

Comments from the Board of Wythenshawe Community Housing Group on the Annual Complaints Report

May 2024

The Board would like to thank all customers who took the time to provide feedback on Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG)'s services during the last 12 months.

The Chair of the Board expressed his thanks to customers and noted the considerable service improvements that had been achieved as a result of this feedback.

The Board noted that:

- the purpose of the Annual Complaints Report is to enable Board members to scrutinise complaint handling performance and service improvement made as a result of complaints
- the Annual Complaints Report is written in slide format to make it accessible for a wider audience when it is published on WCHG's website
- WCHG is getting better at listening. Last year WCHG recorded dissatisfaction from 76% of the total number of customers who we think may be dissatisfied, based on the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey. This is an improvement from 40% last year.
- The three pieces of assurance of WCHG's compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code sought during the last year: an internal audit; a peer review; and a review by tenants on the Scrutiny Group.

There have been three occasions when WCHG has not complied with the Complaint Handling Code during the year;

- 1 complaint was not acknowledged on time
- 2 stage two complaints were not answered on time
- 1 stage one complaint was not answered on time

- Additional measures being introduced to reduce the probability of future errors:
 - Compulsory training for all managers handling complaints
 - Complaint handling objective for all managers handling complaints
 - Two new complaints officers who will: check the complaint definition and resolution sought with the customer; resolve any 'quick fix' complaints; chase complaint responses if required; check responses have covered all aspects of the complaint; issue the response; and track actions
 - Improved system introduced with reminders and improved visibility of complaint progress
- Board Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) meets quarterly with the Senior Officer and Complaints Officer to review complaint trends and activities going on.
- Customers from the Customer Experience Committee have scrutinised the Annual Complaints Report, prior to it being considered by Board

Board members made the following comments:

AM stated that it is really good to see that the increase in satisfaction on how complaints have been dealt with and asked if WCHG are doing anything to communicate this to tenants and wider stakeholders to show that they are being listened to and WCHG are acting on what they hear?

SK agreed that from the TSM on listening and acting it is really important that tenants understand that WCHG are not just responding to their particular complaint but are identifying trends and communicating that back. This communication is currently through WCHG Newsletter that goes to all customers. Feedback received from these communications showed that we need to specifically say these findings came from complaints. This is being introduced going forward. The usual channels are also used to communicate through social media, annual report to customers and website.

AM asked what can be done further to manage how we deal with complaints – are we expanding the range of activities to pre-empt complaints with other listening forums?

SK advised that WCHG have started to run workshops where customer insight from TSMs, transactional satisfaction data and complaints feedback is shared with managers. To date there have been 6 workshops held and this has resulted in some of the service improvements in the report.

AHM referred to the first statement in the report which states “total customer expressions of dissatisfaction have increased by 72% in the last year....” AHM asked if this was intentionally a bold statement and should consideration be given to putting some context to this statement. SK advised that this was intentionally bold however agreed that there needed to be some context to the statement and will review with some customers.

Action: SK to review the first statement of the report with some customers and add a brief statement to give more context to the increase in dissatisfaction.

TI observed that the proportions of complaints amongst diverse groups are broadly proportionate to the numbers of complaints and the profile of tenants and shows that everybody is being treated equally. TI added that it would be interesting to know in the future to how much of this is about managing expectations and how much of it is addressing the real issues and does this need to be managed through better communication on what customers can expect.

MG referred to the points on communication and stated that at CX Committee members regularly talk about communications and managing customers expectations as the two are linked. It is recognised that there is still more than can be done to be clear with customers about what WCHG can/will do and what they can't/won't do and where to go if it is not WCHG.

MG added that CX Committee commissioned Scrutiny Group to do reviews of complaints both on processes and content. From the first review members were not very happy and commissioned a

further review. At the CX Committee meeting last week Scrutiny Group gave feedback and felt very pleased with the progress made particularly on responses that managers and colleagues had given to the complaints team.

Members considered the frequency and focus of complaint reporting to Board and CX Committee.

It was agreed that Board would receive the report bi-annually, CX Committee would review in depth every six months with quarterly reporting within the Performance Report.

Any complaints determinations from the Housing Ombudsman would be reported to Board through the CEO report.

NC nominated DN to remain as Board Member responsible for complaints and was seconded by TI.