**Tenant Involvement Unconference**

**Flipchart Notes from Workshops**

**5 July 2017**

**1 Complaints**

* S.I.G specific at Southway to complaints - reviews lessons learnt, monitor complaints and outcomes and monitors timescales
* You can form an Independent panel at the internal complaints – Mosscare have now joined with Southway, Salix and New Charter to offer this option which is available to all their tenants
* Need to be sure that tenants don’t complaint due to in fear of having their tenancy removed
* Should be able to complain anonymously if you do not want feedback – crime stopper style line
* Tenant training in compliant is helpful

**2 Welfare Reform, Universal Credit, LHA etc**

**Communication**: Twitter + Facebook

 Face to face

 Articles in local mag, easy to read + understand letters & leaflets

**Affordability:** Member of staff helps new tenants check they can afford rent

* Important to get messages out there
* Money buddies can help resident volunteers who can help and advise and point in right direction (Weaver Vale)
* Staff are updating residents as soon as information is released after discussion with a residents working group at WVHG
* Everyone who is affected by LHA or the Benefit Cap is sent a letter then a face to face apt if necessary
* Referrals by tenants onto a Money Matters Team is helpful
* Tenants ring tenants randomly to see if they wish to sue the money matters service – they don’t have to have arrears for this
* Tenants supporting staffto give clear messages in a way which tenants understand the message, is helpful involvement

**3 Mystery shoppers/making calls to tenants**

**Tenant partners are helpful**

Weaver Vale involved tenants call random tenants on behalf of the home management team to check they understand Universal credit and are aware of what advice & support is available

Scrutiny Panel at Warrington mystery shop services to ensure information is available + that staff have right info + know how to advise tenants

Test = length of time to answer and if staff are polite?

**Data Protection – concerns about breaching? New Data Protection Bill?**

Tenants need to know more about that

Ask tenants if they’d be willing to take part

Letters in advance to warn of calls

Walk about Wednesday – face to face contact with tenants from staff. Involved tenants can attend too if they wish – South Liverpool

**Green Inspectors, looking at energy have been helpful to keep down heating bills and give energy swap advice.**

**4 Scrutiny of Repairs**

* Need breaking down into manageable chunks
* Pre-meets with contractors
* Clear scope and TOR for this work, to prevent creep
* Support from Organisation - Co-regulation in action

**Problems recruiting members – big picture, a problem for everyone**

* Co-opt expertise if it is needed
* Publicise reports/findings to encourage more to get involved, this has brought in many more tenants to scrutiny

**Policy & Performance**

* Communication – key for all policies
* Observation – judgement – recommendations impact
* Vital – tenants review policy + performance
* Review performance e.g. 99% - use numbers, they are more useful
* Use of web surveys e.g. survey monkey -> not always popular
* is everybody online or do they have access to IT?
* Benchmarking – Housemark comparing data against other landlords
* Barrier to involvement not understood
* Complexity of interpreting performance figures – training required
* Example of change in policy as a result of ASB inquiry

**5 Influencing Board & Committees**

* Gateshead - Good relationship
* WVHT - Good relationship
* SLH - Not met yet (new member)
* Plus Dane - Not met yet

Liaise with:

* Group Audit Committee WVHT
* Gateshead chair is tenant
* Plus Dane Chair is ex-chief constable of greater Manchester, Plus Dane is going down commercial route

Customer Involvement Group

* Gateshead
* Plus Dane just scrutiny
* SLH just scrutiny

It is vital that there is co-regulation between tenants and the housing association. That includes all levels up to CEO and board.

**6 Report Writing**

Useful to get some training –Trafford Hall/Yvonne

Write a report up on training as practice – keep short and sweet

* WHASP – write report up as a group in meetings
* SLH – secretary scrutiny member takes own minutes – just starting this now
* WHASP – have Board members come to meetings – start present report at board
* SLH & THT – chair presents report
* WHASP – Aim 2 x scrutiny reviews a year
* THT – Aim 4 x scrutiny reviews a year
* WHASP – didn’t like breaking into sub groups feel work better as a full group
* SLH – meet once a month – more to progress scrutiny
* WHASP – meet every 6 weeks
* THT – meet every 2 weeks + homework
* WHASP & THT – staff type up on screen at meetings so panel can input
* THT – email report template to everyone

**7 Value for Money**

* Potential for tenants to support quality assessment
* Best service for all at the best price
* Benchmarking – tenants can help
* Lack of accurate info in terms of staff costs for example – need to see the breakdown in specific detail and cannot access this from landlords elsewhere – limited to our ability to interrogate data
* Some officers believe that tenants have no regard for value for money + want the organisation to spend, spend, spend!! Not true
* Listen to all views
* Staff buy in from the top is important to support tenant i=engagement in VFM
* Not all savings have to be thousands of £s – look after the pennies + the pounds will look after themselves!

**8 Scrutiny Recruitment & Best Practice**

TGHC 5 members

Warrington Housing 11 members

Trafford Housing 7 members

Southway 6 members

South Liverpool 16 members

**Ideas that work:**

* Recruitment by event held in sheltered scheme was helpful
* Scrutiny conference to invite people to join at the conference
* New Tenants given freebies with scrutiny panel bag, to encourage awareness

**9 Supported Schemes**

* Independent Living:
* Like the manager to be onsite – security
* Tenants feel isolated after Manager moved off-site - Helps people in own house by providing support instead
* Waiting time for conversation if staff are off site
* Vulnerability increased, Social Interaction reduced
* Age is a problem in sheltered schemes, some have more needs that the scheme can cope with
* Scheme manager = on-site 9-5pm, then over to warden call after pendants
* No weekend cover - big bone of contention as that’s when the office is shut too
* Fire drill needs to be addressed
* Sheltered Forum is a useful Consultation Group for involvement
* Tenants independent views need to be sought
* Lifeline telephone has button for help to Southway
* Independent Living – support 4 times a day can stay in own home, works well

**10 Health & Safety and Fire**

* Clear Communal Areas
* Set up separate group for H&S -sub group - scope to be manageable
* Lack of communication
* Tenant Fire Marshalls – good ideas to take back
* Fire Safety by Design (2 Fire doors) – need to know your advice in terms of a fire and need your neighbours to know too
* Applies whether high or low rise or in houses
* Information for Fire Service i.e. oxygen users
* Deafness Aids - helpful
* Carbon Monoxide Detectors
* Evacuation Procedures (evac chairs)– displaying on notice boards
* How does the fire brigade and other services get to know quickly where they can access information about vulnerable tenants?