



**MINUTES OF THE HERTFORD AND OUTER LONDON RESIDENT PANEL MEETING  
HELD ON 06 JULY 2020  
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA TEAMS**

<b>PRESENT</b>	PL ZH AD CR IQ JJ DC SR	Chair and Hertford Panel Member Hertford Panel Member Hertford Panel Member East Herts Councillor and Hertford Panel Member Hertford Panel Member Hertford panel member Hertford panel member Hertford panel member
<b>IN ATTENDANCE</b>	Maria Moriarty (MM) James Mahaffy Gabriel Codjoe Tracy Hanks Edie Mariner	Head of Resident Engagement & Customer Insight Complaints Manager Director of Housing Resident Engagement Officer Research and Policy Officer
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	Jamie Ratcliff (JR)  PB CC	Executive Director of Business Performance and Partnerships East Herts Councillor and Hertford Panel Member Hertford panel member
<b>NOT PRESENT</b>	MS BS LC	Hertford Panel Member Hertford Panel Member Hertford Panel Member
<b>MINUTE TAKER</b>	Tracy Hanks (TH)	Resident Engagement Officer

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.01	IT issue- PL unable to hear anybody through MS Teams- TH contacted IT and they called PL. Issue resolved.	
1.02	Recording started at 18:04.	
1.03	Chair welcomed new panel member DC.	
1.04	The Chair welcomed the attendees, requesting all mics are muted until speaking and to use the chatroom to receive attention.	
1.05	Apologies received from JR, CC and PB.	

<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
2.01	There were no declarations of interest.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Matters arising – Action Log</b>	
3.01	MM advised there was an update on action 13.03 regarding illegal parking Hertford Neighbourhood Team Leader had responded stating that the local council are responsible for the crossing. A Neighbourhood Officer is consulting with residents to understand why there have been limited applications for parking permits, causing people to park illegally. <b>GC to ask Neighbourhood Officers to speak with residents to confirm a way forward as ongoing on 13.03.</b>	<b>GC</b>
3.02	<b>MM to confirm what actions were taken against 8.08 and 8.16, and will update following this meeting</b>	<b>MM</b>
3.03	PL stated that it was good to see that alot of things had moved on from previous meeting and had been worked on	
3.04	PL and MM confirmed there are no other matters arising from the action log.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Management</b>	
4.01	The report was tabled. GC advised the panel a trial of basing two Neighbourhood Officers in the Contact Centre, started two years ago. It has proved to be successful, in that 30-40% of transactional activities can be undertaken in the Contact Centre as a first time resolution.	
4.02	GC asked if the self-service terminals in the reception area at Ware Road are sufficient. GC stated that he is aware that ASB is a major issue and questioned whether this way of working does enable Neighbourhood Officers to be out dealing with these ASB cases of varying seriousness.	
4.03	PL asked if there is a policy in place to reduce the number of Neighbourhood Officers to save money, these officers not being replaced in other ways, and having someone who know the area, the local issues who can deal them would be a great outcome	
4.04	GC advised that two years ago we embarked on transformation through new technology, how Network Homes can use it, and how it can reach out to residents in both regions. This included the self -service portal. So factually year on year yes there has been a reduction of Neighbourhood Officers, but we are utilising the contact centre and portal to handle the transactional enquiries that come through	

4.05	AD feels face to face contact is positive and effective as there is more possibility to speak to someone who knows the area and what the local issues are	
4.06	JJ feels that when going into the office, she would much rather see someone, face to face, than use a screen.	
4.07	DC commented there are residents of many different ages and understandings of IT, so some may find it difficult to use the technology as a result they may need face to face interaction. Also, those with language barriers may be affected and it seems that we might be reducing face to face contact to leading residents towards using IT.	
4.08	ZH asked GC if he has seen positive changes from the portal, when reporting ASB. If the officers are in the contact centre, how are we touching base with residents that have made enquiries? Do the officers respond to the residents? How has the communication managed?	
4.09	GC advised that when a resident calls to report ASB, it is then referred to the Neighbourhood Team by the Customer Services Centre. The resident will be asked questions to determine whether an officer is needed. E.g if someone is in the block selling drugs, and they do not live in the block, that would then be a police matter. If the person is a Network Homes resident, the matter is immediately referred to the back office 100% of the time, to make contact.	
4.10	GC also agrees that officers are needed on the ground, but we can look at ways to make the practices more efficient and find out if the community wishes to engage with us in this way.	
4.11	ZH asked if there is a plan to communicate this to residents, as some residents may not have had to speak to us for some time, and may not be aware of the changes to this way of working, and let them know how they can communicate with us.	
4.12	GC responded stating there has been information on this in the newsletters that go out, but this is the start of the conversation, to let us know what residents think. GC acknowledged that the panel have stated they prefer face to face interaction.	
4.13	PL asked for this paper to outline what the services are that are available and the changes that have been changed in the last two years, as not everyone will be aware.	

4.14	MM added that this discussion isn't about removing face to face contact, but it is about making other options available.	
4.15	<b>GC to circulate questionnaire, with an introduction of what we have been doing over the last two years to be circulated to panel</b>	<b>GC</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Complaints</b>	<b>JM</b>
5.01	JM introduced himself and his professional background to the panel and advised that he isn't making any changes to the previous report that was done by Phillip in the last quarter Update and stats of the complaints report given to the panel.	
5.02	JM suggested that the quarterly full report could be produced after the panel meeting so there is time for people to reflect and provide questions. In addition to possibly publishing the results on the website and providing a quarterly report rather than annually. JM is currently discussing with JR whether there would validity to publishing these reports on the website for residents to review.	
5.03	PL would like to ensure it is GDPR complaint with no personal data and if this will be fed back to the board members agreed by JM.	<b>JM</b>
5.04	JM advised that through complaint investigation, the team have identified repeated behaviour by Contractors, which has led to repeat complaints. He is working closely with the repairs team to improve this.	
5.05	JM acknowledged that there are processes that need attention and stated that upon the next report we will share an email of lessons learned, which we usually receive from the Housing Ombudsman when cases are referred to them.	
5.06	Moving forwards JM advised he would like to add a section to the team's reports called 'You said, We did', if it would need purpose and include valuable lessons learned, that we can document we have taken note of and worked from.	
5.07	JM suggested that the quarterly report be produced after the resident's panel meetings to allow people to reflect on it and think of questions just before the meeting.	
5.08	PL clarified some of the points made by JM and asked the panel if there were any questions. No further comments were made.	

<p>5.09</p> <p>5.10</p>	<p><b>JM to circulate quarterly figures by email within 10 working days of the end of each quarter and include “you said/we did”.</b></p> <p><b>Lessons learnt analysis from Housing Ombudsman and commentary in every other quarterly reports going forward (every six months).</b></p>	<p><b>JM</b></p> <p><b>JM</b></p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Allocations</b></p>	<p><b>EM</b></p>
<p>6.01</p> <p>6.02</p> <p>6.03</p> <p>6.04</p> <p>6.05</p> <p>6.06</p> <p>6.07</p> <p>6.08</p>	<p>EM introduced her role to the panel and stated the importance of resident involvement in shaping policies and opened a discussion on how we manage our policy on overcrowding and allocations.</p> <p>EM explained the report on overcrowding management process and explained the aim was to involve the panel opinions on how we can make this process more lenient.</p> <p>EM advised the panel there are discussions at senior level regarding the possibility of moving way from building one-bedroom properties as there is a greater need of family sized units-according to our waiting lists.</p> <p>PL asked if Network Homes would consider taking properties and extending them to meet the needs of those that are in need of a family sized property.</p> <p>EM advised that this would be difficult in much of London as more properties tend to be in blocks of flats, so wouldn't be possible, but is something that could be looked at.</p> <p>EM also stated that we would want to ensure that we wouldn't want to perpetuate the problem for people if they were offered a property that wasn't exactly what they needed size-wise, but was maybe a little better than where they currently lived as it would leave them in a similar situation. They would only be offered one property</p> <p>PL asked if there would be a possibility of Network Homes finding and purchasing privately developed family sized properties to help alleviate the strain of the issue.</p> <p>EM responded that most 3-4 bedroom properties built by a private developer would likely not be affordable. The team are looking at the issue of under- occupation, so if we incentivize somebody to downsize as well as making the policy more lenient, we may be able to meet those needs.</p>	

6.09	EM clarified that 112 people are on the waiting list for a 3-4 bedroom properties, this list covers both Hertfordshire and London regions. This discussion is to ensure if there was leniency and flexibility in the process it would have to benefit those on the waiting lists.	
6.10	MM clarified on the subject that us building homes with more family units is more of a conversation for the development team so may be useful to seek feedback from them and come back with an update from.	
6.11	PL agreed to this way forward.	
6.12	IQ said that she is aware that a local authority worker pro-actively goes to residents that under-occupy and talks about mutual exchanges. EM advised that we do offer a £1000 incentive to encourage those in this situation to downsize.	
6.13	ZH asked why a person on the waiting list will only be made a property offer once, whilst on the waiting list.	
6.14	EM responded that the rule of offering only one property whilst on the waiting list will possibly be reviewed as a way of making the process more lenient and to offer more choice.	
6.15	<b>To move forwards, EM provide update on these points and discuss the under occupancy project at the next panel meeting.</b>	<b>EM</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Resident Engagement Update</b>	<b>MM</b>
7.01	MM summarised that she has provided an update on the transparency and RE action plan, new resident engagement offer and the new strategic objective and virtual pop up engagement events- to which there were no questions.	
7.02	The recognition policy was shared, appendix 2. MM explained the policy.	
7.03	The policy was approved by the panel.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Continuous Improvement Panel update</b>	<b>MM</b>
8.01	MM advised the panel that the last CIP panel was due to take place on the 10 <sup>th</sup> June virtually via teams, many of the panel members weren't available so will be rescheduled.	

8.02	Panel advised by MM that enthusiasm has waned a little in the CIP, but that we also need to do more work around it, so we aim to reinvigorate it and drum up enthusiasm to recruit more residents to join the panel. We have had more people register their interest since we launched our new offer, so will be working through and arranging interviews for prospective members with the Chair.	
8.03	MM advised the panel that we will be seeking approval from the Customer Services Committee to collapse the structure into one CIP, as there is currently one in London and one in Hertford. The services that would be looked at by the panel are essentially the same, so it makes sense to have one CIP, with residents from both regions.	
8.04	PL asked if the description of the CIP could be re-sent/published, as the Hertford panel has a number of new members, and to advise what is happening on the London CIP as it is currently, to have a taster of what is required	
8.05	<b>Description of the CIP could be re-sent/published, to the panel</b>	<b>MM</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Network Homes Performance Report</b>	<b>MM</b>
9.01	MM confirmed that the current satisfaction for first class customer service is at 87.3% and explained that we haven't been carrying out as many surveys as usual, as they are transaction based.. During lockdown we have only been doing emergency repairs therefore we've had less transactions with residents.	
9.02	MM advised the panel that where we haven't been doing as many surveys, the results may differ when the panel meets again in October.	
9.03	PL stated that lockdown as a whole may have an effect on figures. PL is conscious that he would like to see all performance figures up to a higher level for all KPI's.	
9.04	PL questioned whether the targets are too high, as the stats can sometimes drop.	
9.05	MM responded in stating that this would be fed back to the Business Intelligence and Improvement team. Also was stated that the targets are high, but they should be so we should be striving to meet them.	
9.05	MM is working on a project with other housing associations to capture residents' feedback but capturing this feedback in a different way that	

	<p>focuses on their real experiences. If it is possible start this at the end of the summer, there will be an update for the panel in October.</p>	
9.06	<p>DC commented that since Network Homes staff have been working from home due to Covid-19, the service has maintained its standard. It was also noted that working from home gives people a much better work life balance.</p>	
9.07	<p>MM said that following a transformation project last year, where staff were provided with laptops, it was a smooth transition to working from home which has enabled work to go on as usual. The main difference being that we have only been able to attend to emergency repairs, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our contractors and residents. Also, the Resident Engagement team haven't been able to interact with resident's face to face, we are exploring alternative methods. We have just held a virtual pop up event, where 31 residents attended and engaged with us via Microsoft Teams.</p>	
9.08	<p>JM added that it is testament to the way this technology has been implemented that he has been able to start his role with Network Homes in the middle of lockdown and has been able to build relationships with resident and colleagues despite having never being in the office.</p>	
9.09	<p>CR and PL discussed that the technology isn't for everyone and some people do prefer face to face communication, and now that lockdown is easing slightly, we may be able to get out and meet people with careful distancing and care.</p>	
9.10	<p>PL said that we would look forward to meeting everyone in person at future meetings in the Hertford office if this is possible but agrees that the technology has worked very well and it was an investment that has certainly paid off.</p>	
<b>10</b>	<b>Panel Business</b>	<b>PL</b>
10.01	<p>PL asked the panel if anybody has AOB</p>	
10.02	<p>MM advised the team that we are in close contact with the procurement team, to see if there are any procurement exercises happening that the panel members may be interested in joining. MM advised the panel there will be some new contracts coming up for resident facing services that we will be putting out to tender. MM asked the panel if there would be any interest from the panel to get involved.</p>	



10.03	PL, JJ and ZH expressed interest in getting involved	
10.04	<b>MM to provide more details to panel members regarding upcoming procurement panel opportunities.</b>	
<b>11</b>	<b>Minutes from the meeting of 06 April 2020</b> <i>For Information, not to be discussed unless so requested</i>	
11.01	No comments from panel members	
<b>12</b>	<b>Building Safety</b> <i>For Information, not to be discussed unless so requested</i>	
12.01	No comments from panel members	
	<b>Chair's closing remarks</b>	
12.02	PL thanked all for attending the meeting  Meeting closed 8.04PM	
<b>13.0</b>	The next meeting is due to take place on 05 October 2020 at 6pm.	

....

.....

Chair

Date