

YHN Limited

Tuesday 20 November 2018 at 5.00 pm

YHN House, Benton Park Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE7 7LX

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AGENDA

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Introduction Items

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2. **Declarations of Interests**
3. **Chair's Items**

To consider the agenda order and exclude the press and public during discussion of protected agenda items because of the likely disclosure of confidential information. The definitions of what is considered confidential are contained within Section 16 of the Company's Standing Orders.

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To be first for housing

Your Homes Newcastle Board
20 November 2018

TITLE	Response to Social Housing Green Paper Consultation
AUTHOR	Tina Drury - Managing Director
COMPANY	Your Homes Newcastle
ACTION REQUIRED	For information
SUMMARY	This paper presents the Newcastle City Council (NCC) and Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) response to the Government's Social Housing Green Paper.

DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keep the housing stock decent and neighbourhoods clean and safe 2. Collect the rent and let properties effectively 3. Promote health and wellbeing and support vulnerable people to enjoy independence 	
STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER	NUMBER & TITLE	SR12: Failure to comply with regulatory and reporting requirements
	LIKELIHOOD	1 (Low)
	IMPACT	4 (Significant)
FINANCIAL / VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS	Some proposals, included in the Green Paper, may have value for money implications, if implemented by Government at a later date.	
CUSTOMER IMPACT / VIEWS	YHN's Customer Service Committee discussed the green paper after receiving a presentation on it.	

	<p>YHN customers were invited, through social media and the 'home and people' magazine, to contribute to the Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice (NITV) consultation on the green paper. Feedback from the NITV consultation has been reflected in the joint YHN/NCC response. NITV have also submitted a separate, independent response to the Government.</p>
<p>EQUALITY & DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS</p>	<p>The needs of vulnerable or hard-to-reach groups have been considered in the response to consultation questions.</p>

Your Homes Newcastle

Response to Social Housing Green Paper Consultation

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Newcastle City Council (NCC) and Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) joint consultation response to the Government's Social Housing Green Paper to YHN Board for information.

2. Background

- 2.1 The social housing green paper 'A new deal for social housing' was published 14th August 2018. It aimed to "start a national discussion" about how to improve social housing and set out proposals under five core themes:

- ensuring homes are safe and decent
- effective resolution of complaints
- empowering residents and strengthening the regulator
- tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities
- expanding supply and supporting home ownership.

Consultation closed on 6th November 2018. NCC and YHN worked together to submit a joint response to the Government's Social Housing Green Paper consultation and the associated Review of Social Housing Regulation: Call for Evidence.

The joint NCC and YHN responses were informed by sector analysis, local CIH member briefings, a staff workshop, staff surveys, discussions with senior managers and tenant feedback from the independent Newcastle Independent Tenants Voice response.

3. Social Housing Green Paper Consultation response

- 3.1 The NCC and YHN joint consultation response is attached at Appendix 1.

4. Review of Social Housing Regulation: Call for Evidence

- 4.1 The NCC and YHN joint response is attached at Appendix 2.

5. Expression of Interest for a Social Sector (Building Safety) Best Practice Group

- 5.1 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is currently inviting expressions of interest for a social sector (Building Safety) best practice group. This takes forward a proposal from the Social Housing Green Paper, which originated from the Hackitt Review. This is an opportunity for YHN to further develop its customer engagement work around building and fire safety and we are submitting an expression of interest.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

- 6.1 Board are recommended to receive this report for information.

Contact Officer:

If you have any questions about this report that you would like clarifying before the meeting, you can contact Helen Bell, Policy and Innovation Manager on 0191 211 6618 or email helen.bell@yhn.org.uk



Social Housing Green Paper - A New Deal for Social Housing

Newcastle City Council and Your Homes Newcastle consultation response.

This paper presents the Newcastle City Council and Your Homes Newcastle (The Council's Arms Length Management Organisation) response to the Government's Social Housing Green Paper. Both Newcastle City Council and Your Homes Newcastle welcome the opportunity to comment on this green paper and look forward to informing future policy development, which we know this will be the start of. We sincerely hope the Government continue this open dialogue and gather further evidence with regards the challenges in sector, and the policy responses that can best meet these challenges.

These responses have been informed by sector analysis, staff workshops and surveys, discussions with senior management and tenant feedback from the independent Newcastle Independent Tenants Voice.

Ensuring Homes are Safe and Decent

1. How can residents best be supported in this important role of working with landlords to ensure homes are safe?

Open and transparent engagement with residents is key. As recommended by the Hackitt Review, landlords should be working towards a position whereby any information and data relating to the safety of their homes, including fire risk assessments, is easy to access and in a format that works best for the audience

The suggestion of a working pilot with residents and housing organisations to trial engagement options is very welcome and is something we would be keen to be a part of.

There is certainly need for a simpler more straightforward set of quality standards for the housing sector across the board, the current ones are complex, dependent on tenure and difficult to enforce in certain circumstances.

2. Should new safety measures in the private rented sector also apply to social housing?

There should be no distinction on minimum safety standards. Newcastle City Council and Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) are well placed to meet the higher standards suggested. YHN installed hard wired smoke detection in our properties when carrying out rewires through our Modern Homes Programme. NCC properties also have a carbon monoxide alarm fitted – any missing alarms are replaced during gas services. We are already moving from a ten year to a five-year programme to inspect electrical installations, on a risk-based approach, and since 2010/2011 we have also tested properties on change of occupancy. Within our new Business Strategy, we have set a target to achieve a Minimum SAP rating of 70 (which equates to Band C) for all stock by 2022. It should be noted that additional requirements potentially have an impact on rents and service charges and we will continue to monitor affordability of charges for tenants.

3. Are there any changes to what constitutes a Decent Home that we should consider?

The Decent Homes Standard (DHS) provided a great foundation for improving the quality of social housing across the board; however, it is timely for a review and for the standard to be enhanced to reflect current circumstances.

We agree that energy efficiency/thermal comfort should be a requirement under a standard however we are of the view that EPC banding isn't always the best way to measure energy efficiency (nor is SAP) there needs to be a more holistic approach.

In determining any additional possible enhancements to the DHS, consideration should be given to involving tenants in this process. We should be asking what tenants think makes a decent home, rather than the sector deciding for them. Anecdotally, we know that some of our tenants feel that the decent homes standard should extend further than the current key elements and should cover the environment and the external fabric of their property.

However, the DHS is only one aspect of asset investment decisions making and that needs reflecting in any change to the standard.

4. Do we need additional measures to make sure social homes are safe and decent?

Consideration should be given to whether some aspects of Building Regulations should be applied retrospectively. Arguably, measures concerning such things as fire safety and electrical safety would benefit from being applied retrospectively (within an agreed timeframe). Funding constraints would need to be considered. A change to the gas regulations, the removal of 'not to current standards' category in 2015 made some requirements for gas installations retrospective, when historically they hadn't been. Currently social housing is outside the regulatory framework applied to private landlords and there is value in all housing providers being regulated through a consistent framework.

Further regulation is needed around flats sold under the Right to Buy Scheme which are sold on, sublet or there are absentee landlords. We need a way of monitoring this sector, especially considering the Grenfell tragedy where it wasn't known who was residing in some of the properties.

Effective Resolution of Complaints

5. Are there ways of strengthening the mediation opportunities available for landlords and residents to resolve disputes locally?

At YHN, we, proactively, reviewed our complaints procedure over a year ago. This included empowering staff to resolve complaints informally at the first point of contact where possible/appropriate. Sometimes, when resolving a complaint informally, frontline officers may feel it appropriate to offer a resolution that will involve a more creative resolution or a small amount of compensation for the customer. For example, if a customer has experienced a leak through a repair gone wrong we may buy materials to help with the clean-up of the leak, or, we could arrange to send a bunch of flowers. The new way of working is progressing well, and we are currently undertaking further work to ensure a consistent approach across the business.

There is potential for mediation to be introduced into the process, for example through a mutual agreement with other landlords in the region (i.e. we could advocate on behalf of tenants of a neighbouring social landlord and vice versa). We could also refer to CAB or another independent professional body on a shared cost basis to strengthen this arrangement.

6. Should we reduce the eight-week waiting period to four weeks, or should we remove the requirement for the "democratic filter" stage altogether?

We believe that the democratic filter should be removed altogether. In our experience, this step adds no value and lengthens the process for the customer. It seems unreasonable to make someone wait to escalate their complaint when they have already gone through a lengthy complaints process.

7. What can we do to ensure that the “designated persons” are better able to promote local resolutions?

Landlords should continue to work positively with local councillors and MPs to endeavour to resolve issues without the need for further escalation.

8. How can we ensure that residents understand how best to escalate a complaint and seek redress?

Landlords should ensure that information is readily available to residents about their complaints procedures e.g. on websites and in publications. Also, they should ensure that staff are up to date on the process. Tenants should also have the ability to track the progress of their complaint in a transparent manner.

Advocacy by CAB or another similar organisation, or a mutual arrangement with another social landlord in the locality, to provide mediation, may also be helpful.

There is also a wider discussion to be had around people not wanting or feeling comfortable to complain. We need to continually engage with customers and constantly assess their perception of the organisation and its performance.

9. How can we ensure that residents can access the right advice and support when making a complaint?

Please see previous answers.

10. How can we best ensure that landlords’ processes for dealing with complaints are fast and effective?

The resolution at initial point of contact is critical to this working efficiently. If more lower level issues are addressed quickly and efficiently, and learning from complaints effectively identified and applied, there would be far more focus on a smaller number of complaints which would lead to more service improvement.

The emphasis should be on effective rather than fast. Some complaints can be multi-faceted and very complex. We should not necessarily be measuring the days taken to respond but be measured on the outcomes e.g. the customer is satisfied that we have listened and responded (even if we can’t always do what is asked) and that learning from the complaint has been identified and appropriate steps taken.

Landlords should be mindful of vulnerable tenants and their possible need for additional support and/or advocacy to help them make a complaint and guide them through the process as required.

11. How can we best ensure safety concerns are handled swiftly and effectively within the existing redress framework?

There needs to be complete transparency around the process. Whilst routine complaints can be addressed informally, any safety concerns should be clearly documented, reviewed and challenged. In addition to resolving any outstanding safety issues, there needs to be a process to take the resolution/learning and apply it to other similar dwellings/situations.

Involvement of the Health and Safety Executive for safety concerns that are not addressed, may be on way of catching landlords' attention!

Empowering Residents and Strengthening the Regulator

12. Do the proposed key performance indicators cover the right areas? Are there any other areas that should be covered?

We appreciate that there should be transparency for customers; however, we have concerns about KPI's and league tables as it is difficult to compare organisations on a 'like for like' basis. Size and area of stock, area, level of deprivation and type of landlord (whether Housing Association, ALMO or stock-retained Council) can all have a significant impact on performance levels and make it difficult for customers to get a clear insight into how their landlord is performing.

The measures appear too one sided around quality – they don't consider cost whereas normal consumer behaviour / feedback would consider both value and quality.

There is also no measure of support services (for example welfare benefits advice) which, as highlighted by the Green Paper, are a significant and valued part of many landlords' offer.

The measures assume that all customers have similar priorities. Some landlords have undertaken extensive work around customer satisfaction drivers and found, for example, that it is not the speed of repair that matters most to a customer but whether it is done at a time to suit them. By designing their repairs services to reflect this priority, they have achieved very high customer satisfaction rates. If the focus of national KPIs was speed of repair, either these landlords would perform less well in the league table or have to change priority and risk reducing customer satisfaction. Perhaps, the focus should be on landlords having good customer insight about their customers' priorities and be measured on customer satisfaction rates.

Landlord league tables would also reinforce social housing stigma. No other tenure has league tables, and for customers of landlords near the bottom of the league table, the stigma would be even greater.

Much of the information identified in the green paper is already available within the sector, e.g. through Housemark, so most landlords already compare their performance with their peers. The Regulator's energy should be focussed on those organisations who are not transparent, rather than introduce another system of monitoring, when sector benchmarking is already the sector norm and understood by tenants.

13. Should landlords report performance against these key performance indicators every year?

If landlords were required to publish KPIs in this way every year, there should also be opportunity for them to provide context to their performance - KPI's in isolation would be a very crude, and not a particularly useful, measure.

However, in becoming predominantly KPI driven, there is a significant risk that landlords will lose sight of the customer and service satisfaction will reduce as a result. The emphasis should be on outcomes not indicators.

14. Should landlords report performance against these key performance indicators to the Regulator?

This appears to be a return to the Audit Commission framework. If the Regulator has the correct remit, and the reporting requirements are robust and publicised, the system should first and foremost rely on self-regulation. The Regulator should focus on those organisations who are not transparent and where tenant concerns are regularly raised but not resolved.

15. What more can be done to encourage landlords to be more transparent with their residents?

Landlords should engage with their customers to identify what their priorities are, what information customers want about how they are delivering services to meet those priorities, and how they want to receive it. Transparency is achieved through continuing dialogue demonstrated by the right information, publicised in a timely and consistent manner through channels that customers can easily access.

In Newcastle, tenants and leaseholds are involved in shaping the direction of the organisation, and holding it to account, through scrutiny, engagement and ALMO governance.

A 'TripAdvisor' or trust pilot style customer review of housing services / landlords would also help residents and has been suggested by our own tenants.

As identified in the Hackitt Review, ensuring certificates and documentation e.g. health and safety records and fire risk assessments are readily available to be viewed would also support transparency and greater trust between landlords and residents.

16. Do you think that there should be a better way of reporting the outcomes of landlords' complaint handling? How can this be made as clear and accessible as possible for residents?

Regarding complaints, landlords should be measured on the outcomes e.g. the customer is satisfied that we have listened and responded (even if we can't always do what is asked) and that learning from the complaint has been identified and appropriate steps taken. This information should be reported to Committees and to customers so that it can receive challenge and scrutiny. Implementation of learning from complaints should be checked and tested through mystery shopping.

17. Is the Regulator best placed to prepare key performance indicators in consultation with residents and landlords?

It would be challenging to identify a set of KPIs which are fair, relevant and equally applicable to Housing Associations, ALMOs and stock retained authorities and there are concerns around how well versed the regulator is in relation to issues faced by Local Authorities and

ALMOs as opposed to Housing Associations. For these reasons, the Regulator should work with a specialist in this area.

Consideration should also be given to the best comparator, not solely referencing a 'one size fits all' national comparator. Many already takes steps to benchmark through Housemark, HQN and other local groups.

18. What would be the best approach to publishing key performance indicators that would allow residents to make the most effective comparison of performance?

Although it is important for customers to be able to understand how their landlord is doing, for many it will not be possible, because of a lack of other social housing landlords in their area, or high demand for properties, to move to another provider.

Comparison would only be useful if it was on a 'like for like' basis in terms of housing provider type, levels of stock, locations etc. Any comparison should enable organisations to offer context and narrative to explain performance e.g. the impact of variables such Universal Credit and local spending priorities.

Individual landlords should work with their customers to identify the most appropriate / cost effective method of reporting performance.

As previously mentioned a TripAdvisor style site – with simple star system of 1-5 for cost, quality, value, refer a friend etc 'owned' and populated by customers would be hugely useful and tackle social housing stigma by putting customers on a par with the customers of other services.

19. Should we introduce a new criterion to the Affordable Homes Programme that reflects residents' experience of their landlord? What other ways could we incentivise best practice and deter the worst, including for those providers that do not use Government funding to build?

This approach would be unhelpful as residents in the areas, with the highest deprivation, may be the least satisfied and blame the landlord for things outside of their control. These areas that need the most investment, with the highest cost pressures may score poorly, which could impact on much needed funding.

The Affordable Homes Programme is becoming less regulatory which is welcome as that allows the market to find its own innovative solutions and deliver greater numbers of homes. Further regulation on accessing the Affordable Homes Programme could impede the market.

20. Are current resident engagement and scrutiny measures effective? What more can be done to make residents aware of existing ways to engage with landlords and influence how services are delivered?

The standard of resident engagement and scrutiny differs from provider to provider. It is an area where, under the current regulatory framework, the Regulator is never likely to get involved because it is difficult to see how the serious detriment threshold could be breached

for the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard. The threshold should be defined differently for this standard.

There needs to be a greater emphasis on using customer insight to understand customers' needs, aspiration and priorities and effective collection and application of customer satisfaction data. Customer scrutiny has a significant role to play but should be seen as wider than just scrutiny reviews but as a continuous dialogue between customers and landlords, with greater use of digital methods of communication, about performance, 'you said, we did' and opportunities for customers to ask questions and provide challenge.

Providers need to be mindful of the different needs of vulnerable and hard to reach customers and ensure that they take steps to maximise the inclusivity of their engagement and involvement mechanisms.

21. Is there a need for a stronger representation for residents at a national level? If so, how should this best be achieved?

The creation of a National Tenant Voice organisation would be welcomed, but only if it is genuinely empowered, embedded in government policy development and where the focus is on tenant rights across different tenures.

It would be well-received by residents, and if sufficiently empowered, should strengthen their voice to influence Government and the Housing Regulator.

22. Would there be interest in a programme to promote the transfer of local authority housing, particularly to community-base housing associations? What would it need to make it work?

There is unlikely to be interest in this area. In Newcastle, we have encouraged and resourced development of community-based housing, co-operatives and self-build groups, including providing grant support. Unfortunately no local organisations have yet reached the stage where they want to take on such legal, financial or asset responsibilities.

23. Could a programme of trailblazers help to develop and promote options for greater resident-leadership within the sector?

No comment.

24. Are Tenant Management Organisations delivering positive outcomes for residents and landlords? Are current processes for setting up and disbanding Tenant Management Organisations suitable? Do they achieve the right balance between residents' control and local accountability?

No comment.

25. Are there any other innovative ways of giving social housing residents greater choice and control over the services they receive from landlords?

No comment.

26. Do you think there are benefits to models that support residents to take on some of their own services? If so, what is needed to make this work?

No comment.

27. How can landlords ensure residents have more choice over contractor services, while retaining oversight of quality and value for money?

Landlords should include residents in procurement frameworks and decisions for large value / scale works that have an impact on their homes. They should also look to provide training and support to enable customers to meaningfully participate in this process.

Performance benchmarking can also be useful as demonstrated by YHN's delivery programme. Where a contractor scored low in terms of customer satisfaction, their future work allocation could be reduced or removed. In this way, we can link poor performance to financial outcomes for contractors and be transparent in reporting this through tenant forums.

28. What more could we do to help leaseholders of a social housing landlord?

Make leaseholders aware of independent government advice which is available to them that can support their decision to purchase a leasehold property. YHN is already proactive in this area, as we offer to visit and also provide information to potential leaseholders, to ensure they fully understand the terms of the lease and their responsibilities.

One issue, which needs to be considered, is how we help leaseholders to free up equity to pay for renovations / improvements in retirement – keeping their homes up to modern day living standards when they are on low incomes.

29. Does the Regulator have the right objective on consumer regulation? Should any of the consumer standards change to ensure that landlords provide a better service for residents in line with the new key performance indicators proposed, and if so how?

The consumer standards are generally satisfactory. However, they should be given more priority and more proactively monitored, but without a return to the prescriptive nature of the previous Audit Commission Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOES).

A number of housing providers have either achieved, or are working towards, Institute of Customer Service (ICS) accreditation and benchmark their performance against the UK Satisfaction Index (UKCSI.) This raises standards, helps organisations understand how effective their customer service strategy is and identifies areas for improvement. It reflects that customers don't just compare their landlord with other landlords but every other provider of the services they buy or receive.

30. Should the Regulator be given powers to produce other documents, such as a Code of Practice, to provide further clarity about what is expected from the consumer standards?

This is not necessary. The consumer standards already provide a good framework for landlords, with an additional Code of Practice likely to reduce rather than increase clarity. It would be more effective to introduce a lower threshold for the consumer standards, for intervention from the Regulator, so encouraging landlords to give them greater priority.

31. Is “serious detriment” the appropriate threshold for intervention by the Regulator for a breach of consumer standards? If not, what would be an appropriate threshold for intervention?

Serious detriment is too high a benchmark. The regulator needs to consider some ‘can openers’ such as numbers of complaints in an area of business, customer satisfaction levels and cost. There will be a need for landlords to be proactively transparent in their own reporting to enable this to happen.

32. Should the Regulator adopt a more proactive approach to regulation of consumer standards? Should the Regulator use key performance indicators and phased interventions as a means to identify and tackle poor performance against these consumer standards? How should this be targeted?

A lower threshold for intervention would support a more proactive approach to regulation of consumer standards. More consumer analysis should also be included in In Depth Assessments (IDAs). The regulator needs to consider some ‘can openers’ such as numbers of complaints in an area of business, customer satisfaction levels and cost.

33. Should the Regulator have greater ability to scrutinise the performance and arrangements of local authority landlords? If so, what measures would be appropriate?

Yes. There should be a greater emphasis of Regulator scrutiny of the consumer standards and consistency of scrutiny, of the consumer standards, across the whole sector.

34. Are the existing enforcement measures set out in Box 3 adequate? If not, what additional enforcement powers should be considered?

No comment.

35. Is the current framework for local authorities to hold management organisations such as Tenant Management Organisations and Arms Length Management Organisations to account sufficiently robust? If not, what more is needed to provide effective oversight of these organisations?

We feel that the current framework is sufficient. Ultimately the parent authority can end the contract and set up new arrangements if they are not satisfied with the quality of the services. Newcastle City Council work very closely with YHN to ensure that we operate effectively and there is a clear governance structure in place which covers value for money, performance, resource allocation, service development, comparators with other landlords, tenant engagement and satisfaction.

36. What further steps, if any, should Government take to make the Regulator more accountable to Parliament?

There needs to be greater clarity and consistency across Government. For example, welfare reform agendas and language used by the Government further embed stigma. A clearer Government agenda will lead to greater clarity for the regulator and those in receipt of their regulatory frameworks.

Tackling Stigma and Celebrating Thriving Communities

37. How could we support or deliver a best neighbourhood competition?

As with many other commentators from the sector, we are of the view that 'best neighbourhood competitions' are a little simplistic, derisory and in isolation would do little to contribute towards thriving communities. Like many other housing organisations, we already do a great deal to help support communities and build capacity within through community investment projects and funding.

The focus should be on encouraging and facilitating community engagement in local areas and supporting communities to take pride and interest in the places they live. We should avoid defining neighbourhoods simplistically as 'best' as this could have the unintended consequence of widening the gap between successful communities and those that are less so, further creating stigma.

38. In addition to sharing positive stories of social housing residents and their neighbourhoods, what more could be done to tackle stigma?

Consideration should be given to how we might 're-frame' our national relationship with the social housing sector. Language is a very important part of this - would moving away from using the term 'social housing' help to reduce the stigma? We don't use 'social' in other publicly funded sectors such as 'social education', 'social health service' and 'social policing', so why do we make the distinction for 'social housing?' Perhaps residents can play a role in a national conversation that seeks to re-define the terminology and come up with something more appropriate, that reflects the modern housing offer that the sector provides today.

Mainstream media must also be pressed to play their role in avoiding unnecessary stereotyping. For too long tabloid press and television schedules have been filled with negative stories about those who live in the sector often contributing to the commonly held assumption that social housing equals vulnerable, unemployed, in receipt of benefits and perpetrators of anti-social behaviour. Rarely do we see positive stories in mainstream media celebrating all that is great about the sector and those that live in the houses we provide.

However, as a sector we also need to recognise that we have played a role in creating stigma too. We regularly talk about helping the vulnerable and being a helping hand/hero saving people. Whilst it is absolutely right that we do provide all the support we do to those who need it, there are many more tenants who we speak about far less, who are completely independent and living successful lives in their communities. Perhaps it's time to shift some of the focus on them.

Referring to social housing as our "first social service" perpetuates the stigma. Many tenants don't need additional support, they just rent a house from us. At YHN, we talk about being there for 'those who want to stand on their own two feet but like knowing there's someone on their side.'

However, there also needs to be an appreciation that we have got an obligation to house very vulnerable people which can re-enforce some people's negative impressions of social housing.

Locally, we have an ambition to be 'first for housing' when people are thinking about their preferred rented tenure. To achieve this, we need to be able to better compete with the private rented sector, who typically have a far wider reach in terms of advertising and marketing their properties. It is often much harder to access and navigate waiting lists for social housing, than it is to register with a private landlord. This can put people off and contribute to the perception that social housing is only accessible to certain demographics. We need to be better at broadcasting the fact that those who live in our properties pay fair rent in comparison to many of their private sector peers, live in a home that is warm and safe and kept in good repair, and also offer peace of mind that a tenancy with us is secure for as long as it needs to be.

For too long there has been a great deal of emphasis on the notion that home ownership is what we should all be aspiring towards. With this rhetoric, by default anyone who has not achieved this either through choice or otherwise will be perceived as the poor relation. We cannot hope to reduce stigma around social housing if the implication is that people need to work to get out of it and move on as soon as practically possible.

39. What is needed to further encourage the professionalisation of housing management to ensure all staff deliver a good quality of service?

Housing already has a professional body, the Chartered Institute of Housing who promote professional standards across the sector and offers qualifications from introductory level to post-graduate to increase specialist knowledge and professional in the sector.

In addition to specialist knowledge, professionalism should focus on developing a customer-focused organisational culture. The work that many housing providers are undertaking with the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) is already increasing the customer focus and professionalism of the sector and bringing it to a comparable standard with other customer-

focused services and organisations. ICS also provide professional qualifications which recognise the attainment of excellent customer service skills, knowledge and behaviours. Alternatively, they can endorse in-house customer service training programmes to ensure they are of a comparable standard. Encouraging the sector to continue to work further with CIH and ICS would be a good way forward.

40. What key performance indicator should be used to measure whether landlords are providing good neighbourhood management?

We know that how someone perceives the neighbourhood in which they live often relates directly to their overall satisfaction with their housing provider. However, the perceived success or otherwise of a neighbourhood is not dependent on the work of a landlord in isolation. More often, the role played by their local authority's environmental services, the community sector, the police, local businesses, housing landlords, and not least the residents themselves, all have a bearing on the success of a neighbourhood. With this in mind, it is difficult to determine a measure that would accurately reflect whether a landlord is providing good neighbourhood management. However, we do already collect information relating to satisfaction with neighbourhood via our Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR survey) but for the reasons outlined above it is not necessarily an accurate reflection on landlords' performance.

41. What evidence is there of the impact of the important role that many landlords are playing beyond their key responsibilities? Should landlords report on the social value they deliver?

Many housing providers were delivering social value long before it became a legal requirement to do so. Some local examples of the additional social value we add include socio-economic initiatives such as employability programmes, employability advice and support, SME business support and community investment programmes to help facilitate and enable local initiatives.

Many housing organisations already produce an annual social value report which helps to highlight the breadth of activity the sector undertakes beyond their key responsibilities, demonstrates that what we are doing meets the needs of the customer, and that money is being spent appropriately. It's reasonable to expect that all landlords should report on their social value; however, this should be for the benefit of residents rather than a regulator.

It should be noted, however that whilst increasingly more housing organisations are using the HACT model as a means of evidencing the social value that is created, it is probably fair to say that as a sector we haven't quite fully mastered our ability to consistently and accurately do so.

42. How are landlords working with local partners to tackle anti-social behaviour? What key performance indicator could be used to measure this work?

Locally, we are working together with Newcastle City Council in developing an innovative approach to managing anti-social behaviour. A multi-agency panel meets on a regular basis to discuss families and individuals who have involvement with more than one agency. The

agencies represented work together to develop a holistic package of support for both perpetrators and victims.

We are also represented on local safeguarding, MAPPA and MARAC panels which are attended by a wide range of agencies from across the city including police, probation, health services, adult social care and many more. Again, working together with partners, cases are discussed, and actions agreed by the relevant agencies.

In relation to a key performance indicator it would be difficult to identify one specific to anti-social behaviour that would be meaningful for tenants. Dealing with anti-social behaviour is not a one size fits all approach. An overall performance indicator that best reflects we have listened and responded to a complainant, no matter the issue, is probably the most practical. Perception on delivered outcomes will be reflected in overall resident satisfaction levels.

43. What other ways can planning guidance support good design in the social sector?

Please refer to good local practice in response to question 44.

44. How can we encourage social housing residents to be involved in the planning and design of new developments

We are of the view that resident engagement and meaningful involvement from the beginning are critical for the overall success of new developments. Locally, we already hold residents' events and ensure tenants are involved right from that start of a new development. Any comments and concerns are picked up through this process and, where feasible, changes are made to the design.

Beyond the planning stage, regular updates are provided as the project progresses and events are held on completion of new developments to understand what the residents like and dislike. This ensures we constantly improve the designs and also promotes the new community – ensuring new neighbours get to know each other.

Expanding Supply and Supporting Home Ownership

45. Recognising the need for fiscal responsibility, this Green Paper seeks views on whether the Government's current arrangements strike the right balance between providing grant funding for housing associations and Housing Revenue Account borrowing for local authorities.

We share the Government's ambition to deliver more affordable housing and for money well spent, providing the right types of properties and tenures to meet the housing needs of local communities.

Along with certainty over rental income through the new rent settlement post 2020, the abolishment of the high value sales levy and with the announcement that supported housing will continue to be funded via the existing housing benefit system, Councils are finding a new climate of certainty for the foreseeable future. Local Authorities need the climate of certainty to continue to meet local and national ambitions.

However, we need to balance future claims on the HRA as part of the budget process, against the legal requirement to use the HRA principally to support tenants and sustain the stock. Existing grant levels makes development difficult on challenging sites. This reduces available resources for maintaining the existing stock and delivering key environmental schemes which are really important to residents, such as estate remodelling to remove ASB and fear of crime. Additional grant funding should be more readily available for more difficult sites.

The removal of HRA borrowing cap is welcome one but it is a freedom we would like to see extended. To achieve this, we believe that a permanent extension for the spending of all RTB receipts should be given, or removal of the deadline altogether, would be more effective. Councils need greater flexibility if output is to be increased over the longer term. In addition, decisions around whether to provide social or affordable rent should remain for the local authority to make based on local circumstances.

46. How we can boost community-led housing and overcome the barriers communities experience to developing new community owned homes?

As a local authority we support community-led housing locally and are part of regional network sharing best practice. We see the value that community-led housing has to promote diversity in housing delivery. Ambition from community groups is evident but both technical support and resources is often lacking, as is time. Community groups need time to establish and formalise themselves to be able to successfully pursue opportunities, leverage funding and access formal support such as the community led housing fund. We would like to see the existing deadline of 31st March 2020 extended and a long-term commitment of funding from the Government.

Further support through the planning framework is needed to ensure national policy drivers with community-led housing seen as an important delivery route to affordable housing. Ultimately availability of land is an issue with many group priced out or unable to compete with seasoned developers.

47. What level of additional affordable housing, over existing investment plans, could be delivered by social housing providers if they were given longer term certainty over funding?

This would provide an opportunity for better borrowing rates from lenders and better value from longer term procurement. Both of which would enable more homes out of the available funding as organisation can plan effectively for the long term without political shocks.

Newcastle is already positioned to take advantage of the new opportunities presented and to build on our already strong record in delivering housing in the city. Nearly 5000 homes have been built over the last 5 years, with last year presenting a record high with over 1000 homes being built with the Council directly contributing to two-thirds of these. This is the highest level of new housing development seen in the city for the past 30 years. However, the number of available Council owned land for development is becoming limited

A return to long term regeneration funding is needed for local authorities again. We need to be empowered to meet local housing need and there needs to be a realisation that with the

passage of time replacement of existing stock, to provide accommodation that is more suitable to the changing local need, can be more important than delivering additional homes.

48. How can we best support providers to develop new shared ownership products that enable people to build up more equity in their homes?

In the North East, shared ownership has had limited success with affordable home ownership products such as discounted open market value proving more popular due to better affordability ratios compared to other areas of the country.

The new National Planning Policy Framework requires a minimum of 10% affordable home ownership to be delivered through products such as Starter Homes that are not regarded as either truly affordable, or accessible in the long term. Products like this do not meet housing need.

The Government state, as part of their research findings, that two-thirds of social housing tenants would prefer to be owner-occupiers. But we know the reality, whether that is access to mortgages, size of deposit, or availability of affordable properties, not everyone is able to become a home owner. Additionally, affordable home ownership products are often targeted to first time buyers. More creative solutions are required to create market movement and solutions for different sectors, such as ownership products for older people to access products that are aspirational and would meet their needs.

In Newcastle, most social tenants are not in the position to buy a property and our own consultation as part of this response found social housing to be tenure of choice rather than situation. It is national policy positioning like this that adds to stigma towards the sector.

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Review of Social Housing Regulation: Call for Evidence

Newcastle City Council and Your Homes Newcastle
consultation response.

This presents the joint Newcastle City Council and Your Homes Newcastle (The Council's Arms Length Management Organisation) response to the Government's review of social housing regulation - call for evidence – that complements the consultation on the social housing green paper. Both Newcastle City Council and Your Homes Newcastle welcome the opportunity to comment on the existing regulatory framework. We sincerely hope the Government continue this open dialogue and that any future changes to the regulatory framework are informed, and evidenced, through the work of a dedicated commission to allow further engagement with the sector.

We are of the view that the current statutory economic regulation and consumer regulation objectives are appropriate. However, more needs to be done at both national and local levels to ensure that current and prospective tenants are aware of what the standards are, so they are clear about what to expect from their provider and crucially better able to identify when an organisation is failing against them.

We support the existing approach of co-regulation and self-assurance but agree with the view that the Regulator needs to strengthen their monitoring role but without a return to the labour intensive, limited impact, Key Lines of Enquiry style approach.

Undoubtedly there must be greater assurance and transparency for customers of the services we provide. This could be achieved by the Regulator determining a set of guidelines for reporting requirements however the exact methodology and the way in which such information is presented should largely be left for landlords and their customers to decide to reflect local differences in priorities.

We recognise that there is growing appetite for social housing customers to be able to more readily compare the performance of their provider but as stated in our response to the social housing green paper consultation going down the line of prescriptive indicators and league tables is unlikely to achieve the required aims.

Currently the regulator only intervenes in a suspected breach of consumer standards in situations whereby there are reasonable grounds to suspect the potential for serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants. As far as we aware, to date, detriment cases have only been brought in relation to the Home Standard linked with health and safety concerns. With this in mind, we would argue that the level for intervention is currently set too high and thought should be given to how best the regulator can embark on some pro-active monitoring at a lower level.

Where Local Authority housing stock is managed by an ALMO there absolutely need to be robust monitoring and scrutiny arrangements in place to ensure that the management organisations are compliant with the regulatory standards. However, we agree with the view held by the 'Council with ALMO's' group that there should continue to be a direct regulatory relationship between council and their ALMO's. This works really well in Newcastle and we are confident that we have established the right level of scrutiny and monitoring.

Finally, we concur with the view set out by the MHCLG that where possible emerging regulations that result from Hackitt review should be closely aligned or better still, incorporated where possible to maximise efficiency across the board.



Fourteenth Annual General Meeting held on 18 September 2018 at 5.00pm at YHN House, Benton Park Road, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Present: Newcastle City Council: T Kirkham (Director of Resources)

Your Homes Newcastle Board Members: J Boaden (Chair), A Chisholm, L Doherty, V Dunn, D Huddart, K Lowry, J McCarty, M Page, P Scope, H Simpson, E Snaith

In attendance:

A Baker-Daley	Governance Support Officer
J Davison	Strategic Business Manager/Company Secretary
T Drury	Managing Director
M Foreman	Customer Services Director
K Hedley	Governance and Implementation Manager
D Langhorne	Assets and Development Director
C McMullen	Housing Policy and Commissioning Team Manager

Apologies for absence

R Clark

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and to T Kirkham, who was attending representing the Shareholder.

2 MINUTES

RESOLVED – pending the correction of T Kirkham’s job title, the minutes were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 DIRECTORS’ REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDITORS REPORT

J Davison, Company Secretary gave a short presentation about the financial statements for the period ending 31 March 2018. The statements had been approved by Group Audit and Risk Committee on 10 July and subsequently by YHN Board on 31 July. External auditors EY did not identify material errors or weaknesses.

RESOLVED – that the sole member of YHN, NCC, received the Directors' Report & Financial Statements and Auditors' Report for the period to 31 March 2018.

4 RE-APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

RESOLVED – that Ernst & Young LLP be re-appointed as auditors of the company, in accordance with parent NCC.

5 RETIREMENT AND REAPPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

The Chair asked members to approve the retirement of Independent Members as set out in the agenda (previously circulated and copy attached to the official minutes).

RESOLVED:

- To accept the retirement and reappointment of Richard Clark as an Independent Member, in accordance with Article 16 of the company's Articles of Association, for a three-year term.
- To accept the retirement and reappointment of Kevin Lowry as an Independent Member, in accordance with Article 16 of the company's Articles of Association, for a three-year term.
- To accept the retirement and reappointment of Helen Simpson as an Independent Member, in accordance with Article 16 of the company's Articles of Association, for a three-year term.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS RELEVANT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

None.

The meeting closed at 5.05pm.



Board 18 September 2018 (5.05pm to 7.55pm)

Present:

J Boaden (Chair), A Chisholm, L Doherty, V Dunn, D Huddart, K Lowry, J McCarty, M Page, P Scope, H Simpson, E Snaith

In attendance:

A Baker-Daley	Governance Support Officer
J Davison	Strategic Business Manager/Company Secretary
T Drury	Managing Director
M Foreman	Customer Services Director
K Hedley	Governance and Implementation Manager
D Langhorne	Assets and Development Director
C McMullen	Housing Policy and Commissioning Team Manager

641 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from R Clark.

642 Declaration of Interests

V Dunn declared an interest as a Member of Leazes Homes and Cabinet Member responsible for procurement with regards to item eight – Procurement Changes. The Chair also declared an interest as Chief Executive of Northern Housing Consortium with regards to item eight and items within the Managing Director's report.

P Scope declared an interest as a Partner at Wardhadaway with regards to the Articles of Association report.

643 Chair's Items

The Chair advised the Board that the meeting may overrun due to the number of main business items that require sufficient consideration.

Articles of Association and Written Resolution

J Davison introduced the report and produced to the meeting draft new articles of association of the Company proposed to be adopted in substitution for and for the entire exclusion of the Company's existing Articles of Association ("**New Articles**"). A draft written resolution ("**Written Resolution**") of the Company to adopt New Articles to the entire exclusion of the Company's existing articles of association was also presented.

After careful consideration of the New Articles and proposed Written Resolution and taking into account each director's duty to promote the success of the Company for the benefit of its members as a whole, including the matters referred to in section 172(1) of the Act and the other duties the directors owe to the Company (so far as relevant to the matter in question), **IT WAS RESOLVED** that:

- the form of Written Resolution and the New Articles produced to the meeting be approved and recommended for acceptance by the sole member; and
- they are immediately distributed to the sole member entitled to receive the same pursuant to chapter 2 of part 13 of the Act for approval, and to the Company's auditors.

J Davison reported that she would, once signed file a copy of the written resolution and the New Articles with the Registrar of Companies.

Learning and Development Update

The Chair introduced the update, which reiterated the importance of training and development opportunities such as the current health and safety roles and responsibility training, briefings and tours to increase familiarity with stock and strategies. A learning and development plan has been produced, which outlines areas/themes, who would be required, how it will be delivered, and timescales.

The Chair acknowledged the balance between commitments of Members to the Board and to other roles can be difficult but asked as part of good governance that efforts to attend YHN development sessions are reasonable.

E Snaith commented that the recent health and safety training was very informative, and suggested that it might be helpful to receive an annual programme of activity in addition to the known 2019 Board and Committee dates, to better secure availability. V Dunn added that the importance of the themes in the plan are designed to benefit Members, and asked that dates are presented as far in advance as possible.

Members suggested that six months notice should be sufficient. H Simpson added that for those who live further away, it would be efficient to schedule certain events in the same day. M Page commented that some training offered on the market can be done online or remotely and questioned whether a full day is practicable.

T Drury asked Members if scheduling some events on a Saturday might help attendance, though some would find it difficult due to other commitments, such as councillor surgeries.

RESOLVED - that:

- The Board approved the learning and development plan, dates to be allocated to the learning and development plan and re-circulated to members

644 Universal Credit

M Foreman introduced the report, which provided an update on the implementation of Universal Credit in Newcastle.

Key issues in the report which were highlighted to the Board included;

- There are 17,000 residents in the city in receipt of Universal Credit, 5,000 of which are YHN customers
- YHN have been invited to speak about staff experiences at upcoming events
- Co-location with DWP is helping improve the customer journey
- 94% of income is being collected from UC customers
- YHN have been selected as one of five organisations for a data deep dive exercise to look into patterns and trends, with a view to realise outcomes that will further improve the customer journey

A Chisholm commented that YHN are being recognised nationally for their work in this area, but rent arrears isn't the only metric, there was a study done in South Wales which revealed that a proportion of UC recipients were regularly paying their rent but weren't eating properly. Up to 40% of rent arrears appear to be linked to public sector debt collection, and it would be interesting to see what impact Universal Credit has had on YHN in the way rent arrears are collected. A Chisholm added that there is talk that the Government will bring in conditions linked to hours worked per week, for example, imposing a condition on someone who works 20 hours per week, requiring them to be job hunting for the remainder of the time.

M Foreman noted that YHN are part of a council wide network, entering customer data to see the impact of lost income and sanctions. Though officers are regularly in touch with DWP to make changes, a percentage of automatic clawback is still putting some households into financial detriment, this has been highlighted to the network. A Chisholm suggested that other mechanisms could be explored.

RESOLVED - that:

- The Board received the report and noted progress to date

645 Health and Safety Policy Update

D Langhorne presented the report and revised Health and Safety Policy for approval. The policy incorporates best practice recommended by the Health and Safety Executive and had been reviewed twice before being presented to Board; by an external specialist and the Health and Safety Committee. The Committee has requested a one-page appendix which summarises obligations, in a style similar to the Risk Register. It will be presented at the next Committee meeting in January. P Scope added that they have attended two Committee meetings and feels very assured by the work of the Health and Safety team, YHN appear to be delivering not just the industry standard but going beyond requirements.

RESOLVED – that;

- The Board approved the revised YHN Health and Safety Policy

646 Minutes of 31 July 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

647 Matters arising and Action Log

The action log was received and noted for information.

648 Board Forward Plan

The forward plan was presented to members for approval, which contained known business items through to September 2019. J Davison noted that the plan will be included in every subsequent Board pack and highlighted that there will be an opportunity to shape it at the strategic away day in December.

RESOLVED - that:

- The Board approved the forward plan

649 Committee Membership

RESOLVED - that:

- The Board approved the Committee membership for 2018-19

650 Assurances from Committees

Finance and Performance Committee – 23 August 2018

M Page commented that the performance report had been fully scrutinised and that the Committee had asked for a detailed report on complaints and in particular complaints about the repairs service. L Doherty commented that at the latest Customer Service Committee, Members suggested that Scrutiny look at complaints

in more detail. J Davison added that Scrutiny have completed the exercise, there are some actions to take forward, some of which link back to the Customer Service Committee.

RESOLVED - that:

- The Board received the draft minutes of Finance and Performance Committee for information.

651 Petitions Monitoring

The report was received and noted for information.

652 Officer Delegated Decisions

The form was received and noted for information. L Doherty asked if Board will continue to receive the report, to which D Langhorne replied that it will be incorporated into a quarterly investment programme report.

653 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 20th November.

RESOLVED – that in accordance with the organisation’s Access to Information provisions, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of confidential agenda items.

.....

J Boaden
Chair
20 November 2018

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YHN Board 20 November 2018 Action Log (Public)

Minute ref.	Action required	By whom	Target date for completion	Current status
643	The Learning and Development Plan is to be populated with dates and recirculated to members	Jill Davison	December 2018	Governance Team planning and sourcing training materials /providers

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YHN Board Forward Plan 2019

Meeting 29 January 2019

	Report Name	Purpose	Confidential?	Report Author
	Draft Budget/Delivery Plan/Risk Register 2018-19	Discussion	✓	Finance and Commercial Director
	Business Strategy update	Discussion	×	Assistant Director Business Support
	Assurances from Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finance and Performance 10th December• Group Audit and Risk 13th November• Customer Service 5th December	Discussion	×	N/A
ABRI TRADING				
	Abri Trading – Business Activity Update	Discussion	✓	

Meeting 26 March 2019

	Report Name	Purpose	Confidential?	Report Author
	Budget/Delivery Plan/Risk Register 2018-19 including Gift Aid payment to Asfaleia	Approval	✓	Finance and Commercial Director
	Health and Safety Update	Discussion	×	Assets and Development Director
	Group Governance Handbook	Approval	×	Company Secretary
	GDPR update	Discussion	×	Company Secretary
	Housing Investment Update	Discussion	✓	Assets and Development Director
	Safeguarding Annual update	Discussion	✓	Customer Services Director
Page 126	Assurances from subsidiaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asfaleia Ltd. 17th January 	Discussion	✓	Customer Services Director
	Assurances from Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Audit and Risk 12th February Finance and Performance 19th February 	Discussion	×	N/A
ABRI TRADING				
	Abri Trading – Budget	Approval	✓	Finance and Commercial Director

Meeting 4 June 2019

	Report Name	Purpose	Confidential?	Report Author
	Community Investment Fund	Approval	×	Assistant Director Business Support
	Housing Investment Update	Discussion	✓	Assets and Development Director
	Assurances from subsidiaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asfaleia Ltd. 25th April 	Discussion	✓	Customer Services Director
	Assurances from Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Service 13th March Finance and Performance 14th May 	Discussion	×	N/A
ABRI TRADING				
	Abri Trading – Business Activity Update	Discussion	✓	Finance and Commercial Director

Meeting 30 July 2019

	Report Name	Purpose	Confidential?	Report Author
	Annual Report and Financial Statements -Year End Reserves - Asfaleia Letter of Support	Approval	×	Finance and Commercial Director
	Appraisals	Discussion	✓	Company Secretary
	Appointment of Vice Chair (or in September)	Approval	×	Company Secretary
	Director Re-appointments (or in September)	Discussion	✓	Company Secretary
	NHF Governance Code Compliance Statement	Approval	×	Company Secretary
Page 128	Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement	Approval	×	Assets and Development Director
	Business Strategy	Discussion	×	Assistant Director Business Support
	Assurances from Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Audit and Risk 21st May • Customer Service 19th June 	Discussion	×	N/A
ABRI TRADING				
	Annual Report and Financial Statements	Approval	×	Finance and Commercial Director

Meeting 24 September 2019

	Report Name	Purpose	Confidential?	Report Author
	Chairs Report	Information	×	Chair
	Appointment of External Auditors	Decision	×	Company Secretary
	Retirement & Appointment of Board Members	Decision	×	Company Secretary
	Appointment of Vice Chair	Approval	×	Company Secretary
	Committee Membership	Approval	×	Company Secretary
	Strategic Risk Register	Discussion	×	Finance & Commercial Director
	Housing Investment Update	Discussion	✓	Assets and Development Director
Page 129	Assurances from subsidiaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asfaleia Ltd. 25th July 	Discussion	✓	Customer Services Director
	Assurances from Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance and Performance 6th August Group Audit and Risk 13th August 	Discussion	×	N/A
ABRI TRADING				
	Abri Trading – Business Activity Update	Discussion	✓	Finance & Commercial Director

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Customer Service Committee

27 September 2018

(5.30 - 7.50 pm)

Present:

T Moore (In the Chair)

L Doherty
A Fullwood
L Popoviciu
J Greenwood
Zara St Clair

In Attendance:

M Foreman	- Customer Service Director, YHN
L Grogan	- Customer Involvement Officer, YHN
H Bell	- Policy and Innovation Manager, YHN
J Hayton	- Customer Involvement Officer, YHN
L Dodd	- Customer Involvement Officer, YHN
C Patterson	- Democratic Services Officer, NCC

32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from L Burnarde, M Cygan, F Lisassi, and G Spoor.

33 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None

34 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING DATED 19 JUNE 2018

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 June 2018 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

35 ACTION LIST

RESOLVED – That the action list be received and information noted.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT UPDATE

Jill Hayton delivered a short presentation giving the committee an update on progress in relation to the community investment fund before providing information on the purpose and proposals of each scheme where funding had been allocated. During discussions the following points were made:

- Officers agreed to circulate a copy of the short films and a copy of the presentation slides to the committee.
- Confirmation was given that there had been no deadline set for receipt of applications for the community investment fund.
- Officers would be reviewing the gaps in investment but indicated that there had been a good spread of investment already across the city.
- Support would be given to enable organisations to match fund or secure future funding from alternative sources in addition to determining sustainability.
- A learning log would be produced, and evaluation carried out at the end of the financial year to determine where improvements in the process could be made and the benefit impact of the schemes. Confirmation was given that the evaluation reports would be presented to this committee prior to being submitted to the Board.
- It was confirmed that the next round of funding would be available April 2019, if the Board agreed to this as part of the budget process.
- An element of control was maintained over the budget as only 50% funding was released initially to the organisations. Once benefit had been demonstrated the further 50% would be released.
- A comment was made that part of the criteria for investment should be to provide information on which partners the organisations were working with so that direct links could be established.
- Publicity on the schemes was only carried out once they were up and running.
- Clarification was provided on the social return for each scheme.
- Officers agreed to check whether if any funding that was not allocated could be rolled over to the next year' round of investment.
- Reference was made to the network event to be organised in November, with a request being made for committee members to attend. Officers agreed to check whether this was possible.

RESOLVED – That the information and comments be noted.

37 **CUSTOMER SERVICE WEEK**

Libby Dodd delivered a short presentation taking the committee through the wider aims and planned activities for customer service week campaign for October 2018. During discussions, the following points were made:

- Officers agreed to circulate with the committee the short videos, which were to appear on social media.
- Confirmation would be provided to committee members about what days they had agreed to attend at the customer service week.
- Clarification was provided on 'housing plus'.
- Assurances were provided that the officers would be at the events to concentrate on the themes planned for each day, whilst the members could concentrate on seeking information from tenants on issues from the Housing Green Paper. Both sessions could run in parallel. The layout of the room would be carefully considered, with the option of a private room being made available for any tenants wishing to speak in confidence with committee members or officers.
- Consideration was given to a few simple questions being agreed, particularly on the 'Housing Green Paper' etc. and for these to be provided to respective members attending the events, so they can obtain valuable feedback from the tenants to feed into the consultation.
- The social media – Facebook blogs to be circulated to the respective committee members.
- Committee members were asked to contact Libby Dodd to confirm their availability to attend the additional activities - outside roadshow events that were planned.

RESOLVED – That the information and comments be noted.

38 **HOUSING GREEN PAPER**

Helen Bell delivered a short presentation on the proposals of the Housing Green Paper which related to the new deal around social housing and the potential implications. She circulated further information on the proposals relating to the regulator. During discussions, reference was made to the following areas with the respective comments being made by members:

- There was a need to respond to the Grenfell disaster.
- Regulators can come in or get called in to undertake the checks.
- There was confusion around what was 'social housing'. The removal of labelling would go a long way to reduce or stop stigma.
- The Government was focussing on engaging with young people due to their vote on Brexit.
- Aspirations for home ownership was only the Government's belief.
- Huge numbers of student accommodation were being established in the city but when accommodation becomes unaffordable the likelihood was the accommodation could become available for social housing.

An invitation was extended to the committee to attend a forthcoming ministerial visit, which was to take place on 8 October 2018 at Tree Tops Village.

The importance of seeking resident's views and information from hub events to feed into consultation was discussed.

The committee considered questions relating to Housing Green Paper, which could be set for the Hub roadshow celebration events with agreement being reached that at least one question should be based around 'home ownership'.

RESOLVED – That the information and comments be noted.

39 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(a) **Scrutiny Report on Complaints**

The Chair requested that the scrutiny report on complaints be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

(b) **Change to Committee Name**

The Chair referred to the new appointment of the Customer Experience and Engagement Manager, within the Business Support Team and suggested that the committee may wish to consider in the future changing the name of this committee to create a link. Matt Foreman indicated that this could form part of a future governance review.

(c) **Member Attendance/Term of Office**

A brief discussion took place around committee member attendance and succession planning. L Grogan explained the training and support plan, which officers were currently establishing. M Foreman indicated that he would clarify member attendance rules and terms of office with J Davison and if required, could feed into the future governance review.

40 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 5 December 2018 at 5.30pm.

The Chair suggested holding a social evening following the meeting in December. He said that as a venue had not yet been secured that he would check the Tree Top Village facilities, with the option to hold the social evening there.