



Repairs and Maintenance Service User Group

MINUTES

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Location</i>
R &M SUG	30/11/2023	10:00	Zoom
Attendees			
Residents	Councillors	Staff	
Carmen Lai Carol Smith Carrie Martin Chris Evans Dottie North (DN) Gillian Wright Janet Browning Jay-Jay Martin Jeremy Fennell Jo Coomber (JC) John Michael Foley Nigel Varley (NV) Pat Robinson (PR) Roderick Mills (RM) Thomas Cooke (TC) Tim De La Rew (TDLR)		Simon Rowland (SR) Ilona Marciniak (IL) David Maggs (DM) Chris Weeks (CW)	
Apologies		Minutes	
		Henry Murray	

Agenda items

- 1 Welcome and Housekeeping**
- 2 Actions from previous meeting – David Maggs**
- 3 Customer Service Centre – Darin Hedges**
- 4 Income and Rents Service – Mark Kempt**
- 5 Service Transformation**
- 6 Agree items for forward plan**

7 Any other business

8 Date of next meeting and close

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions	Actions
1	Welcome (Housekeeping/ code of conduct)	
8	<p>Barton House update</p> <p>Simon Rowland gave update on ongoing Barton House review</p> <p>NV – Asked, should the worst scenario arise in which Barton House has to be demolished, what the capacity for rehousing is</p> <p>SR – Advised they have drawn resources from voids and elsewhere for as much capacity as possible.</p> <p>NV – Asked how many voids are there</p> <p>SR – Advised on 45 voids in central Bristol but not all fit for purpose. Advised there are 400 residents that have come out of Barton House.</p> <p>NV – Asked how many voids citywide.</p> <p>SR – Advised they work on around 200 voids at any one time.</p> <p>NV – Asked about emergency plan for situations like Barton House. Expressed belief that the council is always in a rush when scenarios such as this arise. Asked what happens if Barton House has to come down. Asked if there is a plan to do something about empty houses in Bristol in general. Expressed opinion that council does not plan for emergencies.</p> <p>SR – Advised they can't answer the question fully but that hotels are being used. Agreed that long term this is not an adequate solution.</p> <p>Back and forth on similar points. SR again advised that they do not have all the information to provide full answer.</p>	

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	<p>TDLR – Asked who’s idea it was to continue charging Barton Hill residents rent.</p> <p>SR – Advised that again they can’t give answer as they don’t have all the information.</p> <p>TC – Asked to have a better understanding on structural issues in Barton House. Advised they have experience as a bricklayer. Asked if flats were built without modern structures with concrete stanchions.</p> <p>SR – Advised it can be taken away as an action point to get Ash to present more information</p> <p>GW – Asked about Carolina House which is same kind of construction.</p> <p>SR – Advised it will depend on current review of Barton House.</p> <p>GW – Asked about route of communication on this.</p> <p>SR – Advised through regular channels like tenant participation.</p> <p>TDLR – Raised incident of block of flats that collapsed in the past, and advised on update given to Barton House after that incident.</p> <p>PR – Raised communication about possibility of collapse from a possible explosion, and therefore there wasn’t a major problem that couldn’t allow for a managed evacuation. Asked about lead up to evacuation</p> <p>SR – Advised they are not sure what led up to discussion on evacuation but it was presented to executives that if an explosion did take place that it could collapse. Advised they can find more information on lead up to evacuation and come back.</p> <p>TDLR – Advised on block of flats that were knocked down and structural changes were made to Barton House on the back of a petition asking to keep the flats.</p>	<p>SR</p> <p>SR</p>

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	<p>Chris Weeks gave presentation on updates to bathroom replacement project.</p> <p>NV – Advised on issue filling a bath, which involve switching on emersion heater on during the day during more expensive period. Advised as they’ve gotten older they can’t get in and out of the bath, and asked for a provision to have appliance changed</p> <p>CS – Advised they have installed electric shower where there are emersion heaters giving an option of shower over the bath if desired. Advised they aren’t replacing baths with walk-in showers as they would need to be assessed for accessibility to qualify.</p> <p>NV – Advised that as you get older, though you might not meet threshold for accessibility, it is still unsafe to climb in and out of a bath and expressed opinion that an extra accommodation should be made.</p> <p>CS – Advised that baths are the norm to be installed and that any accessibility needs would need to be referred for an assessment. Advised that if tenants are unsuccessful for assessmne that they should get back in touch with their team.</p> <p>NV – Asked about grab rails being an option.</p> <p>CS – Advised they can’t fit grab rails on walls without an assessment first, though there are grab rails on the baths themselves.</p> <p>TDLR – Noted that from photographs it seemed that pipes were not being covered.</p> <p>CS – Advised that some pipes have been covered in some areas but there was never any plan to box pipe work in, this is to consider future work. Advised they are quite limited in what they can do within their remit.</p> <p>TC – Advised that the bathroom they’ve had is very good. Asked how long it should take to install bathroom. Advised it has taken 5 or 6 weeks, with workers coming</p>	

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	<p>in and out without notice and taking their toilet without notice. Advised on similar behaviour experienced by other residents. Advised on mess left behind and generally a lack of information.</p> <p>CS – Advised that they have been going through communication and timescales with residents. Advised they did send out leaflets explaining processes and challenges. Advised that they only have taken up to two parking spaces for skips. Advised on volume of work does mean disruption to residents. Advised that the two week target for bathrooms is desirable but challenging.</p> <p>TC – Reiterate point raised about toilet taken out without notice.</p> <p>CS – Advised that at start of work, notice was given for removal of toilet for several hours.</p> <p>TC – Advised they were not informed. Repeated initial points raised.</p> <p>Jeremy – Asked for criteria for eligibility of new bathrooms.</p> <p>CS – Advised that criteria is based on number of repairs showing up for a certain area and that asset team passes on those locations.</p> <p>JO – Advised on white washed piled neatly after work that spread across their estate and caused a mess at Butler House.</p> <p>CS – Acknowledged points.</p> <p>J – Asked for clarification on previous points.</p> <p>CS – Advised on criteria that asset team uses to assess bathroom replacement viability.</p> <p>DM – Advised that the number of repairs in a given block is taken into account when determining criteria for bathroom replacements. Advised details can be passed on to Jeremy and get their block checked.</p>	<p>DM</p>

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	<p>NV – Raised similar issue as TC. Advised on plaster left on ground after window installation. Expressed opinioin that it is a question of oversight of contractors by the council.</p> <p>CS – Advised there are surveyors and council officers on site nearly every day. Advised on multiple trades involved with one bathroom, plumber, electrician etc. Advised they can't all be in property in one day and they must be programmed in. Advised that this process is more often than not lengthy.</p>	
	<p>Update on voids by Simon Rowland</p> <p>PR – Expressed surprise at having to slow down for asbestos, made point that surely council can look up plans which show where asbestos is an issue.</p> <p>SR – Advised that they do not personally have access to those systems and is not sure if they exist. Advised it doesn't cause major problems but occasionally it can cause delays. Advised sometimes asbestos can be found in places they didn't expect.</p> <p>NV – Asked that if Barton House residents had to be rehoused into voids that properties could be retroactively repaired to save time.</p> <p>SR – Advised that they have been looking at that option and they would have to look at doing that if the worse case scenario did arise.</p> <p>DN – Expressed unsurprise at 20% voids rate given the process which is complex. Asked if process is being looked at to be changed.</p> <p>SR – Advised that staff can earn a lot more in private sector and as such it is very hard to retain those workers. Advised they are trying new options for recruitment but it is challenging.</p> <p>TC – Advised on additional problems when starting up a as contractor, that PAYE contractors are often more secure compared with self employment.</p>	

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	<p>PR – Asked if anything is being done about loss of staff.</p> <p>SR – Advised that every time a member of staff leaves an exit interview takes place to find out why. Advised that trade staff haven't been lost to outside market but to progression internally.</p> <p>PR – Asked if they have any long term sick staff pulling figures down. Asked if council has the budget for the number of staff needed.</p> <p>SR – Advised on internal sick leave process. Advised that budgeting always a concern but they do have budget for staff.</p> <p>TC – Advised that there were a lot more benefits working under council than working self employed when they worked.</p> <p>Chris – Asked about cleaning of external windows on high rise blocks, advised they have raised it previously.</p> <p>IL – Advised will be taken away.</p> <p>SR – Advised that Fiona Lester will be moving on at the end of the year. Advised they will work with Ilona to look at this issue for Chris.</p> <p>C – Expressed opinion that 9 months is more than enough time for answer on this. Asked on costs of fire marshals at their blocks.</p> <p>SR – Advised they don't have numbers on costs but they have been successful on receiving funding from central government to help with budgeting wake and watch.</p> <p>JC – Raised issue on electric scooter being stored in community room by resident and that they are not happy with this. Asked if council can address this.</p> <p>SR – Advised they can pick this up straight away.</p> <p>JC – Asked if there has been resolution on raised heating</p>	<p>SR</p>

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	<p>bills. SR – They don't have answer but will come back.</p> <p>NV – Raised issue of cladding removal during coldest period and increased heating bills as a result. Advised on refitting of windows that has not gone well and that new windows leak cold air in. Advised on complaints response that stated "no fault can be found" and that any extra heating costs will be incurred by residents. Expressed dissatisfaction with process.</p> <p>Chris – Repeated previous points about lithium batteries.</p> <p>DM – Advised a member is due to join future meeting to give update on above issue.</p> <p>SR – Asked NV if they have escalated complaints with relevant team.</p> <p>NV – Advised they have been through stage 1 and 2 of complaints process and it is now being taken up with ombudsman.</p> <p>DN – Advised that they haven't been made aware of whether or not repairs have been done in their communal areas as there has been no communication. Asked if resident can be contacted about this.</p> <p>SR – Asked for Ilona to make a note for it to be captured and taken away.</p> <p>IL – Advised Carrie they will be contacted after meeting for follow up.</p>	<p>SR</p> <p>IL</p>
	<p>Future agenda items</p> <p>TDLR – Asked if any points would like to be made about Nottingham council.</p> <p>DM – Advised that Nottingham doesn't run their housing in the same way as BCC.</p> <p>SR – Advised that all councils have been left with a similar backlog since covid.</p>	

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	<p>TC – Asked when next meeting is taken place</p> <p>IL – Advised 25th January for next repairs SUG but next Estates SUG is 7th December.</p> <p>RM [via chat] - Good morning all, the ten slide presentation looks and was presented very well, I wish I could say my bathroom is a good reflection of this presentation when in reality I'm still waiting on works to be done for all my rooms to be completed. Since and before the 18th September I was told all the works would be completed by the 3rd October. There was supposed to be asbestos removal in four rooms, redecoration, and a bathroom replacement which is still ongoing surpassing well past the 28days as the gentleman said. I haven't had any members of BCC contact me/ update me on when these works will finally be completed or about the damages made in the process. I've also contacted contractors directly to see if they can give me any information of my repairs, schedules, cancellations, rescheduling, etc. I was told I'll have to liaison with BCC to give the contractors permission to free up my own information although they've already had direct contact with me to arrange dates for theses repairs. Not happy sorry.</p> <p>SR – Asked if they can message Ilona with address and have it looked at after meeting.</p> <p>TDLR – Asked if Simon will be shaving off their moustache tomorrow.</p> <p>SR – Advised that they may have to purchase some hair dye to make it darker in order to compete with their friends' moustaches.</p>	<p>IL</p>
	<p>End of meeting.</p>	