

# Minutes

**Name of meeting: Meeting 7** Service Charge Working Group

**Date:** Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 18:30-20:30

**Venue:** Teams online

<p><b>Attendees</b></p> <p><b>Residents</b>          Barbara Cliffe (BC), Lee Hall (LH), Michael Roberts (MR), Roger Hankey (RH)          Grace Famoriyo (GF)</p> <p><b>Milton Keynes City Council</b>          Andrew Hodgson (AH), Catherine Arnold (CA), Mohammad Bari (MB), Roz Duffy (RD), Brighton Eraki (BE), Sonia Hattle(SH), Sebastian Kulig (SK)</p>	
<b>Guests:</b> Amanda Griffiths (AG), Natasha Hutchins(NH)	
<b>Apologies:</b> Jean Harry (JH)	
<b>Note taker:</b> Rahima Ahmed (RA)	

1.	Introductions and Apologies	Action
	AH welcomed all to the meeting and acknowledged apologies	
2.	<b>Approval of minutes (2:07- 26:42)</b>	
2.1	<p><b>Updates on actions from previous minutes.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Service Charge policy for 22-23 confirms that CA will check and NH will overview the accounts. Both are qualified accountants.</li> <li>- Senior managers will be invited to the group to have conversations about the services.</li> <li>- BE has started work on the service charge schedules.</li> <li>- Service charge and rent definitions are on the Housing Consultation webpage.</li> <li>- Leaseholder Consultation C letter will go out in the next 2 weeks. The delay was to ensure no further adjustments needed from leaseholder actuals.</li> <li>- 3.2 We are waiting for advice from Building Insurance as to the correct wording for the last question.</li> <li>- 3.2 To clarify, we are asking shared owners to confirm building insurance for the actual bricks and mortar and not contents, fixture, and fittings. Most leases do not ask for contents insurance, so we do not have a legal basis to enforce.</li> <li>- Word changed from shareholders to shared owners.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3.3 Street lighting charge – If the streetlight is on housing land, then it includes repair and maintenance, replacement and possibly power. If there is a known inherent problem we will have to investigate.</li> <li>- 3.3 Fire Risk Assessments reserve within the Local Authority setting does not have to comply with the same commercial standards. It can simply sit on our balance sheet.</li> <li>- 3.3 We have the ability to call off works for ground maintenance using Glendale the waste contractor. Details to be discussed in due course.</li> <li>- Minutes to the last meeting approved and on website.</li> </ul>							
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>3.1</b></p> <p><b>3.2</b></p>	<p><b>Main Activities</b></p> <p><b>Service Charge - Letter to tenants and leaseholders progress (1:45- 1:52)</b></p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> letter to go out to tenants and residents the last week of August. It will give the wider residents an opportunity to see what this group has discussed and the ability to vote. We will be transparent in sharing the perspective of the group and MKCC.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b></p> <p>a) AH to circulate the letter to group for comments.</p> <p><b>Caretaking and Cleaning Services – Dialogue with Amanda Griffiths (26:54-1:32) The main points are below:</b></p> <p><b>Context</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Caretaking and Cleaning Services are part of Neighbourhood Services. Neighbourhood services, Allocations, Homelessness and Private Sector Housing sit within Adult Social Services and are areas that Amanda has responsibility for.</li> <li>- Amanda is on a journey herself as it is only in the last four weeks that she is directly managing Neighbourhood services after Todd Ricketts the Neighbourhood Manager left. So far Amanda is going on monthly estate visits to have a better understanding and listen to resident’s feedback. Amanda understands the current system is not working and is open to feedback.</li> </ul> <p><b>Current structure</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="288 1749 1222 2020"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="288 1749 756 1794">Role Hierarchy</th> <th data-bbox="756 1749 1222 1794">Role brief description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="288 1794 756 1906">Estate Supervisors x 3</td> <td data-bbox="756 1794 1222 1906">Line manage Caretakers and Caretaking Assistants across the city.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="288 1906 756 2020">Caretakers</td> <td data-bbox="756 1906 1222 2020"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Predominantly responsible for the outside of the buildings.</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Role Hierarchy	Role brief description	Estate Supervisors x 3	Line manage Caretakers and Caretaking Assistants across the city.	Caretakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Predominantly responsible for the outside of the buildings.</li> </ul>	<p>AH/ALL</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- carry out some maintenance.</li> <li>- spot checks and health and safety checks inside the buildings.</li> </ul>							
Caretaking Assistants	responsible for doing the cleaning within the buildings.							
<p>Sheltered Housing have Sheltered Housing Officer who look after the scheme.</p>								
<p><b>Main Dialogue points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Definitions</b> - What is MKCC definition of cleaning and caretaking? What is MKCC trying to achieve?</li> <li>- <b>Accountability</b> - Processes are not being followed. Complaints are cumbersome or ignored. There needs to be quality assurance and proper contract management and decision making.</li> <li>- <b>Charges</b> - All elements are part of variable charges so there is no refund. Currently, MKCC does not allocate a charge when there is no cleaning provided. The question is how is this triggered?</li> <li>- <b>Staffing</b> - There is a problem with staff retention, morale, and overuse of agency staff. AG is looking to develop a bank of cleaners to cover sickness and absence. We need to be clear of what we want the cleaning and caretaking service to provide to understand whether we have the correct amount and level of staff.</li> <li>- <b>Acknowledgement</b> – Currently, there are inherent problems with the service. As we moved to variable charges, there is an appetite amongst the group and AG to develop the service quality, standard and feel comfortable that the charge is transparent, fair, and reasonable.</li> </ul>								
<p><b>Decision 1 Create a sub-group to review MKCC Caretaking and Cleaning service.</b>  Brighton Eraki, Service Charge Accountant will lead the task and finish group. First meeting will be 23<sup>rd</sup> August.</p>								
<p><b>ACTIONS</b></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">a) BE to lead subgroup for Caretaking and Cleaning. Meeting to take place on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023 at Civic 18:30-20:00</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">BE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b) AG to share the Caretaking and Cleaning ‘As Is’ process and standard. Who does what where and how to the sub group</td> <td style="text-align: right;">AG</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c) Email <a href="mailto:rentservicechargereview@milton-keynes.gov.uk">rentservicechargereview@milton-keynes.gov.uk</a> if you would like to be part of the Caretaking and Cleaning sub group or if there is anything you would like to share with AG</td> <td style="text-align: right;">ALL</td> </tr> </table>			a) BE to lead subgroup for Caretaking and Cleaning. Meeting to take place on Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> August 2023 at Civic 18:30-20:00	BE	b) AG to share the Caretaking and Cleaning ‘As Is’ process and standard. Who does what where and how to the sub group	AG	c) Email <a href="mailto:rentservicechargereview@milton-keynes.gov.uk">rentservicechargereview@milton-keynes.gov.uk</a> if you would like to be part of the Caretaking and Cleaning sub group or if there is anything you would like to share with AG	ALL
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<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>4.1</b></p> <p><b>4.2</b></p> <p><b>4.3</b></p> <p><b>4.4</b></p>	<p><b>Any other Business</b></p> <p><b>Update from Natasha (1:33 – 1:45)</b>  Notice was given to call a delegated decision meeting on the 5th September, where we will be taking a decision to enter into formal consultation around the future of the repairs and maintenance service.</p> <p><b>ACTIONS</b></p> <p>a) RA/SK to circulate report when available.  b) All to consider the report and feedback to the consultation</p> <p><b>Leaseholder estimates</b> -Group agreed it would be helpful to have a guide describing how we have arrived at the charge.</p> <p><b>Tenants and Leaseholders Annual Report 2022</b> has just been signed off so will be on the website soon.</p> <p>The GIS work is still in progress. We can invite Nick Hannon- Head of Environmental and Waste to October’s meeting where we can talk about ground maintenance and gardening.</p>	<p>RA/SK  ALL</p>
<p><b>Date of Next Meeting:</b>  TBC the meeting will cover heating</p>		