

Confidential - No

Agenda No: 3

Report Title: Customer Service Scrutiny Review Report

Board:
Town & Country Housing Group

Action:
For Discussion & Agreement

Date of Meeting: 13 November 2014

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Appendices attached:
Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Panel Report on Customer Service at TCHG + 3 appendices (a, b &c)
Documents in the Board Lounge – N/A

Executive Summary

The Resident Scrutiny Panel has completed its first review which focusses on Customer Service and how this relates to customer satisfaction. The review topic was selected by the panel from a shortlist of priorities based on their overview of TCHG's business gained during their initial six month induction period and after an analysis of current performance data and customer insight.

Recommendations

1. The Board is asked to consider the report and recommendations and discuss any queries with the Scrutiny Panel representatives attending the Board meeting.
2. The Scrutiny Panel request that the Board provide a formal response to their recommendations, detailing the process by which the accepted recommendations will be implemented.

Customer Service – Resident Scrutiny Panel Report

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The review process involved initial discussions with the Head of Customer Service to gain an understanding of processes, practice and challenges; this enabled the panel to scope the parameters of the review. They decided to investigate:
- How the TCHG Customer Service Centre operates
 - How the Countrywise Repairs Call Centre operates in relation to the Customer Service Centre. Do customers get a consistent service?
 - Our customers' experience. What is the Customer Journey from initial contact to resolution of enquiry, especially where issues are not resolved at first point of contact?
 - How does TCHG keep customers informed? Who is responsible for providing information?

2 Process and Aims of the Review

- 2.1 There was an initial, comprehensive, review of documents and sources and some benchmarking against other organisations. The second phase of the review consisted of a variety of 'reality check' activities which involved panel members working with TCHG and Countrywise Repairs staff members and other residents to validate the information gathered and gain first hand knowledge of customer service operations and how these impact on both staff and residents.
- 2.2 The stated aims of the review were:
- To increase customer satisfaction
 - To achieve consistency of service for all residents
 - To ensure clear processes
 - To reduce repeat calls/overall call numbers to the Customer Services Centre
 - To ensure that services are value for money

3 Review Outcomes

- 3.1 The review found 4 overarching themes and makes 14 recommendations, the majority of which involve changes to processes, practice and culture, largely relating to how we communicate with our customers. The panel hope that many of the recommendations could be simply and promptly implemented to help to bring real changes to how the organisation's customer service is perceived by our customers.
- 3.2 Additional findings were also identified across 2 themes which did not fall into the original scope of the review, with a further 4 recommendations. These recommendations are around the need for further investigation to substantiate the initial findings.

- 3.3 The review findings complement and support the aims of TCHG's Customer Service Strategy published in August 2014 and our Journey to Customer Excellence programme launched in June 2014. Implementation of the recommendations would help to provide assurance to our customers that the organisation is committed to real cultural change in our approach to customer service.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 Conducting the review has been a very positive experience for the panel members and the staff members involved. Panel member Len Lewis has commented:
"How helpful, open and transparent all the staff are in assisting our review"
- 4.2 The staff members' experience is summed up by Charlotte Fox, Customer Service Team Leader who said:
"Having the resident scrutiny panel join the team has been a fantastic experience so far. In such a short time, we have developed a strong open relationship which shows the signs of being an excellent working partnership. The team looks forward to seeing how we can work together to offer our customers the exceptional service they deserve".
- 4.3 The review report and recommendations are attached at Appendix 1.