

Northwards Housing – Resources Sub-Committee Meeting

Non-Confidential Minutes

Hexagon Tower
Wednesday 22nd May 2019 at 5.30pm

Chair: Sharon Thomas

Present:	Sharon Thomas (ST)	Board Member (Chair)
	Janice Gotts (JG)	Board Member
	Hilary Vaughan (HV)	Board Member
	Sue Abbott (SA)	Board Member
	Neil Adams (NA)	Resources Co-optee
	Helen Knowles (HK)	BDO Director
	Stuart Hulme (SH)	BDO Audit Manager
In Attendance:	Stephen Brown (SB)	Director of Business and Property Services
	Robbie Chapman (RC)	Head of Finance & ICT
	Jan Norris (JN)	Head of HR (Minutes)
	Tracy Langton (TL)	Head of Rents & Welfare Reform (part meeting)

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	Welcome and Introductions ST welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting was confirmed as quorate.	
2	Apologies for Absence Guy Johnson and Hazel Summers	
3	Declarations of Interest / Confidential Matters / Equality & Diversity There were no declarations of interest.	
	CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS	
4	Minutes of Last Meeting 13th March 2019 (Confidential) Please see confidential minutes.	
5	Audit Planning Memorandum (Confidential) Please see confidential minutes.	
6	Management Accounts (Confidential) Please see confidential minutes.	
7	YES Management Accounts (Confidential)	

	Please see confidential minutes.	
8	<p>3-Year budget Forecasts (Confidential)</p> <p>Please see confidential minutes.</p>	
	NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS	
9	<p>Minutes of Last Meeting 13th March 2019</p> <p>Sub-Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2019. There were no matters arising.</p>	
10	<p>People Review 2018/19 End of Year Update</p> <p>JN presented the end of year people report. JN explained that one of the key issues remains with absence. Absence rates and performance remain in line with previous year finishing the year on 10.37 days per employee – only a slight reduction of 0.7 days versus last year. Long term absences have increased as we have a number of employees with long term conditions, such as MS, heart and stroke, terminal cancer. JN explained that we have also seen a progressive increase in the number of mental health conditions.</p> <p>JN further explained that HR proactively manage short-term absences with line managers with 3 individuals moving to a formal disciplinary as a result of breach of attendance monitoring.</p> <p>SB asked JG whether this was comparable to the Council. She explained that the statistics at the Council were actually worse – currently running at circa.12 days per employee. Also noted that there were issues with absence, especially in regard to mental health issues.</p> <p>HV asked about E&D and the employee profile and how that relates to the areas we manage. JN confirmed that it comes to committee twice a year.</p> <p>ST asked about jobs being advertised in different locations to try and ensure that we get a diverse range of applications. JN explained that we advertise at a number of locations including faith organisations and other community organisations.</p> <p>Resources Sub-Committee noted the update.</p>	
11	<p>People Strategy Update</p> <p>JN presented the people strategy action plan. She explained it has been categorised according to the different challenges faced by the business.</p> <p>Resources Sub-Committee noted the update.</p>	
12	<p>Rent Service Improvement Review Success</p> <p>TL presented an overview of the report.</p>	

	<p>RC asked for it to be noted, a credit of thanks to Tracy and the rents team on successful implementation of the review and outcomes.</p> <p>NA asked if the Experian data had helped to identify 'bad debt'. TL explained that it had supported earlier and proactive intervention to enable the team to refer tenants experiencing financial difficulty to money advisers / other agencies for support in prioritising key debt and support individuals.</p> <p>ST asked how long the Voicescape system had been in place. TL explained that the system went 'live' within Responsive Repairs in November 2018 and with Rents in January 2019. Initially committed to Voicescape for a 12-month period with a view that a formal and full procurement of providers will be conducted at the end of this time.</p> <p>ST asked what feedback had been gained from tenants. TL explained that there was currently a 51% engagement rate based on the number of tenants we identified to be put forward to receive a call and we got a response. This is higher than other users. TL further explained that there are safeguards in place to ensure tenants are not overfaced by contact from either Voicescape or the rents team.</p> <p>ST asked if it was planned to keep 'away days' on the agenda – TL explained that this was a key part of the ongoing review, to engage with the team and the technical and behavioural competencies have helped greatly by identifying what a good case worker looks like?</p> <p>HV also wanted thanks to be expressed to the Rents Team – SB agreed to place a communication of thanks on Yammer.</p> <p>SB also raised that outside of the service review, in 2019, we are still unable to take Direct Debit payments. TL explained that this presents many challenges and in particular is an issue for tenants in shared ownership properties. As part of the ILM business project, rents team leaders have researched and are due to present their findings in June (as part of the ILM graduation) and Direct Debit is their project topic. RC to take up the process again with MCC.</p> <p>Resources Sub-Committee noted the rent service improvement review.</p>	SB
13	<p>Procurement Strategy Update</p> <p>RC presented the report and explained that this was an update from the strategy which was approved in November 2018.</p> <p>RC explained that the strategy places greater emphasis on social value and sustainability in procurement which is beyond contract management with a revised framework to hold contractors more to account.</p> <p>RC informed that there has been real progress made in this area – NW has engaged with Social Value UK (a not-for-profit organisation)</p>	

	<p>who have carried out workshops with all managers. RC offered, and it was agreed to invite Social Value UK to present to Board.</p> <p>JG asked how professional services were responding in respect of community-led work via advice to SME's, links to schools, mentoring opportunities and volunteering days. RC stated that there was real value to be added via the link to schools, key partners and support to business and this is discussed at initial outset.</p> <p>Resources Sub-Committee noted the update</p>	RC
14	<p>ICT Update</p> <p>RC presented the report and explained that the self-service portal has been launched on the website with an initial signup by 905 people – an increase of 20 people per day. This has been a 'soft-launch', with no advertising at all. We are wanting the responsive repairs contract to be up and running in Summer 2019.</p> <p>HV asked why the leaseholder project had been delayed. RC explained that there had been technical problems at MCC needed some work and the deadline to switch in March 2019 has been put back – no further update at this point. Outstanding issue, RC to review.</p> <p>Resources Sub-Committee noted the update.</p>	RC
15	<p>Budget Risk Matrix 19/20</p> <p>RC presented the report and explained that Mears commercial were no longer pushing the £200K claim for additional works.</p> <p>JG stated that it would be helpful to see the scale of risk on a table e.g. likelihood of financial impact above £100K. RC agreed that he was happy to action</p> <p>Resources Sub-Committee approved the budget risk matrix 19/20</p>	RC
16	<p>Waivers</p> <p>RC confirmed that one waiver had been granted since last resources committee meeting and it was good news with the appointment of groundworks MSST/YET team</p> <p>The Sub-Committee approved the waivers were in line with the descriptions within the Standing Financial Instructions.</p>	
17	<p>Resource Rolling Agenda</p> <p>It was agreed to add the following items to the Resources Rolling Agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3-year budget forecasts to present with the budget in March, as part of annual review with a half-year review presented in November 	

	The Sub-Committee approved the Resources Sub-Committee workplan for 2019/20.	
18	Any Other Business There were no items of A.O.B.	
	ST thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7:55pm.	
	Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 17 th July 2019 @ 5:30pm Hexagon Tower Board Room	