

Housing Performance Panel

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting

held on Thursday, 14 September 2023

from 1pm to 4pm via Zoom

Attendees: Peter Campbell (Head of Housing) – Chair

Cllr John Batchelor

Brian Burton

Eleni Koutso

Les Rolfe

Patricia Hall

By Invitation: Elaine Phillips (Mears)

Geoff Clark (SCDC – Service Manager – Tenancy and Estates)

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: Paul Bowman

Eddie Spicer (SCDC – Service Manager – Housing Assets)

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting at 1.02pm.

Apologies were received from Paul Bowman and Eddie Spicer.

2. Quorum

The meeting was quorate.

3. Minutes of previous meeting – 15 June 2023

The Chair referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2023, which were approved by the panel.

4. Matters Arising from previous Meeting – 15 June 2023

4.1 Mears Group (Item 5.1)

Elaine Phillips confirmed that she had received the database of tenants who had opted out of the surveys and had sent it to Eddie Spicer. She confirmed that between October 2022 and June 2023, 302 tenants had opted out of the surveys.

4.2 Review of Quarter 4 Complaints Data (Item 5.4)

Dave Armitage advised that he still had to set up a meeting with Eddie Spicer to look at the current arrangement that was in place for monitoring the contract and for ways to get more tenant involvement, and would provide feedback at the next meeting.

Action by: Eddie Spicer and Dave Armitage

4.3 Estate Inspections (Item 5.5)

Geoff Clark advised that we received schedules of completed work from SP Landscapes, however, Bronwen Taylor had requested schedules of future works from Debbie Barrett.

5. Standing Items

5.1 Mears Group – Review of Quarter 1

Elaine Phillips, from Mears, referred to the report in the pack and said that “KPI O1 – % Overall Job completions within target” was 93%, which was 5% below target, because in April 2023 they realised that the KPI for the “W” priority which was the “30-day non-standard repairs” was missing. She said that included in these jobs were the “20-day repairs” and they were also included in the “KPI R3 – % Routine repairs exceeding 20 working days for completion”. She added that by quarter 2, these would be separated and there should be an improvement in the KPIs.

Cllr Batchelor said that the government were currently taking a close interest in KPIs and asked for an explanation on the “30-day” issue.

Elaine Phillips said that the normal routine was 20 working days and if a repair was not classed as routine, it would have a priority of 30 working days, for example a re-roof which was classed as a major repair.

Cllr Batchelor asked if the 30 days KPI was the same as major repair.

Elaine Phillips said that it was a major repair unless it was classed as a capital component, for example, if a kitchen needed a full new installation, and it would be included in the “KPI O1 – % Overall Job completions within target”.

Cllr Batchelor said that he thought that these were left out.

Elaine Phillips said they were included in the KPIs “R1” to R10”. She added that KPI “O1 – % Overall Job completions within target” included everything in the contract, including planned works. She went through the Void KPIs and said that Mears were recruiting more sub-contractors to help with the volume of work.

Eleni Koutso said that she thought it was a bad idea to have sub-contractors as it lowered the standards and there was no control over their performance.

Elaine Phillips said that they have monthly meetings with all sub-contractors for performance reviews.

Eleni Koutso said that tenants should be asked about the performance as the sub-contractors would always say that they did a good job.

The Chair said that if the demand was greater, then it was entirely appropriate that Mears involved sub-contractors. He added that empty properties were signed off by a member of the housing staff and the views of the incoming tenant were reflected with a post occupation survey.

Eleni Koutso said that she was referring to repairs before Elaine Phillips disappeared from the call.

The Chair referred to KPI O4 and said that if the “36 blank survey responses” received were removed as if they did not exist, it would improve the KPIs and he suggested removing them.

Elaine Phillips said that she would remove these from the report for the next quarter and would include a side note explaining the blank responses received.

Cllr Batchelor said that they needed to be careful of not being accused of fiddling the numbers.

The Chair agreed and said that this was a contract with the council, and what we were asking for was information with an explanation of the numbers. He added that we would not do anything to manipulate the figures without an explanation.

Eleni Koutso referred to KPI “R6 – % Urgent and Routine Repairs completed on first visit” and asked if there was any data for big jobs, for example mould on walls, which may take several hours or days to complete.

Elaine Phillips said that that was reflected in the missing 15% of the KPI.

The Chair said to remember that this was Mear’s and their sub-contractor’s data and that we appoint other contractors for specialist jobs such as mould.

Eleni Koutso asked for an explanation on the Cumulative Call Data graph.

Elaine Phillips explained that it was the performance of the Call Centre, showing the number of calls answered and how quickly there were answered. She said that there was a slight dip in May 2023 as they had two new starters which the team were training.

Action by: Elaine Phillips

5.2 Repairs Contract – Performance Review Joint Working Group

As Eddie Spicer had tendered his apologies, Elaine Phillips agreed to report on his behalf. She said that the request for the “opt out” report was made at one of these meetings.

Les Rolfe said that it was disappointing that they had not had a meeting for 2 months and that someone should be able to take over if Eddie Spicer was not available.

The Chair said that moving forward, we could make sure that we had an abled deputy to take over if Eddie Spicer was unavailable.

Patti Hall said that the reason for one of the meetings being cancelled was that there were too many bank holidays and it seemed as if the meetings were always being cancelled.

The Chair said that perhaps the way forward was that if meetings were booked, we should try and have them and not be dependent on one person. He added that one of the issues that we want to talk about in the future was having more formal agreements with tenants to make sure that we have our own monitoring systems and targets for the percentage of meetings that were arranged and kept.

Les Rolfe said that nobody was advised that the last meeting was cancelled and only he, Elaine Phillips and Dave Armitage dialled into the meeting. He added that not even management of SCDC knew that it had been cancelled and he felt that that was wrong.

Peter Campbell agreed and said that someone should be able to take over these meetings. He added that should meetings be cancelled, they should be only under

exceptional circumstances and we would work on a plan to make sure that this did not happen again.

Les Rolfe said that he had a few queries for Elaine Phillips.

The Chair asked him to email the details to her.

5.3 SCDC – Review of Quarter 1 Performance Data

Grace Andrews gave an overview on the Performance Data for Quarter 1. She said that 13 KPIs had either shown an improvement or had maintained performance and two had shown a decline, however one of the two was still in target.

Les Rolfe asked if this slide show could be included in the pack.

Grace Andrews said that due to the timeline of sending out the pack, this was not ready to be included, however, she could send it to Bronwen Taylor to send out a couple of days before the meeting.

Cllr Batchelor asked what the Damp and Mould KPI of 1.3% meant.

Grace Andrews said that this was a new KPI and reflected 1.3% of the entire housing stock of 5,401.

The Chair said that this was a new indicator to show that we were tackling this issue. He said the reason that it was higher than the target was because the stock condition survey had identified a number of cases that we were not previously aware of as they had not been reported to us.

Cllr Batchelor asked about the information for AH224 – Number of new build council house completions and AH225 – Number of new build council houses currently started on site.

Grace Andrews said that at the time of putting the report together she did not have the information.

The Chair said that we did have the information and it would be sent to Bronwen Taylor to send out with the draft minutes.

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

- Housing Options and Advice – maintained
- Average relet times – average of 31 – declined
- Satisfaction with response repairs – improved

Eleni Koutso asked for an explanation if the blank response were included in these percentages.

Grace Andrews said that the explanation could be found in Annexure 1 of the full report, which was included in the agenda pack, however, she would add a reference to where the information could be found.

- Rent Arrears – improved

Eleni Koutso asked if people who received benefits and did not pay rent were included in this data.

The Chair said that it was expressed as a percentage of the overall rent due by tenants in the year and was not our interpretation, but a HouseMark definition, to allow for this comparison.

Geoff Clark explained that Universal Credit was paid directly to tenants and they were responsible for making rent payments from this benefit.

- Proportion of homes with a valid Gas Safety Certificate – top performing = 100%

5.4 SCDC – Review of Quarter 1 Complaints Data

Grace Andrews went through the Complaints and Compliments Data for Quarter 1 as follows:

- 29 complaints received – less than in quarter 3
- 91% complaints were received digitally, with 57% via the portal
- Complaints responded to within deadline = 85% – decline on last quarter
- Year to Date complaints – 56% related to repairs and maintenance
- 21 compliments received – year to date – improvement from last year

Eleni Koutso said it was easier for people to give complaints and compliments as they were done digitally, however, there were a lot more complaints than compliments.

Grace Andrews said that we always received more complaints than compliments, however sometimes it evened out by the end of the year. She said that people did not always go out of their way to give a compliment but would do with a complaint. She added that not many compliments were received through the portal but were emailed directly to the officers.

Eleni Koutso said she would like to see a comparison of previous years complaints.

Grace Andrews said that the information was in the report included in the agenda pack. She added that the Regulator had introduced Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), which was something that all local authorities were looking at, and there were 22 measures – 12 of the measures would be collated by conducting surveys and the balance would be from performance indicators.

Eleni Koutso asked if an update on the TSMs could be included in the report for the next meeting.

Grace Andrews said that as we were still getting answers back from the Regulator on some of the calculations, she would report back on what progress had been made at the next meeting.

Action by: Grace Andrews

5.5 Estate Inspections

Bronwen Taylor referred to the Estate Inspection summaries for May, June and July 2023, included in the pack, for noting.

Geoff Clark thanked the tenant volunteers for their time attending the estate inspections and said that the feedback that he had received was that they had gone well. He said he had checked the Estate Inspections Issues and Actions worksheet and he would ask the Housing Service Officers (HSOs) to update it as soon as possible. He also thanked Andrew Cole, one of the HSOs, for standing in for colleagues when the team had been short staffed.

6. New Matters

6.1 Tpas National Tenants Conference, Coventry – Feedback Report

The Chair referred to the feedback report from Jim Watson included in the pack for noting. He added that Paul Bowman's report had been recently emailed to the panel.

7. Any Other Business (AOB)

None

8. Meeting Dates for 2023 / 2024

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

- 7 December 2023 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)
- 14 March 2024 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)

9. Closing

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 2.30pm.