

Minutes of National Scrutiny Committee.

Meeting held on 11th February 2015.

Attendees: Keith Harkness (Chair), Alan Anderson, Ivy Isherwood, Maria Milford, Linda Perry, Ann Rignall, Glynn Williams.

Staff: Mark Hoskisson, Kate Jungnitz, Heather Welsby, Chris Brown (Marketing), Jackie Puleston (Div. RI Observer)

Apologies: Sandra Maziere sent apologies

Agenda Items:

- 1 Welcome and Introductions.
- 2 Minutes of last NSC meeting and Matters Arising.
- 3 Feedback from Joint meeting with Federation Executive.
- 4 Recruitment.
- 5 Riverside Website Presentation.
- 6 Feedback from OPG consultation.
- 7 Divisional Scrutiny update.
- 8 Any Other Business.

Agenda items Decided & Actioned:

2. Minutes of last NSC meeting and Matters Arising:

Matters arising – **MM** to contact Sue Powell re Feedback from Annual Report consultation

Minutes approved

3. Feedback from Joint Meeting with Federation Exec 2nd/3rd December 2014:

KH described the meeting for the benefit of those who did not attend.

There followed a general discussion.

MH highlighted the visit of Max Steinberg (Chair of the Riverside Group Board). Max felt it was useful to meet with the NSC and the Federation Exec and asked to come again in 2015.

AA noted that the Question & Answer format it was a good opportunity to feel the general direction of motion for Riverside as an organisation.

MM noted that questions for Max were given out on the day. She suggested that in future the NSC should prepare questions ahead of the meeting. General feeling that a Q & A session feels like a one way exercise, and that members would prefer more discussion about the latest issues discussed at Group Board meetings.

Generally agreed that it was worthwhile to continue meeting together to create a more joined-up feel to Tenant Involvement structures and build up working relationships. Further discussion concerning the format of future meetings and the balancing the merits of inviting members of staff to present items and value of training and networking.

Agreed - to include Group Board Headlines as a permanent Agenda item.

4. Recruitment:

KH welcomed the three new members - Ivy, Glynn & Linda to the NSC.

It was noted that they would serve along with the existing six members the remainder of the three-year term. ie. until April 2017.

5. Riverside Website Presentation:

Chris Brown from the Marketing Team introduced the progress to date with designing the new Riverside Website.

He noted that the numbers of people using the website is increasing which demonstrates a willingness to utilise the service. It is also apparent that people are increasingly using mobile devices (tablets and i-phones) rather than computers when using the website. Chris has met with different groups of tenants, panels and

staff to gather their opinions about what they would like the new website to provide.

Twenty-four companies tendered for the contract of which five were short-listed and were invited to make presentations to a panel which included Keith.

The company which was selected works for not-for-profit organisations and consults closely with their audience at the beginning of their design process.

The aim is for Riverside to have a new Website in October 2015 which will include various 'self-service' features. Chris stated that the 3 elements of crucial importance were that the new website was easy to read, easy to navigate & accessible for our audience.

NSC members then asked Chris questions about the new website.

Chris explained that the new website would conform to AA Accessibility standards, for example any video items will be subtitled. He confirmed that a 'get involved' link will feature on the front page of all the regional sites.

"REASON DIGITAL", the successful company are used to working with charities and so are very aware of the varied backgrounds of the likely customers. They are planning workshops in order to capture as many views as possible. It is planned that there will be a proto-type of the website available for testing in the summer.

The new Scrutiny Exercise for the NSC is to consider carefully the content of the two documents 'Website Guiding Principles Version 02' and 'Website Guiding Principles- bullet points'. Do you regard them as fit for purpose? Do you feel that these principles best suit our tenants?

This is not a confidential document and so NSC members can consult outside the group as part of their research.

Action – each NSC member to forward their own recommendations, proposals & amendments to Heather before 5th March 2015.

The responses will be collated and arrangements made for a delegation of NSC to meet with Chris to present their report.

NSC should then scrutinise the new website once it has been operational and report if it is delivering the service Riverside customers require.

6. Asset Management - Operational Procedure Guides for Programmed Works update:

HW gave update to accompany the Asset Management working document provided. It was explained that the Asset Management Team had now almost completed their consultations and were about to commence writing the final version of the Operational Procedure Guide incorporating the amended proposals from the NSC and other groups.

Agreed - This item was noted and it was agreed that this consultation would form the basis of future co-ordinated scrutiny exercises that ensure the procedures agreed are actually implemented in practice.

7. Complaints Scrutiny

Folders containing complaints reports for each Division 2013-14 were distributed to the NSC. KH introduced the item and asked the NSC to discuss which area they wish to scrutinise and settle on a topic so we can invite a relevant member of staff to the next meeting.

There was a general discussion about which aspect of complaints to scrutinise. Members considered the different areas they might wish to investigate in greater depth. It was acknowledged that repairs would always be the most common area of customer dissatisfaction, as it is with all RSLs. KH explained that there was a new procedure for reporting repairs in place. In this new system customers who felt their complaint couldn't be resolved by their Division could elect to have their case heard by a 'Tenant's Panel' (of which he is a member). A tiny minority of complaints reached this stage.

MH noted that Divisional Scrutiny Panels and TASQ have already reported on repairs, and that the second highest volume of complaints is about Estate Management. He explained that in RECHG supported schemes members of staff work closely with clients and by the nature of the role will have a disproportionate number of complaints logged about them or their service. It was agreed by all that the NSC would not scrutinise complaints against staff.

The discussion then moved on to consider the funding changes for RECHG schemes, and how the service provision in some areas has had to be reduced, which in turn may have an impact on the volume of complaints.

Agreed – NSC members to look at the reports, and decide which members of staff they would like to invite to the next meeting.

8. Divisional Scrutiny Panels updates :

Heather reported to the NSC the updates from the Divisional Scrutiny Panels.

9. AOB:

- Mark invited NSC members to the Homes for Britain Rally on 17th March at Central Hall Westminster.

Date of next meeting:

- **Wednesday 15th April, Local Solutions, Kensington. L7 8TF.**