by the contractors. SS advised that these tenants should have alerts on their accounts. In some incidences Steve Dobson will attend properties to offer additional support to tenants.</p> <p>DT asked what GGHT's Gas Safety package included. SS advised that the package covered breakdowns and gas service checks. Tenants in multi-storey blocks are not charged for their gas service as the failure complete a service would put the other residents at risk.</p> <p>LB asked whether tenant might consider the annual fee to be too costly and whether GGHT could spread the payment over monthly installments as with insurance. SS advised that the rates are competitive but that GGHT might need to review the payment plans that are offered to tenants. LB advised that Age UK offers a package that costs £3.50 a month this will be look into.</p> <p>DT asked whether there was a contingency fund for gas servicing and repairs. CTD advised that GGHT has a separate budget for gas and this is monitored a monthly basis. The budget is split into 3 separate groups: improvement works, gas servicing and 'other'.</p> <p>The Panel discussed the findings of the audit report. CTD advised that the scrutiny review might consider what incentives could be put in place for contractors to access properties on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd attempt.</p> <p>LB asked why there had been discrepancies in the process used to validate invoices for contractors. CTD advised that different methods were used to check invoices for contractors and that, in future, invoices will be reconciled electronically. This process will also make it easier for the estimated cost to be matched with the actual costs.</p> <p>SS advised that panel members were welcome to observe gas contractor meetings.</p> <p>Recommendations/actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ SS agreed to forward the updated work-flow sheet to panel members once the warrant procedures had been added. ❖ The final version of the revised gas policy will be shared with the Panel. 	<p>CM</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Bathrooms</p> <p>DT advised that an engineer had advised that tenants in Lymm would receive Aids and Adaptation works in June 2012. CTD advised that the engineers should not provide tenants with timescales that had not been approved by GGHT. CTD agreed to follow this up and feedback to DT.</p>	<p>CTD</p>

	<p>LB advised that some properties had not received a complete new bathroom under investment programme and had in fact been part-furnished. CTD advised that the contractors will take into account value for money and will not replace facilities that are in a good working condition. LB provided details of a property that had not had a wet room installed and CTD agreed to look into to this.</p>	CTD
4.	<p>A.O.B</p> <p>CM invited members prior to put forward suggestions for the new panel name. The following suggestions were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Panel of Excellence and Scrutiny ❖ Independent Quality Panel <p>The panel agreed to forward their preferred name to CM via email.</p> <p>CM advised that the tenant inspectors will be invited to attend the meeting on Wednesday 8 August. The panel were invited to consider its approach to its first Scrutiny Review. Suggestions have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Outbound calls to customers ❖ Interviewing staff and contractors ❖ Shadowing engineers and GGHT staff ❖ Panel Members to attend gas contractor meetings <p>It was agreed that panel members should be allocated 'portfolios' for different business areas. This will be discussed at the meeting in August.</p>	CM/SP
5.	<p>Meeting Evaluation</p> <p>The Panel agreed to use Orford Jubilee Park for future meetings.</p>	
6.	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 8th August, 10am, Orford Jubilee Park</p>	