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# “Joining Together in Excellence”

# The Challenge Group

# 25th July 2013

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| **1. Welcome and Apologies** | ACTION |
| Present Jenny St Leger (JSL)(Acting Chair), Margaret Pickup (MP), Austin Ambrose (AA), Paul Brooks (PB), Louise Booth (LB) (Chair), Sophie Lewis (SL) (Resident Involvement Officer), Ian Salt (IS) (Assistant Director of Housing Services), Michelle Moseley (MM) (Customer Experience Manager) , Pauline Radford (Observer), Margaret Reed (Observer)  Apologies  Linda Roche (LR), Mike Thraves (MT)  JSL welcomed everyone to the meeting. |  |
| 2. Minutes & Actions from previous meeting |  |
| MP queried if it was a new aspect of the low-cost decorating service that customers were advised to get at least two other quotes, as she wasn’t advised to do that when she used the service. SL advised that it almost certainly will be, as it’s done as matter of course currently.  Everyone was happy with the minutes. |  |
| **3. Incentive Scheme Update** |  |
| SL explained that further investigations were needed by other teams into the technical aspects of the new scheme, and it may be a couple of months before she could provide any more information. |  |
| **4. Inspection Number 4 - Scrutiny Topic** |  |
| The group discussed the options for the next inspection, and weighed up repairs and voids. IS felt that repairs affected more customers than voids, and voids may follow on more easily from repairs.  The group agreed to inspect the repairs service first.  IS agreed to provide regular updates on voids in the meantime. | Action: IS to provide details of the internal review of repairs, which looks at service delivery and efficiency in the area.  Action: SL to provide Halton Housing reports for MP |
| **5. Local Offer and Service Standard review** |  |
| SL talked through the document that was sent out. LB asked about the responsibility of scrutiny groups in monitor VFM and governance as well. SL advised that LB liaise with Greg Bones and Pauline Gosling to agree Challenge’s role in this.  The group agreed that, aside from this, they were happy with the proposed service standards and local offers. | **Action: LB to speak to Greg Bones(*E-mailed PG 09.08.13*)** |
| **6. EMT Performance and Scrutiny Info** |  |
| IS talked the group through the most recent performance dashboard.  He told the group how his voids team have managed to increase the number of turnarounds, despite the impact of the welfare benefit reform.  IS also confirmed that decent homes work is done whilst the team are in the voids, unless the particular element of the house (i.e. bathroom, kitchen, etc.) is in a good state of repair, and in that case they will wait until the tenant is in, so they can choose the spec.  IS added that procedures need to be a bit clearer around this, and they are in the process of putting in void procedures for week 1 and week 2 of the work.  LB queried why some aren’t having a fire surround when having an electric fire fitted? IS explained that this should always be done, unless the tenant has specifically asked for it this way.  IS confirmed that their biggest challenge is the voids, and making sure that PPHT delivers consistent service to customers.  IS was asked if any savings made are passed through to other budgets? IS can suggest where budget savings can be spent.  AA asked if PPHT are considering any plans for standing water? IS clarified that, rather than this option, they are looking at the option of mechanical vestibules; these are good for breathing difficulties and asthma.  Michelle Moseley, Customer Experience Manager  MM talked through performance and changes within her team.  MM suggested a rolling update of team information and successes on the plasma screen in reception.  MM also suggested creating something that reports back on achievements of Challenge and SL, and LB suggested holding mini-workshops. | Action: SL to speak to Simon Penaluna about rolling slide show on plasma |
| **7. Any Other Business** |  |
| SL invited all of Challenge to the Board meeting on Tuesday 17th September, to be available for questions on both the Grounds Maintenance Inspection and the Annual Impact Assessment Report.  SL announced that the Tenant Expenses Policy has now been approved, and advised that Neil Bancroft is apparently making the policy available on the internet.  Grounds Maintenance Inspection - feedback from Ian Salt  IS advised that he will produce a business proposal based on their recommendations. He also asked for a definition of vulnerable, which was given as elderly or disabled. IS agreed to include this definition in the proposal. AA suggested using a tiered-system.  MR asked why the Green Spaces group had been told that they couldn’t bring the service in-house. IS clarified that PPHT couldn’t agree to anything whilst the inspection was taking place.  IS also asked for clarification on whether ‘in-house’ meant the whole grounds maintenance service, or just the low-cost gardening aspect of it. The group confirmed they meant the entire GM service.  IS advised that he will review this in time for the next financial year, and agreed that bringing in -house would mean:   * Greater customer satisfaction * More opportunities for local employment and apprenticeships * More control   LB asked if IS would consider sending gardeners on day-release to Rees Heath. IS confirmed that PPHT currently employ apprentices on day-release. | Action: SL to ask PG if MR and PR can sit in the board meeting as observers. (*E-mailed PG 09.08.13*)  Action: SL to ensure Expenses Policy is on internet (*Done 09.08.13*) |
| **Next Meeting to be held on Thursday 29th August 2013 at 11am** |  |