

**Community Voice AGM Minutes**  
**Meeting held via Microsoft Teams**

**Date:** Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021

**Time:** 1:30pm to 4pm

**Chair:** Wendy Wolfe

**Present:** Jill Milner (Treasurer)  
Keith Lumbers  
Colin Cranidge  
Tim Mills  
Ian Bulleyment  
Ryan North  
Tony Sanderson  
Greg Carter  
Peter Dennington  
Sue Nicholson  
Jim Newcombe  
Christine Osimbo  
Steve Hepworth (Ongo)  
Jo Sugden (Ongo)  
Pete Stones (Ongo)  
Dawn Hill (Ongo)  
Karen Cowan (Ongo)  
Wendy Wolfe (Ongo)  
Natalie Davies (Ongo)  
Hayley Sleight (Observer)  
Rachael Haynes (CE Assistant)

**1. Welcome & Apologies**

Wendy welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that Hayley had returned from maternity leave, and will be observing the meeting.

Apologies received from Alan Gouldthorpe, Avril Bairstow, Denise Whipham, Barry Morley, Richard Leach, Keith Riley, Kevin Hornsby and Neil Keay.

Wendy gave a brief update on what members of CV had been involved in during the past year and thanked members for how well they had coped with new ways of working throughout the pandemic, using digital means with little support required. By being able to continue the group's good work throughout lockdown restrictions, there have been many positive outcomes, these include:

- Approval of several policies
- Development and approval of the four new strategies
- Formation of two new groups: Carbon Reduction group and the Digital Experience group
- Review and approval of the Volunteers Code of Conduct
- Review and approval of the CV Constitution
- Involvement from members in the design of the Ongo Roadmap for tenants, showing the journey out of lockdown
- Members influenced what information should be shared with the wider tenant base in relation to performance information and the new requirements indicated in the Social Housing White Paper

**2. Previous Minutes from AGM 2020**

The minutes from the previous AGM were approved as a true record. Proposer: Tim Mills, Seconder: Tony Sanderson.

**3. Treasurers Report – Jill Milner**

Jill provided the audited accounts for the previous year that were included in the meeting pack. Jill advised that the accounts had been reviewed by finance, and confirmed there were no discrepancies; with £2673.41 left in the account. Jill asked if anyone had any questions. A member thanked Jill for her hard work and complimented her accurate record keeping documentation.

**4. Election of Officers – Wendy Wolfe**

Wendy thanked the previous officers for their hard work and commitment during the previous year and went on to carry out the elections.

Nominations were received for positions of Chair, Treasurer and Vice Chair prior to the meeting, with two nominations for vice chair; a vote was held prior to the meeting with the following being elected into the following positions:

|                            |                          |                         |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Chair: Avril Bairstow      | Proposer: Tim Mills      | Seconder: Keith Lumbers |
| Vice Chair: Colin Cranidge | Proposer: Tony Sanderson | Seconder: Keith Lumbers |
| Treasurer: Jill Milner     | Proposer: Keith Lumbers  | Seconder: Greg Carter   |

Secretary: No nominations received for this role. It was agreed that customer engagement (CE) would help support the group in producing the minutes for a short period. Members were asked to think about their interest in this role; if anyone would like more information please contact Wendy.

Colin thanked the group for their votes.

**Close of CV AGM**

## **Community Voice Minutes**

**7<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

### **1. Minutes & Actions from Previous Meeting**

Wendy asked for approval of the previous minutes from the May meeting, several members agreed including Keith Lumbers. Wendy provided an update from the previous actions:

|    | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Who</b>  | <b>Update</b>  |
|----|--|-------------|--|
| 1. | CV workshop to be included on the customer engagement forward planner for April 2022 to influence the consumer standard self-assessments | Wendy Wolfe | Item included on the forward agenda planner for 2022.  |
| 2. | Unconscious Bias training to be arranged to accommodate those who hadn't attended it previously  | Wendy Wolfe | The next session has been booked for 27 <sup>th</sup> July at 1.00pm.  |
| 3. | Peter to be added onto the membership for the Carbon Reduction working group   | Wendy Wolfe | Details added to the membership and invites for future meetings to be shared when available.   |
| 4. | Greg to provide details of his query   | Wendy Wolfe | This issue was not reported to Customer Services; Greg was advised to ask the resident to contact them directly so the full details can be logged onto the system. |

### **Decision Item**

### **2. CE Volunteers Code of Conduct – Wendy Wolfe**

Wendy explained that the Code of Conduct had previously been discussed at a CV workshop where members agreed on what amendments should be made. These have now been included in the final document and so Wendy asked the meeting for approval. Members gave approval.

Proposer: Colin Cranidge

Seconder: Tim Mills

As requested at the CV workshop, in addition to the full version of the Code of Conduct a summary sheet has also been produced which will be used going forward.

### **Discussion Items**

### **3. Executive Update (Verbal) – Pete Stones**

Pete provided the executive update in Kevin's absence.

Operational: Operational teams that are able to work from home continue to do so, with small numbers of office bookings now been made. Moving forward our teams are likely to work using a blended approach of both home and office working which will be dependent on

the needs of the business and colleagues. To support this, we have recently agreed an agile framework for staff.

Customer facing buildings such as Ongo House, Viking Centre and The Arc are now open by appointment only. Our Cole Street office is continuing to deliver one to one sessions with customers where required. Restrictions are to be reconsidered once we know more about any changes in government guidance. Both The Arc Café and Viking Centre Café are open, with table service at the Arc Café and takeaway from the Viking Centre Café.

Retirement Scheme Lounges: Plans are still in place to open scheme lounges from 21st June as per the Ongo Roadmap when we expect restrictions will be lifted. We are closely monitoring any changes and updates to government advice. Residents from Wells Court approached us, as they wanted to pilot opening their meeting room twice a week, using the rule of six in the communal room. This was agreed that with social distancing measures, a clear cleaning regime before, during and after use, this could be trialled with a tenant from Wells Courts managing this. We are now considering the same approach for two other schemes - Albion Grove and Lincoln Court as they have approached us too. We will be sending communication to all the other schemes this week to see if they would also like to explore this option with us. This is on the understanding that tenants can manage it, that they will abide to the rule of six and that we can deliver the level of cleaning required to keep our tenants safe. We will keep CV and our wider tenants updated on this.

We Care days: A number of colleagues from Ongo have been taking part in 'We Care' days, which started last week. Building on the safer streets project, colleagues have been out fence painting and tidying up in the Westcliff area.

A New Approach: Over the last few months, Kevin had been updating the group on a project to improve the way certain parts of Ongo operate. This links closely to Ongo's three strategies of offering quality homes, being a great landlord and creating opportunities. We have now completed our review and will be focussing on three key objectives, which are:

- A new triage approach to call handling and queries, to bring more decision making to the Customer Advisors and thus improve the tenant experience
- Bringing all our landlord functions together (Housing and Support working as one team)
- Coaching the Ongo Way that will see front line colleagues trained in coaching techniques to better coach and support our tenants

Kevin will talk you through the changes in more detail at the July CV meeting.

Communities: The communities' team have been successful in gaining extra funding and with some match funding from Ongo, communities will see Ongo investing nearly £500,000 between now and December 2023 in a new project called Endeavour. The Endeavour project will support people with mental health issues to get closer to the labour market and into employment where possible. The participants are a mixed demographic and those with disabilities will receive intensive support to help them to progress.

Property Services: Repairs, empty homes and neighbourhood services have worked well throughout the pandemic and have been working hard to clear the backlog of repairs. The trades deserve a massive acknowledgement for working as normal throughout this stressful period when many organisations are facing huge backlogs of repairs.

Compliance Performance: Compliance has been excellent throughout the pandemic, despite increased challenges around gaining access to properties due to shielding or illness. A big thank you to the majority of tenants for their cooperation, allowing us to keep on top of gas and electrical safety testing and keeping everyone safe.

New Developments: Between 2020 and 2021, 182 new homes were completed, which is Ongo's highest number of new homes delivered in a 12-month period. There also remains a further 173 new homes at varying stages of construction including 24 houses on Frodingham road, 37 houses on Station road, 12 flats on Queensway and 8 bungalows at Trent View house. We have also nearly completed construction of Myos House, our specialist dementia care unit, which has 25 flats and is due to open mid-July. A query was raised as to whether CV members could have the opportunity for a visit before it opens to the public. Karen advised she would look into this and will be in touch with members who may be interested in attending. **ACTION:** Karen to investigate whether some CV members could visit Myos House once it is complete.

A member asked if Ongo had faced any supply issues regarding building materials. Pete advised that currently they hadn't faced any issues, however that didn't mean there wouldn't be any in the near future and could see a potential alternative required for roof tiles. There is a healthy pipeline for the future however, with potential projects at varying stages, for example, some are at the initial discussions with developers and landowners' stage, other schemes are being drawn up and awaiting planning, Board approval or Homes England funding.

Ongo have started gathering feedback from tenants living in new build properties and customer satisfaction with new build properties is positive. The only emerging theme is that some tenants are struggling to get the builders to return to the property to complete repairs.

- 96% of new occupants said they would recommend an Ongo Homes new build to a friend or colleague
- 97% reported being satisfied with the appearance of their new home
- 92% stated they were satisfied with the quality of their new home
- 96% of those surveyed were satisfied with the space provided

#### 4. **Performance Report – Natalie Davies**

Natalie presented the appendix document on screen for the group to see and ran through each section explaining the figures and trends for each service area.

- Complaints are currently on the increase, however this may not be a true representation as this could be in relation to delays due to Covid restrictions. The complaints process has also now changed due to the Social Housing White Paper requirements and the introduction of the Customer Resolution Officers.
- The amount of digital contacts received by the Customer Service Team has doubled leading to the amount of calls received being halved, as well as the number of dropped calls.
- The Income Collection Team have managed to lower the amount of rent arrears during the pandemic, whereas most housing associations have had increased rent arrears. Ongo's former tenancy arrears have also decreased. To achieve both of these is fantastic.

- Tenancy breaches have risen during the pandemic and this is believed to be due to more people spending time at home. This follows the negative trend of anti-social behaviour across the whole of the UK during this time.
- There is a reduction in the amount of empty properties Ongo has. This is also a good achievement as it has been hard to complete major works during this time.
- Repairs satisfaction levels dropped due to trades only completing emergency repairs during Covid restrictions.
- Neighbourhood services targets were not affected by the pandemic.
- Employment support figures are up which is also linked to the pandemic, as many people lost their jobs during this time.
- Customer Engagement have a satisfaction level of over 85% throughout the year in relation to tenants feeling listened to and having their views acted upon. The percentage of total tenants engaged that are younger voices can change month on month depending on what communications have been sent out during that month. A member asked if there were any figures in relation to the percentages to see how many people were engaged. Wendy advised she did not have the numbers to hand but can provide these if required.  
**ACTION:** Wendy to provide updates on number of tenants engaged that are younger voices for the group.

## **BREAK**

### **5. Customer Engagement Activity Update (Verbal) – Tenants Reps**

The tenant reps who attended the meetings during the past month gave updates as follow:

- Tenant Inspectors – Keith provided the update in Alan’s absence, explaining that the new lettable standards was discussed and will be in place from July. A new method for carrying out empty homes inspections was discussed, which will be virtual inspections to be trialled for a period of 3 months with experienced tenant inspectors. A review will take place after the 3 months to check how satisfied we are with the process. Members raised the negative aspects of virtual inspections, e.g. not being able to check doors and door keys work properly, that windows open and close correctly and that you can’t check the smell of a property. It was agreed that some physical inspections would still be completed to include a mixture of checks. Wendy advised that the lettings officers also carryout checks when they visit the property.  
Keith advised that the green space inspections and estate inspections had started up again following social distancing guidelines.
- Social Housing White Paper – Jill informed the group that she really enjoyed the session. Jenny from Tpas had presented the training and explained the information well, making it easy to understand as she was extremely knowledgeable.
- Complaints Monitoring Panel – Tim explained this had been the first meeting this year and the panel were introduced to the new Customer Resolution Team and the new complaints handling process. He stated that even though the team have been in place only a short time, they had managed to lower the average time to resolve a complaint to 5 days from over 20 days. Tim advised that the Ombudsman’s new panel was also discussed, and that Becky was happy to hear that one of the Complaints Panel is also a member of the Ombudsman’s panel.

- RA Networking – Wendy explained that most of the resident associations had been successfully holding meetings over Teams during the pandemic and Customer Engagement had kept in regular contact with them. Digital newsletters have been developed for the groups to help keep their local communities updated. The second Resident Association networking meeting had taken place last week, discussing what the groups hoped to achieve once lockdown restrictions are lifted. The group shared their ideas to help each other with planning activities etc. in their local areas.
- Customer Engagement – Wendy congratulated the new CV Officers advising them that a provisional date has been booked for their first Officers meeting for the 14<sup>th</sup> June at 10.00am. It was agreed to make changes to the time for the meeting.  
**ACTION:** Wendy to notify the officers of a suitable time.  
Wendy advised there was a meeting provisionally booked for the Officers to meet with Leah in PR on the 15<sup>th</sup> June. The officers present confirmed they were available; however, this would need to be confirmed with the Chair.

## 6. Customer Engagement Activity Update (Verbal) – Wendy

- CV training Schedule Update - Wendy advised members about the forthcoming training sessions due to take place, which included:
  - Complaints handling to be facilitated by Becky (Customer Experience Manager) on the 15<sup>th</sup> June, 1.30pm to 3.30pm.
  - Effective use of Social Media and Websites on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1:30pm to 3.30pm.

Members were reminded to contact Rachael (CE assistant) to register names for attending these sessions. The links for each session will be sent out closer to the time. Ryan requested to join the sessions and will be added to the attendance list.

- Social Media Promotion - Wendy explained that our next promotional video is due out next week and is from one of our volunteers. There will also be a post sent out about engaging new members to join the CE structures. Wendy also advised that some bulk text messages had been sent out to younger voices in relation to the procurement process.
- Key News - the latest printed edition was published on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May for all tenants and leaseholders. A satisfaction survey is available online and on the back of the printed edition for readers to give their feedback and ideas for future issues. A member expressed that she hadn't received the magazine along with a few others at Ancholme Gardens. Wendy advised she would look into this.  
**ACTION:** Wendy to check details of the distribution for the Key News at Ancholme Gardens. Wendy explained the team are also in the process of refreshing the overall look of the printed editions of the Key News magazine. Customer Engagement will be carrying out some internal and external consultation, including with the Publications Panel. Feedback from this will be used to design some new front covers and pages. The Publications Panel will then choose the top design based on the feedback received, ready to start using the new design from the next printed edition in October.
- Neighbourhood Pride Events - the Customer Engagement team are now in the process of making plans for these and are working with Neighbourhood Services to identify areas that

would benefit.

### Information Items

#### 7. **Any Other Business**

Wendy asked the members to contact Customer Engagement with their preference for holding future CV meetings, e.g. face to face, digitally or a blended approach.

The Vice Chair asked if the Officers could have a list of all the CV members and their contact details. Wendy advised that members would be individually contacted to seek their approval.

**ACTION:** Rachael to contact all members to ask for permission to share contact details with the CV Officers.

#### 8. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be taking place on **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July at 1.30pm**, the paperwork will be sent out nearer the time. This meeting may still be conducted via Microsoft Teams, depending on government guidelines and the results of CV member's preferences.

#### 9. **Action Plan**

|    | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Who</b>     | <b>Update</b>  |
|----|--|----------------|--|
| 1. | Change time for the CV officers' first meeting on 14 <sup>th</sup> June.   | Wendy Wolfe    | A suitable time was arranged and the officers attended.  |
| 2. | Explore whether some CV members can visit Myos House once completed.   | Karen Cowan    |  |
| 3. | Provide numbers of tenants engaged that are 'younger voices'.  | Wendy Wolfe    | Monthly figures to be provided under the Customer Engagement update.   |
| 5. | Check distribution of the Key News magazines at Ancholme Gardens.  | Wendy Wolfe    | All addresses at Ancholme Gardens are on the mailing list - if they have an email address with us then they will receive it digitally (unless specified otherwise). I advised residents to check their email inboxes and spam/junk folders if they hadn't received a copy. |
| 6. | Contact all members to ask for permission to share their contact details with the CV Officers.   | Rachael Haynes | Members have confirmed if they are willing to share their details or not. A document is being created to send out to the CV Officers, with the details of those who have given consent.  |
| 7. | Members to notify Rachael (CE Assistant) about attendance for the Complaints Handling Training and the Effective use of Social Media training. | Rachael Haynes | Names provided and added to the list. Reminders sent out by Customer Engagement to help increase numbers.  |