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# “Joining Together in Excellence”

# The Challenge Group

# 30th January 2014

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| **1. Welcome and Apologies** | ACTION |
| Present Jenny St Leger (Acting Chair), Margaret Pickup (MP) , Paul Brooks (PB), Austin Ambrose (AA), Sophie Lewis (SL) (Resident Involvement Officer), Ian Salt (IS) (Assistant Director of Housing Services), Lorraine Hare (LH) (Estate Services Team Leader), Alicia Whittaker (AW) (Customer Champion)  Apologies  Louise Booth (Chair), Mike Thraves (MT)  JSL welcomed everyone to the meeting. |  |
| 2. Minutes & Actions from previous meeting |  |
| The group agreed that they were happy with the minutes. |  |
| **3. Incentive Scheme Update** |  |
| SL advised that the Customer Service Advisors are currently carrying out surveys with callers to find out -   * If people would be willing to feedback * How they would like to feedback (email/post/text, etc.) * What they would be willing to feedback on (short/long surveys, written reviews, meetings, etc.)   SL hoped to have collated the feedback by Februarys Challenge meeting, so that Challenge could review the preferred methods of feedback, and assess potential consultation methods that can be rolled out as pilots in 2014.  The group discussed how the involvement opportunities are promoted in the coming year. AA suggested producing a route map for e-marketing, drawing on the customers email addresses, and sending out e-flyers about getting involved. Anyone ticking the boxing would automatically receive a flyer/PDF document with more information about the roles. | Action: SL to speak to IT about creating a database of email addresses that can be contacted electronically with promotions |
| **4. Feedback Session** |  |
| MP fed-back about the Community Voice Repairs Monitoring meeting that she recently attended. SL suggested that, in future, when Challenge attend CV meetings, they make a few bullet points of the main changes/news items that they think Challenge would want to know about that particular team/service area.  The group ran through the feedback for the Tenant Central Scrutiny Lounge event attended by Mike Thraves. | Action: Challenge to make a summary of main points covered at Community Voice meetings they observe  Action: SL to bring along breakdown of RI budget to next meeting |
| **5. EMT Performance & Scrutiny info** |  |
| IS ran through the performance information for each team.  Q. What are the drivers behind the delay to the new builds?  A. Normally planning issues or negotiations with contractors  Q. Is it just homechoice that we use to advertise vacancies?  A. If we’re struggling to let, we might use the local papers or letting agents  Q. If a property isn’t let, does it go back on Homechoice the next week?  A. Yes it will stay on every week until it’s let  Q. Who manages Homechoice?  A. Internally, Lee Johnson (New Tenancy team leader) manages it, but the scheme is run from the Town Hall by Cheshire East Council  Q. What does it say about gas servicing on the tenancy agreement?  A. It states that they must provide access  Q. Could there be something placed on the agreement that says we could force access if they don’t provide it?  A. Possibly, and we are discussing different options – at the moment, we can legally force access through an injunction and have used this option with a tenant with mental health issues  JSL talked about a property on Delamere Drive that had kitchen/bathroom ripped out during void period, and someone had told her it was all in good condition prior to being ripped out. IS advised that without the address he can’t comment, but it could be a separate issue such as rising damp.  Q. Did you do staff engagement?  A. No, not in November, as we did the Times 100 which would have meant duplicating work for staff | **Action: SL to find out what the total arrears are (*Arrears are currently £355,044.24*)** |
| **6. Grounds Maintenance Performance** |  |
| LH talked through the satisfaction results of the recent survey they sent out about the grounds maintenance service.  Q. What factors would you attribute to the rise in satisfaction?  A. Probably because the weather was worse in 2012 than it was in 2013, and climate affects customer satisfaction  Q. Who else tendered for the contract?  A. Sodexho  Q. Could we do something community-based to replace the contractors?  A. It would be hard, and expensive to manage as there are so many little pockets of properties in widely dispersed areas  Q. Why did the post-inspection performance drop into red last May?  A. I can’t explain because I was on leave then, but probably because it was quite rainy then  Q. Do you incentivise responses?  A. Yes, £50 vouchers are given to the winners of the draw |  |
| **7. Grounds Maintenance Action Plan Update** |  |
| LH ran through the action plan, and explained that she produced a report in December about the pros and cons of bringing the grounds maintenance service in-house. She is still waiting for a response from EMT.  Q. Can a member of challenge sit on the panel for the tender?  A. If we decide not to bring the grounds maintenance service in-house, then yes  Q. What steps are you taking about making it easier for people to get in touch with you?  A. The details on the website, the livery on the vans contains the phone number and it’s on the satisfaction card  Q. Are you having trouble looking at costings for the new proposal?  A. No, we are calculating how long it takes to cut a square metre of grass |  |
| **8. Internal Auditors Schedule** |  |
| The Group discussed the value of the Internal Auditors contributions to scrutiny, and felt that it was generally helpful, despite the recent report which was not hugely beneficial to the inspection.  The group decided that they would review the need for the auditors further down the line, and could not immediately think of any areas where the auditors could assist over the next few months. |  |
| **9. Environmental Policy Review** |  |
| The group agreed they are happy with the changes. |  |
| **10. Code of Conduct and Probity Review** |  |
| The group agreed they are happy with the changes. |  |
| **11. Any Other Business** |  |
| Internal Auditors Report feedback  Rec. 1 – Ian felt that, with this particular recommendation, there is a wider definition of Right First Time (i.e. turning up and doing in on the first occasion, and making sure the operative doesn’t need to go back). IS would like to see how the other clients mentioned in the report are measuring RFT  Rec 2 – This needs to be looked at from a business perspective, as there will be a cost to evening and weekend appointments. The text-messaging service would be interesting, as we could establish how many appointments are missed. This could be positive in terms of cost, as it would save the business lots of money.  Repairs Inspection Report  The group ran through the learning points of the inspection, and agreed on what aspects of it had worked well. |  |
| **The next meeting will be held on Thursday 20th February 2014 at 11am** |  |