

Minutes of Meeting

Meeting: Members' Forum Meeting
Date: 14th March 2024
Time: 6pm – 8:00pm
Venue: Boardroom

Present

Peter Haynes	Amanda Browning
Vic Breach – Vice Chair	Bertie Doy
Gerald Prior	Doreen Gow
Kay Sentance	Clive Jepson
Margaret Buckell	
Sarah Simmonds	
Deb Longney	
Trish Langford	

Also in attendance

Kate Wareing, Emma Langstaff, Jackie Logan & Michelle Pugh-Roberts

Apologies:

Ann-Marie O'Sullivan
Elizabeth Welsh

Observers:

Eliane Pony
Angela Harding

1.Members' Forum priorities over the next 12 months - workshops

Workshop feedback - please see appendix A

2. Approval of minutes

Minutes approved from January 18th

3. Matters arising

None raised.

4. Chairs report by Vic Breach

Vic welcomed the Forum and asked if there was any members that would like to observe the March 28th Board meeting. Clive Jepson and Val Kir volunteered.

The Forum was asked to make contact with their locality leads to arrange for an update before the May Forum.

Margaret gave an update on Finance as their Portfolio Holder. Meeting arranged for service charge policy for 28th March. Finance is at present, recruiting for a finance business partner. The budgets have been approved by the Board in February. We have a new external auditor called Bishop Flemming who are already working on the up-and-coming financial year end audit report.

5. Chief Executive update by Kate Wareing

External news

Inflation has risen slightly to 4.2% and Interest rates remain at 5.25%

Awaab's law has been published with guidance on damp and mould and sets out very strict timelines to deal with reports on damp and mould. Also, a new form of redress where residents have a right to take action under their tenancy.

Consumer standards in place from 1st April. This has previously been regulated by our Board. They are now being regulated as part of our regulatory regime. New consumer standards rating to be introduced.

Decent Homes Standard due from government.

Complaint Handling Code has been finalised and will become statutory on April 1st 2024. Increased workload expected.

Consultation on professional standards in social housing has commenced. This is a significant piece of professional training that will need to be undertaken by staff. This has been factored into the budget for next year.

DW&P migrating HB claimants onto UC during 2024/25. Resident will need to make us aware of this transition period.

Internal news

Most things are going well! according to TSM data. Areas of exception are repairs service and time taken to complete a repair. Both areas are improving although still below average.

Winter weather and flooding – we had four homes flooded. Generators in Extra Care worked well when power cuts.

Frances Curtis Court shared ownership sales remain slow. We are letting more homes until we have sold more.

Budget was approved by board resulting in interest cover at 122% We will be developing again, but at a lower level. We were building approx. 250 new homes a year. We have now set a cap for the next 2 years to at 100 homes.

There is a maximum amount of money that we can borrow, and this is written into the rules of Soha, any changes proposed need to be made by our members at the Board AGM. There will be a paper submitted to the Board AGM asking for approval to increase the maximum amount of borrowing. A full briefing will be made and a lot of opportunities to discuss this well in advance of September.

Hook Norton CLT has received great press coverage and has been nominated for 'Best Sustainable Project of the year.

6. Performance targets 2024/25 & TSM's Q3 Benchmarking by Kate Wareing

A series of TSM's were shared with the Forum showing how Soha are benchmarked against other HA's. Targets are approved by the Board and we aim to achieve the upper 25th quartile so we are within the top 25% of HA's.

There are some areas that are set slightly lower and higher particularly repair and shared ownership. 4

Comparison with other Housing Providers – Q3 2023-24 Rentals

	Q3 Benchmarking from Acuity			
Overall Results	75th Quartile	Median	25 th Quartile	Soha Q3
Satisfaction with overall service	82%	72%	63%	82%
Satisfaction with Soha providing a home that is safe	84%	78%	72%	83%
Satisfaction with well-maintained home	79%	71%	65%	78%
Satisfaction with repairs completed in the last 12 months	81%	74%	66%	72%
Satisfaction with time taken to complete repairs	77%	70%	62%	67%
Satisfaction with listen to views and act upon them	72%	60%	53%	71%
Satisfaction with communal areas	73%	66%	59%	71%
Satisfaction with ease of dealing with Soha	82%	73%	63%	82%
Satisfaction with handling of complaints	39%	34%	27%	47%
Soha is making a positive difference in my community	73%	66%	60%	80%
Keeping residents informed	83%	77%	71%	82%
Treating residents fairly and with respect	82%	75%	68%	84%
Satisfaction with ASB	67%	61%	55%	70%

Upper

Between Upper & Median

Between Median & Lower

Lower

Comparison with other Housing Providers – Q3 2023-24 Shared Owners

	Q3 Benchmarking from Acuity			
Overall Results	75 th Centile	Median	25 th Centile	Soha Q3
Satisfaction with overall service	59%	50%	44%	58%
Satisfaction with Soha providing a home that is safe	82%	72%	63%	76%
Satisfaction with listen to views and act upon them	56%	36%	30%	45%
Satisfaction with communal areas	53%	45%	36%	31%
Satisfaction with ease of dealing with Soha	Not benchmarked			61%
Satisfaction with handling of complaints	33%	22%	12%	31%
Soha is making a positive difference in my community	60%	44%	37%	47%
Keeping residents informed	71%	62%	52%	61%
Treating residents fairly and with respect	67%	53%	49%	75%
Satisfaction with ASB	49%	40%	30%	31%

Upper

Between Upper & Median

Between Median & Lower

Lower

TSM SURVEY RESULTS – QUARTER 3 – 2023-24

Overall Results	Qtr4 2022 23	Qtr1 2023 24	Qtr2 2023 24	Qtr3 2023 24
	473	303	302	299
Satisfaction with overall service	76%	81%	77%	82%
Satisfaction with the overall quality of home (well maintained)	71%	80%	78%	78%
Satisfaction with Soha providing a home that is safe and secure	72%	87%	85%	83%
Satisfaction with repairs completed in the last 12 months	72%	68%	72%	72%
Satisfaction with time taken for repairs	63%	62%	65%	67%
Satisfaction with communal areas	No data	61%	75%	71%
Satisfaction with ease of dealing with Soha	79%	83%	79%	82%
Satisfaction with handling of complaints	57%	44%	34%	47%
Soha is making a positive contribution in my community	57%	77%	78%	80%
Satisfaction with ASB	No data	66%	67%	70%
Keeping residents informed	74%	74%	82%	82%
Treating residents fairly	80%	84%	85%	84%
Satisfaction with listen to views and act upon them	62%	69%	69%	71%

The Forum was asked if they approve of the questions. Peter said it was very gratifying to see that meaningful questions are being asked to shared owners but he would like to see the areas target split out between shared owners and tenants. The Forum were given the deadline for Board papers going out and to let Michelle know of any concerns with the paper prior to that date.

7. Corporate Plan Consultation by Emma Langstaff

Emma talked Forum through a step-by-step process for the consultation, design and delivery of the next corporate plan and asked for their input following a break down of each stage.

Developing Soha's Corporate Plan 2025 & Beyond

Purpose

- Review and update Soha's vision, mission, values and cultural principles.
- Reevaluate Soha's future and the big questions we need to consider.
- Create aims and objectives, budgets and action plans.

Who

We want to widen the range and type of opportunities available for as many stakeholders as possible to engage and be a part of the conversation in creating our Corporate Plan.

Project group and staff will identify the key stakeholders.

We will be consulting with the following: -

Who	How - Consultation & Communication
Staff	Staff away day (19 th April), chalkboard, workshops, surveys
Residents (members and non- members)	Members event, locality community events, door knocks, website, surveys, coffee mornings, social media, AGM, chalkboard wall
Board	Away days, workshops, AGM
Partner agencies (Local authority and community partners)	Interviews, workshops

We will also be evaluating what we already know from previous engagement and our data.

PHASE ONE: Reflection & Big Picture Questions

April to May 2024

Reflection - The journey so far and our current position

- 1| Where are we now?
- 2| How well are we doing in living out our vision, mission, values and cultural principles?
- 3| Where are we doing well?
- 4| Where could we do better?

The Forum were happy with the way the Corporate plan process has been set out and look forward to working on the Corporate aims at the residents event on June 8th.

8. Complaints Handling update by Kate Wareing

Complaints Handling code comes into effect from 1st April setting out how complains need to be managed. Every complaint will be treated as an expression

of dissatisfaction and a process needs to be followed making sure we are compliant with the new guidance. We anticipate an escalation in the number of complaint cases.

Training to be rolled out with frontline staff and technical offers first, then case managers. Training will also be given to stage two panel members.

9.Draft Resident Involvement Support & Incentive Policy by Jackie Logan for approval

Jackie thanked everyone for their feedback on the draft Resident Involvement Support & Incentive policy that came to Forum in January. Adjustments were made as suggested. Jackie advised that this policy will be reviewed annually. The Forum **Approved** the policy.

10.Localities update by Vic Breach

Amanda gave an update from Andrea Bain on the Henley locality.

Clarence Road is a new development in Henley and once completed the residents began to contact Soha to say that they had a garden area to the rear of their home but that they couldn't use it as it was inaccessible. We consulted with all residents and it was agreed to extend a path around the back and install a small patio area with a bench and provision of a washing line to both blocks. Some residents wanted to plant some shrubs which we agreed they could do along the borders. One of the blocks has railings bordering the Townlands hospital car park which meant it wasn't very private so we have put up some fake hedging to the fence to give some privacy.

The residents are now able to enjoy their garden and one has been growing vegetables which he shares with his neighbours. Leaver Road in Henley is a long standing neighbourhood, it was built predominately for older residents as all properties are bungalows. As time has gone on and residents average age reduced there was some disagreement and minor ASB around parking and demand from residents for more parking spaces. Soha staff consulted with all residents and came up with a proposed plan to increase parking provision and were able to make 5 new spaces. We consulted further to improve landscaping with more biodiverse plants to attract bees, butterflies and other pollinators. We are also repainting the step edges with yellow paint to make them more visible to residents. And we are providing a bin shelter to hide waste bins.

Simmonds Road in Henley has a block of 12 flats with its own communal garden. This area has become unusable and the communal sheds are overflowing with stuff

Soha staff consulted with the residents to ask what we could do to make the garden a more usable space for them and they came up with some ideas around wildflowers, bird feeders and perhaps some benches etc to enable resident to sit out and enjoy the wildlife and birds. We also met on site with Greener Henley to

look at providing swift boxes as swifts are on the decline in the UK and they are always looking for areas to put the boxes up. Greener Henley loved the space and opportunity that the garden offered and are coming up with an outline plan for us to talk to residents again.

Vic gave an update on the Wallingford locality from Sarah Willson

LL have tried surgeries, community connector, coffee mornings and door knocks. surgeries being very successful when in conjunction with the community larder. Door knocks leading to insightful conversations around there communities highlighting what was missing had how it can be changed.

Demolition of a block of garages in Bransfield took place making space for 25 parking spaces. Chelsey meadows will be hosting a know your neighbour event and in Wallingford a resignation project is being run in several areas.

The projects for Chequers Place and Allnatt avenue are all approved and being scheduled in for April/May.

I have received a verbal offer of funding for 2 'Pocket Parks' in Berinsfield as part of a joint working project with South & Vale. This is work we would have undertaken under the regeneration of Berinsfield so it will save us money! The council are offering £6K for each project - £12 in total.

I am also starting a project with Jackie and the Berinsfield Library and Williams Jet for 'upskilling'. In other words, work with English and maths to lower illiteracy rates in the area.

I have also almost completed a project in Colwell Rd to improve the communal garden there, including picnic benches with wheelchair access, planters and fruit trees.

Sarah Simmonds is the Forum's locality link for the Thame area and met with Annie over Zoom to discuss what projects they are working on in the Thame. Sarah was also given a list of activity days that are happening. They have been involved with Thomley which is an organisation in Worminghall for children with disabilities. Sarah will be attending an accessibility day in July with Annie. Sarah also participated in a door knock in the Thame area with the locality leads which she found very interesting.

11.E-Vouchers by Michelle Pugh-Roberts

Michelle asked the Forum for a decision on moving over to E-vouchers from the current shopping vouchers that are used as a thank you for resident engagement. The Forum were happy to move over in April, although some would prefer a printout rather than using the app.

Date of next meeting – May 16th

Signed..... Date.....
Chair of Members' Forum