

Resident's Panel Minutes
26 June 2019- Guildhall Committee Room 2

Attendees- Liz Forte, Clelia Merloni, Emily Watts, Jean-Louis Ayivor (Tenant Rep), Diana Minns (Elected Tenant Rep and Chair- for this meeting only), Sally Norman (Policy and Performance Officer)

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Housing Webpages Overview- Sally Norman

- SN used a PowerPoint to demonstrate the newly create city council housing service webpages. The pages were still in draft format (and were not yet on the main website) so SN wanted feedback from residents about the usability and if they had any recommendations about improvements to the look or content.
- J-LA suggested that adding a facility which enabled residents to log repairs online would be beneficial. EW explained that this function was already in the pipeline as part of the new housing management system so it should be available to residents over the next year. EW will bring a mock version of this new facility to a later panel meeting.
- J-LA suggested that it would be good to include a facility which enables residents to check information about their house such as when the boiler needs to be serviced. EW to speak to ROAM group and feedback at next meeting.
- Residents think that the existing sustainability tab should remain on the main housing page so resident know their welfare rights. Universal Credit and benefit information should also be included. **ACTION SN**
- Style of landing page- they liked the 3 new images and the description about what the housing service does but they didn't like that the reader had to then scroll down the page to be able to see the main links. This is off putting. They preferred for the links to be embedded into the description in order for the whole page to flow more effectively.
- SN to feed these comments back to the web designing team to be considered. **ACTION SN**
- Members thought the images used on the Resident Involvement page should be of resident activities; if they can't be pictured from the front (for consent reasons) could they be pictured from the back? EW will update the pictures over the summer **ACTION EW**
- CM referred to the garden competition and asked if it would be ok if she cut out a border from the grass underneath her lounge window in her communal garden so that she can plant flowers and encourage wildlife? EW will visit the site with the Estate Champion and feedback via email. **EW ACTION**
- DM suggested that an article in Open Door would help raise awareness amongst residents about the benefits of working on communal gardens.
- Members fed back the various reasons that they have had to use the housing website, all experiences has been positive to date but if they had any negative experiences then they will feed back to EW.
- Members also highlighted the importance of having an effective phone contact system for residents who do not have access to the internet. EW assured that phone contact will always be available, we only encourage residents who are capable of going online to do so which will free up the phones for those who don't have internet access.

3. Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) and Ask Me Campaign

- EW outlined how the housing service is working toward a DAHA accreditation. This aims to improve our response to domestic abuse through an established set of standards, cohesive policies and strategies.
- EW gave an overview of the Ask Me campaign- Cambridge Women's Aid is launching a new community project to help tackle domestic abuse. The 'Ask Me' project evolved from discussions with survivors which noted that while communities are often the first to know that domestic abuse is happening, lack of understanding and confidence can make people afraid to talk about it, and unsure of how to respond when someone speaks out. The Ask Me project is

an initiative that equips everyday people within the community with an understanding of domestic abuse and how to respond to survivors. Anyone interested in becoming an ambassador should get in touch with the campaign directly.

- Members requested information sheets about the Ask Me Campaign, some may want to get involved.

4. Open Door Money Matters Pages

- EW outlined how residents play a crucial role in suggesting items to be included in every Open Door publication. Members agreed that if they had ideas for inclusion they would send them through to EW.
- Members requested information on the Estate Improvement Scheme. The scheme funds improvements to the communal areas of council owned estates. The new fund releases £1 million each year for 5 years which will be ring fenced to ensure it is spent solely on improvements rather than work that's categorised as planned maintenance. The first improvement proposals were submitted by Estate Champions and have arisen directly from resident and ward councillor input through estate walkabouts undertaken during 2018. The walkabouts allowed residents the opportunity to identify first-hand the areas on their estates which could benefit from investment. Residents are encouraged to come forward with new EIS proposals across the city.
- LF asked whether children's park equipment could be installed on the grass area in Ferrars Way as part of the EIS? EW confirmed that she would make enquiries and respond via email. **EW ACTION**

5. County Council Digital Online Safety Training

- The County Council has circulated free online training by a Friends Against Scams which helps increase awareness of online safety. EW said that she would circulate it to members via email. **EW ACTION**

6. Time Credits

- EW gave an overview of time credits, explaining that for every hour they volunteer by taking part in the panel they can claim 1 time credit. The credits can then be spent as currency at leisure facilities around the city, e.g. the cinema or swimming. It's easy to sign up and earn time credits, just contact EW to complete an application form.

7. AOB

- CM outlined some issues related to parking on her estate where the public are using the car park so residents don't have enough spaces. EW confirmed that she would visit the estate with officers to assess the issue to see what can be done to improve the situation and respond to CM via email. **EW ACTION**
- Next meeting- **6-8pm on 2 October 2019** in Guildhall Members Lounge