

MINUTES OF ESTATE SERVICE WORKERS FOCUS GROUP

Minutes of the Focus Group held on 08TH April 2010

Present:

Agenda Item	Action
1. Welcome	
<p>A. Lisa Howarth opened the meeting and thanked everyone for coming</p> <p>B. Lisa Howarth apologised for the late change in times</p> <p>C. Lisa Howarth explained the purpose of this focus group was to review the service standards for the Estate Service Team.</p>	
2. Estate Service Team Review.	
<p>A. Lisa Howarth explained that the Estate Service Team costs £271,050 per year, which equates to £1.15 per week per tenant.</p> <p>B. Lisa Howarth invited those present to mark her chart with an X to indicate their opinions of the level of service they receive. Lisa Howarth left the room at this point to allow honest marking</p> <p>C. The chart shows three good marks, three fair/good and three poor marks.</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>The chart is a green pyramid divided into four horizontal sections. The top section is labeled 'EXCELLENT' and is empty. The second section is labeled 'GOOD' and contains three red 'X' marks. The third section is labeled 'FAIR' and contains two red 'X' marks. The bottom section is labeled 'POOR' and contains three red 'X' marks.</p> </div> <p>D. The tenants collectively suggested we need more Estate Service Workers.</p> <p>E. It was noted that some sheltered schemes have handymen but there was confusion as to what he can and cannot be done.</p>	

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<p>F. The tenants present from Charter Court stated that their handyman came around once per month and did minimal work.</p> <p>G. Di Wilkes has previously raised estate services issues at previous S.A.G meeting including the pricing for 1 more Estate Service Worker.</p> <p>H. Tenants acknowledge this but still feel half a day per scheme per fortnight is unacceptable.</p> <p>I. Lisa Howarth gave the group an opportunity to assess any improvement by placing a sticker in the relevant area of the chart. Lisa again left the room at this point to allow fair judgement.</p> <p>J. The chart shows that most of our customers in the group felt the service had remained the same or declined.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="233 846 1259 1061"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5">Decline</th> <th colspan="5">Improvement</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>-5</td> <td>-4</td> <td>-3</td> <td>-2</td> <td>-1</td> <td>+1</td> <td>+2</td> <td>+3</td> <td>+4</td> <td>+5</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>●</td> <td></td> <td>● ●</td> <td>● ● ●</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>●</td> <td>● ●</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>K. It was raised that this does not give a fair reflection as houses and sheltered schemes have different needs and different services.</p> <p>L. Lisa Howarth explained that Mark Smith was the new Estate Service Worker and has lots of ideas how to develop the team including using the Matson One Stop Plus as a base that now enables the team to get out into the community start work earlier in the morning.</p>	Decline					Improvement					-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5		●		● ●	● ● ●			●	● ●		
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3. Review Estate Services Standards																															
<p>A. Remove items from housing designated land that is identified as health and safety risk within 24 hours. The group agreed that this was good but felt it doesn't always happen.</p> <p>B. Remove leaves, ice, snow in communal areas i.e. paths and entrances and the gritting of sheltered housing schemes within 24 hours. The tenants from the sheltered schemes commented how estate service workers were not doing this and how scheme managers had done these duties. The group commented how they felt this service should be extended to include all areas with a high density of elderly people. It was also noted about the lack of grit available for these areas.</p>																															

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<p>C. At this point Lisa Howarth asked if the tenants would be willing to pay a little extra for this service which everyone agreed seemed fair.</p> <p>D. Clear alleyways on housing designated land on request within 28 days. Lisa Howarth commented she was unaware of a program of works. 28 days seems fair unless it poses a health and safety risk.</p> <p>E. Erect chain link fencing on request within 28 days from request. The group felt this was satisfactory but needed clarification. Lisa Howarth explained this was regarding where gardens extend onto public land not between properties.</p> <p>F. Assist new tenants with central heating operation within 5 working days of request. The group pointed out that 5 days was fine during the summer but in winter maybe this should be a 24-hour priority. The group also felt maybe this could be the housing officers duty when showing new tenant around property.</p> <p>G. Remove graffiti, offensive/ racist within 24 hours and non-offensive within 5 working days. The group felt the timescales were suitable but felt the Estate service workers need to consider graffiti removal on other surfaces such as shiny lift doors.</p> <p>H. Complete repairs for elderly, vulnerable or disabled tenants that would normally be their responsibility within 28 days of request. The group agreed to this but there was some confusion whether the Estate Service Workers are allowed to change light bulbs.</p> <p>I. Lisa Howarth noted that the service standards are inconsistent in that some points are made in days others in working days.</p> <p>J. Complete garden works to empty homes 28 days after letting. The group felt the property should be presented in the condition we expect it to be maintained in. Gardens should be checked during pre-termination check. The group would like to see this changed to 28 days from pre termination inspection.</p>	

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<p>4. Other Business</p>	
<p>A. The group would like to see acknowledgment cards for service requests with a job number and an appointment slot AM/PM</p> <p>B. Our customers also felt it would be helpful if service workers could contact customer when appointments over-run.</p> <p>C. Overall the group still feel this service offers good value for money.</p> <p>D. Lisa Howarth summarised the focus groups requests above and thanked everyone attending. All group attendees will received a letter of thanks and minutes of the meeting that will be following by a report detailing what has happened following their feedback.</p>	