STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL - Leaseholder Meeting

8 April 2015
6.30 pm in the Shimkent Room, Daneshill House

Present:  Stevenage Borough Council, Anne Hensley (AH) – Senior Leasehold Advisor, Emma Goff (EG) – Senior Leasehold Advisor, Alan Mortimer (AM) – Service Manager Investment, Minutes Dale Minhas (DM) - Leasehold Officer

Chair: Diane Green (DG)

Customer Scrutiny Panel Member – Lesley Storey (LS)

Leaseholders: Robert Tregaskis (RT), Anthony Martin (AM), Gabriel Joe (GJ), Paul Kyprianides (PK), Karin Endersby (KE), Jean Sebastian (JS), Pauline Mowbray (PM), Jo Martins (JM), T Paget (TP), S Paget (SP), June Pease (JP), David Weemys (DW), PR Robins (PR), Elsie Vilimnot (EV), Salima Sharif (SS).

<table>
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<th>ITEM</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
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<td>1 Welcome and apologies;</td>
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<td>Welcome to all.</td>
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<td>Apologies received from: Brenda Stamper, Bryan Locksley, Stephanie Kiernon, Laura Anderson and Maureen Herdman.</td>
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<td>2 Customer Scrutiny Panel feedback on the outcomes of the Caretaking Review</td>
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<td>Handouts of the Review of the Caretaking Service were distributed amongst the table. Lesley Storey (LS) introduced herself and explained the purpose of the review was to improve the service delivered and satisfaction levels. She talked through the review. The link to the review can be found below: [<a href="http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/content/15953/21310/112620/112624/CS">http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/content/15953/21310/112620/112624/CS</a> P-Caretaking-Report-March-2015.pdf](<a href="http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/content/15953/21310/112620/112624/CS">http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/content/15953/21310/112620/112624/CS</a> P-Caretaking-Report-March-2015.pdf)</td>
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<td>Questions: JP asked what floor surfaces would be laid as some of the flats already had good carpets down. Was advised by LS to ask Alan Mortimer later in the meeting; although whatever floor surface they did put down would have to be easy to clean by the caretakers. It was suggested by</td>
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JP that if something decent was laid down then it would encourage residents to keep the area nice.

DG asked if they would be notified once a blitz clean had been done. LS responded that this information would be shown on the lockable Perspex notice boards that are being installed. JM mentioned that some blocks notice boards got vandalised but other blocks did not need lockable notice boards and we should stop generalisation. LS suggested having locking Perspex notice boards in blocks where there is an element of vandalism first and then slowly rolling them out to other flat blocks.

PM queried whether Perspex lockable notice boards were really necessary and would they not be vandalised too.

LS stated residents needed to know when the next blitz clean was due.

Most agreed that a card should be posted through the doors after the blitz clean had been carried out so residents could give feedback.

There followed a discussion about the frequency of cleaning in blocks where they have chutes. LS explained why it was necessary for them to have more cleans due to the size of the bins and the fact that people put items in the chutes that are too big and ultimately block them.

JM queried the STAR survey stating if one fifth of customers were unhappy that meant 80 % of customers were happy on the STAR survey yet the executive summary point 6.1 on the CSP review contradicted this; there were discrepancies in the report. A discussion followed and LS stated that the STAR survey was correct.

DG thanked LS for her feedback

3 Update on Major Works Contract

AM introduced himself and apologised for not attending the previous meeting. He advised there was a major works project for the 540 flat blocks which would be procured in 2015 with works commencing in 2016. There would be two major contractors with a 5 year contract worth £50-70 million. They were currently verifying stock condition surveys. Hendren Court and 5 blocks in Hopton Road were outside of the proposed 5 year programme.

DG queried the age of these blocks and was advised they were just over 35 years old. She queried why work was starting on them when in Broadwater and Shephall there were flats over 60 years old. AM responded that the blocks had been identified as requiring urgent
works whereas in Broadwater and Shephall due to their age they will have had works carried out already and therefore could wait for the programme whilst these blocks could not.

JM asked about costs; if all works on a flat block were going to be done at the same time. AM responded it would be more cost effective and value for money if they put scaffolding up and did what was needed at the time rather than come back and have to put the scaffolding up again.

JM asked if leaseholders could go back to paying quarterly for the painting works. He was advised by AM there would be a Section 20 consultation if work was over £250. JS stated that there had been years of neglect with the painting.

TP asked how they would be charged for works and how SBC need to make sure they charge for specific works carried out to the block and not for work done in nearby blocks. AM stated as part of the process they would specify what work had been done for each block and what contractors had priced for the work.

It was pointed out that current leaseholders will now have to pay for work which should have been done over the previous years and how if you had recently purchased your flat then you were being asked to pay for previous years of neglect. How the costs could be 5k and some residents would not be able to afford to pay.

AM reassured everyone that SBC would make sure that the repayment terms were for monthly amounts and they were reasonable; as they did with the Fire Doors where there was an option for 12 months repayment. He stated that they will be publishing the proposed list of works as part of Section 20 before 2016 (hopefully Autumn this year).

Resident AM pointed out that doing works on flats in one go was worrying. AM responded that it was not ideal catching up on all works in one go but coming back in ‘drips and drabs’ and having to put up scaffolding again at a later date would not be cost effective.

Resident AM mentioned his boiler was redundant at High Plash but the flue had not been removed and now the sheeting over the scaffolding was being removed. He queried if the flue would be removed. His contact details have been passed to AM to investigate and report back.

DW asked if windows were going to be replaced and if the windows would be purchased at a lower cost as they would be bought in bulk. PM asked if leaseholders could get their own contractors in to change
the windows.

AM confirmed windows would be replaced and residents could opt out if there was an option available. The price would be a lower cost just like it was with the fire doors as they were bought in bulk. If residents wished to change their own windows they would have to be uniform to the block and they would have to obtain Landlords Consent prior to any installation.

A leaseholder asked if asbestos would be removed from the floors or would flooring be laid over the top. AM responded that it depended on the survey results and the type of asbestos found.

PK asked if there were any plans to insulate the loft space. AM replied yes they will look at energy performance measures, cavity wall insulation and external insulation. He advised the residents they could put insulation in themselves as it may be a while before the work was carried out providing they have obtained Landlords Consent first. He also mentioned looking into solar electric PV panels to help reduce running costs and how these may be good for flats where there was a higher energy drain i.e. flats with lifts. Contact details for PK have been passed to AM for him to contact PK on this issue

4 Minutes of Last Meeting

DG went through the last meetings minutes. No questions were raised. JP and RT agreed the minutes.

5 Any Other Business

JS suggested it would be good practice to meet up with other Key Leaseholders to discuss their roles and how they deal with issues in their blocks and scrutinise repairs together and then report back any problems to the HOST team.

JM mentioned how repairs used to be on the SBC website and could they be put up on website again. AH said they have never been on the website but as JM was insistent she would investigate.

Date of next meeting - 8 July 2015