



SCRUTINY PANEL
9.30 AM TUESDAY 22ND NOVEMBER AT STENNACK HOUSE

ATTENDEES:

Jan Ford – Resident – JF
Maria Wellington – Resident – MW
Tessa Walker – Resident – TW
Karen Rosenfeld – Resident – KR

Micheal Elliott – Head of Tenant Involvement - ME
Stuart Hill – Corporate Policy Manager - SH
Beverley Bassett – TI Coordinator BB
Lesley Pearson –TI Coordinator LP

- | 1.0 | WELCOME & APOLOGIES. | Action by |
|------------|---|------------------|
| 1.1 | ME Welcomed all to the meeting and thanked those who attended, adding that these meetings are important. | |
| 1.2 | ME gave a brief overview of the Scrutiny panel role within Ocean, explaining that JF had agreed to be Chairperson and that the Scrutiny Panel is extremely important as they will scrutinise our services with the aim of suggesting improvements if required. | |
| 1.3 | ME was keen to establish dates for the Scrutiny Panel to meet; reminding the panel that these dates will need to fall in line with Board meetings and Tenant and Resident Panel meetings, Thus allowing scrutiny reports to be present at both meetings.
It was agreed the Scrutiny Panel would be sent Board and Tenant & Residents Panel meeting dates. | LP |
| 1.4 | ME explained as a guide an agenda will be required for each scrutiny meeting. | |
| 1.5 | ME advised the panel to consider how much time they need to spend on scrutinising a service and that the Tenant Involvement team can assist in getting the required documentation to the panel by their preferred method (i.e. post, email, phone call) ME added how the Tenant Involvement Team are here to fully support the Scrutiny Panel in all they do. | |
| 1.6 | JF suggested that Ocean Housings Offices be the meeting place as it's central and information can be easily accessed. | |
| 1.7 | MW suggested meeting monthly. JF mentioned that a meeting every two months may be more appropriate to allow suitable time to look into a service. | |
| 1.8 | ME agreed with JF adding that it may be difficult for everyone to complete tasks required in the timescale of a month as all members will have other commitments. | |
| 1.9 | SH suggested having a meeting date set in the diary to work from and that meetings coincide with the performance reports which are released quarterly. He added that meetings in-between these 4 set dates could be used to undertake a service review. | |
| 1.10 | LP suggested a meeting date for end of February. JF thought this may be too late and that a meeting end of January may be better. Agreed. LP to arrange date for end of January. | LP |
| 1.11 | SH added that Ocean have organised a scrutiny training day on the 12th December for panel members. | |

- 1.12 ME assured the panel members that whilst there is plenty of training, to not be put off by it as we are here to help if there is anything that is not understood.
- 1.13 BB asked JF if it were her intentions to leave today's meeting with targets to reach before the next official Scrutiny Panel meeting. JF agreed and suggested breaking down a service into smaller areas for each member to look into and feedback findings at the next meeting.
- 1.14 SH enquired about the first service that the panel wish to scrutinise. JF advised it was the Customer Services department as it was the "hub" of Ocean.
- 1.15 SH asked the panel for their opinion on what the important parts of this service are?
- SH started by suggesting the waiting time for a call to be answered by Customer services.
- KR added the manner in which Customer Services Advisers introduce themselves when answering a call.
- MW added if the callers query can be dealt with by the adviser or is it sign posted to another department.
- JF added logging the query and if an audit trail of the query is created.
- JF also added the phone call set up and options for the caller to press
- MW added if customers details are up to date as this was an issue mentioned in the Customer Contact Review.
- 1.16 KR reiterated the importance of a reference number given when residents call as details do get lost, causing residents to repeat their original query which can become frustrating.
- 1.17 SH advised that in response to several residents requesting reference numbers, Ocean are on the verge of introducing a customer contact database allowing details of a call to be recorded and to give residents reference numbers, adding that it would be beneficial to have Nicola Jones the Operations Manager attend the next meeting and give an overview of this system.
- 1.18 SH asked the panel about their thoughts on access to our services and how easy is it for residents with various different needs to get in touch?
- 1.19 MW explained that she makes calls to Ocean on behalf of a neighbour who is hard of hearing. SH responded that its helpful for Ocean to be aware of these residents to see how we can make our services more accessible.
- 1.20 KR mentioned the importance of having Customer Services Advisers who are understanding of residents with certain needs and not become impatient if the customer cant hear too well or if the advisers are asked to speak slower.
- 1.21 KR also suggested having a repair feedback form online. SH responded that feedback is another large part of Customers Services. ME added that it has been previously mentioned that a feedback call be placed to the customer following a repair to ensure a response is received.
- 1.22 KR also suggested an online blog session.

- 1.23 KR thought that the diagnostics part of the website could be expanded further so that there could be a “web chat” set up allowing residents to chat instantly about issues with a immediate response.
- 1.24 MW referred back to feedback and commented that feedback forms are not always left by repair men.
- 1.25 LP mentioned some feedback cards can be left for several different repairs and residents have complained about not knowing what they are feeding back on. SH responded that this issue has been dealt with.
- 1.26 SH informed the panel about the Customer Complaints Report adding that most of the complaints fall down to poor communication and that Ocean are working hard to produce an effective system that can improve communication in-house and with residents.
- 1.27 SH suggested customer journey mapping which follows the journey from first point of contact to how the query is responded to and when it’s closed.
- 1.28 ME mentioned different ways of looking into a service such like mystery shopping.
- 1.29 KR mentioned the importance of understanding a job role before scrutinising the service adding that job shadowing would help.
- 1.30 ME agreed adding that training and development for the panel members would also help them understand how Ocean operates.
- 1.31 ME added that Ocean staff are aware of the Scrutiny Panel and the work the panel need to do, therefore staff should be very accommodating to requests made.
- 1.32 ME mentioned that tasks requiring staff members will have to be well planned.
- 1.33 KR thought that the job shadowing would be more of a observation task. SH responded that panel members should talk to staff and feel comfortable enough to ask questions about the service they provide and how they feel.
- 1.34 ME explained that pulling information together to scrutinise a service comes from a variety of sources such as speaking with frontline staff, having the managers attend meetings and speaking with tenants about their experiences.
- 1.35 JF mentioned its importance to recognise the areas that are doing well in addition to the improvements that can be made.
- 1.36 ME added that for the purpose of audit reports its good to show areas that perform well and areas that could be improved.
- 1.37 KR suggested that it would be useful to have a dummy account set up for mystery shopping exercises as in KR’s experience staff started to recognise that something was going on.
- 1.38 SH suggested circulating the performance indicators to the group. **SH**
- 1.39 SH also suggested that when Nic Jones attends the next meeting that she is asked how many calls are answered and the time it takes and explain how she monitors her teams work.
- 1.40 JF enquired if the Customer Service Team have a Policy and Procedures to follow. SH **SH**

confirmed that they do and this will be circulated before the next meeting.

- 1.41 SH suggested providing information on how much Customer Service Advisers can actually advise on.
- 1.42 BB added that this is something that the team is looking into and asked the panel if they feel the advisers give a good response to queries or do they need more training to help solve a question or issue on first contact.
- 1.43 KR agreed that advisers could have better knowledge overall.
- 1.44 JF suggested a tenant's questionnaire to get service users feedback on the team's knowledge.
- 1.45 ME mentioned how this will need to be looked into more explaining that call waiting times would increase and the practicalities need to be investigated.
- 1.46 KR responded that this is where the online chat feature on the website would help service users get a response to their questions as quickly as possible.
- 1.47 JF suggested looking into the online chat feature in the future.
- 1.48 SH referred back to Job Shadowing and proposed that 2 or 3 scrutiny panel members shadow Customer Service Advisers as a list of what they do will not give a full understanding of the job role.
- 1.49 ME added that confidentiality will have to be considered when Job Shadowing but sensitive information will not be shared.
- 1.50 JF suggested that a confidentiality agreement be signed by those who job shadow.
- 1.51 BB put forward that the job shadowing takes place at different times.
- 1.52 MW thought it would be an interesting exercise.
- 1.53 JF added that the correct arrangements would have to be in place before the exercise took place.
- 1.54 SH proposed that a demonstration on the new customer portal is given before job shadowing takes place.
- 1.55 JF queried where information on residents is kept.
- 1.56 SH responded that information is kept in a variety of places dependent on the nature of the details. SH continued that annually we have to report to the Information Commissioner on information collected on individuals. We are good at collecting information but could improve how we communicate this with residents.
- 1.57 TW enquired about how staff are held accountable when a poor customer service is delivered and explained a personal circumstance whereby TW received unacceptable customer service.
- 1.60 ME enquired if this had been reported to Ocean. TW responded that it hadn't as she was concerned about the repercussions. ME advised that if we are told about a poor service this can then be looked into confidentially and investigated through the complaints procedures.

- 1.61 SH was concerned that TW didn't feel comfortable enough to approach Ocean about a poor service and this needs to be addressed. Ocean needs to ensure residents are aware that they can approach us with regards to complaints. ME added complaints received are taken seriously.
- 1.62 BB thought it would be beneficial for all visiting staff to have cards allowing residents to report back on the service they have received.
- 1.63 TW mentioned the stigma relating to social housing residents. SH responded that Ocean would want people to aspire to live in our properties because of the quality of the properties and the quality of service delivery.
- 1.64 ME added that Ocean want to form a good partnership with residents and it doesn't help when a poor service is delivered.
- 1.65 SH referred the conversation back to feedback adding that Ocean receive feedback from complaints, satisfaction surveys and compliments but the panel need to be aware of our response to feedback and what we do with the results adding that these are the types of questions that the panel need to be asking.
- 1.66 ME added that feedback is very important as it helps to instigate recommendations.
- 1.67 JF was keen to delegate tasks to be completed before the next meeting, allowing findings to be shared at the next meeting.
- 1.68 SH proposed that we confirm the documentation required before tasks are delegated. **SH**
Documentation to be sent includes:
 - Policy and procedures in respect to the customer service team
 - Performance indicators (i.e. call waiting time information etc)
 - Information on feedback and what we do with it
 - Customer contact review
- 1.69 JF enquired if MW would kindly give feedback at the next meeting on the customer contact review as MW was involved with the process. **MW Agreed.** **MW**
- 1.70 SH enquired what the panel may like to do first?
- 1.71 ME thought it be beneficial to have Nic Jones come to the meeting first and then undertake job shadowing.
- 1.72 JF requested to see Nic Jones first to speed the process up. JF also proposed to write a letter detailing what the Scrutiny Panel's intentions are. JF Also intended to speak with the Managing Director of Ocean housing, Frances Turner. **JF**
- 1.73 JF asked TW to look at Oceans web site and accessibility for customers and feedback at the next meeting. ME suggested that TW also look at other social landlord websites for comparison. **TW**
- 1.74 SH suggested that when JF meet with Nic Jones that they discuss how she assures herself of the quality of the service and the knowledge of her staff and the possibility of job shadowing.
- 1.75 SH clarified that the Scrutiny Panel are welcome to find out anything they want about Ocean

and our services, but not about individuals which is, as discussed previously, confidential.

- 1.76 ME Advised that should the panel members find anything that they want to bring to our attention, then they can contact the Chair before the next meeting. **JF Agreed**
- 1.77 JF Requested that the panel share contact details allowing contact in-between meetings. LP to create a contact sheet and circulate. **Panel agreed.** LP
- 1.78 SH proposed that in the future the panel look into how we can help residents feel more comfortable and free to complain when they are unhappy with a service. SH
- 1.79 JF suggested approaching the complaints area after January as its large area. **Panel agreed.**
- 1.80 TW Mentioned how some staff deserve praise and that she is not sure how this could be done as a recent repair was undertaken but no card left to feedback. KR Agreed but added that a feedback card is not always suitable and referred back to how much better it would be to feedback online.
- 1.81 BB added that it's nice for staff to receive positive feedback.
- 1.82 KR felt that sub contractors also undertaking work need to be scrutinised as a recent personal experience lead KR to call Ocean to confirm the work and the contractor as no information had been given previously.
- 1.83 KR added that there is no opportunity to feedback on the quality of service provided by sub contractors.
- 1.84 LP mentioned that this and the repairs service has previously been discussed however it was agreed amongst the panel that Customer Services would be the first area to be scrutinised before repairs.
- 1.85 MW advised she would have to leave the meeting and requested to be informed of the next meeting date, adding that Tuesday and Wednesday are unsuitable due to work commitments. LP to advise all members on the next meeting date. *MW left the meeting* LP
- 1.86 JF was conscious of KR not having a task to complete before the next meeting.
- 1.87 KR expressed an interest in Job Shadowing. LP advised this is likely to take place after the next meeting.
- 1.88 ME thought it may be good to hear KR's observations on how she was treated when she first moved into her property. JF added that it would be beneficial for all members to make a note of their experience when first moving into their property. ALL
- 1.89 SH reminded the panel about TPAS Training on the 12 December.
- 1.90 LP Suggested that the panel members might like to think about a different name as mentioned before by JF.
- 1.91 ME re-clarified that if there is any information that the panel want or help from the tenant involvement team to feel free to ask. ME also reminded panel members about mileage costs.

The meeting closed at 11am

DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING: 26TH JANUARY 2012 PM

