



## GGHT Scrutiny Panel 14 November Orford Jubilee Park

### Minutes

<b>Attendance:</b>	Jean Stringer (Chair) Dot Thacker, Jean Bullock, Linda Booth, Ayo Akinrele  Danny Parker (Minutes) Charlie Martin, Claire Phillips (Part) Mark Burrows (Part) Peter Mercer (Part) Tracy Trantum, Gareth Riley
<b>Apologies:</b>	Lynda Johnson, Alan Rankin, Mick Rivington

		<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p>CM introduced the Service Improvement Officers, Tracey Trantum and Gareth Riley to the meeting.</p> <p>JS stated that Lynda Johnson will not be at the meeting as she was not well. The Panel wished Lynda well and hoped she made a speedy recovery.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> October</b></p> <p>CM advised that the E&amp;D Policies will need to go to Board for approval.</p> <p>DT advised that she had spoken to a neighbour about GGHT's handyperson service. Her neighbour was under the impression that you had to be an elderly person to receive the service. CP advised that when it was first rolled out, the service targeted elderly tenants. However, due to the limited uptake GGHT widened the service to include all tenants. DT asked how many visits a tenant could have in 1 year? CP advised that each tenant was entitled to 1 visit per year.</p> <p>DT asked for an update on the Care Call contract. CM advised that the Carecall Maintenance Agreement will finish in April 2013. However, there is scope for the Panel to support the review Older Persons Strategy. The Older Persons Strategy will finish on 31 October 2013.</p>	

	<p>CM advised that the Terms of Reference had been updated to following the query raised by a tenant shareholder in relation to conflicts of interest. It was noted that members should declare any conflicts of interest at each meeting and the Chair should decide if the members is able to remain in the room or vote on an issue the issue. The revised Terms also outline the level of commitment that will be expected from Panel Members. The revised Terms of Reference will be taken to CCP for approval on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2012</p> <p>CM agreed to forward the revised Terms to Panel Members.</p> <p>CM advised that YVOW had a lot on the agenda at there last meeting and were unable to discuss the Panel's logo. CM suggested that a competition is included in the next edition of News and Views that invites tenants to submit their own ideas for a logo. The Panel felt that this was a good idea as it would help raise the Panel's profile.</p> <p>CM advised that he is looking into CRB checks for Panel members and will need to confirm the level of checks that are most appropriate for the Panel.</p> <p>The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.</p>	<p><b>CM</b></p> <p><b>CM</b></p>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Update from Service Champions</b></p> <p>DT and LJ (The Service Champions for Welfare Reform) had met with Carmel Morris (Financial Inclusion Officer) and Tanya Lowry (Money Advice Worker). DT advised that the new reforms pose a significant risk to GGHT tenants and could lead to a rise in tenant arrears.</p> <p>PM stated that Warrington are a pathfinder for Universal Credit. There have been rumors of staffing issues and this could impact the implementation of the new I.T. systems.</p> <p>AA (Service Champion for Tenant Engagement) advised that he had met with Fiona Graham (Business Manager for Quality and Performance) to discuss Tenant Involvement. AA has agreed to shadow the Tenant Participation team on Wednesday 21 November.</p> <p>JS has had a meeting with James Doran (Regeneration Manager) and has arranged another meeting to discuss key regeneration works.</p> <p>JB (Service Champion for Customer Contact) has arranged to meet with Donna Wilkinson (Business Manager for GGD Direct) on Friday 16 November will feedback to the Panel at the next meeting.</p> <p>CM advised that Helen Grant has left the organization and a meeting will be arranged between Alan Rankin (Service Champion for ASB) and Natalie Gillbanks (ASB Manger) once Natalie has settled into her new role.</p>	<p><b>JB</b></p> <p><b>CM/AR</b></p>

4.	<p><b>In-House Maintenance Repairs (Presentation)</b></p> <p>Mark Burrows introduced himself and Claire Phillips to the Panel.</p> <p>MB advised that repairs covered a wide area and it would be useful for the Panel to visit Eagle Park Depot and meet with Assistant Managers. The visit would enable the panel to see, first-hand the van stock and the process that are involved in managing GGHT materials and supplies. CM agreed to arrange the visit.</p> <p>MB advised that the Property Services Team includes 3 managers that sit directly under the Property Services Manager; 6 assistant managers; 4 Technical Officers and a team of operatives. The team also includes 14 trainees that joined GGHT during last year's intake. Work is ongoing to prepare for next year's intake of trainees.</p> <p>MB advised that property services is split into 3 separate areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Responsive repairs (incl. programmed works and fleet management)</li> <li>❖ Voids and Waste Management</li> <li>❖ Planned Investment Work (including capital works, cyclical maintenance and painting team)</li> </ul> <p>The Repairs Team has expanded to include a further 2 electricians and 2 roofers due to a backlog in roofing work and the increased focus on roofing works within years 5 and 6 of the investment programme.</p> <p>JS asked whether the additional staff will be recruited locally. MB advised that GGHT will target GGHT customers and local schools during the recruitment.</p> <p>DT asked whether the new roofers would be guaranteed employment with GGHT once the programme had been completed. MB advised that it would not be possible to guarantee employment once the programme had ended.</p> <p>DT asked whether apprentices had been taken on within the painting team. MB advised that painting falls under cyclical maintenance and work is carried out by a sub-contractor. However, GGHT has recruited 1 painter internally. The enhanced Void Standard has led to an increase in the demand for painters. GGHT is reviewing the option of bringing the service in-house.</p> <p>MB advised that there were approximately 60 staff based at Eagle Park. Flexible working arrangements are in place and operatives are able to 'hot desk' and access the server from home. There are training facilities within the Main Warehouse that enable GGHT to carry out PAT testing and train operatives to work from height. CP advised that kitchen mock-ups are used to provide specialized training to new staff.</p> <p>The Panel were advised that 100 smartphones have been rolled out and these,</p>	<b>CM</b>
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coupled with the recent upgrade of the I.T. systems, have enabled operatives to access their emails whilst out on site.

CP advised that GGHT received a new fleet of 92 vehicles at the end of 2001. Of these vehicles 85 are owned by GGHT, the other 7 are rented. Each one of our vehicles have an onboard tracking system, and are able to monitor whether drivers have left Warrington or have exceeded the speed limit. 85 vehicles are currently on the road and there will be a further 7 that need to have the tracking equipment installed.

Jewsons are GGHT's 'material partner' and provide the materials used by operatives to complete repairs. GGHT currently spends £3.2million through Jewsons. The contract will be put out for tender within the next 18months.

MB gave an overview of the key policies and regulations that GGHT must adhere to. The following points were highlighted:

- ❖ MB advised that compliance with Right to Repair does not apply to Large Scale Voluntary Transfers (LSVT) such as GGHT. However, GGHT adhere to the framework as the guidelines reflect best practice.
- ❖ MB advised that tenants also have a Right to Compensation. TT asked whether this has been exercised by tenants. CP advised that this had only been exercised in very specific circumstances and GGHT have only experienced 2-3 such incidences in the past few years.
- ❖ MB advised that GGHT must comply with the Party Wall Act. This covers incidences where customers share areas of their home with a neighbouring property. One such example would be where two joining out-houses share a roof. Problems can arise where a tenant's roof is in need of repair and the repair work could impact on the co-joining building.
- ❖ MB advised that GGHT should also comply with Manual Handling Operations Regulations Act 1992. Jewsons provides a risk assessment on manual handling. Previously operatives were not allowed to work from a height of 6 feet. However, changes to the regulations state that operatives are not allowed to work from any height.
- ❖ MB advised that the strict regulations reflect the need for high volume of staff within the team and can often impact on the time it takes to complete a repair

JS asked how a recharge will be allocated to a tenant's account. CP advised that a secondary account will be set up and the tenant would be required to clear the balance in this account.

MB advised that all staff are trained to report asbestos and to ensure that areas

of risk are recorded onto the asbestos register. DT asked whether it was safe for GGHT to remove asbestos. MB advised that asbestos should be removed by a specialist if there were signs of air bubbles starting to form. More often however, the level of risk is low and the substance flakes away from the wall. Asbestos used to be commonly found in baker light fittings, door tiles, and radiators.

LJ asked if there was any risk that tiles installed during the 1960s contained asbestos. CP advised that asbestos found within hard tiles is compounded and is therefore considered low risk. GGHT is able to remove low grade asbestos and areas of high risk will be deferred to the Health and Safety Executive.

DT asked whether GGHT had profile data on the properties that still contained asbestos. MB advised that GGHT had data on the majority of its properties and that staff have been trained to approach all properties with a level of caution. CP advised that the asbestos register is now accessible online and this had made it easier to identify on areas of risk.

DT asked whether GGHT still owned garages and whether these carried a significant asbestos risk? MB advised that GGHT did still own some garages and tin sheets were installed to control the risk of asbestos.

MB advised that all each operatives wear Personal Protective Equipment and are required to attend manual handling course. There is lot of sickness from operatives due to bad backs through handling heavy equipment.

JS advised that she knew a tenant that had received a new kitchen. The tiler had been asked by their manager to tile around the back cooker. Unfortunately the decorator did not have the equipment to move the cooker and was unable to complete the work. MB advised that cast iron cookers can be very heavy and it may not have been value for money for the tiles to be fitted around the bottom of the cooker.

LB asked whether the 2 hour slot for emergency repairs was achievable. MB advised that the 2 hour slot would involve visiting the property and making the repair safe. GGHT would have to ensure the repair was completed within 24 hours.

CP advised that the back-log in roofing work is mainly due inclement weather as it is not safe for operatives to repair roofs in windy conditions. If GGHT is unable to complete a repair due to Health and Safety the customer will be contacted and an alternative date will be arranged.

CP advised that GGHT ensure customers are regularly updated on the status of repair work. If work is likely to slip outside of the time-scale then customers will be contacted as soon as possible. Keeping customers informed should help reduce the volume of calls to GGDirect.

MB advised that vehicles are loaded with over 2,000lbs worth of stock. Assistant managers liaise with Jewsons on a regular basis to ensure vans have the appropriate amount of stock.

All repairs are scheduled through the GGHT call Centre which is based at Bank House. When tenant's contact GGD they will be asked a series of questions using our fault finder tool (Omfax) which will guide them through the process using diagrams to locate the correct component and tell you what how your repair will proceed.

MB advised that GGHT carry-out a random sample of 10% post inspections on completed works. Morgan Lambert carry out 5% 3rd Party Audits for gas repairs and services. MB advised that GGHT is looking to move towards a more targeted approach to post-inspections.

DT asked whether post-inspections are carried out on rechargables? CP advised that this was the case and that the Call Centre would be prompted to decide whether the repairs was caused by the tenant. If the contact centre is not sure then an inspector would be visit the property.

MB advised that GGHT had recently re-launched its Re-charge Policy. GGHT do not currently charge for missed appointments. However, GGHT anticipates that a proportion of all appointments will be missed and will often overbook appointments. This approach has been used by commercial companies and frees up operatives for other repairs in the event that a customer is not at home.

MB advised that 222 GGHT properties had rechargeable repairs in 2011/12 with a total of 23k being charged overall.

MB advised that GGHT will text customers prior to repair work being carried out. Further reminders will be sent to 'repeat offenders'. For large scale jobs, such as plastering, GGHT will phone customers to reminder them that they will need to clear their room prior to the work being carried out.

DT asked whether customers were likely to pay for missed appointments (no-access). MB advised that missed appointments will be linked to sanctions that have been rolled out as part of the investment programme. The recharge would remain on the customers account as an alert.

DT asked whether GGHT kept details of the estimated costs for repairs. CP advised that GGHT used a schedule of rates to determine the cost of each repair. A common issue was the need to change locks after tenants had lock themselves out of their properties. CM asked whether this could be built into the pre-tenancy service. MB advised that this is currently being reviewed.

TT asked whether GGHT used its discretion when applying recharges to

tenants. CP advised that this was the case and personal needs and circumstances would be taken into consideration.

JS asked whether the recharge was added to a tenant's rent account. MB advised that the recharge would be added to a sub-account but would be followed up in the same manner as tenant arrears.

MB advised that the Out Of Hours service is managed by First Call which operate from 18:30 until 8:00 Mon/Friday. Out of Hours repairs are delivered by GGHT's in-House team. First Call have access to all GGHT's systems and can book appointments that will be picked up by the in-house team the following day. This arrangement enables GGHT to make savings in overtime costs.

MB advised that advised that 2 managers will be on call permanently to deal with complex repairs. DT asked whether customers would be able to speak to a manager during Out of Hours. MB advised that this would not be possible.

MB advised that Jetter and roofers are on a separate call-out arrangements. Some Jettors are used to remove blockages and this work is usually carried out by GGHT. However, GGHT would treat some blockages as an emergency and will complete the work internally if United Utilities are unable to meet GGHT's timescales.

MB advised that the % emergency repairs completed on time is currently below target by -11%. This translates to 23 complaints in 3,500 jobs. MB advised that the rise in complaints is partly due to Star Survey which led to an increase in outbound calls and higher levels of feedback from customers. GGHT do receive a significant amount of 'praise calls'.

MB advised that the Assistant Managers review the time it takes for each operative to complete a repair and compare this with the Schedule of Rates that indicate how long each repairs should take to complete. All operatives are required to under-go annual appraisals.

DT asked whether GGHT has issues with speeding fines incurred by van drivers. CP advised that these incidence were very rare as the vans emit a beeping sound that alerts the driver if they have exceeded the speed limit.

JS asked if GGHT received cash-back from WBC for recycling waste material? MB advised that this was not the case.

DT asked for clarification on who is responsible for delivering Adaptations. MB advised that Social Services complete assessments and sub-contractors are responsible for carrying out the work.

LB asked what training is offered to Technical Officers. MB advised that technical officers have come from a trade background or have achieved a

	<p>degree in Building and Maintenance. Recently they have had bespoke training with the most recent training being housing health and safety. Technical Officer are provided ongoing support and training. Training is often reviewed to accommodate changes in Government Legislation.</p> <p>JS asked whether GGHT would complete a repair where the tenant has used their own materials to decorate their property. MB advised that GGHT have a legal obligations to make the property safe and will carry-out the repair.</p> <p>MB provided a breakdown of the costs included with repairs service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Property Services Budget £8.2m</li> <li>❖ Response Repairs budget £3.6m</li> <li>❖ Salaries £3.1m</li> <li>❖ Vehicles £288K</li> <li>❖ Fuel £113k</li> <li>❖ OOH overtime and standby £120K</li> <li>❖ Waste collection and disposal £105K</li> <li>❖ Materials £3.2m</li> <li>❖ Sub-contractors £441K</li> </ul> <p>MB stated that we can review right first time and possibly turn this into customer satisfaction. Right First time was in out transfer offer document but GGHT do understand this is a very subjective definition.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Forward planning off the back of the presentation</b></p> <p>CM explained that the presentation formed the basis of the first stage of the review where the Panel will need to gather facts and data from GGHT's existing policies and surveys.</p> <p>The Panel were asked to forward its views on the presentation and whether there was any further information members would like to receive.</p> <p>The Panel asked for the following further information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Diagrams of Work-Flows (repair reported – diagnosis by GGD – communication between GGD and operative – communication between GGD and customer – operative to visit property and complete repair – follow-up survey)</li> <li>❖ Results of current surveys</li> <li>❖ Complaint trends for 2011/12 and 2012/13 (compare quarterly trends)</li> <li>❖ Right to Repair Document</li> <li>❖ Housemark Benchmarking Data</li> <li>❖ List of sub-contractors and costs (e.g. painting team). Would it be cheaper to bring work in house</li> </ul> <p>GR advised that GGHT use Housemark to benchmark its repair services</p>	



	<p>against other housing organisations. GR also runs reports on repairs on a quarterly basis and staff attitude is a common complaint as well as communication. GR advised that he will look into putting together a report for the Scrutiny Panel surrounding trends.</p> <p>GR stated that he can give more information surrounding figures and invited Panel members to contact him or Tracey Trantum directly if they needed any specific information.</p> <p>TT stated that she more than willing to share some of her work she is doing at the moment with the panel to help identify key trends around the nature of repairs and customer satisfaction.</p> <p>LB advised that complaint sub-group have received GGHT’s responses to complaints raised by customers. However, the Panel do not receive the customers views on how GGHT have dealt with their complaint. It was agreed that for the purposes of the review the Panel will look at complaints around repairs and not delegate this to the sub-group.</p> <p>DT stated that she had spoken to a few contractors when having work and asks them what it’s like working for GGHT, she has recently found out useful information surrounding GGHT repairs procedures. The Panel agreed it would be useful to interview staff and shadow operatives to gain a greater understanding of staff satisfaction and feedback on the service.</p> <p>LB asked whether the Panel would be able to complete phone survey’s from home? CM advised that members would not have access to GGHT’s I.T. systems and members will have to keep handwritten notes on customer feedback.</p> <p>CM agreed to develop a list of information that the Panel have requested and the questions raised and circulate this to Panel Members.</p> <p>CM that the next stage of the review would enable members to visit other Housing Trusts (e.g. Blackpool Coastal Homes). However, the Panel agreed to focus on Stage 1 – “Fact Finding” for the time being.</p> <p>CM asked the Panel to note the ongoing re-structure may lead to the opening hours changing to 8am-8pm through the week and Saturday 8am-6.30pm. This will have implications for the Out of Hours service and the Panel should be aware of this.</p>	<p><b>CM</b></p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>A.O.B</b></p> <p>JS advised that she had recently attended a conference in York with 3 other panel members. JS had learnt that other organisations use in-house teams to deliver their gardening service and this has led to high levels of customer satisfaction.</p>	

	<p>CM advised that GGHT will be taking all panel members for Christmas lunch on 12 December 2012 at 2pm to thank them for all there hard work and commitment to the Panel.</p> <p>DT asked whether other tenant groups will be receiving a Christmas lunch. CM agreed to ask Graham Pearce (Tenant Participation Officer) if other tenant groups will be receiving a Christmas lunch</p> <p>CM stated that there had been changes to the Scrutiny Panel Terms of Reference which will go for approval at CCP on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November.</p> <p>A vacancy has been created following the resignation of Ray Powell. The Panel agreed that the new member should be selected from the pool of tenants that were not successful during the previous round of recruitment.</p>	<p><b>CM</b></p> <p><b>CM</b></p>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December, 10am at Orford Jubilee Park</p>	
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Evaluation of Meeting</b></p> <p>The panel agreed it had been a positive meeting and found the presentation to be very helpful. The Panel is looking forward to working with Mark and Claire over the forthcoming months.</p>	