

## **Report of the Service Level Agreement Working Party to the Residents Consultation Committee for its meeting on 25 March 2024**

This working party met on March 4<sup>th</sup> 2024. Those present included Tony Swanson, Jane Smith, Juliet McNamara (Carey), Jim Durcan, Helen Davinson, Ella Ashton, and Luke Barton. Apologies were received from Andrew Tong.

1. KPIs – the KPI report generated substantial discussion and considerable disquiet. Among the topics discussed were the rising number of complaints and the increasing failure to handle these in a timely manner.

Complaints are recorded when leaseholders make a formal complaint (rather than a request for service). There are two internal stages to the complaints procedure. In the last quarter there were 15 complaints at the first Stage of the procedure and 1 complaint was escalated to the second stage of the procedure. Service Level agreements specify that complainants should receive a response within 10 days. In the last quarter only 40% of complaints received such a response. This is not acceptable.

Nine of the sixteen complaints were about repairs.

Service Level Agreements for repairs and maintenance have six Key Performance Indicators. These cover such matters as quality of repairs, timeliness of repairs (which varies depending on their assessed urgency) and underfloor heating repairs. Problems with the Civica software, which is used to record and track repairs, means that reliable data is not available for these KPIs.

This problem has been repeatedly drawn to officers' attention but remains unresolved. Staff and leaseholders lack accurate and timely information. It results in additional unnecessary work and considerable frustration by all parties. Producing the spreadsheets for this KPI report is a laborious, time consuming process that inhibits effective and timely data analysis.

The Working Party raised a number of questions concerning Civica software:

- What, if any, is the timescale for the resolution of these issues?
- If they cannot be resolved what is the BEO's Plan B to manage repairs?
- Is Civica receiving the full license fee despite these failings (are residents being charged for a service they are not receiving)?
- Will the consultant who has been engaged in response to the issues with Civica produce a report? When will that report be completed?
- Will that report be made available to residents and leaseholders? When will it be available?

### 2. Repairs and maintenance by block and by type of repair

The number of repairs is still rising. Leaseholders and residents are expressing concerns about the costs and quality of repairs. These difficulties are compounded by the current shortfall in the number of resident engineers where there remains a 50% shortfall in staff. This shortfall means that some repairs that would have been undertaken by resident engineers have to be passed to contractors. Where repairs are undertaken there are more

delays than previously. This resulted in at least one resident in December being left without background heating for several days despite lower temperatures. Resident engineers are responsible for checking the quality of repairs. It is inevitable that fewer repairs are being checked and that, consequently, the quality of repairs will have slipped. Resident engineers also provide technical advice to contractors. The loss of the more senior and more experienced engineers is bound to have a negative impact.

A recent recruitment effort for two posts produced only two responses – one of whom had applied previously and not been appointed. The work being undertaken by the remaining resident engineers and the flexibility they have demonstrated to maintain services is very much appreciated but there are concerns that having two resident engineers provide 24 hour cover could be damaging to the health of staff and could result in further resignations.

- What consideration, if any, has been given to recruiting from overseas?
- What is the timescale for the resolution of these issues?
- Is accommodation still being offered with these posts?

### 3. Terms of Reference

The Working Party reviewed its Terms of Reference. In general the clarity and brevity of the ToR were welcomed.

It was suggested that the overall objective:

“To review the quality and performance of the SLAs (Customer Care, Estate Management, Property Maintenance, Major Works and Open Spaces) that are charged for in accordance with the terms set out in the lease against targets and Key Performance Indicators (KPI) in the appropriate SLA or contract specification”

would be improved the inclusion of ‘third party’ in the final line before ‘contract specification’.

### 4. Software used to monitor cleaning standards

The Working Party expressed concern that the adoption of different software was being actively considered at this stage and wondered:

- Why this change was being proposed at this time?
- Whether all the costs and difficulties of changing a system that has been widely adopted by staff have been considered?
- What is the expected cost to fully install any new software and how will its running costs compare to those of Safety Culture (the current system)?

### 5. Communications Strategy and Single Point of Contact

In 2023 the Working Party was consulted about improvements to Communications (following the responses in the last survey of residents) and about proposals for a single point of contact to make it easier for leaseholders and residents to raise issues and needs e.g. repairs and to facilitate staff tracking such matters.

The Working Party was informed that these matters were now being dealt with by the Project Transformation Board.

- What is the timetable to bring forward proposals to deal with these issues?
- What actions are expected as a result of the Project Transformation Board's discussions?
- When will these issues be resolved (given that the Resident Survey took place in November 2022)?

## 6. Services provided under the lease

In response to a question raised by the Working Party about what services are provided under the lease, staff circulated a presentation produced by Anne Mason to explain service charges and service levels. The Working Party commended the presentation on its clarity and usefulness while recognising the financial numbers needed to be updated. The Working Party agreed that it would look at each of the service areas in its subsequent meetings to check that appropriate measures are in place to monitor service delivery and report to the RCC.