

## Notes of the Tenant Panel Meeting

Held on 10 July 2020 at 10 am held virtually

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

**Apologies** – Sandy.

**Declarations of Interest** – None.

**Work Programme** – This was noted.

	Item
<b>1</b>	<p data-bbox="277 512 1465 546"><b>Notes of the Last Meeting held in June 2020</b></p> <p data-bbox="277 548 1465 622">They were approved as a correct record, and the Governance Coordinator agreed to circulate any matters arising after the meeting.</p> <p data-bbox="277 658 1465 757">Following a request, the Governance Coordinator agreed to ask for information from the Communications Business Partner about the Ombudsman aspect of the process that had been proposed.</p> <p data-bbox="277 792 1465 1010">The Governance Coordinator and Tenant Panel Facilitator updated the Panel on the process for Board attendance to Tenant Panel meetings. The Tenant Panel were satisfied with the process proposed as well as their submission of a quarterly report to the Board. They noted that Simon Smith would be accompanied by a different Board Member at each quarterly meeting, as well as other opportunities that may arise such as the Customer Service Committee pilot or away days. The Tenant Panel noted the changes.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p data-bbox="277 1050 1465 1084"><b>Quarterly Update from Board with Simon Smith</b></p> <p data-bbox="277 1120 1465 1337">Simon Smith attended the Tenant Panel Meeting to provide a quarterly update; also in attendance was Board Member Marie Connell. He thanked the Tenant Panel for their continued involvement since the pandemic outbreak and shared that the Management Team had done a great job in keeping all the critical functions going whilst taking efforts to work to a new normal and working environment. He added that the Board and Management would review all learning outcomes since the outbreak.</p> <p data-bbox="277 1373 1465 1547">Simon shared that the Chief Executive Tony Hall would be retiring at the end of July and Tony had built a good base from which Anita could work from. He added that he would continue to provide a quarterly report to the Tenant Panel and each time would bring a different Board Member with him. He shared the Board and Management wanted to continue working on the relationship with the Tenant Panel and respecting their independence.</p> <p data-bbox="277 1583 619 1619">Simon shared the following:</p> <ul data-bbox="331 1621 1465 1910" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="331 1621 1465 1695">• The Board meeting in July would focus on the annual accounts; preparation of the Annual General Meeting and the next 12 months plan.</li><li data-bbox="331 1697 1465 1771">• The next Board strategy meeting was on 7<sup>th</sup> September and would focus on next 5-year strategy.</li><li data-bbox="331 1774 1465 1910">• A Board Meeting after this would be held on 16<sup>th</sup> November where it would be Anita’s first Board meeting since joining the organisation as Chief Executive, and the Board had wished at that point for her to come along with thoughts of where she wanted to take Freebridge and how she saw priorities going forward.</li></ul> <p data-bbox="277 1946 1465 2013">The Tenant Panel were invited to get in touch with the Governance Coordinator should there be any questions they had.</p>

	<p>Marie shared that it was good to maintain contact with the Panel and the Board was still there supportive of it and wished to stay in touch in this new norm. She had been a Board member for nearly six years, and there had been a lot of changes over that time and now with a new Chief Executive arriving. She sees her role on the Board as reminding the Board and Management Team of the Freebridge values; how vulnerable tenants may be treated and how policies can affect different people with vulnerabilities.</p> <p>The Tenant Panel thanked Simon and Marie for their attendance and they left the meeting.</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Customer Satisfaction and Performance</b></p> <p>The Tenant Panel had received customer service and performance statistics for quarter 1 (April to June 2020/21) from the Communications Business Partner for their review. Queries made by the Panel would be sent to the Communications Business Partner for response at the next meeting.</p> <p>It was felt that this year's performance figures could not be compared as easily with other years due to the Covid-19 outbreak.</p> <p>The Governance Coordinator agreed to share with the Communications Business Partner for response and to invite him along to the September meeting as a result.</p> <p><i>Annette left the meeting at this point.</i></p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Rules Changes, Board Structure, Annual General Meeting and Annual Report to Tenants</b></p> <p>Angus MacQueen, Company Secretary attended the meeting to provide an update on the following items. He thanked the Tenant Panel for inviting him to the meeting.</p> <p><b>Annual General Meeting</b></p> <p>The Annual General Meeting had usually been held at a community centre with presentations from the Tenant Panel and Management Team before the formal part of the meeting. This year Management Team and the Chair of the Board had decided to hold it virtually via Zoom for safety concerns, and therefore it would not be the usual format. So this year Freebridge would just be covering the formal part of the meeting though there would be an opportunity for shareholders to ask questions. The Annual General Meeting was on Monday 21 September via Zoom and a letter would be sent to all involved with further details.</p> <p>A Tenant Panel Member asked how people might vote virtually. The Company Secretary advised that it might depend on how many people were in attendance, whether hands were raised or something more technical needed to be put in place.</p> <p><b>Rules changes</b></p> <p>The Company Secretary shared the key decisions at this years at the Annual General Meeting within the rule changes.</p> <p>One key part of the rule changes was on the agreement to move to a skills based Board. This meant that anyone could still apply, but they needed to demonstrate the skills that they had and what was needed for Board Membership.</p> <p>The Customer Service Committee would have been introduced back in March 2020, however it had been delayed due to the Covid-19 outbreak, and the pilot was starting again at the end of July with a training session and then the first official meeting planned in the autumn. The Company Secretary added that with the Customer Service Committee in place and the great work of the Tenant Panel, together it reflected a more effective way of tenants having a say in our governance arrangements.</p>

The Tenant thanked the Company Secretary for the update and confirmed they had no comments or queries on the rule amendments.

### **Annual Report to Tenants**

He shared that the Communications Business Partner had emailed to the Panel what last year's annual report to tenants was, and it would be repeated in the same format again for this year's report, with more pictures and less text. The Communications Business Partner wished to know if the Tenant Panel were satisfied in repeating this format again.

The Tenant Panel confirmed that they were satisfied to repeat the same format but there needed to be a bit more text to balance off the amount of pictures as Freebridge still needed to present it in a way that it conveyed the importance of the document.

Some Panel Members affirmed that pictures were a way of making the document more attractive to read and for those who were unable to read, not inclined to or English was not their first language, this format aided those groups.

A Panel Member shared that they felt that graphs was a better way to display information pictorially as it could be easily followed and a tenant would be able to see the increasing or decreasing nature of the data.

The Tenant Panel felt that within the document Freebridge could reference that if there were information that customers did not understand they could make contact with someone internally at Freebridge for further assistance.

The Governance Coordinator agreed to share the feedback with the Communications Business Partner.

The Company Secretary asks if as many Panel members could attend the virtual Annual General Meeting as possible on Monday 21 September. The Tenant Panel thanked him for attending he left the meeting.

## **5 Quarterly Report to Board and Key Messages**

*Hazel arrived in the meeting.*

The Tenant Panel received a draft copy of their quarterly report to the Board in July for review and needed to agree what key messages to include. The Tenant Panel Facilitator wished to thank the Panel for continued involvement since the beginning of the outbreak, adapting to change, and the report demonstrated that the Panel had continued to work well. The Panel discussed what key messages they would like to convey to the Board and Management Team and agreed to include the following:

- 1) The Tenant Panel would like to formally say a sincere thank you to Tony for all his hard work, as he has been an excellent Chief Executive. The Tenant Panel unanimously feel that Tony has always had the Tenants best interests at heart throughout his time at Freebridge, and wish to send their best wishes to him for the future.
- 2) Importantly the Tenant Panel would equally like to welcome the new Chief Executive Anita Jones and look forward to meeting with her at their meeting in September. They are looking forward to working with Anita and hope that she will continue to build upon the great tenant involvement opportunities at Freebridge to empower it further, as well as generally grow and develop Freebridge.

	<p>3) The Tenant Panel would like to thank Management, Directors, employees and the Board for keeping the organisation going during the pandemic crisis. The Panel wish to make a key point that although the world in part had stopped; Freebridge had not, and the Panel is aware of all the hard work and kindness Freebridge has been involved with particularly the food deliveries.</p> <p>The Governance Coordinator agreed to take the key messages and report forward to be included in the July Board Performance pack.</p>
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Development Slot – Tenant Involvement and Community Standard</b></p> <p>The Tenant Panel had received a copy of the Tenant Involvement and Community standard as part of their development plan in 2020.</p> <p>A Panel member commented that regulator’s standards were clear and Freebridge were complying very well with them in their view, and even more so than what was prescribed. Panel Member comments included agreement that the document was clear, they agreed with its contents and felt that it covered all aspects of tenant involvement.</p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>The Governance Coordinator agreed to follow up a query about Planning Applications that effected current Freebridge properties and whether Freebridge were notified and how that process worked.</p> <p>The Governance Coordinator agreed to look into whether Freebridge swept Chimneys.</p> <p>The Governance Coordinator agreed to find out what the current view was in Freebridge of providing a paid for Gardening service for those who did not qualify for the garden assistance scheme.</p> <p>The Governance Coordinator agreed to discuss recruitment to the Tenant Panel with the Communications Business Partner.</p>
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Meeting how did it go</b></p> <p>Good discussion.  Broad knowledge base across all subjects raised today.  Everything, did everything well. Thanked the Governance Coordinator for her expertise as their involvement would not come across as well as it does without her work.  Informative.  Covered many topics.  Flow of communication.  Interesting.</p> <p>The Tenant Panel Facilitator said that he was proud of the Tenant Panel in attending virtual meetings, taking care of themselves and he hoped that the group could carry on with their virtual meetings via Zoom and that the new Chief Executive notices the energy of the Panel when they meet with them in September. A Panel member wished to thank the Tenant Panel Facilitator for his interpretation of what the Panel say generally. He responded to say that the panel was passionate and had expertise.All Panel Members felt that the virtual meeting format continued to work well.</p>
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b> - Friday 11 September, for a 9.30 am start for 10 am via Zoom.  Meeting Closed at 1.05 pm</p>