

HYDEWIDE RESIDENTS VOICE

MINUTES OF HRV REVIEW CALLS HELD ONLINE

WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL 2020, 5.30PM – 6.30PM

1. Welcome, introductions, how is everyone

- 1.1. Members shared their experiences of social distancing and any challenges they are facing

2. Income Services

- 2.1. Hyde understands that it is a very hard time for many residents, especially financially
- 2.2. The priority at the moment is to get a full picture of the actual situation that residents are in and the scale of the problem. Insight data is being used, from Hyde residents and more widely - from the government etc - to understand the full impact
- 2.3. One of the biggest concerns is the delay to Universal Credit (UC) – this should be coming end of May / June.
- 2.4. Hyde is currently not taking any action on arrears on rent accounts, instead looking at payment plans. Cannot offer breaks in payments, but being aware that some may not have much until UC comes in
- 2.5. 1600 people have contacted Hyde so far regarding coronavirus-related income problems
- 2.6. To ensure that there are enough resources, the Income team is upskilling team members and bringing other resources in e.g. customer services. 40-50 new members of staff are being trained to support the income service
- 2.7. Income is also working with Hyde Foundation (HF) to proactively speak to vulnerable customers to see where more specialised advice is needed for vulnerable residents. Every resident who suggests they are struggling financially is being referred to HF for employment and financial advice and support.
- 2.8. It is a balance between mitigating the risk for the business and supporting residents as best we can. Working with G15 organisations to share best practice and provide support and leadership across the sector. Things are moving and changing very fast.
- 2.9. HRV – have heard that the National Housing Federation & Peabody HA have formed a taskforce; is Hyde part of this? Hyde is working with the G15; Rod Holdsworth - the Chief Financial & Resources Officer for Hyde - is leading this group. So residents can be reassured that discussions & decisions are being made at the highest level, looking at the needs of our organisations and developing a way forward that is right for us. There is no right or wrong answer.
- 2.10. HRV – people that are shielding and working for a public body were going to be furloughed, but now this may not be possible – how will Hyde respond to this? Hyde will raise this with the HR team who are looking at the HR legislation – this is worrying and we will need to work out how many residents this may impact.
- 2.11. Hyde is actively asking residents to contact us if they are worried about their situation. This is better for them and for Hyde, as it means support can be provided before they get into too much into debt. HRV – how is this being done? A reminder was included in the email & letters. The message is that they don't need to speak to Hyde if they are not comfortable doing so; they can just email for now.
- 2.12. HRV – happy to see that the communication around rent holidays has improved as this was causing some dissatisfaction and confusion amongst residents.
- 2.13. HRV – what is happening about arrears for residents that haven't contacted Hyde, will you still be actively chasing those up? Yes, because we need to understand what residents' situations are. We will investigate, but we will not take action at the moment.

3. Service update & Communications

- 3.1. Calls to vulnerable and non-engaged residents are ongoing. Lots of support being provided from across the business. This is being viewed as an opportunity for Learning & Development e.g. getting work experience in other teams.
- 3.2. Frontline staff who are out and about on site and visiting residents are going to receive a 'COVID-hero' bonus in their pay this month. HRV – good that Hyde are recognising frontline staff
- 3.3. Staff living alone are being provided with additional support e.g. buddy system, plus extra support for people dealing with difficult telephone calls
- 3.4. Frontline teams are nearly back up to normal in terms of resourcing, as mentioned by Audrey last week
- 3.5. PPE delivery has arrived which will provide further protection and reassurance to those out on site, enabling us to continue delivering services
- 3.6. Drop in non-emergency repairs - shows that residents are being aware of not-reporting
- 3.7. HRV – what about communication hubs for vulnerable and elderly – are Hyde aware of this initiative? Yes, Hyde Foundation are researching about these now, to understand more about what is available in individual LA areas so that we can signpost – these services do vary.
- 3.8. HRV – what are the business response call meetings? Business continuity – key members of staff from across Hyde meeting regularly to make sure that Hyde is planning effectively to maintain basic services.
- 3.9. The next all-resident email should be going out before the weekend – the draft will go on The OAK for comments. HRV are asked to feedback as quickly as possible.

4. HRV meetings during coronavirus lockdown

- 4.1. HRV agreed that they should go ahead with the next formal meeting in May. This will be done via Skype for Business. The Chair & Vice Chair will discuss the agenda via The OAK.
- 4.2. All also agreed that the weekly calls should continue
- 4.3. Members agreed that it would be good to start bringing some business as usual and 'normal' conversations into the meeting again

5. Next meeting

- 5.1. Date of next online meeting. Wednesday 29 April 2020.
- 5.2. HRV will be joined by Kerry Starling from Hyde Foundation & David Hunter – new Director of Resident Services
- 5.3. Rolling item: resident communications during coronavirus pandemic