

Minutes of the National Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 7th October 2015
@ Local Solutions Liverpool

Present:

Keith Harkness, Linda Perry, Glynn Williams, Ann Rignall, Paul McGregor, James Osler, Dawn Bulmer,

Staff:

Kate Jungnitz, Mark Hoskisson, Rachel Hayes, Maxine Davis, Jamie Hendry (Observer – Cumbria)

Apologies:

Maria Milford, Ivy Isherwood, Pam Bradbury

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting - Held June 24th 2015 – agreed as accurate

2. Matters Arising

Update on TASQ Report on CRM (Customer Relations Management system) the report has been finished but needs finalising and a date is to be set for the TASQ team to present to HSD (Housing Service Directors). **Point 8** – the co-regulation meeting with HSC went very well and showed good examples of the NSC, HSC (Housing Services Committee) and the Federation working together. The meeting was more of a discussion and more productive than the meeting held in 2014. There was also a discussion around new Benchmarking techniques. **Federation Annual Report – LP and MM** agreed in the last meeting to sit on the steering group and give their feedback. Sharon Hutchinson to arrange meeting.

3. Conference de-brief

MH advised that 232 delegates attended this year's tenants and Federations Conference and 12 workshops were held. The feedback the team have received so far has been very positive. Carol Mathews spoke about the future of Riverside and future savings the organisation has to make with the potential 100+ million loss over the next 4 years due to the 1% reduction in rent announced in the summer budget. Feedback was instant through John Woods consultation session on how Riverside should react to the challenges faced. The guest speakers (Sean Percival-Scott) had very positive feedback as well as the quiz and the workshops. 62% of delegates were new to attending a conference and further feedback was obtained at the end of the conference which the RI team have compiled ready to report on. MH went on to say

that the conference was organised and run by a group of tenants with support from the central RI team. KH congratulated the RI team for their help and hard work on the day. AR advised that a few tenants from RECHG schemes were late to hear back on the applications to attend. MH explained that there was a slippage as the Conference Planning Group wanted the applications to be sent direct to the RI staff within the divisions rather than the Central Team which has happened in the past. LP agreed that the conference was tenant lead but the workshop she attended was a bit disruptive. JO advised that he was not assigned any of the workshops he opted for and AR & GW reiterated this. KH advised that the selection was based on workshop capacity and room size.

GW queried why the conference was not used as a platform to promote scrutiny. The Conference Planning Group had decided on the themes so this will be fed back to them. RH spoke about Carol Mathew's session on 'the three legged stool and is it fit for purpose'. KJ advised that there is a review taking place on governance within the organisation and its structure. Key tenants and staff are being interviewed and the results should be published before Christmas.

4. Update from Divisional Chairs

- **Irvine Paul McGregor** - Irvine have put forward 24 recommendations altogether to IHA Board. The next topic the panel have been looking into is Complaints where the Contractors will be the main focus. PMcG advised that that Housemark were commissioned by IHA to produce a detailed report on scrutiny with very positive feedback. **ACTION** RH to email report out to NSC. The panel hope to be self-sufficient by Christmas.
- **RECHG Dawn Bulmer** – DB advised that she is new to scrutiny and the upcoming exercise will be her first. The panel have agreed to look at complaints procedures. They panel are due to have their first meeting with Tonia imminently as support is still required for the panel as a whole. RH advised that she can attend a future scrutiny meeting and Tonia can invite any time. **ACTION** DB to speak to Tonia about RH and MH attending a future meeting. LP advised that a member of the NSC could possibly attend to help support the panel. AR explained that RECHG is a huge geographical area which may be causing a problem retaining members. MH agreed but advised that the crucial thing is we have recommendations in which need addressing.
- **Mersey South Glynn Williams**– GW spoke about the MS scrutiny panel producing a report which covers all 3 topics the panel have carried out over the past year and a half. (copies were available at the conference and from Head Office). In the next meeting the panel are addressing recruitment as well as the terms of reference and training accreditation before embarking on a new scrutiny exercise.
- **Cumbria James Osler** – JO advised the panel are just finalising their exercise on Voids and Allocations they are due to have a meeting next week and

interviewing Paula Davidson from Asset Management. The report should be finished by Christmas. The last report they completed was on Customer Satisfaction. They have asked for a response to the recommendations put forward but Dean Butterworth (Divisional Director) has told the panel that they will all be picked up in 'Central Projects'. The panel are not satisfied with this response and this needs to be picked up by the NSC. **ACTION** RH to speak to Sue Powell Head of Service Improvement Team (PMO) and feedback to NSC.

NB – no updates were available from S&C, Mersey North and Riverside North

- 5. National Recommendations** – In Mersey South last report on Responsive Repairs the report listed a separate set of recommendations that apply to the Group. KJ noted that most of the recommendations that have come through the divisional scrutiny panels will apply nationally and should all be looked at by the NSC. RH is compiling a spreadsheet of all recommendations from all panels. Once this is complete RH will send to the rest of the NSC. This will then be used as a working document for the NSC to challenge divisions and Board for results.
- 6. Report Writing; Universal Template** – RH advised that at the moment divisional reports are coming being presented in all different formats. Some reports are not highlighting recommendations and it can be time consuming looking for information. As well as this Head of Service responses should be standardised so the panels get clear and concise information on recommendations put forward and how they will be implemented. The NSC agreed that a template should be designed to help the panels write their findings – it was noted that this can be used as a support aid for new panels to help guide them through the report process. RH advised that a big part of scrutiny is looking at value for money (VfM) and reports at the moment are not reflecting this in their findings. LP asked that reports not be 'boxed' as it is difficult to read this way. RH agreed to arrange with LP a time to go through this in the next few weeks. MH suggested each NSC that a report is read and noted and RH to feedback discussion to the appropriate divisional panel. **ACTION** RH to send out S&C Scrutiny Report on Estate Management to be discussed in the next meeting.
- 7. Feedback Annual Report (AR)** – GW and KH represented the NSC on the steering group lead by John Wood (director of Housing Services). GW advised that it was very innovative and interesting being part of the AR steering group. The report went 'live' online on the 1st October on Riverside new website. hard copies are in the process of being printed and any tenant can request a copy. RH advised that Scrutiny was not listed as a 'key principle'. GW and KH pushed for scrutiny to be highlighted and the report now reflects this although there is no direct reference to scrutiny. LP advised that the report is a PDF and difficult to read – this is being addressed through the new website. GW mentioned that some customers may have had trouble with the 'technical information'. KJ explained that the report is a technical document and not a newsletter so a certain amount of facts and figures have to be listed. RH advised that an easy

read document has not been mentioned this year so unsure as to whether one will be produced.

- 8. Irvine Candidates** - RH advised that 3 members of Irvine have applied to sit on the NSC until the current term runs out in March 2017. KH and MM have approved the applications but wanted the rest of the NSC to concur. The applications have gone to the fed Exec officers for ratification. Once they have been ratified RH to send a letter to invite them to the next meeting. It was noted that unlike the Federation the NSC is not a representative body for tenants so having 3 members from one division sit on the committee is within the guidelines to sit on the NSC.
- 9. Federation minutes and Board Headlines** – the Federation minutes were noted. MH advised that staff have not received Board Headlines since May this year so unable to discuss.
- 10. AOB** - MH spoke about the Tenants Inspectors Steering Group (TISG) review which was carried out over summer. This group co-ordinates the tenant inspector (TI) work. The review looked into the process of consulting with Divisions as well as how the TI feed into the NSC. The TISG have agreed that they can be used by the NSC to do on the spot inspections and feedback. It was noted that any recommendations that have not been replied to HSC will follow up. These proposals were unanimously accepted by the TISG.

Meeting closed

Next meeting Wednesday 4th November 11 – 3pm – Local Solutions, Liverpool L7 8TF