

This time last year I reported on the the Co-regulation event that Riverside Customer Voice (RCV) shared with senior Riverside staff to discuss collaborative working. It was the first event of its kind for some time and we were looking forward to it resuming as an annual event, but who would have predicted that the following twelve months would see the world and how we live our lives change so drastically, due of course to the Covid-19 pandemic.

I am however pleased to say that the response from Riverside in support of its customers has been, in the main, quite superb and has shown a tremendous amount of empathy as well as care, particularly for the most vulnerable in schemes up and down the country.

Likewise too the reports of Riverside neighbours and communities coming together to offer support and assistance where it was needed as been heart-warming. Those of you who follow Riverside Customer Voice Executive's (RCVE) Facebook page or other social media platforms will have seen accounts of such actions, including the deployment of the RCV Minibus to collect and deliver parcels of food and other essential household items in and around the Thanet area of Kent. Well done and thank you to everyone involved in those community projects during these unprecedented times so far this year and in the months to come.

RCVE wasted no time when lockdown was announced and we were up and running on video conferencing to maintain RCVE meetings and plan our continued work within week one, as a result Scrutiny continued on Planned Maintenance and we remain up to date with any Customer Complaint Panel referrals. We have also continued any scheduled consultations with Riverside and have opened new dialogue where we hope to improve customer engagement still further.

A new and in some areas more efficient way of working is well and truly under way and where we do find improvements, they will stay and improve the service.

RCVE held our first three Facebook live events, one in each Riverside region, and our first National Virtual customer conference was held on 16<sup>th</sup> September, in all reaching well over 300 customers plus many more who watched the recordings. At the conference we announced that by the end of 2020 we will have launched 8 regional hub Facebook groups.

More online events including ones for specific groups, such as Home Ownership and Care and support customers are planned in the future, as well as specific conversations with key Riverside staff, so join our Facebook group and watch out for those.

So, although the pandemic has meant a postponement of this years Co-regulation event and other large physical gatherings with Riverside, I'm sure these will be replaced as technology or a vaccine permits, but in the meantime RCVE has in fact been as busy, if not busier than ever.

Stay safe everyone.

Vic Andrews

Chair

Riverside Customer Voice Executive Committee.