**Meeting Notes for Resident Service Charge Network**

**Date:** Wednesday 21st May 2025

**Time:** 15.30 – 16.45

**Chair of meeting:** Tom Long (TL)

**Housing 21 Representatives:** Tracy Jones (TJ) - supporting; Richard Lawton (RL); Richard Wheeldon (RW) Lucy Nixon (LN)

**Housing 21 Residents:**

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| **Title of agenda item** | | **Summary of Discussion** | **Actions agreed, including assignments and deadlines** |
| **1.** | **Introductions** | TL introduced everyone and welcomed a new resident from Trefor Jones Court. |  |
| **2.** | **Internal Service Charge Project Update** | TJ discussed actions from the most recent internal Service Charge Project Group meeting:   * Professionalising managers/empowering managers. * Training for managers, residents would like some training – we have agreed RL will do this as July meeting and agree final content for Managers. * Hold ‘Setting the Budgets’ conversations with managers * Hold a ‘Service Charge Month’ to upskill managers before going into the service charge setting period in October   Production of monthly transactional reports and working with regional managers on those reports, a template will be designed and agree with residents – the idea is for managers to hold quarterly meetings and give reassurance on service charge budget, run through exceptions (surplus / deficits). | **Action H21**  A full plan and timeline to be produced for the next meeting.  Training will be delivered to residents on the SC call and be agreed by residents.  A template will be constructed for quarterly meetings with residents to show visibility / influence decision making on SC. |
| **3.** | **Multimedia Approaches to Service Charge Updates** | TJ fed back on the AI audio sent by DD in the last meeting:   * Great recording with valuable information taken from the guide * Didn’t like American voices * IT felt there would be a cyber security risk using AI – albeit we are currently testing AI from Microsoft across the senior teams. * We have agreed after good discussion that we will create some verbal FAQs over MS teams initially and bring back to the next meeting to see what everyone thinks – LN will facilitate these with the help and support of RL RW and TJ. * We discussed Kent PFI having separate verbal FAQs / podcasts prepared if the trial one is successful. | **Action: H21**  Create some verbal FAQs / podcasts – personalised – short bursts answering relevant questions such as “deficits and surplus” what residents can influence in the SC etc.  Create separate ones for the Kent PFI schemes – more explanations around the contract in place and how SC work. |
| **4.** | **Sinking funds** | TJ explained how sinking funds work for all tenures with the support of RW and RL.  LH / Shared owners  A collection pot is in place which collects money based on stock condition survey to ensure all future works can be completed with enough money in the sinking fund to complete these. From a legal point should there not be enough money then we would need to invoice for the remaining amount as we cannot allow shared owners / leaseholders to go into a deficit so its important to charge the sinking fund correctly based on due works.  For this sinking fund, interest is earned.  Rented:  A repayment pot is in place to pay for items:   * Emergency lighting * Fire alarms * Lifts   This was introduced approximately 7 years ago from that particular point in time. Charges are based on what has been provided and what H21 has paid for (above items only) the money is then collected over the lifespan of the item until it is paid, therefore no interest is earned as the money is not being collected, it is being repaid. | **Action** include in verbal FAQs or podcasts. |
| **5.** | **Calendar of actions / meetings** | We have agreed due to some staffing changes that we will construct a basic timeline / plan / calendar to keep up the momentum and ensure all actions are worked to. It was agreed TJ / RL / RW and LN would attend all future meetings. | **Action H21:** Calendar / action plan to be sent over to residents. |
| **6.** | **Summary and Close** | TL thanked everyone for attending the meeting – said there was very useful explanations and discussions and an open invite remains for TJ / RW / RL / LN. |  |