

Sheltered Housing Panel
Tuesday 10th October 2017 at 2.00pm
Bernard Weatherill House Community Space

Panel members

Sheryl Read (Chair)
 Bob Horne (Vice-Chair)
 Joan Smith
 Charles Caesar
 Eileen Kistnappah
 Bill Dryden
 James McCloggan
 David Sykes
 Sylvia Ions
 David Besser
 Robin Macbroom
 Joan Redmond

Apologies

Vanessa Gauld
 Syed Ahmad

Observers

Marilyn Smithies

Councillors

Councillor Margaret Bird

Officers

Rachel Pankhurst Resident Involvement Officer (Notes)

Guests

Sandra O'Connor	Resident Liaison Officer (for surgery)
Nicola Payne	Tenancy Support Officer
Kingsley Eze	Caretaking Manager (for surgery)
Hazel Butcher	Members and Resident Services manager (for surgery)
Andrew Stone	Careline Plus Coordinator (for surgery)
Emma Langhorne	Project Officer
Shelley Williams	Principal Facilities Manager
Colin Stone	Facilities Building Manager
Sharon Murphy	Anti-Social Behaviour Manager

Ref	Item	Action
1.0	Welcome, introductions and apologies	
1.1	Sheryl Read welcomed those present to the meeting.	
1.2	Apologies were received from Vanessa Gauld and Syed Ahmad.	
2.0	Action plan from previous meeting and matters arising	

2.1	(3.3) – Rachel said she had sent an email to Ian Rhodes and Jenny Scott from Axis but had not received a response yet. She said she would follow this up with them.	RP
2.2	It appears that some blocks have received dates for surgeries but others have not.	
2.3	Sheryl pointed out that the other items on the action plan are on the agenda and will be discussed at this meeting.	
3.0	Update – mobility scooters – Emma Langhorne	
3.1	Emma introduced herself to the panel. She explained that part of her role involves looking at installing storage for mobility scooters in sheltered blocks.	
3.2	It was noted that this project has been given high priority after what happened at Grenfell. Work is being undertaken with the London Fire Brigade (LFB) to make sure that blocks are safe.	
3.3	Storage for Allington Court and Leyton Crescent has been completed. Southlands close is next on the list for completion and there are four more blocks which need to be planned which are Arun Court, Ashwood Gardens, Borough Grange and Windmill Bridge House. Emma added that this will run on a continuous programme. She said she is aware that there are issues at other sheltered blocks which will be scheduled at some point but these blocks need to be prioritised as scooters are being stored in communal areas.	
3.4	Bob Horne asked Emma where Arun Court was on the programme as he needs to replace his current mobility scooter but doesn't want to do this until the storage arrangements have been confirmed. Emma replied that a meeting is scheduled to take place in the next couple of weeks and that a meeting to discuss the plans with residents will be held shortly after this.	
3.5	Robin MacBroom asked if any mobility scooters had actually caught fire. Emma said as far as she is aware none have in Croydon but there have been incidents where this has happened. Emma added that mobility scooters are also being looked at as they could be viewed as restricting resident's means of escape if a fire was to occur. She said they can explode when they are being charged.	
3.6	Nicola added that she had seen scooters in communal lounges. She said it is important to act on the advice that has been given by the London Fire Brigade. She said for the last five years she has had to send letters to residents in sheltered blocks, asking them not to leave mobility scooters in communal areas.	
3.7	James McCloggan said it was good to see this being treated as a priority and that the block where he lives is going to be included in the	

	programme He asked whether existing space had been identified for storage. Emma said there are proposals to demolish some of the existing space to install storage for mobility scooters.	
3.8	Emma said she hopes that storage at Southlands Close will be completed in the next few months. She anticipates that by next summer, storage for most of the blocks will be completed.	
3.9	Sheryl said that some of the flats are quite small and asked whether this could potentially pose a hazard if scooters are stored inside whilst storage solutions are being sought. Emma said this is why external storage is being installed.	
4.0	Overview of September's TAASC event – (item moved up agenda)	
4.1	Rachel gave an overview of the Talking About Adult Social Care event which took place at Jurys Inn on the 28 th September 2017.	
4.2	She said overall it was a good event but there had been a few issues with the organisation from the hotel on the day.	
4.3	The event was focused around PIP – Personal Independent Payments and presentations were delivered by the DWP and Croydon Welfare Rights Team.	
4.4	Feedback from attendees was positive with 100% saying they felt welcomed at the event and 94% saying the organisation was good.	
4.5	The next TAASC event will take place in March 2018. Theme and venue to be confirmed nearer the time.	
5.0	The Future of Sheltered Housing Panel – Rachel Pankhurst – (item moved up agenda)	
5.1	Rachel explained that this had been raised at previous sheltered housing panel meetings. It was last discussed in April 2016 but nothing has progressed since then.	
5.2	It was noted that the existing set up needs to change due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of suitable venues for meetings • Declining attendance in current format • Panel needs to be more representative of tenants in sheltered housing 	
5.3	Rachel said she had met with colleagues in Tenancy services and Sustainable Communities to discuss this. Discussion took place around introducing a roadshow style event which would mean engaging with more sheltered residents. It could also enable a range of services to visit a particular block at one time.	
5.4	To overcome the problem of finding suitable venues, the communal	

	lounges in sheltered blocks could be used on a rotation basis.	
5.5	Rachel said they had looked at splitting the borough in to three districts – north, south-central and east which would result in each district having three roadshows/surgeries a year. The blocks could then be grouped in to clusters, consisting of 2-4 blocks in each cluster. Residents from these identified clusters would be invited to attend roadshows that fall within that particular cluster group thus to minimise the risk of the meeting being oversubscribed. This could also provide opportunities for residents to form relationships with tenants in other sheltered blocks.	
5.6	The option of holding a yearly sheltered housing conference, where residents from all blocks could attend was also discussed.	
5.7	To discuss these proposals in further detail, Rachel said she would like to set up a working group consisting of 6-8 residents from this panel to see how this idea can be progressed. Rachel asked for panel members to make their interest known to her if they would like to be involved with this.	All
5.8	Bill Dryden felt it was a good idea to hold meetings on people’s home territories as residents will be amongst peers and may feel more confident in expressing their views. He feels that there is currently a lack of action and questioned how long it should take for matters to be resolved. He said if residents see action being taken on their home ground, people may feel more inclined to support this proposal. He feels residents do not receive enough feedback on issues they have raised.	
5.9	Rachel added that if these proposals went ahead, a local action plan would be devised for each cluster group and a nominated officer would be responsible for particular actions. Progress would then be fed back to the group at the following meeting and this would be updated every three months.	
5.10	David Sykes said he doesn’t see the Tenancy Officer in the block where he lives. Rachel said this could be viewed as a local issue which could appear on an action plan. She agreed to note within the minutes that residents at Gillett Road do not see their Tenancy Officer.	
5.11	Nicola explained that Tenancy Officers are required to spend 50% of their time in the community, doing visits. The contact centre will take telephone messages and send to individual officers asking them to return calls to residents who have attempted to make contact. Nicola said if there is an issue with calls not being returned then this can be looked in to.	
6.0	Churchill Cleaning – Shelley Williams	
6.1	Shelley Williams asked panel members whether they had any issues	

<p>6.2</p>	<p>they wanted to raise.</p> <p>Sheryl provided Shelley with a copy of the action plan from the last meeting and explained that there are items on this which require follow up. These were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All sheltered blocks are to be provided with a mop and bucket for spills <p>Shelley advised that all blocks should now have a mop and bucket. Some residents said their blocks did not and that the equipment seems to have disappeared. It was suggested that a local representative is nominated in each block to take responsibility for the mop and bucket, or for them to hold a key if there is space for the equipment to be locked away.</p> <p>It was noted that the mop and bucket has already gone from Gordon Crescent, despite it only being put there a few months ago. Bill said there is a large cupboard in the block which could be used for storage. Shelley and Colin agreed to look in to this.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Dryers not being pulled out to allow for cleaning to take place at Cedar House – Axis to arrange for dryers to be pulled out <p>Joan Smith said there are still on-going problems in the laundry room at Cedar House. There had recently been a problem with the dryers which caused the laundry room and the toilet to become full of steam. Two filters on the back of the machines had come off. It is unclear how this happened but an operative from Axis had attended the block the previous day to put the filters back on. The operative had commented on the amount of dirt that was at the back of the machines where it hasn't been cleaned.</p> <p>Shelley said Churchill will need to link up with Axis to ask them to pull the dryers out to allow for cleaning to take place. Shelley asked Rachel whether she had contact details for someone she could speak to from Axis in regard to this. Rachel agreed to email contact details to Shelley.</p> <p>Councillor Bird felt there should be a regular cleaning schedule in place for this. Several residents agreed.</p>	<p>SW/CS</p> <p>RP/SW</p>
<p>6.3</p>	<p>Bill felt that a lot of problems are created by the residents who live at a location. He said tenants need to take some responsibility and have a part to play in the environment in which they live.</p>	
<p>6.4</p>	<p>James said he had reported an incident at Windmill Bridge House where a non-resident was using the laundry facilities. He said he had requested for a letter to be sent to residents to remind them that the</p>	

	facilities are for residents use only.	
6.5	David Sykes said there are issues at Gillett Road, where non-sheltered residents keep trying to use the laundry facilities which they are not supposed to do. He added that the machines also keep breaking down.	
6.6	Residents from Allington Court said the cleaning in their block is very good and the building is almost spotless.	
6.7	Marilyn Smithies asked for clarification on an issue that had been raised previously at sheltered housing panel, which was the matter of cleaners using the same mop and bucket to clean multiple blocks. Colin said he would need to check this with the mobile team.	CS
7.0	Anti-Social Behaviour – Sharon Murphy	
7.1	Sharon Murphy introduced herself to the panel as the manager of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team. She explained that her team deal with anti-social behaviour across the whole borough. She added that the team consists of her, one Senior ASB Officer and eight ASB Officers.	
7.2	It was noted that cases for council properties are referred to the ASB Team when a Tenancy Officer has exhausted all prevention and diversion methods with a particular problem, person or family. As a first point of call, the Tenancy Officer will carry out investigations to try and bring unwanted nuisance to an end. In cases where the offender is persistent, the Tenancy Officer will request for the ASB Team to take over the case.	
7.3	Sharon explained that the team investigate anything that constitutes a nuisance, i.e. when someone's actions cause a negative impact on someone else. She said officers try to inform people that their behaviour is impacting on the lives of other's. Sometimes this can be related to communication, other times it will involve re-educating people's behaviours and sometimes formal enforcement action is needed such as applying to the courts for an injunction, to prohibit someone from doing something by order of the court. Sharon said a person may have been given warnings but their actions and behaviour persists which will result in an injunction being applied for. This will prohibit or restrict the person's behaviour.	
7.4	If the person causing nuisance is a council tenant, the officer may look to seek a notice of seeking possession which would result in the Council taking the property back. Sharon added that this would be a last resort as officers need to be able to demonstrate in court that the person or family have been given a chance to change their behaviour.	
7.5	Sharon said when issues are reported to the team, it is important for officers to talk to people. The desired outcome should be for the behaviour to stop not for the people causing the behaviour to be	

	<p>evicted. She said officers need to be aware of false and malicious allegations as some people use this as motivation to get people evicted. Officers can either write to people or invite them in to talk to. She said it is important for officers to take time and delve in to issues. However it can be difficult to take action when it is one person's account against another.</p>	
7.6	<p>Sharon explained to the panel that matters are dealt with by the Civil court under Civil law, on the balance of probability.</p>	
7.7	<p>Concerns were raised in regard to Laxton Court. Sharon said she is aware of the issues in this block which are complex and far reaching. She said possession action has been taken against several tenants with an outright possession order being achieved and action taken against several others that are on the team's radar. Sharon added that outreach services are visiting the block 2-3 times a week to deal with the rough sleepers in the block and a number of other services are also involved including officers from her team and the Neighbourhood Safety Officers.</p>	
7.8	<p>Sharon confirmed that officers are allocated cases on a case by case basis. If there are issues within blocks, the officer will deal with the individual property number rather than the block as a whole.</p>	
7.9	<p>Concerns were also raised in regard to Garnet Road. Sharon confirmed that an officer is currently dealing with these issues which aren't specific to a particular flat and need to be reported back to the Tenancy Team. She said an officer is currently dealing with a case relating to a certain property number, but in order to resolve these issues, a holistic approach to the work must be taken.</p>	
7.10	<p>Robert said Frances Bourke – ASB Officer has undertaken a lot of work at Garnet Road and commented that she had been really helpful in getting security arranged for the block. He said he had asked Frances if the key fobs could be changed to prevent people from entering the block. Sharon clarified that security had been arranged by the Tenancy Officer for the block, not Frances. Sharon said she would ask Frances to follow up on the issues at Garnet Road.</p>	SM
7.11	<p>Sheryl explained that the panel had asked for Sharon to attend the meeting as there appeared to be generic issues relating to ASB in several sheltered blocks.</p>	
7.12	<p>Sharon emphasised the importance of reporting issues to the relevant agencies. She said this should either be via 101 or to the Tenancy Team/officer. She noted that the response may not necessarily be a speedy one but calls to 101 are recorded and statistics will come from the Police. Sharon explained that resources can be allocated according to reports that are logged thus if a large number of reports are made in relation to a particular block or area, additional resources can be put there.</p>	

7.13	Robert said he made a call to 101 and spoke to an officer based in Coventry. Sharon said she would not comment on the Police response from 101 but emphasised the importance in placing calls, otherwise when the Police look at crime statistics in the borough, areas where there are problems will not flag up as hot spots.	
7.14	David asked if a security officer could be placed in Gillett Road overnight. Sharon said there is no chance of this even being considered if issues are not reported.	
7.15	Marilyn thanked Sharon for attending the meeting and said she appreciated listening to what had been said. She agreed that if issues are not reported nothing will be done.	
7.16	Bill agreed and said it is important to report as this logs the date incidents occur and agencies can then recognise that certain things need to be prioritised. He said in his experience officers are doing as good a job as they can with the resources they have to work with.	
7.17	Robert said in a recent Croydon newsletter, an article stated that the borough will have a bigger police presence, but this doesn't currently appear to be evident.	
	<i>No further agenda items or date for the next meeting were suggested due to proposed changes to the Sheltered Housing Panel.</i>	
	<i>Meeting closed at 4pm – Rachel reminded panel members that they should make their interest known to her, if they would like to be part of the working group around re-modelling this panel.</i>	