

Property Improvement Panel Meeting
Wednesday 23rd November, 2pm at Coastal House

Attendees:

Elaine Christian (EC)
Maurice Christian (MC)
Keith Edwards (KE)
Jean Gill (JG)
James Jason (JJ)
Jean Mills (JM)
Keith Myers (KM)
Colin Porter (CP)
John Raine (JR)
Peter Rowbotham (PR)
John Scholey (JS)
Ron Whittaker (RW)
Ian Grimshaw (IG) – Stock Investment Manager
Mark Shepley (MS) – Services Manager
Dave Scanlon (DS) – Gas Technical Officer
Jen Taylor (JT) – Customer Involvement and Projects Officer

Apologies:

Mark Tugwood

1. Terms of Reference

All attendees were provided with a copy of the Terms of Reference for this Panel illustrating the purpose of the group which is to monitor and scrutinise the performance of the Gas and Planned Maintenance/Stock Investment service. It was stated that all Improvement Panels have now adopted a Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct for each meeting. It is anticipated that after the next meeting a customer Chair and Vice-Chair will be appointed by a ballot process conducted by the Customer Involvement and Projects Officer.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting/Matters Arising

The minutes of the last meeting were read through and agreed as a true record. No actions were identified from the previous meeting.

3. Overview of the Service

Attendees were provided with an overview of the Gas and Planned Maintenance/Stock Investment services.

4. Quarterly Report/Panel Report

The quarterly report was discussed with attendees and it was advised that this would be sent to members approximately two weeks before future meetings. Performance information relating to service standards, the local offers and key performance indicators was discussed for quarter 1 and 2 (April to September) and the following was raised:

- **The number of properties with a current landlord's certificate** – a legal requirement but unlikely to achieve 100% all of the time.
- **Standard Assessment Procedure** – relates to the energy efficiency of properties. A tender exercise for insulation to 1000 properties is currently being completed.
- **The percentage of non-decent properties** – this is on target to be achieved by the end of the year.

- **We will provide a comfort zone/respice area when disruption is caused to your property during Decent Homes work** – out of 299 surveys completed in the last two quarters only 41 people stated that they use these areas; IG explained this could be looked at in the future.

Attendees requested for jargon to be removed throughout the report. At the next meeting the local offers and performance targets will be reviewed and agreed with members.

5. Service Development and Benchmarking

IG and MS attend quarterly benchmarking groups which provide the opportunity to meet with similar organisations to compare services and performance.

MS reported that the Northwest Inter Authority Gas Forum involves around 40 other organisations who report on solving issues, new technology etc; relevant items are to be brought to future meetings for discussion.

IG attended a meeting which included discussions on fire risk assessments, satisfaction survey formats, key performance indicators, access to grant funding, current initiatives and new technology.

6. Complaints, Compliments and Comments

IG and MS explained the different stages of the complaints procedure and ran through the complaints received for quarter 1 and 2. It was noted that in certain circumstances customers had not been kept informed of the progress of works/complaints; staff are to ensure the standard response times are followed.

7. Satisfaction Results

The satisfaction results for quarter 1 and 2 were discussed. It was stated that the surveys are sent to all customers upon completion of improvement works in order to gauge satisfaction and identify areas for improvement/development.

A query was raised into why the answer 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' has to be included; it was stated that this is a standard way of reporting and ensures benchmarking with other organisations can take place.

8. Customer Involvement Activities

- **Gas Safety Week Events** – JT explained that 3 events had been held to raise awareness of gas safety and the gas servicing programme during the first ever Gas Safety Week in September. At the events a survey was completed with attendees to gauge awareness and identify possible areas for further promotion. A total of 42 surveys were completed; the results identified that in the majority customers were aware of gas servicing and safety. However it was noted that the frequency of the servicing programme and who BCH's Gas Contractor is could be further promoted. Attendees agreed that it would be beneficial to include the service dates and areas in every edition of Viewpoint rather than once every year at the start of the programme. It was also noted that the incentive scheme should assist in further promoting the programme.
- **Decent Homes Customer Inspector Review** - JT explained that a review had been completed and it was identified that there was duplication between the scheme and the satisfaction surveys which are completed by affected customers after works have been completed. A Focus Group had taken place with the customer inspectors to review the scheme and a new procedure and forms were agreed. The scheme will now focus on customer care and the service provided by the contractors and take place mid way through improvement works. A pilot inspection has taken place and others are planned for December – a Focus Group is to be held early next year to ensure the revised scheme is relevant and suitable. Results of inspections are to be brought to the meeting and discussed along with any improvements/developments as a result of the scheme.

9. Value for Money

- A dedicated Gas Services Team and the Gas Access Procedure has decreased the number of no access properties and the amount that go through the court.
- New gas servicing/Repairs and Maintenance Contract – will provide efficiency savings in the new financial year.
- At the last SIP it was agreed for the costly kitchen units to be removed and replaced with a cheaper style.
- Earlier this year an internal tender exercise was completed which reduced the number of framework partners to 3 which saved just under £500,000.
- £100,000 grant funding has been obtained for fuel switches.

10. Customer Issues

A query was raised regarding boot covers and if these are available for trades staff; IG and MS advised that these should be kept in the vehicles and will raise with the Team to ensure there is a supply.

KE stated that I.D. was not used by Read and Errington on the last service – MS is to investigate.

11. Any Other Business

MS invited members to contact him if they would like to gain more of an understanding of the service and the monitoring undertaken by the Team.

12. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 22nd February, 2pm at Coastal House