



**Leaseholder Forum Meeting  
Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010**

**Minutes**

**In attendance:**

**Officers in attendance:**

Brian Moriarty Linda Manley Joan Howarth Maureen Byrne Mary Taylor Beatrice Grainger Patricia Purcell Patrick Boyce-Thomson Mark Morris Sue Edwards	Helen Thorpe Matt Harrison Karen McLean
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**Apologies:**

John Ogden	Vicky Bowe
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	Notes	Action
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Member's discussion on key tasks and responsibilities.</b>	
<b>1.1</b>	Officers were not present for the first part of this discussion at the request of the forum members.	
<b>1.2</b>	<p>During the members discussion it was agreed that Patrick Boyce-Thompson would take the role of Chairperson for the group and Beatrice Grainger would be the Vice-Chairperson.</p> <p>Members asked that the following 3 major discussion areas be minuted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1). Members would like a breakdown of the service charges, including the difference between leaseholder and tenant charges and the different amounts per property type.</li> <li>2). Salix need to be more accountable for their service provision to leaseholders. The group unanimously agreed that they do not currently feel this is the case.</li> <li>3). Forum meetings to continue to take place every 6 weeks.</li> </ol>	
<b>1.3</b>	Members took the decision not to nominate a representative to the customer senate at this point in time.	



	<p>provided in this format to leaseholders who attend the forum and receive the minutes. It can be good to look at leasehold satisfaction separately from tenants as if they are less satisfied for any reason we need to understand why and respond to that.</p> <p><b>3.3</b> Members challenged the indicator relating to <i>% block inspected achieving a “to standard” or above rating</i>, and asked how these ratings are independently verified. Members felt this was particularly important as they are not happy with the standard of the current cleaning service. Helen explained that as well as staff carrying out block inspections there are customer inspectors who carry out mystery shopping exercises and survey other customers. Matt advised that all performance indicators are independently verified by the performance team once a year. Helen also reminded the members that following on from the caretaking and cleaning review which acknowledged the poor standard of the cleaning service we have served notice on the contractors and will be providing the service ourselves once that contract runs out. Members should then see significant improvements in that service and this is something the forum could monitor.</p> <p><b>3.4</b> Matt advised that if the group feel that we are measuring the wrong things then this can be changed – for example we could survey leaseholders 4 times a year to ask for their views on the cleaning and caretaking service. Beatrice Grainger said that the surveys that are sent out do not always ask the right questions and that people don’t always want to fill them in. Matt responded by saying that the forum members would be involved in drawing up the survey and that it could be done by phone or face-to-face contact instead of by post if this is the way that the forum decide they would like to measure the performance of this service.</p> <p><b>3.5</b> To take this forward, it was agreed that Matt Harrison would go away and draw up more specific ideas of what could be measured by the group with particular reference to the cleaning and caretaking service (as members had expressed particular dissatisfaction with this service during the discussion). Matt would then bring these ideas to the next forum meeting for discussion. Members asked to postpone the discussion on Service Standards until the next meeting and asked if they could be included with the performance report. Matt was agreeable to this.</p>	<p><b>Matt Harrison</b></p>
<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>4.1</b></p>	<p><b>Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising.</b></p> <p>There was not sufficient time during the meeting to go through all the matters arising. The following matters were discussed at the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage and lighting at Victoria House – all signs should have been repositioned by 8<sup>th</sup> February. Numbers can</li> </ul>	

	<p>be provided at Victoria but this will be another couple of weeks. The lighting scheme is to start on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February and will run for 2 to 3 weeks. The work will include rewiring in the stairwell areas and the provision of emergency and security lighting outside the block. This will have no financial bearing to residents within the block.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recycling bins – Denis Whittle from Environmental Services had been contacted for an update. He has told Salix officers that the larger bins do have printing on the front saying what goes into the bin but it isn't detailed. Wheel bins have a sticker on them with pictures of what goes into the bins and they do have A3 detailed posters for flats and leaflets. The flats that have had the bins before Christmas would have been given the posters and leaflets. These include Holm Court; Sycamore Court and Blackfriar Court. Denis is working towards all flats having the right information and the right bins. Patrick Boyce-Thompson raised an issue with the recycling bins for his block, bin men have arrived at 7:05am and emptied all bins into one general wagon. The bins are not supposed to be emptied until at least 7:30am. Helen will raise this issue with environmental services.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Helen Thorpe</b></p>
<p><b>4.2</b></p>	<p>An update on other matters arising which were not discussed at the meeting is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decent Homes Improvements, 10 month repayment period – this has been agreed with the council. Leaseholders can choose whether or not they want to have Decent Homes improvements carried out in their homes. This work is not obligatory in the same way as Capital Works where we would provide different repayment options.</li> <li>• The cost of the gas safety check service has been calculated using the actual cost price of a service from Apollo (who provide the service to tenants) plus the administration costs. More information has been collected about offering an enhanced gas service including call out and maintenance and this will need to be discussed at a future forum meeting along with the provision of a repairs service (which was raised by a member at the last meeting but omitted in error from the minutes)</li> <li>• Helen spoke to Colin Mannion about the changes to the caretaking and cleaning service – Colin advised that all caretakers have been fully informed and consulted about the changes.</li> <li>• Two leaseholders have asked to take part in the selection process of contractors for future capital works and decent homes work.</li> </ul>	<p><b>All</b></p>

<p><b>5.0</b></p> <p><b>5.1</b></p> <p><b>5.2</b></p>	<p><b>Service Improvement Plan</b></p> <p>The last item on the service improvement plan for 2009/10 is to review the leasehold service standards. This was deferred until the next meeting at the request of the group.</p> <p>Development of the 2010/11 service improvement plan was deferred until the next meeting.</p>	
<p><b>6.0</b></p> <p><b>6.1</b></p> <p><b>6.2</b></p>	<p><b>Salix Inspection</b></p> <p>Helen Thorpe informed the group that Salix is being inspected over the next two weeks and during those two weeks the inspectors will be meeting with staff and customers across the different service areas. They would like to speak with members of the forum on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 10 at 6pm. Inspectors will want to know about customers experience of the service.</p> <p>Helen requested volunteers to meet with the Inspectors and the following members agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patrick Boyce-Thompson</li> <li>• Brian Moriarty</li> <li>• Joan Howarth</li> <li>• Beatrice Grainger</li> <li>• Patricia Purcell</li> <li>• Sue Edwards</li> </ul>	
<p><b>7.0</b></p> <p><b>7.1</b></p>	<p><b>Repairs Update</b></p> <p>No repairs issues were raised at the meeting other than those covered under matters arising.</p>	
<p><b>8.0</b></p> <p><b>8.1</b></p>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>Patrick Boyce-Thompson said that he was unhappy about the timescales for the consultation recently carried out over the painting of the communal areas to his block. He said that the residents were only given 2 days notice of the consultation meeting and the work started on site 3 days later. Patrick requested information on the tender process for this contract. Helen Thorpe advised that the contractor was selected through the existing procurement framework and as such no open tender was required. She confirmed that the consultation was carried out purely to give residents a choice on the colour of the paint and as well as the on-site drop in all residents had surveys posted through their doors which they could complete and return via a postbox in the foyer. Patrick raised issues regarding the quality of the works and requested to know the actual cost of the contract. Helen said she would feed back Patrick's comments and requests to the asset management team who are responsible for delivering the painting programme.</p>	<p><b>Helen Thorpe</b></p>

8.2	<p>Joan Howarth enquired about a letter she has received relating to future major works and asked for clarification regarding the content, and in particular the £250 charge quoted within the letter.</p> <p>Helen advised that the letter was sent out by Stephanie Clueit who had attended the November leasehold forum meeting to tell members about the future major works programme and the consultation process. We are required to consult formerly with leaseholders whenever we enter into a long term contract for carrying out major works. The letter, which was sent to all leaseholders, is the first part of the consultation process as we are selecting contractors to go onto the Greater Manchester procurement framework, and it will be these contractors who will carry out the decent homes and capital works that will take place over the next 5 years. Leaseholders will be consulted again prior to any specific work taking place to their block or homes. The £250 is the legal limit that leaseholders could be asked to pay if the consultation process was not followed, and therefore has to be quoted in the letter. It is not a demand for payment.</p>	
8.3	<p>Mark asked if Salix have a sinking fund. Helen advised that there is no sinking fund at present but the terms of the lease do allow it and we could look into this if members want. Patrick asked for clarification of what a sinking fund is as he understood the monies were taken from existing service charges paid by leaseholders but Helen advised that it was an additional charge paid specifically for the purpose of being held in a fund to pay for future major works to avoid individual leaseholders receiving a large bill for major works at the time that the works happen. Patrick asked Helen to check on this and clarify at the next meeting.</p>	Helen Thorpe
8.4	<p>It was asked whether Salix includes clauses for addressing poor performance within major works contracts and how this is measured. Helen will find this out and report back to the next meeting.</p>	Helen Thorpe
8.5	<p>Patrick thanked members for their vote of confidence in appointing him as Chairman for the group and stated he feels that Salix are providing a better service than other managing agents in the Greater Manchester area and are definitely trying to work with leaseholders to improve the services they receive.</p>	

**Date of Next Meeting**

**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2010  
Diamond House  
6-8pm**

Helen circulated a list of future meeting dates for the year.

**Please ring Vicky Bowe on 779 8040 if you require transport or if you have particular dietary requirements as a buffet will be provided.**