

Community Voice (CV) Meeting Minutes



Date: Tuesday 21st June 2023
Time: 1.30pm – 4pm
Chair: Tim Mills

Apologies: Melvyn Kenyon, Kevin Hornsby, Christine Osimbo, Stewart Pearson, Ian Bullyment, Ron Weller, Paul Pearson, Michelle Hodgson, Harry Jackson, Tima Omari, Sue Whitelock, Mike Robinson (observer)

Present: CV Officers: Tim Mills (Chair), Jill Milner (Vice-Chair), Dawn Johnson (Treasurer)
CV Members: Keith Lumbers, Keith Riley, Paul Pearson, Jim Newcombe, Tami Reevell, Anita James, Tracey Bain, Dawne Reed, Susan Hickling, Eileen Salmon, Jeanette Ellis, Matt Waddingham, Anita James, Tony Sanderson, Paul Smith, Judith Tomlinson, John Parsons, Tracey Borrill, Andrew Mumby.
Ongo Staff: Karen Cowan, Neil Keay, Steve Hepworth, Andrea Morley, Jo Sugden, Wendy Wolfe, Bev Miller, Heather Robinson, Steve Shelley, Bev Lewis

1. Welcome, Apologies & Housekeeping.

Tim welcomed all members and observers and brief introductions were given by all present. Tim explained that there was no planned fire drill and the fire exits were pointed out. He also reminded members to not raise any personal issues and to use the general enquiry log if a personal issue had been raised before but no update had been received.

2. Minutes & Actions of Previous Meeting

The minutes were approved as a true record and Wendy provided an update on the actions:

	Action	Who	Update
1.	Changes to be made to Building Safety Resident Engagement Framework.	Emma Atkinson	Completed.
2.	Customer Experience presentation to be shared with members.	Customer Engagement	Completed.
3.	Repairs information with updated facts and figures to be added to September agenda and to be delivered.	Customer Engagement / Pete Stones	In process of being arranged.
4.	Feedback about external contractor to be passed on.	Pete Stones	Completed.
5.	Reason why tenancy breaches have increased to be brought to next meeting featuring performance information.	Tenancy Services / Performance	In process of being arranged.
6.	Cleaning inspection of Myos House to be added to the Tenant Inspectors schedule.	Customer Engagement	Completed.
7.	Internal process for what needs to be removed and what can stay when leaving a property to be reviewed.	Lettings	Update to be provided at a future meeting.

8.	Look into the possibility of a CV stand at the Ongo Carnival.	Customer Engagement	There will be no Community Voice stand at the carnival but people will be around to hand out leaflets and to give advice to any persons interested.
9.	Recommendations from Tpas report to be brought to June meeting.	Customer Engagement	Update to be provided at next meeting.

3. Treasurers Report – Dawn Johnson

Dawn asked if there were any questions on the report sent out in the CV information pack, there were none.

4. Board Observers – Tim Mills

Next Board meeting via Board Room or Microsoft Teams, 3rd July at 2pm. Three CV members can attend, names interested to notify customer engagement team.

Decision Items

5. Environmental & Sustainability Policy - Andrea Morley.

Name change on the policy, had great feedback from the last meeting so Andrea welcomed comments.

Page 3 end of sentence offset is it 1 word? A member says it doesn't flow – Andrea will have a look maybe change the wording slightly. **ACTION**

A member raised some issues at the last meeting but then reading the final copy it doesn't seem to have changed anything, they noted it was a good meeting with lots of points raised but not reflected in the policy. He doesn't see Ongo's ambitions, aims and objectives just loose guidelines with a few references to 2050. He would have expected Ongo as a forward-thinking organisation to be more ambitious in this policy. Karen assured the group that all the feedback is in the action plan and suggested having a separate meeting to go through with CV.

It was agreed for a separate meeting to be convened on this topic in 2 months. **ACTION**
Action plan is different to the policy but it's important to not ignore the action points, should it be an appendix to the policy but it's a live action plan document that is ever changing. If political agenda changes our policy will have to change radically as well, the policy will now go through to board to be passed as approval was given by the group.

Discussion Items

6. Equality & Diversity update – Karen Cowan.

Karen has done a piece of analysis on equality and diversity to identify the diversity profiles of tenants, staff and board members (diversity profiles in terms of the protected characteristics, e.g. age, disability, gender, sexual orientation etc.). The profiles were then compared to identify whether representation had been achieved at all levels. Some of the findings included:

- Ongo need to try to get better representation of disability at board and staff levels to aid informed decision making.

- Ethnicity is represented at board and staff level but not at management level. The percentage of total tenancies are below the percentage of ethnicity of the general population across North Lincs and Yorkshire & Humber. We need to understand why those from minority ethnic communities are not coming to us for housing, is it that they are living in larger family generational groups, are they utilising private rented accommodation due to geographical location etc. As long as we can understand the reasons then we can identify whether there is anything that we need to do to ensure equal opportunity and access.
- Further diversity profiling on Community Voice will be carried out next to identify any under representation that needs to be addressed.
- A member asked why the question of sexual orientation is relevant as they didn't believe it should be. Ongo's response was that all minority groups are relevant. E.g. in relation to ethnicity, Ongo is very white as an organisation and this has been raised with board. Proportionally staff are representative but at manager level and higher up the organisation there is less colour. 30 years ago, this was the same situation with women and by doing the profiling and surveys, this was turned this round due to awareness raising. Could it be that as a group we are all white and is it that someone may feel because there is no one that looks like me they may not be welcomed? We just need to start to turn any under representation around like we have with gender and we can only do this if we can identify all of the gaps to make sure we are not discriminatory.

The group noted that they are happy to receive a report like this, it created good discussion and raised awareness of lots of differences.

7. Performance Information – Karen Cowan.

Karen explained that the group had received the report and performance from April, but she could talk about the May figures as she had now gained access to them.

- Complaints unfortunately increased and dealing with them was not as quick as previously. In May this had improved at the stages 1 and 2 beating the targets set.
- Damp and mould, blame and claim cultures also the government campaigns “make it right” all have had an impact. Ongo have also encouraged people that hadn't advised of damp and mould issues previously to report it now. Extra resources have been made available to get these looked at in a timely manner.
- Karen asked the question for anyone ringing into Ongo, is the service any better? The response was mixed with a couple of members saying better and some saying that they had given up waiting on the phone (although they did state it was at peak time). As a whole they suggested that the Out Of Hours service was not good. Karen asked if the group wanted more information on that service and the group stated yes. **ACTION**
- Someone mentioned that the on-hold time was quite long. Karen explained that the turnover of staff is quite high in the customer experience department because it's a very pressurised environment with high amounts of stress. A member noted that the call back system works well so maybe we should promote this more.
- Against a target of 80 empty homes (voids), we currently have 160 at moment. Voids with investments is classed as major works which are taken out of the equation. Ongo's visibility on Home Choice Lincs is only about 50% so we could be losing to other housing associations. We have received good feedback from a couple of new contractors working on these.
- For information, due to government changes, domestic violence reports are no longer classed as ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour).

In the future the performance report will be a CV agenda item on a 3 monthly cycle for full discussion rather than monthly. Should anything occur inbetween that Ongo feel CV should be made aware of then this will be raised at the next meeting.

Information Items

8. Executive Update (verbal) – Jo Sugden.

Lots of issues already spoken about by Karen so not much to add. In terms of complaints, yes we are dealing with them but we need to learn from them and not make the same mistakes repeatedly. Complaints are still likely to be on the high side due to all the campaigns going on currently.

9. H&S Compliance (videos) - Steve Shelley

Steve went through a presentation; this will be sent out with the minutes along with a couple of links.

There has been a large increase in mobility scooter fires as Lithium batteries are prone to exploding, this is why they are not allowed in people's homes in high-risk buildings and why we have scooter rooms available instead. Steve confirmed that the fire extinguishers in the scooter rooms are CO2 and fire extinguishers in the communal areas of the schemes are foam.

Ongo made the decision to install 60-minute protective fire doors rather than the 30 minutes which most other Housing Associations have done. This gives more security and peace of mind. It was asked if we do fire drills with tenants in situ; the answer being yes but sometimes if tenants know it's a drill they won't come out. Another question raised was whether the masionette's at Market Hill had fire doors; the response being that the current doors are fit for purpose. Steve asked the group to try and educate people that fire doors MUST be kept in good order as some people will alter the door closures etc., which is a real risk. Fire drills are carried out regularly checking the sound and the magnetic door closers work.

A member asked if Ongo advises tenants not to tackle the fire themselves as a non-qualified person could use wrong fire extinguishers and make it worse/potentially harm themselves and others. Most of the fire extinguishers are foam – this will make a lithium fire worse, which tenants need to be made aware of. Steve confirmed that the extinguishers in the scooter rooms are CO2 and we don't want to bombard tenants with information as sometimes this isn't retained.

Unfortunately, we can't incorporate fire door checks into the annual gas safety checks as not all the buildings have gas. We just need to enforce the safety aspect of the drills and regulations. The question was asked as to whether there is a language barrier for some tenants (although on the back of the leaflet it does say to contact us if you need this is a different language. It was agreed that Steve Shelley will identify the demographic of the tenants in the high-rise blocks. **ACTION**

It was stated that not all occupiers of homes with fire doors are tenants, e.g. leaseholders. Steve has a meeting with the leasehold team to organize access etc. and enforcement of these regulations with landlords other than Ongo.

10. Customer Engagement (CE) Activity update (verbal) – Tenant Reps.

Resident scrutiny panel report has been done and this will come out to Community Voice asap.

Building safety training to do with fire safety and legionella - it has been decided that physical training would be best as difficult to do digitally. Feedback has been received that the fire door leaflet was very informative.

Complaints Panel are going to strip their process right back, changing to meeting every 2 months rather than 3 months to keep momentum flowing.

Tim reminded the group about nominations for the Community Voice officer positions, having until Monday to enter them.

The group training feedback was good, lots of information.

11. CE update – Wendy Wolfe.

Utility focus groups for retirement schemes coming up soon as have a tight timescale to work to.

Lots of training dates are coming up in the next few months and these will be sent out separately.

12. Any Other Business.

Facebook live Q & A event with Steve Hepworth, these figures be added into our engagement figures. Approx. 2,000 people looked at it (not all stopped for the whole period) and there were over 100 comments and questions.

Electric vehicle charging points at Myos house in place for 2 years have never worked, they were fitted but never switched on. Karen said she is aware of this problem and is working on it.

It was asked if we have a policy on CCTV. The response was yes but it's not really fit for purpose as it should only show your own property. However, it is very easy to just move the camera as and when you like.

13. Date and Time of next meeting

15th August, 9.30am at the Arc in person or via Teams.