

Leaseholder Forum Minutes, 10 September 2019

Present at the meeting

- Julie Hood, Housing Equalities and Engagement Facilitator
- Nicky Colley Samuels, Asset Officer
- Claire Race, Asset Officer
- 16 Leaseholders

Apologies

- Peter Holt, Housing Team Leader (Accounts and Assets)

Julie Hood (Chair), opened the meeting and welcomed everybody.

The Officers introduced themselves.

Development of the Service

- Nicola Colley Samuels
- Claire Race

Nicky and Claire updated the meeting about the following service areas:

Service Charges

We're now producing quarterly advisory statements.

These will:

- include all repairs information from the previous 3 months
- be sent to leaseholders

These are for information only, not bills. The service charge bill issued in April will include all the repairs stated on the advisory statement.

These will give leaseholders the opportunity to raise any issues as they arise. It is much easier to remember if a repair has been done within a three month period than an (up to) 12 month period.

We'll send the first of these advisory statements over the next week.

If leaseholders would like to raise any issues or want to discuss it further, email: housing.leaseholder@york.gov.uk.

Contacting leaseholders

We'll be sending a letter to all leaseholders in the near future asking how they'd prefer us to contact them. We'll be asking to use their email

addresses to use as their main method of contact, as it's quicker and reduces costs.

We appreciate that some leaseholders prefer to be contacted by post. However, where the leaseholder would prefer to be contacted by email, we'll use this method in future.

Please let us know your preferences after you've received your letter.

IT Systems

We're currently in the process of bringing all our IT together into one place.

We currently use more than 12 different systems to store different information about our properties and tenants, however, these systems don't interact with each other which makes gathering information very time consuming. Our new IT System will keep all the information in one place.

We've appointed a contractor who's in the process of testing, who'll and who'll move all the data to the one system.

We anticipate the new system will be 'live' towards the end of 2020/ beginning of 2021.

Staff Changes

Julie Hood talked about the Asset Officer post introduced following the Housing restructure. This post has proved to be successful in delivering services to and for leaseholders, so we're expanding this from 1 full time post to 2 full time posts.

These posts will also undertake work for CYC Garages.

The new post will not increase the management element of service charges as:

- the current post has needed to work extra hours to meet the demand of the post
- the garage element of the post will not be charged to leaseholders

This post will be in place very soon as interviews are taking place later this week.

Any other business

Broadband

Broadband in blocks of flats was raised as some areas cannot receive high speed broadband. Claire and Nicky are working with providers to address this. In the first instance, leaseholders should email housing.leaseholder@york.gov.uk.

Antisocial behaviour

Some blocks of flats are experiencing high levels of antisocial behaviour. Leaseholders were advised to contact housing.leaseholder@york.gov.uk.

Nicky and Claire will ensure the relevant Officers receive the information.

Communal gardening

Since the Estate Workers have started their new roles, being more mobile and not estate-based, areas have become overgrown and covered in weeds. Some bushes are now blocking walkways.

Leaseholders were advised to contact housing.leaseholder@york.gov.uk.

Nicky and Claire will ensure the relevant Officers receive the information.

Extending leases

If a leaseholder would like to extend their lease, they should email housing.leaseholder@york.gov.uk.

Emails will be forwarded to our legal department who can provide initial information. The leaseholder will then need to instruct a solicitor to undertake the legal work on their behalf.

Streets Ahead

Some leaseholders are still not receiving a copy of Streets Ahead.

Julie will follow this up.

Needles

One area is experiencing a high number of used needles in the area and has seen open drug use. They contacted the Police who didn't attend.

Leaseholders were advised to telephone: 01904 551551 and request removal of any needles and to always report incidents of drug use they see to the Police.

Several individual issues were raised, Claire and Nicky will follow up and feed back to the leaseholders individually.

Next meeting

Leasehold Forum date in April/May 2020 to be confirmed by the Leasehold Scrutiny Panel.

All leaseholders will receive an invitation to the meeting in March/April 2020.