

**HAVEBURY HOUSING PARTNERSHIP
TENANTS FORUM
Held on Monday 9 September 2019**

Constitution:	Sandra Norris (Chair)	Kevin Jefferson (Vice Chair)
	Lucy Adams	Patricia Donovan
	Keith Harris	Mary Lawrence
	Nikki Jefferson	Sandra Payne
	Jane Long	Lee Northcut
	Patricia Partington	Teresa Casabona
	Sue Haydock	Cher Jackson
	Jackie Rudd	Anna Ovcerenko

Invited:	Andrew Smith	CEO
	Anita Jones	Director of Operations
	Amy St Ledger	Assistant Director of Customer Services
	Rob Longfoot	Tenancy and Estates Services Manager
	Ellie Darling	Customer Services Manager
	Aimi Myhill	Tenancy and Estates Services Co-ordinator
	Hayley Lambert	Communications Manager
	Karen Farrar	PA to Directors (Secretariat)
	Kevin Lawrence	Idverde
	Andy Griffiths	Idverde

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|----------|---|----|
| 1 | Apologies and Declarations of Interests | |
| 1.1 | Apologies were received from Jane Long, Ellie Darling, Hayley Lambert and Karen Farrar | |
| 1.2 | There were no declarations of interest. | |
| 1.3 | Pat Partington has resigned from the Forum due to ill health. | |
| 2.0 | Minutes from previous meeting - July 2019 | |
| 2.1 | The date on the minutes from last meeting reads incorrectly; to read 'July'. | |
| 2.2 | 1.3.2 KJ asked for fly tip information which has failed to materialise. Would like to know fly tips for the month by area. Information can be provided. | RL |
| 2.3 | 4.3 trial inhouse responsive repairs service'. SN found it strange to receive an automated call in the evening. AJ said the reason for this was explained to Tenants Forum at the last meeting. | |
| 2.4 | 4.4 Keith Harris asked '17.5% response rate' - out of how many? | |
| 2.5 | 3.4 TD asked when is tree survey? RL advised ongoing and will update outside meeting. | RL |

2.6	SN asked for the new Assets Director Richard Oliver to be invited to the next meeting. AJ confirmed he hasn't yet joined HHP (joining date 30/9/19) but as soon as he does, he will be invited to the next meeting.	KF
2.7	5.12 TL asked what is the NIP budget? SN referred TL to 'jargon buster' sheet showing acronyms.	
2.8	8.5 KJ referred to water butts and said he is still waiting for quote from the Chair. SN agreed to move on and refer to this point later.	SN
2.9	Minutes were confirmed as an accurate version	
3.0	Idverde report	
3.1	KL asked if Tenants Forum members all received the report. All confirmed.	
3.2	JR asked how many are in each team? KL confirmed 3.	
3.3	SN asked when each team come out to cut the grass why don't they bring a strimmer? (Example given of recent contractor visit to Haverhill). KL confirmed should all have strimmer and will follow up on this.	KL
3.4	KJ had heard information that the Council (assumes IDV) were cutting grass and broke some knee-high fencing. KJ advised that person to report to HHP or IDV. KL confirmed no reports received by IDV.	
3.5	SN asked for confirmation on what will happen to Havebury Area Monitors (HAMS)? RL confirmed meeting to be held in October. RL coming up with new ideas on how contract can be managed and wants to make sure HAMS fit into this - looking for consistency and for HAMS to make meaningful contribution. Form will be improved. KJ stated that he likes the estate walkabout report. RL stated that do not wish to replicate Ranger work.	
4.0	Grounds Maintenance Monthly Report	
4.1	SN stated she was glad to see other areas such as Thetford mentioned. It has not been explained what the Rangers are doing now. RL clarified working in zones (A and B).	
4.2	Confirmed Rangers still looking at estates.	
4.3	SH asked for clarification on Town Centre/Grove Road etc - can HHP update on what zone this is? AJ clarified the zones are not a customer strategy - it is about HHP providing a good service to customers.	
4.4	KJ stated fly tipping information is missing.	

5.0 **Together with Tenants Update**

5.1 AJ gave verbal update following a successful workshop on 30 July. The workshop was part of a National Conversation which aims to make sure things that are important to tenants are tied into the running and governance of HHP. Workshop was well attended and a good session. AJ gave thanks for attending. Feedback on next steps for HHP / results of session to be sent off to the National Conversation. Will also be available to our tenants. Lots of information will be gathered across country, looking at barriers to engagement. Results will help shape the National Charter. What will come out of this will not just be a tick box exercise - will have impact on how HHP is run. National Conference takes place in September where will feedback on National Conversations. This will go to Government. Second follow up session to take place at HHP to take actions to next stages. Will put out newsletter email over next few weeks. Look out for invitation. If anyone can't make it, questions will be sent out, please still provide information if you can.

6.0 **Verbal Update on the Process of Mutual Exchange**

6.1 AM gave a presentation on the Mutual Exchange process following some feedback from Tenants Forum.

6.2 The mutual exchange process has remained the same but due to changes in structure and resourcing, delivery had been a challenge. The presentation included stats on the number of exchange completions and the workload within the team, the staff managing it and confirmation that the team were actively managing 8 exchanges within agreed timescales.

A full review of the process is taking place on 10 September and improvements to information on the website and in writing will be included in that.

6.3 Havebury has 42 days to make a decision on the exchange. SN felt that there should be a nationwide policy on processing exchanges. RL advised that 42 days was the deadline and tenants had a right to complain to their respective landlords and would be encouraged to do so. Positive feedback was shared from SH that Havebury was the easiest landlord she had exchanged into, having completed 3 exchanges in 18 months.

6.4 SN commented that it sounds like everything is in hand.

7.0 **Policy Updates**

7.1 **Anti-Social Behaviour (RL)**

RL supplied a tracked changes version of the Policy in Boardpacks. Explained he has picked up responsibility for ASB process. Policy has been refined - aims to be short and to the point. Policy is statement about what HHP do; procedure is how HHP do it. RL went through policy and offered to answer any questions.

- 7.2 2.2 - SN finds it confusing with tracked changes.
- 7.3 2.3 - RL stated that it aims to set out clearly what ASB is. Havebury Housing Partnership are not only agency involved in tackling ASB and crime - HHP fit in with other agencies.
- 7.4 SN stated that Tenants Forum find it difficult to differentiate between ASB and Nuisance, what HHP do and what other agencies do. RL explained HHP may not be the lead agency, but HHP can pull it all together and take relevant action as a landlord.
- 7.5 3.1.1 - JR highlighted that the policy doesn't talk about minors and their responsibility. RL explained the tenancy agreement makes it clear the tenant is responsible for their household members, and anyone visiting the home. RL to ensure the Policy includes clear information about minors. RL
- 7.6 RL explained that the first advice HHP should give is to advise person reporting the problem to talk to their neighbour first and exercise tolerance. Residents to understand some behaviours are not classed as ASB.
- 7.7 RL acknowledged the Policy is lengthy but it will develop over time with flow charts etc and there will have focus on regular updates and better communication.
- 7.8 SN stated that the biggest issue on estates is drugs. What HHP can do about it? RL suggested that Havebury can seek injunctions as a landlord through court and begin possession proceedings however HHP must be careful not to ruin Police investigations. Intelligence sharing between HHP and Police. HHP would like to hear from residents if there is a problem. There are lots of powers out there HHP can push for.
- 7.9 KH made reference to the policy to 'Operational Board'. Correct name is 'Operational Committee'. To be corrected in the Policy. RL
- 7.10 **7.2 Hardship Fund (JR)**
- 7.11 Hardship Fund (£10,000) is a historical part of HHPs response to welfare reform. It is up for review. Fund exists to support tenants through financial hardship (to combat bedroom tax and Welfare Reform). Broadened its scope since then. The way to administer the fund has formalised. Fund has been underutilised - suspect because HHP do well at securing DHPs for tenants. This fund wasn't intended to replace DHP. When the fund is used it is hoped to provide short term impact. Each application would receive roughly £2000.
- 7.13 SN asked for clarification on the reasons people use the fund. JR answered that initially for Universal Credit (UC) claimants struggling with 6-week gap but this wait has been offset by Advanced Payments by DWP and they have extended repayment period. Has been used for incidents of under occupation.

- 7.14 JR stated that the fund is not advertised to tenants but UC guide that goes out to tenants mentions it.
- 7.15 Discussed lodger pros and cons - discount on Council Tax however UC deductions etc.
- 7.16 JR stated the procedure is published in HHP's website.
- 7.17 KH asked do HHP handhold with tenants who need help with claiming benefits? JR confirmed section of Income Team who provide advice and would always help support tenants before applying for Hardship Fund.
- 7.18 TL asked for clarification on what about applications based on benefit cap. JR stated that would be taken into consideration as part of the fund.
- 7.19 SH stated that it is good to have there in case tenants need help - don't know what will happen.
- 7.20 SN asked for clarification on how utilised is the fund? JR stated there is one application this year so far. Reflection of success in Income Team. Two very experienced officers.
- 7.21 JR said will look at getting more visibility of the Fund internally in HHP's structure.
- 7.22 AJ stated that the policy has been brought before Tenants Forum today to check tenants are still happy to have rent utilised to help tenants in hardship. AJ thinks HHP still have a need to have some form of assistance.
- 7.23 KJ asked for vote from Tenants Forum if still need this fund. Vote taken - all in favour.

JR

7.3 Policy Donations - AG

- 7.24 HHP has a small pot of money to give for donations. Need some guidelines. If someone wants sponsorship, HHP would refer them to guidelines.
- 1.1 - typing error "we be using our resources". Error to be amended.

AG

8.0 Tenants Forum AGM

- 8.1 SN stated that there were many changes to the constitution last year - no changes this year. No election this year - next in 2021. SN to remain as Chair and KJ as Vice Chair.
- 8.2 SN will be doing appraisals for Tenants Forum members in Feb/March 2020 to find out how they are getting on, what they know about housing, what they would like to know etc. Ellie Darling to support with questions.

9.0	Tenants Forum AGM 2018 Minutes	
9.1	3.8 - did Ellie come back about the 'Contractors Day'? Contractors day would give tenants a chance to ask the Technicians questions i.e. "why is it important to have my boiler services?" etc. SN to raise with Ellie.	SN
9.2	SN signed off AGM 2018 minutes with ASL.	
10.0	AOB	
10.1	JR stated Equality and Diversity - couldn't complete the form online/by email. Explained would need to print form to complete. JR - maybe would have been able to do this with training. Highlighted need for 'Tablet Training' for all Tenants Forum members.	
10.2	SN would like photos of the Tenants Forum members as a group. Suggestion to arrange for Communications Team (Hayley / Lauren) to take photos.	
10.3	Suggestion to complete photographs by Comms team, and 'Table Training' on the same day as the next Tenants Forum Meeting (before the meeting - around 3pm?). If anyone can't attend at 3pm to come in as soon as they can.	KF
10.4	SN asked if Aaron Services / Seager - if they will come to the next meeting?	KF
10.5	SN asked new Tenants Forum Members on how they found the meeting.	
10.6	SN asked RL how often he will attend Tenants Forum. Agreed will be invited to every meeting.	KF
10.7	NJ to be on the Strategic Board.	
10.8	LN - Interviewed and accepted two tenants for Performance and Scrutiny Panel. Another tenant to be interviewed 20 September. This will leave one member of panel outstanding. Next Panel to look at ASB (half day panel with Police attending). LN to let NJ know information for Strategic Board.	
11.0	Communications Update	
11.1	SN stated was nice to see photos of new starters.	
11.2	SN asked for clarification on STAR - for 'fairly dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' what do HHP do about it? Do HHP ignore? AJ - HHP do pick this up. HHP try to resolve on the phone if HHP can and make detailed notes. Passed on to managers/teams.	
11.3	AJ stated figures look good overall - satisfaction remains high.	
11.4	Havebury News - agreed Tenants Forum would all receive a hard copy as require this. Has not happened.	KF

- 11.5 SN - water butts going down well.
- 11.6 Christmas opening hours noted. JR - can Havebury News go out in December, so tenants get Christmas opening times before new year? AJ confirmed will go out before Christmas this time.
- 11.7 SN - Complaints Panel - noted members on the Panel. Mistake in printing - reads "Keith and Lee Northcut". Lee Northcut correct but should read Keith Harris.
- 11.8 SN stated she would like to see all complaints rather than a selection. AJ confirmed this would be ok as numbers not too high.
- 11.9 Question was asked around the reason for office refresh. AJ confirmed to create a modern workplace. 11 new HHP employees so a need to create space. Looking at the creation of a breakout area, different meeting spaces (more informal), and general housekeeping of the building. There has not been a lot of investment in the building to date. AJ will be moving back in amongst the teams, so staff see Exec team more.

Meeting closed at 1900

Next meeting: Monday 28 October

Signature _____

Position _____

Date _____