



Notes of Meeting			
Subject:	Tenant and Leaseholder Committee		
Date:	27 th July 2023	Time: 6:30pm	8:00pm
Location:	MS Teams		
Attendees:	<p>Chair – Paul McMahon</p> <p>Staff – Jenny Dickerson (Improvement & Engagement Officer), Daniel French (Improvement & Engagement Coordinator), Cllr Simy Dhyani (Portfolio Holder), Sue Prowse (Improvement & Engagement Projects Lead Officer), Karen Allen (Contract Manager – Building Safety), Simon Walton (Interim Head of Strategy, Quality & Assurance), Ada Terry (Strategy Improvement & Engagement Manager), Darren Welsh (Chief Housing Officer)</p> <p>Committee members – Tracey Halls, Andrea Maloney, Mutsa Cornish, Paulette Reed, Michelle Mitchell, Max Sengul, Andy Forbes</p> <p>Apologies – Mavis Cook, Charlotte Palmer, Cllr Gbola Adeleke, Cllr Michela Capozzi, Cllr Sammy Barry-Mears, Cllr Lara Pringle</p>		

Item	Subject	Actionee
1	Welcome, apologies, introductions and notes from the last meeting	Chair
	<p>Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Everyone agreed that the minutes from the last meeting were an accurate record.</p> <p>Everyone introduced themselves to the rest of the group.</p> <p>Apologies from Mavis Cook, Charlotte Palmer, Cllr Gbola Adeleke, Cllr Michela Capozzi, Cllr Sammy Barry-Mears & Cllr Lara Pringle.</p>	
2	Formal approval of Chair	JD
	<p>JD – I am pleased to formally confirm that we have asked Paul to be the Chair of the TLC and he has kindly accepted. I would like to say that I am looking forward to working with you and know you have got lots of ideas. I know that you will all offer him a very warm welcome into this role.</p>	

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	<p>Unfortunately Paul’s work commitments don’t usually allow him to start the meeting at 18:30, so we will have to move the meeting back to 19:00. I hope this is okay with everyone, but if you do have a problem then please talk to me about it.</p> <p>Chair – Thank you very much for the opportunity to do this.</p>	
3	<p>Building Safety Act Resident Engagement Strategies for ‘higher risk’ blocks</p>	SP & KA
	<p>SP & KA shared a presentation which is available upon request.</p> <p>Chair – Swan Court and Lord Alexander House are both over six storeys but they aren’t on your list, do they fall under the private sector?</p> <p>SP – Yes, they are not council-owned buildings.</p> <p>Chair – Does that mean that we are not responsible for safety in these properties?</p> <p>DW – The primary responsibility for the building lays with the freeholder who owns the building. If it is in private ownership, the responsibility sits with them. The responsibility sits with us for council-owned buildings.</p> <p>Both the Fire Service and the Council have duties to monitor standards, conditions and hazards in any private sector buildings. There are seven privately-owned high rise buildings in Dacorum, and we are actively monitoring four of them at the moment. We have powers under the Private Sector Housing legislation to take enforcement action when the owners of those blocks are not carrying out appropriate remediation works.</p> <p>Chair – It’s good to know that we have the scope to monitor those buildings.</p> <p>PR – Mavis couldn’t attend this meeting, but sent over a couple of questions via email. Are you able to respond to those?</p> <p>SP – Yes I can respond. We haven’t been out to these blocks to consult with residents yet, as we are starting here. We have done a lot of background research into finding out what should go into the resident engagement strategy, and we will have an obligation to make sure that every resident receives a copy.</p> <p>We are starting with this committee because we believe that you are the experts in engagement and you have a lot of experience. We want to get your ideas first, and then we want to go out to the residents who live in those blocks. We have put some information onto social media to say that we are addressing the requirements of the Building Safety Act.</p>	

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	<p>MS – As a leaseholder, I lived in one of my flats for two years. I wouldn't want to be doing a gas safety check every year if it was just me living in the property. You might get better results if you ask the resident leaseholders to do it every three years.</p> <p>I have several properties with tenants living in them, and we do the gas safety check for them every year and the checks don't tend to find any problems. I don't think you will get the buy-in from resident leaseholders to do a gas safety check every single year, but if you spread that over a longer period it might be more of a compromise. That's just a suggestion.</p> <p>SP – If the gas safety check was free of charge and paid for by the council, do you think they would do it?</p> <p>MS - I think they probably would. If they are paying for it themselves then some leaseholders may not do it, although I don't have a problem with doing it. If you want all leaseholders to carry out gas safety checks, I think you need to force it rather than make it voluntary.</p> <p>SP – Unfortunately we don't have the ability to force it, as it's not part of the conditions of the lease.</p> <p>MM – Instead of paying for all of our leaseholders to carry out gas safety checks, could we not incorporate the cost into any service charge they may be paying?</p> <p>SP – There is nothing we can do to enforce gas safety checks and servicing to leaseholders. It's just a case of looking at how we can encourage them to do it.</p> <p>The group went into breakout groups to discuss how Dacorum Borough Council can engage with residents to ensure 'higher risk' blocks are safer. The notes from the breakout groups are available upon request.</p>	
4	Update on the TPAS conference	Chair, MC & JD
	<p>MC shared a presentation which is available upon request. Chair requested that this presentation has its own agenda item at a future meeting.</p> <p>JD – The key thing that I came away from the conference with, was that we need good data. We need to know what each individual property is made of and how it is made. We also need to know all about our tenants so that we can take disabilities and vulnerabilities into account.</p>	

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	<p>There was also a big topic about how many more complaints have been made in the last two years and how many more recommendations have been made by the Ombudsman. They say that lots of organisations are very poor at responding to complaints.</p> <p>Chair – I would like to thank the Council for providing me with the opportunity to attend the TPAS conference as I thoroughly enjoyed it and took a lot from it. I tried to focus on sections of the conference that will enable me to help the committee move forward. There are some things that I want to propose, but there might be some cost involved so I would like to speak with the council first to make sure they are deliverable.</p>	
5	Close / AOB	Chair
	<p>AT – We have commissioned TPAS to come in and do a smart review for us. They will come in and look at our engagement opportunities, look at what is working well and identify areas where we can improve. They will help us to put together an action plan so that we can make improvements and they will also double-check that we are compliant with the new regulatory framework.</p> <p>It will be a helpful exercise, and they will want to come and talk to the TLC at some point. They will also want to observe the next meeting so that will be a good opportunity to showcase the wonderful work that you do.</p> <p>JD – The TLC have been asked to look at the Supported Housing review so we need to arrange an extra meeting that is likely to be on the 31st of August or the 7th of September. As soon as I have a final date, I will email you with the details and let you know. If you can come along then that would be great.</p>	
	Next confirmed meeting is on Thursday 28th September at 19:00 in Conference room 2 at The Forum.	