



**MINUTES OF THE LONDON RESIDENT PANEL MEETING
HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2022**

PRESENT	PG FH CJ AS GK RR BM IA TL AD	London Panel Chair & Customer Service committee Member London Panel Member London Panel Member London Panel Member London Panel Member London Panel Member London Panel Member London Panel Member London Panel Member Hertford Panel Member (joined online)
IN ATTENDANCE	JR PF JT MM EC	Executive Director of Business Performance and Partnerships Director of Compliance and M&E Head of Business Performance and Improvement Head of Resident Engagement and Corporate Experience Resident Engagement Officer
APOLOGIES	DL TB RT	London Panel Member London Panel Member London Panel Member
NOT PRESENT	VL WS	London Panel Member London Panel Member
MINUTE TAKER	EC	Resident Engagement Officer

1	Welcome and Apologies <i>For information</i>	Action
1.01	PG welcomed the panel	
1.02	Apologies have been received from DL, TR and WS	
2	Declarations of interest (declarations of interest to have been provided to the Chair) <i>For information</i>	PG
2.01	PG confirmed there were no declarations of interest	
3	Matters arising – Action Log <i>For information</i>	PG
3.01	PG summarised the completed actions from the action log.	
3.02	Actions 6.10, 7.17, 7.21, 7.26, 8.11, 8.13, 9.08, 10.07, 11.04, 11.05 from the panel meeting held on Tuesday 12 July 2022 as well as actions 8.03, 6.06, 10.18, 5.17, 6.10 and 10.06 are all complete and have been removed from the action log – with approval from the chair.	

3.03	Actions 4.03, 5.09 remain on the action log with further updates/completion pending.	
3.04	PG noted that action 6.10 - to re-share the mandate with the panel, was discussed at the pre-meeting. Panel members provided feedback on the mandate in terms of how the panel is structured and what the panel will look like moving forward. PG is still waiting on feedback from a few panel members regarding this.	
3.05	PG noted that panel members had discussed that the papers they are required to read before the meetings are often quite heavy and asked if it would be possible to have an executive summary of the documents.	
3.06	CJ noted that during the pre-meeting the action log was missing a lot of information and then refreshed during the pre-meeting and looked as though they had received a draft version originally however PG was able to share the version with all the information.	
3.07	PG noted that during the pre-meeting it was raised that panel members wanted to see a copy of the stay put policy and how this is communicated with residents in terms of fire safety.	
3.08	PF stated that fire strategies are unique to individual blocks due to the way they are designed; therefore, we are unable to share a generic stay put policy however we can share a summary of what a stay put policy means. PF to pick up in Agenda Item 9.	
3.09	IA suggested we could have the Readers Group review an example of a fire strategy that would be sent to residents to see how they would receive this information.	
3.10	PF stated that Network Homes do not share fire strategies with our residents as it is a complex document, instead we share the outcome.	
3.11	IA noted that there have been no notices regarding firework safety shared with residents and asked if before they go out the panel has the opportunity to review any communications.	
3.12	EC to share the Firework Safety communications before it is shared with wider residents	EC
3.13	IA noted that in previous years she has not been aware of any communications surrounding firework safety.	
3.14	PF stated that in previous years we have shared firework safety information via social media and our website.	
3.15	IA noted not all residents are signed up to Network Homes' social media or check the website, in future can we ensure these communications are shared on noticeboards at schemes.	
3.16		

3.17	<p>PF reminded the panel members that it is important to note that not all schemes have noticeboards, however we can make sure that the information is posted in schemes where this is possible.</p>	
3.18	<p>PG shared the good news story in action 10.06 from the meeting held on 12 October 2021 – Network Homes engaged with Look ahead and the Rough Sleepers Accommodation to house 5 homeless individuals in 1-bedroom properties which we decorated and carpeted, support is provided from our internal team and external agencies.</p>	
3.19	<p>TL asked if housing rough sleepers is going to be an ongoing project or if it was a one off.</p>	
3.20	<p>JR confirmed we are not looking to expand upon this project at this moment in time as there were some teething problems when initially launching the project. JR is currently in contact with a representative from the Greater London Authority (GLA) to ensure success going forward. It is also important to note that we also delivered 5 new homes for social rent that the GLA funded. We were therefore able to offer these homes to those who were nominated from rough sleeping backgrounds.</p>	
3.21	<p>FH asked if in action 6.10 – To share hard targets and milestone with the panel, is performance against these milestones covered in the information the panel has been provided.</p>	
3.22	<p>JR advised that 40,000 call reduction is included in the KPI information, and we are still tracking how many repairs are being raised.</p>	
3.23	<p>PG asked why residents are not using the portal and instead calling the Contact Centre.</p>	
3.24	<p>MM advised we will be addressing this during our Big Winter Check In, during this we will be finding out why residents have not engaged with Network Homes electronically if they have the means to do so.</p>	
3.25	<p>JR also noted that over the past 6 weeks the Contact Centre has been carrying out a sustained campaign to encourage residents who are eligible to sign up to the portal.</p>	
3.26	<p>PG raised a question surrounding residents' confidence in using the portal and wondered whether there is a difference in response time in comparison to logging a call.</p>	
3.27	<p>JR advised that we need to work on the communications we send out surrounding the portal as some residents are reluctant to use the portal as they do not understand how the process works.</p>	
3.28	<p>MM advised that it is also worth knowing that calls coming into the Contact Centre are logged on the same system as a case on the portal.</p>	
3.29		

3.30	FH noted that it is important that we are careful how we advertise the use of the portal, there is a difference between making it difficult for people access the Contact Centre to raise a repair and using the portal because it is a better route.	
3.31	TL noted that it is important to remember the portal is not going to replace other methods of communication, it is simply another method of contacting the Contact Centre. By using the portal, you will be allowing the people who are not eligible to contact Network Homes via a call. JR also noted that using the portal is better from a cost perspective. TL advised that from a resident's perspective, it is not necessarily important to know how this will help bring the cost down, therefore when advertising to residents it is important to focus more on the personal benefits, such as the convenience aspect of being able to access the portal anytime of the day.	
4	Panel Business & Development <i>For discussion</i>	ALL
4.01	PG advised that we move this discussion to the end of the meeting.	
4.02	IA stated that in previous meetings the panel members were provided with reports regarding cladding works at certain schemes. IA requested for an update on the progress made.	
4.03	MM confirmed this information is included in the papers for agenda item 11 but will also look to provide a more recent update to the panel members before the next meeting.	
4.04	MM to provide an update on the cladding works to the panel members before the meeting held on Tuesday 17 January 2023.	MM
4.05	FH asked to be provided with information on scheduled maintenance regarding cyclical decorations.	
4.06	JR stated we have a paper going to our investment committee in December, we can bring this paper to the next panel meeting as well as the outcomes and decisions.	
4.07	JR to provide the paper regarding the Strategic Asset Management Plan to the London Panel Meeting on Tuesday 17 January 2023.	JR
5	Panel member re-election <i>For discussion</i>	MM
5.01	MM confirmed there IA has come to the end of her first term and has confirmed she will remain for a second term.	
6	Panel Tenure <i>For discussion</i>	MM
6.01	MM introduced the item and explained the role of the panel vice chair.	
6.02	MM to review the tenure of the vice chair role to see if we should reduce the tenure to allow vice chairs the opportunity to become chairs and relay the information to the panel members.	MM
6.03		MM

	PG noted that some panel members were unaware that there was a vice chair role and therefore asked if more information can be circulated to the panel about this position.	
7	Network Homes' Performance Report <i>For discussion</i>	JT
7.01	JT introduced the item and summarised the key points.	
7.02	FH asked to be provided with figures on the number of complaints compared to the number of cases raised.	
7.03	JR confirmed this is included in the regular report.	
7.04	FH enquired about external companies offering to represent residents to claim compensation from social housing landlords.	
7.05	PF confirmed that would be classed as disrepair rather than a complaint.	
7.06	PF to share the disrepair process with the panel members.	PF
7.07	TL requested that when we report on complaints, the corresponding themes are included as the numbers often appear to be high, however, this could be due to an isolated issue.	
7.08	JT to ensure we provide the corresponding themes against complaints when reporting on performance going forward.	JT
7.09	JR raised that we provide these reports to the panels every 6 months, however a performance report is shared with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) quarterly and can also be shared with Panel Members.	
7.10	JT to share the quarterly report sent to ELT with the Panel Members.	JT
7.11	GK asked whether complaints from leaseholders and tenants are dealt with differently.	
7.12	JR confirmed all complaints are treated the same, one question asked for the Tennant Satisfaction Measures report is whether we can make a clear distinction between complaints from a leaseholder and a tenant.	
7.13	JT confirmed she is looking into being able to separate leaseholders from tenants.	
7.14	IA asked if there is a section on the portal where people can report complaints.	
7.15	MM to come back to IA with confirmation on whether there is a section on the portal where residents can raise a complaint.	MM
7.16	BM raised a concern regarding residents' responsibility to test their own ovens to ensure they are compliant with gas safety regulations.	
7.17	PF stated that Network Homes test residents' cookers where Network Homes owns the cookers. The cookers we do not own are considered white goods, meaning they are owned and maintained by the resident; therefore, the resident is in charge of replacing it if the oven does fail.	
7.18		

7.19	PF confirmed that during gas safety checks Network Homes do check for potential gas leaks, however, it is the resident's responsibility to test the function of their oven.	MM
7.20	MM to confirm with PF all communications are up to date regarding gas safety checks and residents' responsibility.	
7.21	BM asked if there is a place residents can go to find qualified gas engineers	PF
7.22	PF confirmed that the Gas Safe Register is the best place to go for people to find qualified gas engineers. This information was due to be covered in Gas Safety Week, however, due to the royal funeral Gas Safety Week 2022 was cancelled. PF to provide communications to go out to residents that was missed due to the cancellation of gas safety week.	
7.23	IA stated it would also be helpful to share the link to the Gas Safe Register on the website for residents who are not sure where to start when it comes to gas safety checks.	
7.24	JR confirmed this information is already on the website.	
7.25	PF confirmed the Gas Safety Team will look to readdress Gas Safety Week later on in 2022.	PF
8	Resident engagement update <i>For discussion</i>	MM
8.01	MM opened the item and provided an update on Network Cares and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.	
8.02	BM asked how the Network Cares team ensures people do not become dependent on vouchers.	
8.03	MM stated that this is something that is discussed, the Charitable Fund is not the type of support people can rely on regularly. However, when residents come to us asking for support we ask them if they would like to be referred to the Welfare team. The Welfare Team can then help the resident go through all the different types of benefits and other support available to ensure resident does not become reliant on the Charitable Fund.	
8.04	MM also confirmed the Network Cares Team do also signpost to other charities who may be able to offer more support.	
8.05	BM asked if a resident became more financially stable in the future, would Network Homes ask the resident to pay that money back awarded by the Charitable Fund.	
8.06	MM confirmed this is not something we have considered as we would not want the residents to feel we are pressuring them to pay the money back. It is also a possibility that some residents may never be able to pay the money back.	
8.07	JR also noted that the systems we would need to put in place to be able to collect the money provided by the charitable fund would be overly complex as well as taking time and money. The recovery rate on the Charitable Fund would also be	

8.08	quite low. JR also noted that the psychological effects of that could be detrimental to residents' mental health.		
8.09	BM asked how we ensure the residents we help do not fall back into rent arrears. MM noted that the residents the Network Cares Team provide support to residents who they believe will not fall back into arrears, the team will gather information from the Income Officer as well as the Welfare Team who are able to advise further. The Network Cares Team keep a record of who we help to ensure it does not happen again.		
9	Fire Safety <i>For discussion</i>	PF	
9.01	PF introduced the item and summarised the key points.		
9.02	RR asked if buildings between 11 meters and 18 meters will be fitted with sprinklers.		
9.03	PF stated that all new buildings over 11 meters will be fitted with sprinklers however, Network Homes has no plans to retrofit sprinklers to pre-existing buildings under 30 meters.		
9.04	BM asked if Network Homes is going to put in place protocol for potential blackouts that have been suggested by energy companies.		
9.05	PF confirmed that over the past two years candles has been a topic covered by our winter campaign, we know people tend to use candles more during the winter. PF confirmed that information on how to use candles safely will be included in the December edition of the resident's newsletter. However, Network Homes doesn't have anything specific planned regarding the blackouts as nothing has been confirmed yet.		
9.06	PF stated that if Network Homes send out communications in preparation for blackouts prematurely, they could cause panic in some residents. If there is confirmation regarding blackouts, we will include information in the resident newsletter.		
9.07	IA stated she was not aware of the newsletter in previous years and asked if there is another way information regarding candle safety can be shared as many residents may not actively look out for the newsletter.		
9.08	MM and PF to meet to discuss the best way to communicate the December newsletter to ensure it reaches the largest number of residents possible.		MM/PF
9.09	JR noted that when there is key information to be shared from Network Homes as a landlord, we ensure this information is shared appropriately. However, the information regarding candle safety, among other things, is more generalised information that residents can access from other sources.		
10	Minutes from the meeting of 12 July 2022 <i>For information – not to be discussed unless so requested</i>		
11	Building safety		

	<i>For information – not to be discussed unless so requested</i>
12	Estates policy and procedure update <i>For information – not to be discussed unless so requested</i>
13	Housing sector hot topics <i>For information – not to be discussed unless so requested</i>
	Meeting closed at 20:50pm

The next meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday 17 January 2023

Chair: PG

Date: 19:10/2022