

Held on 12 June 2020 at 10 am held virtually

Attendance – Tenant Panel Facilitator, Governance Coordinator, Anne, David, Frances, Inge, Charlotte, David, David and Annette

Apologies – Zana, Mick, Hazel and Sandy

Declarations of Interest – None.

Work Programme – This was noted. Tenant Panel Facilitator shared that it was amazing that we had managed to hold the meeting virtually and thanked the Panel. He shared that he would be contacting those unable to attend after the meeting. The meeting was held virtually from 9.30 to 12.30 pm with a couple of breaks. It was noted that when the Panel meetings are held in the barn it met for 3 hours 45 minutes, which included a 25-minute lunch break.

1	Minutes of the last meeting held in February 2020 They were approved as a correct record, and the Governance Coordinator agreed to circulate the matters arising to the Panel after the meeting.
2	Welfare Reform update The Director of Housing joined the Tenant Panel meeting and shared a presentation to update on welfare reform and specifically about Universal Credit. Following a query from a Panel Member about those who may yet lose their jobs following the pandemic, the Director of Housing explained that the danger area was the period of six weeks where a customer was left waiting for their Universal Credit payment to be paid. There would also be future pressures around the coverage of the support to customers as the furlough scheme ends. The Director of Housing shared that some customers did not have the skills needed for financial management and so Freebridge as a landlord was guiding and supporting them as best as it could. The Director of Housing shared that since the pandemic began, as well as an increase in benefit claimants, there had been a surge in the use of food banks. A Panel Member commented that it was really good that Freebridge was doing all that it could do to support customers. Following a query, The Director of Housing shared that no employees had been furloughed, and there was a skeleton employee team working at Juniper House with most working from home. She added that there had been some excellent support from ICT colleagues and Freebridge had the technology to enable employees to mainly work from home. A Panel Member wished to thank the First Contact Centre as they had received a phone call from them to ask how they were and wanted to thank Freebridge for thinking of tenants needs in this way. The Director of Housing thanked the Panel Member for their feedback and shared that the housing team and property services team had took part in a campaign to contact older customers and those who may be at risk or social isolated due to the pandemic, and were still contacting those in this way.

3	<p>Development Slot - Neighbourhood and Community Standard</p> <p>The Regulator of Social Housing’s Neighbourhood and Community Standard had been circulated with the agenda as part of a development slot where the Director of Housing was available for any queries. The Director of Housing highlighted that this standard focused on how Freebridge upkeep neighbourhoods and how it keeps communities safe in relation to repairs.</p> <p>The Tenant Panel Facilitator thanked the Director of Housing for attending and she left the meeting.</p>
4	<p>Quarterly Update from the Board with Jo Barrett</p> <p>Jo shared that she may have not met all Panel Members to date, and in the fullness of time will be great to meet in person. She shared that she was a fairly new member on the Board and had been so for around 18 months. The last 20 years she had worked in local authorities around housing related areas. She also worked as a consultant, relocated to Norfolk, and currently worked for another housing association in policy.</p> <p>She shared that she wished to share information around key messages. Jo shared that in regard to the pandemic the Board’s approach had been to protect customers, employees and support communities as we moved through it. Repairs had moved to emergency and external works only, but as we move forward there will be steps to remove that, but in consultation with customers individually. There was quite a detailed plan on how Freebridge support employees and get the business back up on running based on government guidelines.</p> <p>The Director of Housing, the Chief Executive, and the wider team have hugely impressed the Board during the start of the emergence of the pandemic, and the employee’s work in order to keep the business going. These thanks had been passed onto employees for their efforts.</p> <p>Jo shared that Management Team shared weekly reports with the Board and it was likely to be on the agenda for some time yet.</p> <p>Jo shared that the Repairs performance needed improvement and actions needed to be taken to ensure the backlog was cleared. She added that the period of employees working from home had enabled further clearance within the system’s data, but we needed to further work through this.</p> <p>Jo wished to share an update in regard to Hillington Square that consultation was taking place on a demolition and rebuild scheme and the business plan was being revised to build this aspect in.</p> <p>The Tenant Panel Facilitator thanked Jo for the summary and collected queries from the Panel.</p> <p>The Tenant Panel Facilitator thanked Jo for her attendance and what was shared. Jo shared thanks to the Tenant Panel for their ongoing work and the value of it for the organisation.</p> <p>The Tenant Panel thanked Jo for their attendance and she left the meeting.</p>
5	<p>Meeting - how did it go</p> <p>An amazing learning curve, and would like to do it again virtually.</p>

	<p>It has been great, innovative and using the technology to do what we have done today is brilliant, no one has had to leave home and as they were in the shielding group this was important. I feel that I have been out this morning and this needs to be looked at as a broader picture.</p> <p>An incredible way of keeping the Panel going and meeting in meeting virtually, as it would be so easy to lose contact and hope that we meet virtually again.</p> <p>It was a lovely warm experience meeting virtually and it felt closer than being around the table. The meeting was as good as any other meeting the Panel are used to. Amazing. They wish to give it a go next time.</p> <p>In one word - Involved. Even though we are so far apart, it has brought us together to continue working as a group virtually and it has been really really good.</p> <p>In one word- Unusual. Seems a bit strange talking from the living room meeting virtually, but still nice to see everyone and see everyone is happy etc.</p> <p>Commendable, as Panel Members had done very well joining the meeting virtually and giving it a go.</p> <p>Tenant Panel Facilitator shared that he was going to be in touch with those Panel Members who could not attend the virtual meeting. He shared that technology was changing how groups meet, and this was resulting in efficiency savings in terms of people needing to travel. The Tenant Panel Facilitator shared that he was really proud of what the Panel had achieved today, and with the Panel members input, had made it happen. He shared that it was the intention to do the same for July and all Panel Members agreed.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Friday 10 July, times to be confirmed. Meeting Closed at 12.37 pm</p>