

Housing Performance Panel

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting

held on Thursday, 7 December 2023

from 1pm to 4pm via Zoom

Attendees: Peter Campbell (Head of Housing) – Chair
Cllr John Batchelor
Brian Burton
Les Rolfe
Patricia Hall
Paul Bowman

By Invitation: Elaine Phillips (Mears)
Geoff Clark (SCDC – Service Manager – Tenancy and Estates)
Eddie Spicer (SCDC – Service Manager – Housing Assets)
Grace Andrews (SCDC – Data Quality and Improvement Team Leader)
Dave Armitage (SCDC – Resident Involvement Officer Team Leader)
Bronwen Taylor (SCDC – Resident Involvement Officer) – Minute taker

Apologies: Eleni Koutso

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting at 1.01pm.

Apologies were received from Eleni Koutso.

2. Quorum

The meeting was quorate.

3. Minutes of previous meeting – 14 September 2023

The Chair referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2023, which were approved by the panel.

4. Matters Arising from previous Meeting – 14 September 2023

4.1 Matters Arising from previous Meeting – 15 June 2023

Item 4.2 – Review of Quarter 4 Complaints Data (Item 5.4)

Dave Armitage advised that this was discussed at the meeting held the day before and that he would arrange a meeting with the tenant volunteers who were not there to update them on the new structure. He added that the monthly repairs meetings with Mears and Eddie Spicer would not be held in future due to this new structure.

4.2 Mears Group – Review of Quarter 1 (Item 5.1)

Elaine Phillips confirmed that the data for the blank responses had been removed from the report and she would include a side note explaining the ones received.

4.3 SCDC – Review of Quarter 1 Complaints Data (Item 5.4)

Grace Andrews said a report on the answers received from the Regulator on some of the Tenant Satisfaction Measure calculations was included under item 5.5 of the agenda.

5. Standing Items

5.1 Mears Group – Review of Quarter 2

Elaine Phillips, from Mears, referred to the report in the pack and said that due to the cold weather, they were focussing on heating and emergency repairs but it had not affected their KPIs for “R1 – % Emergencies within target (4hrs)” and “R2 – % Urgent within target (24 hours)” which were still achieving 100%. She said that they were slowly getting closer to their target of 10 days or less for KPI “R4 – Average number of calendar days taken to complete Routine Repairs” and were on 13 days, where previously they were on 17 or 18 days. She added that they had employed two new staff members which had helped with their work in progress.

Elaine Phillips said there was a focus on voids as there had been a failure on KPIs “V2 – % of 10 calendar day voids completed within agreed timescale” and “V3 – % of 25 calendar day voids completed within agreed timescale” which was due to the volume as well as working on major repairs.

The Chair said that it was good to see that the majority of the KPIs were in “green”.

Cllr Batchelor asked why the number of jobs completed for KPI “V2 – % of 10 calendar day voids completed within agreed timescale” was 69% which equated to 11 out of 16 days, however, the average was only nine days.

Elaine Phillips explained that the five that had failed would have been considerably over the 10 days but the 11 that had passed were well within the target, which had helped with the averaging out.

Cllr Batchelor said that KPI “V3 – % of 25 calendar day voids completed within agreed timescale” was only 65%, which was down from the previous quarters and this was a key area that government were looking at in terms of our 4-day work week trial, which we needed to be aware of.

5.2 Repairs Performance Group

Eddie Spicer referred to the annual report included in the pack and said that over-all it had been a really good year in terms of progress, getting the results we wanted, constant improvement and a great deal had been learnt. He said that improvements had been put in place in terms of communication, for example, the contact centre at Mears, changing the call routing so that there were no delays, only one phone number and employing additional staff at Mears. He said that this had improved customer satisfaction, the volume of complaints and the service that we gave.

Eddie Spicer said that an added feature to the contract was the Asset management and improvement projects which had been really useful, with additional funding of £1.8m from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DENZ) to help decarbonise our properties. He added that Elaine Phillips was working on this project.

Eddie Spicer said that the repairs had been very good, however, there had been fluctuations in the voids due to the markets and the number of voids we had. He added that the number of jobs / calls had increased as the new contract was now a heating and repairs contract, and previously we were looking at data which was for repairs only. He referred to the social value elements by Mears and said this was a new addition to the contract which provided an innovative structure within the contract to deliver additional benefits for our residents. He said there were some exciting projects planned for the next year.

Eddie Spicer referred to the Complaints on page 31 of the pack and said that this gave a good breakdown of what areas the complaints were in. He said that out of the 27,218 jobs completed, there had been 87 complaints of which 57 had been upheld.

Les Rolfe referred to the measure for “Emergency repairs completed (per 1,000 units)” in the table on page 21 of the pack and said that the figure of 4.16 did not look right as the median was 73.2 which was very different figure.

The Chair said that he thought the figures for emergency and non-emergency repairs in the “blue” section was a mistake and that the figures should read as a percentage.

Eddie Spicer said that he would check the figures and amend the table.

Pattie Hall said well done to Elaine Phillips and her team, and to Eddie Spicer on the improvement on the last contract.

Paul Bowman agreed and said that they had a good working relationship. He added that he still had one question about the promise in the contract regarding the 50% electric vehicles in the fleet and that the reason given for not having them was that there were not enough charging points. He asked for a commitment on time and for a plan on how Mear's were going to catch up on the commitment made in the contract.

Elaine Phillips said that they were in the process of drawing up extensive plans which would be shared shortly.

The Chair said that this was a well written and clear report, and asked what the next step was.

Eddie Spicer said that it had been circulated to Liz Watts, Chief Executive Officer of SCDC, and she had shared it with Cabinet. He added that going forward it would be a part of the ongoing contract file as a reference and it would be used as a benchmark on what we had achieved and where we were going with the contract.

The Chair referred to page 26 of the pack and said the name of the tenant in the first speech bubble was to be removed. He asked Bronwen Taylor to upload the report to the website once it was amended.

Action: Eddie Spicer and Bronwen Taylor

5.3 SCDC – Review of Quarter 2 Performance Data

Grace Andrews referred to the slides on the Performance Data for Quarter 2, which were emailed to the panel, and said that they were an overview of the report that was included in the pack. She said that 11 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) had either improved or maintained performance from the last quarter and five had shown a decline, however two of the five were still in target.

Grace Andrews highlighted the key indicators that had either improved, declined or been maintained, as follows:

- Housing Options and Advice ('Number of households with family commitments who have been accommodated in B&B for longer than 6 weeks') – maintained

The Chair said that this was the national trend and that many authorities were experiencing a massive increase in bed and breakfast usage. He reported that there was one authority who had issued a Section 141 notice and they were saying that the prime reason for this was due to the spend on temporary accommodation. He said that we were doing really well.

Paul Bowman asked which authority it was.

The Chair said he would send the details to Paul Bowman.

- Average relet times – average of 28 – improved
- Satisfaction with response repairs – declined

Grace Andrews referred to the HouseMark findings diagram showing the different types of surveys and said that although less face-to-face surveys was the lowest form of survey, they had the highest satisfaction scores. She added that there was a discussion on whether there should be more face-to-face surveys, however, they cost more to conduct due to employing additional staff and that this may not give a true score as tenants would feel pressured into completing them on the spot.

A discussion on surveys was held.

Paul Bowman asked if in future a slide could be included with a note to show that there was a 12% difference in the transactional and perception.

Grace Andrews said that she did not normally include information on surveys but did this time as she thought it would be interesting, however, she would add it.

Eddie Spicer said that MEL Research were also conducting monthly telephonic repairs satisfaction surveys and the results were within 1% of the Mears survey results.

- Rent Arrears – top performing
- Proportion of homes with a valid Gas Safety Certificate – top performing = 100% – although as of November 2023 we were chasing three properties
- Housing Options and Advice – maintained

Paul Bowman referred to the first slide, “LPIs Red and Declined” and the “% Customer satisfaction with the condition of new home” and asked if there was a correlation between the time it was taking to sort out empty properties or was it about the way the house was being presented and historic repairs not being put right.

Grace Andrews said there was not enough data that related to those issues to get a true picture, however, it was a performance indicator that we were looking at.

Geoff Clark said that it would not be in relation to empty properties or the level of repairs, but in relation to what tenants anticipated a property to be like when they were completed, for example flooring or furnishings.

Action: The Chair

5.4 SCDC – Review of Quarter 2 Complaints Data

Grace Andrews went through the Complaints and Compliments Data for Quarter 2 as follows:

- 38 complaints received – slightly higher than in quarter 1
- 88% complaints were received digitally, which was lower, with 48% via the portal
- Responded within deadline – 72% (target is 80%) – decline
- 47% of all complaints received related to repairs and maintenance, with the top category being service delivery
- 39 compliments received – year to date – improvement from last year

Paul Bowman asked who was responsible for responses.

Grace Andrews said that it was the Service Manager.

Paul Bowman asked if the resolution to a complaint was also in target.

Grace Andrews gave an example and said that if the complaint was in respect of a roof repair, then the response would be the outcome of the investigation, outlining what work would be to put in place to repair to the roof, and the complaint would be closed. She said that once the complaint was closed, we still followed it through until it was completely

finished. She added if during that time, the tenant was not happy with what was going on, then that was where the complaint could get escalated to perhaps a stage two.

Paul Bowman referred to the 47% of all complaints received and asked if the Service Delivery of 32% was 32% of all complaints received or were they 32% of the 47%.

Grace Andrews said that it was 32% of all complaints relating to Service Delivery.

Paul Bowman asked if all the complaints were received directly by SCDC or were they including complaints received by Mears.

Grace Andrews said that all Mears complaints came through to SCDC and if a tenant did complain to Mears, they would forward it to us.

Eddie Spicer there was a full audit trail as Mears did have a system in place to record everything, whether it be a service request or a complaint.

Grace Andrews said that the landlord was always responsible for complaints. She added that Mears did have a record on their system of all service calls taken and how many complaints had been passed over to SCDC.

Paul Bowman asked if the system had been updated to comply with what the Ombudsman needed.

Grace Andrews said that it had and that Eddie Spicer and Elaine Phillips had been working on a process map.

Eddie Spicer referred to the process map which had been running for about three months and said it had been working really well. He added that the process would be documented over the next month or two.

5.5 Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Grace Andrews said that starting in the summer of 2024 the government were putting new measures in place and they had given guidance on what performance indicators (PIs) to measure. She said they had been having workshops with other local authorities and that different organisations were looking at how to review them. She said the report included in the pack was being looked at locally and was a way for us to understand what measures we needed to collate, and how they were being calculated. She added that HouseMark had done some benchmarking on the some of the PIs to give us an idea of where we were against our peers. She said that in the next couple of months we would get notification on how to submit them.

Grace Andrews said that these PIs were calculated differently to how we calculate our other PIs and reported as follows:

- CH01 – Complaints data was only landlord complaints broken down per 1,000 homes and that this report showed the months in quarter 2, however, when submitting the real-time data, it would be for one year's data
- CH02 – Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales period – this slide may change as the data was not meaningful
- NM 01 – Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord
- RP01 – Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard Collated Annually and RP02 – Repairs completed within target timescale – both top performing
- BS01 – Gas safety checks Number carried out and required to be carried out – top performing

Grace Andrews reported that the following measures were all 100%, however, they were still confusing to Local Authorities (LA) as there were different ways of reporting. She said the Regulator would provide clarity to all LAs.

- BS02 – Fire safety checks Number carried out and required to be carried out
- BS03 – Asbestos safety checks Homes required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out
- BS04 – Water safety checks Homes required legionella risk assessments have been carried out
- BS05 – Lift safety checks Homes required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out

5.6 Estate Inspection Reports

Bronwen Taylor referred to the Estate Inspection summaries for August, September and October 2023 included in the pack, for noting. She said a field, Electric Vehicle Charging Points, was added to the Estate Inspection Questionnaire form in order to identify any accessible, communal parking areas that could be utilised for EV charging points.

Les Rolfe referred to the updated Issues and Actions worksheet and said that there were a number of issues dating back to April 2023 that were still showing as “In Progress”, which

should have been completed by now. He referred to an issue of an overgrown hedge that was reported in April 2023 which was still not showing as being resolved.

Geoff Clark said that it was possibly an administration matter however he would follow up with the Housing Service Officers (HSOs) and ask them to ensure that the worksheet was updated by the end of the year.

Les Rolfe agreed that it probably was only administrative but asked what the point of the worksheet was if it was not being updated properly. He added that there were quite a number of “In progress” issues throughout the worksheet and two issues that had “Not started”, which by now should have been actioned. He asked if the issues were followed up.

Paul Bowman said that last month the tenant volunteer inspectors had a meeting with Geoff Clark and in future they should not have as many landscaping issues as they would be covered in the new contract.

Geoff Clark said that the HSOs would check on issues either when they were at the estate on other business or they would go out on ad-hoc visits. He added that it was the officer’s responsibility to ensure that the issues were resolved.

Action: Geoff Clark

6. New Matters

6.1 Tpas National Scrutiny Conference, Loughborough – Feedback Report

The Chair referred to the feedback report from Paul Bowman included in the pack for noting.

Paul Bowman said the conference was very informative and went through the report. He added that some tenant representatives were not clear on the difference between the Housing Ombudsman and the Housing Regulator so he took the opportunity to add the difference in his report.

Bronwen Taylor said that as soon as she received Margaret Wilson’s report, she would send it to the panel.

The Chair thanked Paul Bowman and said that he thought that SCDC were compliant.

7. Any Other Business (AOB)

7.1 New Resident Involvement Structure

Paul Bowman asked that when the Repairs Performance reports were sent directly to the tenant volunteers and not included in this pack, was there a deadline for when their comments on the data was required in order to include in this meeting.

The Chair said that the basis of it would be that this meeting would cease to exist in its current format and would be replaced with three different sub-groups, which were one dealing with performance, one dealing with contracts and one dealing with policy, and they would report directly to the Housing Engagement Board. He added that one of the things we would need to do was work on the timings of the sub-groups and the dissemination of the information.

Paul Bowman asked if we could still have another HPP quarterly meeting as the new structure would not be in place.

The Chair said that the new structure would only come into effect in April 2024 so we would still be holding the March 2024 meeting.

Eddie Spicer said that the repairs performance reports would be sent to the tenant volunteers by the 10th of each month.

8. Meeting Dates for 2023 / 2024

The Chair referred to the meeting date for 2023 / 2024 as follows:

- 14 March 2024 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)

The Chair gave his apologies as he would be away and he asked Eddie Spicer to chair the meeting. He wished everyone a great Christmas and New Year.

9. Closing

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 2.32pm.