

**Freebridge Tenant Panel Meeting Notes  
Friday 5 April 2019 at 10.00 am in the Barn**

<b>Present</b>	Richard Maun (Tenant Panel Facilitator); Governance Coordinator; Anne Manning, Sandy Peckover, Frances Fox, Zana Balcuiniene, Mick Harpley and Annette McGivern.	
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Welcome &amp; Introductions and Apologies for absence</b> There were apologies from and Stephen Lamprell and Charlotte Beck,</p> <p>The Tenant Panel Facilitator welcomed Brian Long, Board Member who would be observing.</p>	<b>Action or Added Value?</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> – None.	
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Minutes of last meeting</b> – March 2019 – The minutes were read and agreed as a true record.</p> <p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints was due to be discussed again with the Communications Business Partner at a future meeting.</li> <li>• The Governance Coordinator had discussed planters at schemes with the Support Team Advisor, Placeshaping Manager and EIO Manager and report back to the Tenant Panel when possible. A Tenant Panel member commented that it was a concern as tenants come and go, some volunteer to upkeep such items and in time are unable to due to health, then there is an issue around accountability. It was suggested that raised beds may be better. It was also felt that any prospective tenants may be put off by the appearance of pots and planters with weeds in.</li> </ul>	Helen Added Value
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Work Programme and Draft Meeting Dates for 2019</b></p> <p>The work programme for 2019 was noted and the meeting dates presented were agreed for 2019.</p>	
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Update from the Director of Property</b></p> <p>Alex Dixon Director of Property attended the Tenant Panel to give an update on various items in relation to his service area which included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operatives were now paid salary based with 4 bandings based on their skills. This had created a fairer system after a three-month consultation period with unions and individuals. The tenant panel thought that this was a good idea.</li> <li>• The national schedule of rates had been adopted allowing for better benchmarking and operatives would be able to book repairs online which automatically would pick up the right schedule for the work to be done.</li> <li>• This also linked to the possibility of those that worked on the FCC picking the right job through clicking pictures when tenants were in contact to resolve their need. Within the system it also included advice available to the FCC that they could provide to the tenant on that particular topic. The same system could also be used by Surveyors whilst out of the office. It could also be replicated on the website for customers to use but that would be a project for the future where they could book their own repairs.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following a question from a Tenant Panel member the director confirmed that the app system was suitable for employees even those that had reading difficulties.</li> <li>• As of the previous week Freebridge had now checked everywhere for gas in all homes, smoke detectors were included into these checks this included gas solid fuel LPG cookers in all properties and we were now 100% compliant</li> <li>• Over the next year efficiency at Property Services will be focused on and there will be benchmarking around productivity by operatives. The operatives will now be working in specific areas in West Norfolk rather than traveling great distances job to job. The tenant panel thought that this was a very good idea and that it would save time and also fuel.</li> <li>• A tenant panel member suggested a mobile van carrying stock on which operatives could receive it whilst on site may be an efficient way of working, the Director noted this suggestion.</li> <li>• The Director said that they were looking at projects around reducing the van size of some operatives where stock didn't need to be carried which would save fuel and also would be cheaper to lease small vans.</li> <li>• Panel members suggested using a garage as a place to store stock which the Director advised would work for lower value items, and this could be an idea to consider for the work to make further efficiencies in how the operatives operate.</li> </ul> <p>The Tenant Panel thought that it was excellent news of the different projects that had been taking shape to improve property services and it was hoped that this also have a knock of effect of reducing the number of complaints.</p> <p>Following a query, the Director advised that if installations were found in properties, such as open fires and wood burner, without having prior permission, it would be assessed if they'd been installed by a proper contractor and if not and deemed dangerous they would be taken apart and it would be a breach of tenancy. However we can ask people to put in retrospective requests for permission.</p> <p>Following a query about chimney sweeping, the Director felt it was Freebridge's responsibility to keep chimneys safe and they would consider sweeping a chimney if requested to do so.</p> <p>The Director shared that it was hoped that Freebridge could move towards a more planned maintenance focused service, rather than responsive, ultimately reducing the need for responsive repairs. He added that the project would continue through the year.</p> <p>Following a query from a Tenant Panel member the Director advised that there maybe properties that Freebridge wish to dispose of where they are financially unviable such as a large amount of maintenance or sell to develop on the land new homes. Following a further query the Director advised that Freebridge had a good</p>	<p>Added Value</p> <p>Added Value</p> <p>Added Value</p> <p>Added Value</p>
--	---

	<p>relationship with the Borough Council and they were able to give an idea of what housing needs there were in different areas, however properties like bungalows were less likely to be developed due to the large footprint required ultimately costing more to build. Following a query the Director advised that if wet rooms privately carried out in homes were present when a property become empty, if it was to an acceptable standard they would not remove it.</p> <p>Following a comment the Director of Property confirmed that Freebridge had no high rise properties, the highest floor was a third floor and it had no cladding.</p> <p>The Director shared that there had been an increase in complaints over the last year and the team were looking to review the root causes of this. The Tenant Panel had previously discussed the external works programme with the Director of Property and queried what progress had been made. He shared that as far as the LIP area map was concerned the team were working through the map with areas 7-9 first, it was a six year programme.</p> <p>Some Tenant Panel members wished to share concerns they had about shared parking where they lived was causing aggravation and unpleasantness for those that lived there. They described that some tenants had permits and some didn't, and there were flats that needed parking too. The Director agreed to raise with the team and discuss particular areas to resolve where possible and bring back to the Tenant Panel with a response. The Tenant Panel commented that if there was more parking in those areas it would reduce the need for cutting the grass in those areas. The Governance Coordinator agreed to update with the Director of Property.</p> <p>The Tenant panel wished to congratulate the Director of Property on everything that was being progressed and welcomed the changes and appreciated that he had coming to the meeting to share the information. The Tenant Panel Facilitator thanked the tenant panel for speaking with Alex to find out what the team was doing.</p>	<p>Added Value</p> <p>Added Value</p> <p>Added Value</p> <p>Added Value</p> <p>Added Value</p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Away Day Preparations</b></p> <p>The Tenant Panel agreed to hold their away day at the Stuart House Hotel and postpone board members attendance. A tenant panel member commented that the last panel meeting they discussed complaints panels and the 'designated person' element. They felt that Complaints Panels were not best placed with Tenant Panel Members and complaints should sit with Directors investigation as they ask all the relevant questions.</p> <p>A Panel Member suggested that perhaps there needed to be an extra stage between 1 and 2 with a tenant group. It was agreed to discuss further when the</p>	

	<p>Communications Business Partner is due to attend in June. It was noted that in the Government's green paper complaints panels needed to be reviewed internally.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Tenant Panel Constitutional Documents</b></p> <p>The Tenant Panel had received constitutional documents for review and suggested changes had been made and explained within the agenda.</p> <p>The Tenant Panel felt that any review of complaints and learning outcomes could become part of their work programme.</p> <p>Following a discussion about Facebook being a method of communicating with tenants, the Communications Business Partner advised that the idea needed careful consideration. The Tenant Panel discussed whether the purpose of its role was clear to tenants.</p> <p>The Tenant Panel agreed that they were satisfied with the suggested revisions to the Tenant Panel Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct documents.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Latest Quarterly Performance Sheet</b></p> <p>The Communications Business Partner shared the latest performance information, he advised that Management Team set the targets at the beginning of each year. He advised that satisfaction had been on an upward trend since transfer, but in recent times levelled out.</p> <p>The Tenant Panel reviewed performance and felt that it would be better for statistics to be compared with the previous year to understand the status quo and if the situation had worsened. The Governance Coordinator agreed to report to the Board in the quarterly report.</p> <p>Following a query from the Tenant Panel the Communications Business Partner confirmed that there had been some complaints where communications could have been better. He added that there were thousands of repairs a year and the complaints received were a small minority of the overall number.</p> <p>The Tenant Panel shared that they were impressed with the presentation from the Director of Property and hoped the changes being made to operations at property services would help drive up satisfaction.</p>	Helen
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Draft Tenant Panel Quarterly Report</b></p> <p>The Tenant Panel noted the draft report and approved the contents, the Tenant panel wished to include the following key messages in the report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The Tenant Panel expressed concerns about the Complaints process but understand that this was currently under review.</li> </ol>	

	<p>2) The Tenant Panel felt that it was important that responses to enquiries were dealt with according to our service standards.</p> <p>3) The Tenant Panel wished to congratulate the Board and Freebridge for maintaining a V1/G1 award.</p> <p>The Governance Coordinator agreed to include.</p>	Helen
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>It was agreed that recruitment of the Panel should be discussed again in more detail if needed. The Tenant Panel felt that a leaflet to share at out and abouts might be good idea with a heading such as 'Have you ever questioned your landlord?' or something similar to grab attention of readers.</p>	
<b>11</b>	<p><b>Meeting Review – What did we do well?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interesting</li> <li>• Director of Property presentation most interesting</li> <li>• Very informative</li> <li>• Fantastic meeting, lots of information and discussion.</li> <li>• Expansive.</li> </ul> <p>Brian advised that it was a pleasure to come along to the meeting and good to see the Panel Members. The Tenant Panel Facilitator shared that there had been a lot of discussion and good debate.</p>	
<b>12</b>	<p><b>Next Meeting Date</b></p> <p>Friday 17 May 2019 from 9.45-1.45 pm in the Barn.</p> <p>Close 1.50 pm</p>	