

Minutes



Leaseholder Forum
17th October 2011
17:00 – 19:00
Board Room,
14 Hounds Gate

Present:

Kate Bowley	KB	[Chair]	Billy Pollock	BP
Carol Tomkiss	CT			
Audrey Davies	AD			
Sandra Stones	SS			
Eddie Johnson-Flint	EJF			
Robin Stalvies	RS			
Ann Gardner	AG			

Observers: Jacinth Williams, Jim Allabarton

Nottingham City Homes:

Simon Temporal	ST		Trevor Burdon	TB
Peter Thomas	PT	Notes		
Tim Millns	TM			

Apologies: Jon Short, Sheila Thwaites, Graydon Peacock, Val Cleaves, Jenny Bellamy

The meeting was opened at 17.00pm by the Chair.

Item	Commentary	Action
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1.0	KB	Welcome & Apologies Kate Bowley
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1.1	KB opened the meeting, thanked all for attending and mentioned there were 2 apologies.
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ST made the apologies for Val Cleaves

ST confirmed that Jon Short & Graydon Peacock had sent their apologies.

**2.0 KB Minutes of the Last Forum
Kate Bowley**

2.1 TB - Requested the previous minutes to be amended on p.3 para 3, as the statement '*TB admitted that the repairs service wasn't the best service*' were incorrect. This amendment was acknowledged and agreed by the forum.

2.2 ST went through the action points from the last forum on 01.08.11:

3.3 What happens when an electrical check is carried out?:

TB - Annual 3hr checks of all emergency light systems are made. There are also 20 sites with back up generators which are checked every month & a weekly light check to repair damaged items / replace bulbs.

This involves simulating a mains failure either at individual fitting or at a single source (e.g inverter) depending on the sort of system they are dealing with and then walking round ensuring these fittings stay at a constant light level for a minimum of 3 hours. If they do not then he will carry out repairs until this is the case. (Further information requested by KB and provided by Jason Peel – Electrical Maintenance Manager after forum)

TB to confirm whether the Caretakers keep the paperwork on site which is checked annually / weekly? **TB**

SS made the point that lights were out on the 1st floor at Newark Crescent block 1 - 17, which has been the case for 5 weeks

TB will check with Sharon Walters why and when the work will be done. **TB**

2.3 Are Cherry Orchard Mount and Newark Crescent on a cyclical painting programme?

TB Cherry Orchard Mount isn't currently on a cyclical painting programme – The Asset Data Manager is to get the area surveyed, if required this will done on a programme which will depend on the budget as to whether they are done in this year's or next year's budget.

Newark Crescent – PVC & Sofia, fascia guttering to be done by Nationwide in next few months.

Produce an estimated cost for the emergency repairs call out service. – This was agreed that it will be covered in item 5 of the agenda.

2.4

Who is responsible for fire safety within blocks & Will there be fire wardens in the blocks?

ST read out follow state from Sam Hill (Fire and Safety First Aid Officer) in response to point 5.4:

There will not be fire wardens within the block. Instead we have communal alarm systems which are continuously monitored and linked to the Fire Service. In addition we have a stay put policy which means that in the event of a fire everyone is asked to stay within their property unless it is their property which is affected. This means that there is no need for fire wardens and they are only for simultaneous evacuations (where everyone has to evacuate).

Fire safety within a block is the responsibility of everyone. NCH will conduct risk assessments, which are required by law, and will carry out regular cleaning and maintenance of the block. The residents also have a responsibility to ensure that the communal areas are kept as clear as possible and that their property and contents within are in a good state of repair. Ultimately, if the Fire Service believes that there is a breach of the law which will result in serious injury or death, they can end up prosecuting either NCH, or the owner of the property, depending on what the issue is and who is ultimately responsible. NCH are responsible for communal areas, however the front door and passed is the responsibility of the leaseholder.

Make new leaseholders aware of Leaseholder Forum – This was agreed that it will be covered in item 8 of the agenda.

3.0 Head of Rents & Leaseholder Services - Introduction

3.1 TM introduced himself to the forum and gave brief account of where his experience comes from – TM has worked in housing for 11 years; at Mansfield District Council, Amber Valley and Guinness Trust.

TM invited the forum to ask him questions.

KB asked if TM was replacing Richard Holland's (Head of Rents) old role. TM clarified that he was ST line manager & oversees the Rent section on income related matters.

4.0 Re-launch of Contents Insurance

4.1

ST presented the contents insurance scheme NCH offer which leaseholders can access. There will be a big NCH campaign to tenants & leaseholder to take out this insurance due to the burst pipes of last winter.

Although leaseholders are covered with building insurance, many people have taken the risk of not taking out contents insurance.

ST asked forum for ways in which to present this issue to other leaseholders. There are plans from LRRT to ask leaseholders regarding renewal date to promote the future scheme.

Aviva booklets were handed out and forum members were asked to take them home and compare them with what they currently have – Price and cover – and to report back any comments at the next forum.

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AD / SS raised concerns about who was or was not covered in the event of being affected by a leak

ST explained that there were several ways leaseholders could approach this:

- 1) Make a claim on their own insurance
- 2) Make a claim on the tenants (or other leaseholders) insurance
- 3) Or if they believe it to be fault of the landlord, to claim on their insurance.

TM commented - we want to make sure every one is safe.

KB wanted to know why you should have to claim on your own insurance after a leak from another property when it damage your property

ST confirmed that you have insurance for this purpose and you have to claim on your insurance. Your insurance may a separate claim against the other parties insurance.

AG had asked for details of contents insurance in 2009 and not had anything.

JS

KB confirmed that this was when NCC managed the insurance.

LRRT

ST confirmed that NCH is now doing it – Basic & Top insurance with Zurich administered by NCH LRRT & the

contents insurance which is provide by Aviva and administered by NCH central rent admin team. ST confirmed the LRRT would send out documentation to AG.

ST also confirmed that older leases do not obligate the landlord (NCC) to insure the building which means the Leaseholder has the ability to shop around.

KB had contacted an insurance company, to send a quote – however when a call was made to confirm, the insurance company confirmed that they only insured properties with blocks with two flats (insurance company for over 50's)

TM asked ST whether figures increase or reduce, does this mean the cover payments would increase after a claim or is this a static fee.

ST

TM – we want to make sure all are covered and look at why people can't afford it. For next forum all leaseholders to check what their own policy covers and how this compares to the Aviva booklets that were handed out.

**Forum
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ers**

5.0 TB Improving day to day repairs – Internal Repairs service – Trevor Burdon – Head of Repairs & Maintenance

5.1 KB agreed with ST that this item was covered before item 4 of the agenda

TB – at the last meeting in August agreed to update the options available for the DLO to provide an internal repairs service for leaseholders – whether it be emergency or full repair service to leaseholders

TB – The key priority is for the service to be self financing –

There is a possibility for a full repairs package, which would be difficult to control and TB is not sure it would represent value for money for leaseholder.

Emergency repairs service is currently 24/7/365 days of the year – this could be offered to leaseholders but at a call out charge of an estimated £60 including VAT. This would be purely a turn up and make safe system.

Alternative system could be leaseholders would subscribe to a scheme for a minimum service e.g. £4 per week for an emergency service – with a maximum call out of 4/year.

TB stated that this could be expensive for leaseholders.

TB said that a contingency would have to be built-in to the system, which cannot run at a loss. NCH's job management system does not have the capability and Northgate system would have to be improved at the leaseholders cost which would further increase the cost of the service if implemented.

TB out of 1,000 leaseholders how many would actually want this system? There are numerous providers of emergency cover by organisations such as British Gas, these organisations could be less expensive than NCH.

AD raised the question – does not see the value of this.

TB was providing feed back from previous forum and some of the figures from British Gas was between £18 - £27pcm for a full service, where as NCH could only offer a limited service for a similar amount.

KB asked for a vote of who was for or against investigating the option of implementing an internal repairs system further.

The forum voted 8 out of 8 against any further investigation into the implementation of the scheme.

6.0 ST Asset Management Update

6.1 ST read out an update from GP in his absence:

KB – Regarding Newark Crescent Soffits & fascias – contractors have left entrance/emergency exit doors open and have not been cleaning up after they have completed works.

GP

SS also mentioned that visitors at Newark Crescent have not been closing doors and that resident have been propping them open.

7.0 ST Service Charge Invoices

7.1 ST presented an overview of the September 2011 service charges raised and the queries taken in the first few weeks since leaseholders were invoiced.

ST asked the forum for feedback on what they thought of the information being sent out:

SS thought it was better and knew what we have to pay for

KB / SS / AD – would all like to see even less information sent out if possible

ST also covered some of the most common asked questions from leaseholders since invoicing in September 2011

SS raised door entry price increases and consultation:

ST advised that door entry was carried out under section 20 consultation and that the costs were made available for viewing

ST confirmed from Frequently Asked service charge questions and an explanation that was due to economic increases in the industry market.

ST – GP is willing to discuss these issues at the next meeting

GP

ST – We have to have maintenance contracts and these have annual charges.

KB – What does this contract cover?

ST said it would cover an annual maintenance check and emergency call out. There maybe further charges for additional repairs / items not covered in the maintenance through a schedule of rates.

ST showed list of items cover / checks that maintenance contract covers – this list can be provided on request.

KB – does this cover internal handsets?

GP to confirm whether it covers internal handsets

ST confirmed that without maintenance contract it would be more expensive for leaseholders.

GP

TM – so that we can see what it covers – electrics, locks. Also feedback is needed to clarify the issue with this item.

ST and GP – to look at Maintenance contracts to see what they do, what it covers and how much it could cost and present at next meeting.

GP,ST

8.0 Increasing Membership & Interactive Forums

ST opened this item up to the forum to look at trying to increase membership and attendance at future forums.

Forum needs to look at how the forum is promoted and it is also the responsibility of the current forum to ask fellow

Forum Memb

leaseholder why they do not attend, so we can get more people to attend.

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E.g. 30% of leasehold properties are sub-let, why don't they attend?

To look at internet & website - does it need improving?

To look at other websites and what makes them appealing.

ST confirmed that there may be funds available to assist with the promotion of the forum to recruit new members.

Forum needs to think of recruitment ideas for next forum meeting in January 2012

Forum members

TM – does forum have to be at Hounds gate – could there be a local surgery?

KB – New members usually just raise their own concerns & then do not attend.

It was felt that local meetings aren't always effective.

SS – Does not see the value of doing it

AG – Feels that non-attendance is due to lack of interest.

TM – Suggested that we could do a campaign of 'You said, we did' for the news letter to promote the forum.

RS – suggested a 'You said, we did' flyer that leaseholders could hand out themselves to promote what the forum had achieved.

LRRT and forum members

9.0 ST Leasehold Management Update

9.1 ST – Next date for forum – this was agreed for Monday 16 January 2012.

ST made a brief presentation on the fuel poverty initiative being delivered by the St Ann's Advice centre.

Money is being made available to assist those deemed to be in fuel poverty and those affected in deprived areas.

Applications can be made to the St Ann's Advice centre and this organisation can offer assistance in completing the form to see if a person is eligible.

It is mainly for British gas customers, however it is being

offered to customers of other providers.

A booklet was handed out to all forum members to take away and consider.

**Forum
Members**

Date, time and Venue of next meeting

16 January 2012, time & venue to TBC

