

# minutes of THE HERTFORD and outer London RESIDENT PANEL MEETING

# HELD ON 10 July 2023

# Meeting held at Priory Hall, ware

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| **PRESENT** | AD | Hertford Panel Chair and Customer Service Committee Member |
| NA | Independent Panel Member |
| DC | Resident Panel Member |
| JJH | Resident Panel Member |
| BR | Resident Panel Member |
| SF | Resident Panel Member |
| **IN ATTENDANCE** | MM | Head of Resident Engagement and Corporate Experience |
| TH | Resident Engagement Officer |
| JM | Complaints Manager |
| PF | Director of Compliance and Planned Works |
| **APOLOGIES** | RW | Resident Panel Member |
|  | ZH | Resident Panel Member |
|  | PL | Resident Panel Member |
|  | JR | Executive Director of People, Partnerships and Sustainability |
|  | AWH | Resident Panel Member |
| **MINUTE TAKER** | TH | Resident Engagement Officer |

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| **1** | **Welcome and Apologies** | **AD** |
| 1.01 | AD welcomes the panel |  |
| **2** | **Declarations of interest (declarations of interest to have been provided to the Chair)** | **AD** |
| 2.01  2.02 | There were no declarations of interest from the panel.  MIQ (previous panel member) is observing the first 45 minutes of the meeting- as requested by MIQ and agreed by the chair |  |
| **3** | Matters arising – Action Log | **TH** |
| 3.01 | TH summarised the updates on outstand actions- approved by chair |  |
| 3.02 | TH advised that we’re waiting for feedback to be able to update actions 4.06 and 4.07 |  |
| 3.03  3.04  **3.05** | 7.12- TH advised the information for the residents’ associations will be shared as soon as it’s received  Action 7.10- AD stated that the panel haven't been able to discuss this yet, but they do still want to interact with the budget setting process and said that they will pick it up for the October meeting.  **MM stated that that budgets are usually set in the lead up to October so it may not be a productive at that point, but she and SH will discuss between now and the October meeting how the panel may be able to get involved** | **MM/SH** |
| **4** | Welcome to new Panel Members | **AD** |
| 4.01 | AD welcomed the new panel members and invited them to introduce themselves |  |
| 4.02 | Other panel members and staff introduced themselves to the new members |  |
| 4.03 | DC advised that this will be his last panel meeting as he is moving to a new property with another H.A |  |
| 4.04 | AD and MM thanks DC for their contributions to the panel and congratulated him on his move |  |
| **5** | Panel Business | **ALL** |
| 5.01 | MM advised that the TOR’s (Terms of Reference) have now been signed off by CSC (Customer Service Committee) so now we can start the process of electing a vice chair |  |
| 5.02 | MM stated that if any member is interested in being vice-panel chair, that they are welcome to express interest by getting in touch with us via the get involved mailbox and we will hopefully elect someone at the October panel meeting |  |
| **5.03** | **RE Team will send further information regarding the vice-panel role to the panel via email following this meeting** | **RE Team** |
| 5.04 | AD advised that the panel were unable to access their pre-meeting due to technical issues |  |
| **5.05** | **TH advised that she will be investigating this with IT as the meeting settings were correct and will endeavor to resolve asap so panel members can access their pre-meetings** | **TH** |
| **6** | **May Customer Services Committee 60 second round up** | **AD** |
| 6.01  6.02 | AD provided a round up to the panel and advised the panel that Matt Clarke (the CEO of MCP) and she had the opportunity to have a discussion with him about some of the challenges MCP have been facing amidst taking over the London region following the exit of Wates  No questions from the panel regarding the 60 second round-up |  |
| **7** | **March Board 60 second round up** | **MM** |
| 7.01  7.02 | MM provided the 60 second round up in JR’s absence  There were no questions from the panel |  |
| **8** | **Complaints** | **JR** |
| 8.01 | JM opened the agenda item and provided a summary of the report having taken the papers as read. |  |
| 8.02 | JM advised the panel that he is happy to answer any questions from the panel and advised that it is a challenging time for all things complaints. |  |
| 8.03  8.04 | JM advised the panel that damp & mould is currently still a very hot topic within complaints.  JM stated the team had made good progress over the last couple of years with planning and processes and bringing down the overall number of complaints and increasing satisfaction. In the last 6-12 months a combination of changes to legislation and government intervention it has been a challenge. |  |
| 8.05 | JM stated that the team are always looking at how they deal with and respond to complaints, and they also reflect on how they can satisfy both residents and the ombudsman- in an ever-changing environment |  |
| 8.06 | JM stated that other complaints teams from housing associations in the G15 are experiencing the same challenges |  |
| 8.07 | SF asked what the highest number of complaints we receive relate to |  |
| 8.08 | JM advised that a large percentage are repair related, and out of that damp & mould is a high contributor. He stated that we are continuously looking at our damp & mould policies and ensure we act accordingly. |  |
| 8.09  8.10 | PF stated that we have set up a specific team to handle damp ad mould cases only- this team is dedicated to resolving these issues for residents. The team is focused of proactively resolving the issues at their source, whether it be a structural issue, or anything else  No further questions from the panel-JM advised that the panel are welcome to send any questions they have over to him via email |  |
| **9** | **Building Safety** | **PF** |
| 9.01 | PF opened the item by advising the panel he has taken the report as being read so provided a quick summary to the panel |  |
| 9.02  9.03  9.04  9.05  9.06  9.07  9.08  9.09  9.10  9.11  9.12  9.13  9.14  **9.15** | PF stated that he tried to keep the report as concise as possible but wanted to provide some insight into the scope and the challenges within the new building safety legislation. Many people think of external walls and cladding when they think of building/fire safety, but there is a lot more to it.  PF stated that the updated government legislation is relating to high rise buildings (high rise buildings are considered 18metres or 7 storeys high)  PF advised that he has a new project team that has been put together to carry out building safety investigations on such buildings  PF told the panel that this project is in its early days but is expected to take up to two years. The team will take on all safety concerns with our high-rise buildings. This project is called ‘the building safety case’. It involves the team maintaining the government’s ‘golden thread’, which is where all building safety information is transparent and accounted for- with a single line of communication. This involves all information relating to these buildings are shared between contractors, managing agents, etc  PF advised that we own 53 high rise buildings, and there are another 45 high rise buildings that although we don’t own, we have residents living in them  SF asked if the new legislations were a result of the fire at Grenfell Tower  PF responded that that the Grenfell fire had a big impact on the sector as a whole and that there has been a lot of changes as a result  SF asked how much we know about people living in our blocks and if we know of challenges as they may have in an evacuation due to mobility issues, etc  PF advised that all buildings would have a fire strategy in place, and this is communicated to residents. We do ask residents to advise us of anyone moving into the property- but we appreciate that people do have family or friends visiting  PF advised that the team do want to engage with residents by way of a survey to let us know what barriers they may have in the event of an evacuation. There isn’t a legal requirement for us to do this just yet, but it feels like the morally right thing to do  PF advised that the team want to ensure we offer residents a variety of ways in which to get this information to us and they’d like to offer a blended approach  AD stated that she feels a blended approach would be best and it would enable more people to provide their comments in way that are easily accessible for many  PF responded that he would like to engage with the panel about how they would like to see this take forward  **PF will reach out to panel members (via the RE Team) to gain feedback ahead of the building safety vulnerability survey to find out what the best-balanced approach to it will be** | **PF** |
| **10** | **Resident engagement update** | **MM** |
| 10.01  10.02 | MM took the paper as read and provided a summary of the update  MM advised that an email was sent to the panel regarding resident’s feedback about the merge- and it offered residents the opportunity have a 1-2-1 conversation with a member of the team regarding any concerns they may have |  |
| 10.03  10.04  10.05  10.06  10.07  10.08 | MM stated that it also contained a comms plan for what the next steps are for the merger- panel members are welcome to send any questions they have via the link to Padlet provided.  MM also reiterated that we’re aware of the issues with the pre-meetings and asked that if the same problem arises, please send us a screenshot to us so that TH can liaise with IT to resolve the issue  BR asked what the main purpose of the merger is  MM responded that because it’s such a difficult external environment to work in due to the increase in the cost of building materials, building safety, cost of living etc., it makes a lot of sense for two housing associations to merge to become much stronger. Sovereign Housing is a larger organisation than Network Homes, we are financially stronger. Coming together as one will be beneficial for residents.  MM stated that to go on as the organisation we currently may mean that we could have to pause or even stop some of the things we do. By merging it will mean that services like Fire Safety and our charitable fund (Network Cares) will have increased resources added to it.  No further questions from the panel |  |
| **11** | **Any Other Business** | **ALL** |
| 11.01 | No AOB from panel members raised |  |
| 11.02 | Meeting closed at 7.45pm |  |
| **12** | **Minutes from the meeting of 03 April 2023-** |  |
|  | *For Information* - *Not to be discussed unless so requested.* |  |
| **13** | **Network Homes’ Performance Report** |  |
|  | *For Information, not to be discussed unless so requested* |  |
| **14** | **Continuous Improvement Panel Update** |  |
|  | *For Information, not to be discussed unless so requested* |  |
| **15** | **Building Safety (remediation programme)** |  |
|  | *For Information, not to be discussed unless so requested* |  |

**Next Meeting Scheduled for 17 October 2023**

AD

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Chair Date