

Note of meeting held 16th July 2024

Subject: Tenant Scrutiny Group – meeting five.

Venue: Aberdeen Office – 680 King Street, Aberdeen

Time: 11am till 1.30pm

| People present | Apologies | Meet separately |
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| Samantha Hough (SH) Customer Participation Officer | | |
| RB – tenant, Aberdeen | CN – tenant, Ellon | |
| KR – tenant, Aberdeen | KP – tenant, Stonehaven | |
| RB – tenant, Aberdeen | SC – tenant, Aberdeen | |
| KH – tenant, Stonehaven | | |
| BL – tenant, Aberdeen | | |
| Catherine Coutts (CC) Tenant Participation Officer from Castlehill Housing Association | | |

Overview of the meeting

The plan for the meeting was to hear from our guest speaker, Catherine Coutts from Castlehill Housing Association. This was an opportunity for the group to learn how their peers engage with their tenant groups. We also planned to work on draft content for our scrutiny group webpage and discuss the partnership agreement which is being drafted to cover the group's activities.

Also planned for the meeting was a discussion on a future policy review which the tenants may want to be involved in along with continuing with the skill building exercise. Tenants were also to be given an update on their volunteering badges and plan how the group will discuss with Langstane staff details of their work so far along with future plans.

The group continues to maintain momentum with members remaining on a journey of learning and co-working. Once again next steps were discussed for moving forward which is very positive as this indicates that members are looking to get involved in project work as they move past the preparation and training stages.

| Item discussed | Notes |
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| Welcome and housekeeping | <p>Members were welcomed by SH and offered refreshments.</p> <p>No fire alarm was scheduled for today so if the alarm were to sound everyone was informed of the procedure to leave the training area.</p> |
| Apologies, attendance update and update on volunteer badges | <p>SH relayed apologies received and announced to the group that IT has decided to leave the group.</p> <p>Volunteer badges were handed to those in attendance however the lanyards and badge holders are not yet available. These will be presented to members at the next meeting.</p> |
| Guest Speaker presentation | <p>Catherine Coutts, Tenant Participation Officer from Castlehill Housing Association attended the meeting and gave a presentation highlighting the work of Castlehill's RTO (Registered Tenant Organisation), CaRTO. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The history of the group • Their status, autonomy, and budget • The group's activities organised with their own funds • Method and frequency of their meetings • What involvement they have with Association policy reviews <p>Following the presentation was a discussion where members asked questions directly to Catherine about the group.</p> |
| Review/Discussion about visit to Aberdeen City Council's service review group on 4 th June | <p>SH shared with the group that the session was a success with all being welcomed warmly by Aberdeen City Council tenants and staff and the session had been dedicated to talking about Langstane's journey so far. It was a helpful session with lots of positive information and tips provided for us to take away and learn from .</p> <p>Members of the group commented that they found the session helpful and look forward to the next meeting which SH says will not be till 2025.</p> <p>Although the organisations are different in terms of structure and size it is helpful for tenants and staff to get together and share good practice.</p> |
| Quick review of previous meeting notes | <p>SH asked members if they had received the hard copy meeting notes from the previous meeting, which were posted to them with the agenda for the current meeting. Only one member had not so a copy was provided.</p> <p>Members were asked if there were any comments and KH raised one issue. This was regarding the conversation previously held about refreshments provided at meetings. KH stated that as the meeting was over lunch he would like to see lunch provided. Other members were asked by SH if they would like sandwiches and they said no, light refreshments were their preferred option. Therefore, sandwiches will be provided for those who request them.</p> <p>No other comments were made regarding the meeting notes.</p> |
| Skills review – starter discussion | <p>Due to amount of time left in the meeting SH provided the group with copies of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. This is to help everyone think particularly about their personal skills which</p> |

| Item discussed | Notes |
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| | <p>they bring to the group. There was a short discussion about completing the form and SH promised to send copies to those who were not present.</p> <p>The group were reassured by SH that this was optional and only being proposed to help the group think about their existing skills and those they would like to develop.</p> <p>Freepost envelopes were also provided so if members wish to return their sheets to SH they can do so.</p> |
| Idea from management about scrutiny project | <p>The Association will soon be reviewing their antisocial behaviour policy and the tenant group has been invited to take part in the review. This is very positive as it means the group are at the forefront of management plans when developing policy reviews. SH asked the group if they were interested in taking part and all those in attendance were enthusiastic about being involved. SH promised to check with those not in attendance for their views.</p> <p>The group were however informed that they will not be undertaking this review as a scrutiny project as they are not yet at that stage. All were in agreement with this. However, SH stated this would be a good opportunity to think about questions and see this as a chance to work with staff and take part as a group opposed to individually.</p> <p>The response from the group will be fed back to management and the group will be kept up to date as the review progresses.</p> <p>One point that was raised during this discussion was a query from KH about the relationship between the scrutiny group and Langstane's Audit Committee. SH advised that the scrutiny group is independent of Langstane so should not be in conflict with any internal board of management related group. However, SH promised to check this with management and provide feedback at the next meeting.</p> |
| Update on scrutiny framework | <p>The majority of the group have provided feedback on the Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct handed out by SH at the previous meeting.</p> <p>This will now be incorporated into building the framework and the partnership agreement for the group. A draft document will be discussed at the September meeting so the group and staff can work on this together.</p> |
| Any other business | <p>KH has asked for some information on tenants' rights under the new Labour Government and if any guidance is available through the SFHA (Scottish Federation of Housing Associations).</p> <p>Again, SH will enquire and feed back to the group at the next meeting.</p> |
| Date and planning of next meeting - September | <p>SH reminded those who needed to claim for their milage to do so, providing expenses form to those who need them.</p> <p>As not all members present and some who were had no way of checking potential future dates, SH agree with group to send an email to all to check everyone's availability for September so a suitable date can be arranged.</p> <p>Preparation for next meeting and future activities - try and complete the SWOT analysis and then start to draft the scrutiny webpage content along with starting arrangements for a walkabout. We also need to prepare all</p> |

| Item discussed | Notes |
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| | members digital skills as a back up in case they're unable to attend a face-to-face meeting. |

Outcomes

- Members enjoyed presentation by guest speaker, finding it very useful and interesting.
- Meeting continue to be held every two months with more frequent meetings arranged where necessary.
- Sandwiches will be provided for those who request them as meeting times are to be kept from 11am till 1pm.
- SH and group to continue to work together on webpage and framework.
- Partnership agreement to be drafted for the group to review at the September meeting.
- Members interested in being part of the antisocial behaviour policy review.
- Members still interested in a neighbourhood walkabout being arranged as their first project as scrutineers.

Next steps for SH

- Catch up with the members who were unable to attend the meeting.
- Enquire as to whether RB's position on the TPAS Board of Management is a conflict of interest for her membership with the scrutiny tenant group.
- Enquire as to the relationship between the scrutiny group and Langstane's Audit Committee.
- Arrange a session where all tenants can attend to take some promotional photographs for the group to use for publicity.
- Continue to work on drafting the partnership agreement and scrutiny framework.
- Action staff and member getting together so staff can learn about the group and their work.