

Central Home Owners Panel (CHOP) MEETING

Held Tuesday 5 February 2019, 6pm-8pm
Board Room, Park Street

1. Welcome and apologies

- 1.1. Apologies were received from one member also from three prospective members who were planning to observe tonight's meeting.
- 1.2. The Chair welcomed two observers to the meeting and members introduced themselves.

2. Declaration of interest - None

3. Minutes from the last meeting

- 3.1. Minutes were approved.
- 3.2. It was agreed that service charge actions would be looked at in more detail at the next meeting.

4. Review of home ownership section of Hyde website

- 4.1. The Digital Communications Manager gave an overview of the website.
- 4.2. Is online payment available for leaseholders? Not currently but looking to offer this in future. Currently need to do this over the phone so it doesn't mix anything up with the resident's service charge account.
- 4.3. Are many observations made online? Yes it's the main feedback channel alongside email.
- 4.4. Who makes the most enquiries about service charges? It's pretty equal across tenants and home owners.
- 4.5. Suggestions for improvement:
 - 4.5.1. Make clear that the service charge page applies to both tenants and home owners
 - 4.5.2. Under major works and section 20 sections – make clear that part 1 and 2 refers to stage 1 and 2
 - 4.5.3. In regards to the Section 20 fire safety notice – communication needs to be clearer as a lot of residents will be thinking that they will be charged individually – communication needs to be clearer that the notices legally have to be sent out to everyone and recipients may or may not be affected – an assurance should be added in that if they are affected they are they will be contacted again. A date also needs to be added for this – instead of 'recently'.
 - 4.5.4. Section 20 page is also very "texty"; diagrams might help and be easier for people to grasp, e.g. a process map. A diagram for stage 1, 2 and 3 for section 20s might be helpful.

- 4.5.5. Buildings insurance info – headline should not just be about how to claim as some people might not want to and might click away thinking it's the wrong link
- 4.5.6. Under Homeowner responsibilities – need to add 'usually' to bullet 4 and to re-word so isn't 'You are' to residents but 'We are usually' about Hyde.
- 4.5.7. The Home Ownership Manager suggested a pictorial house might help with communicating home owner vs Hyde responsibilities. Members said that leases were quite long-winded and hard to find information – can a line saying "If you are unsure, please check by contacting us."
- 4.5.8. Members suggested that on the online contact form, it should be possible to report a communal heating repair and it was suggested the two questions should be swapped around.
- 4.5.9. Members asked for a contact us button to be added to the Home Owner page.
- 4.6. Members asked for an update on the app as Customer Services have told residents to use the website instead of the app. The Digital Communications Manager will speak to Customer Services to find out. It may be because there is a problem with the current functionality of the app in that the emails go straight to Customer Services and then need to be forwarded on to the right contractor whereas the online form goes straight to the right place.
- 4.7. Residents said the app is easier to use when out and about and that the website comes up really small on the phone. It was suggested by members that functions like the Journey Planner be removed from the Hyde app.
- 4.8. The question was asked as to whether a complaint about a contractor could be added to the app. The Corporate Complaints Manager explained that kind of complaint (e.g. ladders left) would go to Property Services complaints.
- 4.9. Can contact us be added to the app? Not easily, but can add links to website – functionality is fixed on the app.
- 4.10. Is a separate form required for adding a complaint about a contractor? The Corporate Complaints Manager explained that once a complaint is logged, Customer Services then assign it to the contractor. The Corporate Complaints Manager explained that as soon as anything is reported as a complaint, mailbox or OAK, it's jumped on straight away. One of the observers said that she wasn't sure complaints were getting to the right people as if they were, there would be actions. This observer's neighbouring block had a refurb and paint started coming off straight after, found to be manufacturer fault but 3 years later no action. Observer to forward building name to Resident Engagement Advisor.
- 4.11. Reviewing the website to be added to forward plan as a 6 monthly CHOP task either in meeting or via OAK.
- 4.12. In all it was agreed that the website is pretty good and better than it used to be, the issue is how we get people to know about it. It was suggested that Property Managers get better knowledge of the website and share it with residents – website workshops for staff are being run.

4.13. The Bermondsey Spa newsletter should also reference the website.

5. Complaints

5.1. The Corporate Complaints Manager introduced himself and explained he'd joined Hyde April 2018.

5.2. The main complaints for home owners are around service charges, in which home owners are slightly more likely to complain than tenants (52% to 48%). The main problem is around not being kept informed.

5.3. In 2017, 67% were upheld or partially upheld, compared to 52% in 2018.

5.4. In 2018 there were fewer than half as many complaints about service charges as there were in 2017.

5.5. On The OAK residents have complained that the complaints process doesn't feel truly independent and also that the process is slow.

5.6. The focus is on reducing the number of complaints received and trying to resolve them more quickly but in an effective and complete manner. Complaints Resolutions Officers (CROs) now phone residents to find out what resolution they are seeking. If a complaint needs to be open longer so it can be closed in the right way with a happy outcome that's fine, as long as the resident is kept engaged. Residents agreed their priority was being kept informed more than the complaints being resolved quickly

5.7. At present there is a 17 day average to close complaints rather than 21.

5.8. Hyde is reviewing its complaints policy to support the new approach. CROs will be acting like a mini ombudsman to make the decision about a complaint and present lessons learnt – so more independence and transparency. For every stage 2 or 3 complaint, heads of department are being held accountable for how they've acted on lessons learned. The Corporate Complaints Manager explained that they are still in the process of changing the complaints policy and will get the website updated from the new financial year. The policy will move from 3 stages to 2 stages so complaints are escalated to the right person quicker, complaints handling is more independent and complaints are escalated to senior management more quickly. Staff will also be asked to provide evidence to the CROs.

5.9. The Complaints Team are also going through older cases and complaints to check what's been done. There are currently 2,000 cases open and over 20 working days compared to 4,100 in December 2018. The Complaints Team are also looking at cases being reopened more than twice – a trigger for not getting things right first time. The new approach is about trying to be proactive instead of us waiting to be called.

5.10. 86% of Hyde's complaints are being resolved without the Housing Ombudsman (HO) compared to a 79% average across peers. This is good for residents as the HO has quite a backlog and there can be a lengthy wait.

5.11. Are the CROs under any target to reduce the number upheld? No.

5.12. How many CROs are there? 12 and 2 vacancies.

- 5.13. Residents are generally finding it hard to communicate with Hyde and complainants have often found it hard to communicate with us leading up to a complaint – this can sometimes be reflected in the complaints handling satisfaction data, but doesn't actually refer to the way the complaint was handled.
- 5.14. There is a push across Hyde for getting things right first time. Residents shouldn't have to answer the same question twice. This is going to be a key indicator in the next financial year.
- 5.15. One member raised that at the Bermondsey Spa meeting the previous week, staff weren't able to answer residents' questions as they didn't have the right people there – they were invited but didn't show and that Hyde should have been better prepared. The Home Ownership Manager agreed to take feedback back to colleagues. The Corporate Complaints Manager was invited to attend the next Bermondsey Spa meeting.
- 5.16. The Corporate Complaints Manager agreed to distribute slides after meeting and would also like to come back to the next CHOP meeting. He also agreed to provide a rolling performance update and CHOP said they would like to review complaints examples live and closed at next meeting, as well as an update on what learning has already been given to teams from the complaints upheld.

6. CHOP priorities & forward plan

- 6.1. Procurement timeline will be shared for next meeting.
- 6.2. Corporate Complaints Manager and Director of Customer Operations and Digital Services to be invited to next meeting –presentation or report to be shared in advance
- 6.3. Review of introduction of Property Managers – Sept.
- 6.4. Invite Fire Safety Taskforce Lead to September meeting to share on fire safety progress across all affected Hyde properties. Action: Fire safety inbox – feedback at that at Bermondsey Spa meeting nobody in that room had had a response from it.
- 6.5. Communication to be topic for later in the year – the Hyde tone plus residents getting a different standard of communication depending on department – CHOP to use OAK to get feedback on where comms needs improving.

7. Chair & Vice Chair

- 7.1. It was agreed that the Interim Chair become Chair.
- 7.2. Election for Vice Chair to be held 7 May. Any interested parties to contact Resident Engagement Advisor.

8. Recruitment update

- 8.1. Resident observing meeting following RE Recruitment Day and another resident observing 2nd meeting over phone.
- 8.2. Interest from three other residents in observing next meeting.

9. CHOP communication

9.1. Resident Engagement Advisor to arrange website summary quickly.

10.AOB

10.1. Concern was raised about quality of CCTV footage, resident to catch up with Home Ownership Manager outside of meeting.

Meeting closed at 8pm.

Meeting Actions

Meeting	Item	Action	Lead	Deadline	Update
20/11/18	4	Improve communication to residents on what information they can request after receiving their actuals.	Service Charge Team	September 2019	Work to begin with Comms around August 2019 on the information made available to residents as part of the 2018/19 service charge actuals project. I believe we will be sharing the proposed Comms to go out to residents with CHOP.
20/11/18	4	Provide feedback to CHOP on how well the estate inspection service charge process has worked, any trends identified and number of amends picked up.	Service Charge Team	February 2019	As part of the 2019/20 budget process the Property Managers supplied information on the services provided at blocks and estates. This is an ongoing process and an agreed action following the HRE SC audit. There is no way to measure this statistically, however if there are less queries or requests for costs to be removed where services are not provided. This would indicate the process is working.

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20/11/18	4	Share statement formats with CHOP for review before they go out next time.	Service Charge Team	September 2019	This will be shared nearer the time to completion. We would hope to have templates agreed by the end of August/beginning of September 2019.
20/11/18	4	Provide high level graphs to CHOP showing total charge, total refund, reason for refund, any undercharging and whether the amount Hyde has to refund each year due to inaccurate statements is reducing each year and by how much.	Service Charge Team	Feb 2020	Of the closed enquiries as at end of Dec 18. There were 124 blocks/estates that had changes out of 896. Please see table 1 attached for a breakdown by service. Going forward once the actual SC figures are processed in the new system. We can provide more detailed financial information. The next set of Actuals (2018/19) are due in September 2019. To enable comparisons with the same months in Oct, Nov and Dec the data would not be available until Jan next year (2020).
20/11/18	4	Provide data to CHOP on the percentage of service charge enquiries dealt with within 30 days and the average length of time for a response.	Service Charge Team	February 2019	Ave. time in Oct, Nov and Dec 18 was 19 days between the date due and date completed.
20/11/18	4	There is a common misconception that tenants do not pay service charge and we would like Service Charge Team to look	Service Charge Team	February / May 2019	We are currently working with Comms on the information available for residents. It has

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		at how they can help clarify and communicate this to home owners – some myth busting is required. Look at how the message that tenants also pay service charge and that home owners are not subsidising tenants' service charges can be made clear.			been noted that more information can be provided where possible. My thoughts are this information would be best place as part of the welcome pack for Leaseholders.
5/2/19	4.5	Website suggestions to be implement	Digital Communications Manager	7 May 2019	
5/2/19	4.6	Attend next CHOP meeting to share on app plans. (Any presentation/report to be circulated in advance)	Director of Customer Operations and Digital Services	7 May 2019	
5/2/19	4.9	Link to website to be added to app.	Digital Communications Manager	7 May 2019	
5/2/19	4.10	Forward details onto Resident Engagement Advisor	Observer	7 May 2019	
5/2/19	4.13	Bermondsey Spa newsletter to reference the Hyde website	Property Team Manager	7 May 2019	
5/2/19	5.15	Feedback re Bermondsey Spa meeting to be shared with relevant colleagues	Home Ownership Manager	7 May 2019	
5/2/19	5.16	Distribute slides and return to next meeting with performance update, update on lessons learnt and some examples to review	Corporate Complaints Manager	7 May 2019	
5/2/19	6	Update forward planner and share via OAK	Resident Engagement Advisor	7 May 2019	
5/2/19	6.1	Procurement timeline to be shared at next meeting	Resident Engagement Advisor / Home	7 May 2019	

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			Ownership Manager		
5/2/19	6.2	Invite Director of Customer Operations and Digital Services to next meeting	Resident Engagement Advisor	7 May 2019	
5/2/19	6.4	Invite Fire Safety Taskforce Lead to Sept meeting	Resident Engagement Advisor	3 September 2019	
5/2/19	6.4	Share feedback that fire safety mailbox doesn't appear to be monitored or emails responded to	Home Ownership Manager	ASAP	
5/2/19	7.2	Any members interested in Vice Chair role to email Resident Engagement Advisor	CHOP Members	7 May 2019	