

Minutes of Meeting No. 2 - Committee of Residents and Tenants (CORT)

1/03/2022 12.00pm – 2.00pm AWST

Foundation Housing, 297 Vincent Street Leederville

Attendees

Members

Claire Payne (CP) – Chair	Kelly Anne Gill (KG)
Neil Buckley (NB) – Deputy Chair	Colin Knuckey (CK)
Douglas Tweed (DT)	Rochelle Standen (RS) – Via MS Teams
Margaret Speed (MS)	Michael Wright (MW) – Via MS Teams
Matt Lee (ML)	

Ex Officio Members

Kerryn Edwards (KE), Alison Paterson (AP), Roisin Carmody (RC) – Minutes

Apologies:

Neal Bodel (NBo)

Invitees:

Allan Wilkerson (AW) – Housing Programs and Policy Manager

OPENING & PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Welcome & Apologies

The meeting commenced at 12.05pm, with apologies noted as above.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the Land on which the meeting was held.

1. Previous Minutes

The minutes were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting subject to the following change raised by CK, who noted an error under item 4.1, that the \$300K overspend was not on tenant liability. KE agreed and advised the minutes should state the \$300K overspend was of the maintenance budget.

DECISION – Approval of previous minutes as a true reflection of the meeting - Moved by CP, Seconded by NB

2. Review of Action Items

Regarding Action Items 1 & 2, KE provided an update to the CORT noting that work has commenced on developing a communications plan for both the Tenant Liability Policy and Anti-Social Behaviour Policy which includes a handbook and communication in Tenant Newsletter. KE added that both Tenant Liability and Anti-Social Behaviour will be key areas of focus at the roadshows which are planned.

There was a discussion regarding the Video suggestion raised at the last meeting. KE noted that more videos are planned, and a trial video has been prepared on COVID management.

There was a discussion regarding the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, particularly around what FHL can do in complexes where some units are managed by Department of Communities, and some are managed by FHL. KE advised the CORT that FHL can advocate for the tenant with DoC but that is as much as FHL can do. The CORT noted that FHL is doing what they can in managing these situations. It was agreed that this is an ongoing issue which will be discussed again in the future.

Regarding Action Item 3, AP spoke on behalf of NBd noting that a community engagement calendar is being developed with 2 activities planned for tenants including a trip to the zoo and the museum. AP added that zoo trip in April should not be impacted by Covid given it is an outdoor venue.

The Chair noted that Action Items 4, 5 & 7 were on the agenda for discussion.

Regarding Action Item 6, the Chair advised that this has been completed. The Chair added that she attended the February Tenant Services and Engagement Committee along with NB, providing an update on the purpose of the CORT, its Terms of Reference and progress to date.

3. Current Business

3.1 Outstanding Actions

As per discussion for Item 2 - Review of Action Items.

3.2 Tenant Survey Results

The Chair welcomed Allan Wilkerson to the meeting to provide an overview of the results of the 2021 Tenant Survey. During this presentation the following points were noted:

- There were 741 valid responses recorded which is slightly less than 2019 but is above the NRSCH benchmark of 35%
- NRSCH stands for National Regulatory System for Community Housing
- Demographics of those who responded broken into FHL programs, language spoken, length of tenancy and whether regional or metropolitan.
- Other demographics included ancestry, gender and age group.
- Key areas which scored similar to previous survey were noted as overall satisfaction with repairs and maintenance, repairs to the home and complaints handling. These also scored above the industry benchmark.
- 9 indicators scored above the industry average with only 2 of 11 indicators scoring below industry average which were Ability to influence Foundation Housing's decision making (4% below benchmark) and Satisfaction with tenant involvement 2% below benchmark
- The highest scoring areas were noted as satisfaction with location of home and location and proximity to transport and other services.
- Additional questions for those who reported a repair in the last 12 months
- Tenant aspirations to move out of community housing showed an increase in those looking to move into home ownership.
- Barriers to exiting community housing with the main barrier noted as the amount of rent.
- 87% - being a FHL tenant improved their quality of life (up from 85% in 2019).
- The areas for improvement were noted as ability to influence FHL decision making and satisfaction with tenant involvement
- Next steps were noted as Comms to tenants and feedback of results and plans, staff comms,
- Implementation of action plan, Roadshows and further comms and feedback.

There was a discussion regarding the increase in those wanting to move out of community housing and the possible drivers of this. It was noted that it is likely a range of factors including government shifting away from home for life policy, home ownership initiatives and market conditions.

It was queried on whether the winner had been chosen for the voucher for completing the survey. It was suggested that the winners should be announced in the next Tenant Newsletter. The Chair thanked AW for his presentation.

ACTION: KE to ensure winners of survey vouchers are announced in next Tenant Newsletter.

3.3 COVID – What does the CORT want to know in relation to how FHL intends to develop and communicate its COVID response to Tenants and Residents.

KE provided the CORT with an update on COVID management planning within the Operations Department, noting the following:

- Management are currently monitoring the situation and remain within Stage 1
- Once there is higher transmission within the community, we will move to Stage 2 where services will be reduced and provided online where possible.
- The final stage of the plan will be Outbreak Management where services would cease.
- There have been a number of positive cases within some FHL properties which have been managed well.
- Support will be provided to vulnerable tenant cohorts including over 65's, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tenants over 55 and all residents in shared complexes.
- The team are currently contacting these groups to ensure plans are in place so they can access essentials such as food and medication should someone contract COVID.
- The team are currently sourcing PPE and RAT's so they can be provided to tenants in lodging.
- A lot of preplanning has been done by management to ensure we are ready for the weeks ahead.
- A generic communication has gone out to tenants as a reminder to notify FHL should they test positive.

There was a discussion regarding the cleaner used by FHL and if they are supplied with anti-bacterial sprays for common areas to prevent COVID spread.

KE advised that some lodges have FHL employed cleaning staff and some complexes have contractor cleaners attend, with all contractors required to be double vaccinated.

It was noted that the additional cleaning required in the initial stages of the pandemic are no longer requested given evidence now which suggests Omicron is not spread via surfaces.

CP requested if it was possible to ask the cleaner at Bagot Road to include the laundry and common areas. DT noted that the common area and stairways at Foundry Road appear to be cleaned ad-hoc.

ACTION: KE to raise these issues with property services

3.4 How to achieve regional representation onto the CORT

KE provided an overview of FHL's regional portfolios highlighting the differences between the two areas, with the Broome portfolio more similar to the Perth portfolio. KE added that a number of

tenant engagement activities are planned for Broome in 2022 which will provide an opportunity to discuss the CORT with the tenants there and gauge interest in joining. It was agreed that it should be revisited later this year once NBo has had opportunity to run activities there.

DECISION: Defer discussion of regional representation of CORT until late 2022.

ACTION: NBo to approach potential CORT members following on from engagement activities in 2022.

3.5 Customer Service Charter

AP provided an overview of the purpose of a Customer Service Charter noting that it is a framework to guide staff in responding to and delivering services to tenants.

KE advised that we have a charter however it hasn't been updated in some time with AW tasked with leading the review. KE added that now that the CORT is in place, it would be a good opportunity to review it with input from tenants.

There was a discussion regarding the best process to review the charter with options explored such as facilitated sessions in looking at good customer service, codesign, input from CORT members or a broader group of tenants and inviting tenants to participate in the process.

RS and CK agreed they would be happy represent the CORT as part of the project team.

ML asked for a copy of the existing charter to be circulated to the CORT.

DECISION: CP put forward a motion that recommending that the CORT and FHL will collaborate with a broader tenant cohort on development of a new Customer Service Charter. Seconded by KG.

ACTION: AP will bring back a project plan to the next CORT meeting including a communication plan. AP to circulate current charter to CORT members.

3.6 Review Current Rent Setting Policy & Procedure

CP noted the reason that this topic was raised by the CORT as it was felt it was an issue that was not well communicated and caused confusion amongst tenants. The CORT members listed the particular areas which they would like clarification on which included:

- Clarification around market rent – how it is established and assessed
- Rent equity

- How information is presented to tenants currently and if it could be simplified
- Issues around household declarations and the responsibilities of tenants.
- CRA rent assistance – how is this factored in
- What are the rights of tenants in appeal decisions around rent calculations?
- The maximum length a visitor can stay with a tenant?

KE agreed that the way rent calculations are communicated can be very complicated and technical noting that responsibility for this sits within the Finance department. KE suggested the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and members of the Rents team come and present to the CORT and answer any questions the CORT might have.

The CORT supported this suggestion and welcomed a presentation from the Finance department at the next meeting.

DECISION: CP motioned for an Information session on the Rents Policy to be provided at next CORT Meeting. Seconded by DT.

ACTION: Management to arrange for CFO and Rents Team to attend and present at next meeting.

3.7 Participation Payment Policy & Procedure

AP provided an overview of the policy noting its purpose is to provide guidance as to how and when Tenants are provided with a participation payment and to ensure Tenants are fairly compensated for their efforts. AP added that the policy also provides guidance to staff in managing payments to Tenants. AP went through the Policy in detail noting the eligibility criteria a Tenant must meet to receive a payment:

- Have been invited to a FHL activity to provide a viewpoint which is representative of a broader tenant or resident experience as described in the table below; and
- RSVP'd to the event; and
- Arrived on time and participated for the whole of the scheduled activity; and
- Completed a "Receipt of Participation Payment" form and Activity Feedback survey

AP noted the Table of Payments which outlines the different participation roles including Passive Participant, Active Participant, Advisor and Consultant, the definition of each, examples of the responsibilities of each role and the applicable payments.

AP advised she would circulate the Policy and Procedure so CORT members could review and table it for discussion at the next meeting.

ACTION: AP to circulate a copy of the Participation Policy and Procedure to CORT Members.

ML noted that he takes the role seriously and sees it as an opportunity to give back and represent tenants.

4. Other Business

NB asked that CORT members send through items for the agenda for the next meeting to him or the Chair.

5. Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 2pm.

Next Meeting is scheduled for the 21st June 2022 at 12pm, at FHL Leederville.

DRAFT