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| **Residents Service Charge Network** **Friday 29 August on teams**  |
|  | **Topic** | **Whom**  |
| 1. | Welcome | TL |
| 2. | Matters arising / actions  | TJ |
| 3. | Review Aims and objectives – what have we achieved | All |
| 4. | What’s next * priorities for next quarter
* the next Vlog
* update aims
 | All |
| 5. | Update from Operational meetings  | TJ/RL |
| 6.  | A.O.B |  |

**Chair**  Tom L – Resident

Tracy Jones – Head of Operational Development

**Attendees:** Richard Lawton – Head of service charge and rents

 Lucy Nixon – Resident Communications Manager

 Ian D – EC Resident board member

 Michael R – RL Resident Board Member

 Robin B – Resident

**Apologies:** Allen A – Resident

 David D – Resident

Richard Wheeldon – Head of RL

**Meeting notes:**

**1.0 Welcome and intro from Tom**,

Along with his new Service Charge song:

Verse 1

Salaries, pensions, and National Insurance, Office costs, spreadsheets, and steady endurance. Gas, electricity, water on tap, All in the budget, we’ve got it mapped.

**Chorus**

Gardening, cleaning, the lifts keep on going, Gritting in winter when snowflakes are snowing. Repairs and materials neatly arranged, All in the service charge, nothing is strange.

**Verse 2**

Administration and sinking fund planning, Support costs and figures with pie charts for scanning. Income from salons and guest suites as well, Balance the numbers — they all have a tale.

**Final Verse**

(Humorous Twist) And if all else fails, when confusion arises, Email dear Richard — he’s full of surprises. He and his team have the answers on call, To all things service charge, the master of all

**2.0 Tracy discussed matters arsing:**

* 1st Vlog released – some great feedback given
* Rent letter examples distributed for resident feedback

**2.1 Updates from Exec for SC changes:**

* Rent letter example approved – this will now go to design for next year.
* Sinking fund terminology for renters – this will be changed now to “Usage Charge”
* Service charge consultation meeting “terminology” changed to “Service charge Discussion”

**3.0 Tracy went through a presentation – see attached**

**Reviewed Aims and Objectives set**

* **Review and Analyse** service charge processes and expenditure reports.
* **Improve Communication** by developing and implementing strategies to keep residents informed.
* **Gather and Provide Feedback** on service charge concerns and experiences.
* **Influence Policy Development** related to service charges within Housing 21.
* **Enhance Training and Support** for both residents and Housing 21 employees to improve understanding of service charge figures.

**Purpose:**

The Resident Service Charge Network (RSCN) is established to provide a forum for residents of Housing 21 to share feedback and collaborate on improving the accessibility, transparency, and understanding of service charges. The network will work with Housing 21 representatives to enhance communication, ensure accountability, and support value-for-money assessments in service charge delivery.

**Values:**

The network is guided by the following principles:

* **Transparency** – Ensuring residents have clear access to service charge calculations, allocations, and the services covered.
* **Accountability** – Regular monitoring of service charge expenditures, ensuring both residents and management are held accountable.
* **Resident Involvement** – Encouraging active participation of residents in service charge discussions and decision-making.
* **Value for Money** – Reviewing costs of services to ensure they are fair, reasonable, and provide good value.

**Achievements**

**Improved Communications**

* New guide to understanding your SC
* New manager toolkit
* New annual Briefing for standardisation
* New verbal Vlogs on specific subjects
* New designed rent and SC letters

**4.0 What’s next?**

**Feedback**

Discuss and design a survey process for Annual service charge meetings, feedback on:

* The process
* information provided
* Resident engagement in meetings

**Service Charge Discussions**

* Prepare for service charge discussions
* Re-launch toolkit and budget training for managers
* Set expectations for standardisation

**Vlogs**

Prepare further Vlog’s

* Involvement
* Frequency
* Subject

**Revisit future Aims and priorities**

**5.0 Discussion points and Actions:**

* Review resident list for forums – discuss with Vanessa and Sophia to standardise
* Let’s talk EC Resident forums videos. Talking about our forums – aims and objectives and advertising for more representatives.
* Digital Monitors / smart TVs on schemes / villages – could we use for more comms / Vlogs / YouTube Videos – to better inform local communications
* Promote our comms more on social media

**Forums**

* Good to have senior leaders support the forums – helps with traction
* Do we want to involve POA / family members at any point where residents can’t be involved?

Information to be looked at for tenancy sign up for new residents:

* Resident handbook
* Understanding your service charge
* Service charge statement

**Accessibility**

How do we offer SC literature in more accessible form?

* Languages
* Braille / Voice enabled
* Large Print
* Capture in our systems for reporting

**Next Vlog**

* Next one on End of year accounts on 11th Sept to be distributed ready for statements going out by end of Sept.
* Budget setting – service charge discussion meetings – ready for the meetings in Oct.
* Promoting environmentally friendly options across our schemes and thinking about VFM – Paper / Ink / repairs etc
* Global Calendar – rents and SC year - Set dates for letters / meetings / information / monthly updates etc