

Leasehold Forum Meeting Minutes – 10 May 2022

Present: Julie Hood, Housing Equalities and Engagement Facilitator

Peter Holt, Housing Team Leader (Accounts and Assets)

Total number of Leaseholders: 25

Apologies: none received

Julie Hood, the Chair of the meeting, opened the meeting and welcomed everybody

Peter Holt introduced himself.

Julie opened the meeting welcomed everyone and shared the ground rules that had been sent to all attendees with the meeting details:

- although you are sitting in your home you are in a meeting; please do not do anything you wouldn't do in West Offices e.g. eat
- that everyone is in the meeting for their own reasons
- to treat everyone with respect at all times, this includes staff, attendees and any organisations present/discussed in the meeting.
- let others raise their issues
- Housing issues are the only issues staff may be able to change, they have no influence over other CYC departments e.g. Council Tax, Parking etc
- if it is suggested that your issue will be investigated outside of the meeting do not continue to discuss it
- no items will be discussed in any other business unless they have been sent 7 days prior to the meeting, under any circumstance.

Extending leases

Peter Holt

Peter explained that the Legal Department are working on producing an overview factsheet regarding lease extension which will support leaseholders.

In general any leaseholder who has had the lease for more than 2 years can apply to extend the term of the lease.

The leaseholder must meet the costs of:

- a professional surveyor which will be no less than £750
- the legal fees of no less than £700
- the value premium.

There is a calculator to determine the value premium, an example of the cost would be:

For a property worth £200,000 with 90 years on the lease and a ground rent of £10 the value premium would be £2,000 - £3,000.

Leaseholders are advised to have their own legal representative however initial enquires can be made through the Asset Officers.

Please find the link to the Value Premium calculator <https://www.lease-advice.org/external-link/calculate-cost-lease-extension>

Extending the lease would add 90 years to the current lease so an extension to a lease with 90 years left would give 180 years.

A valuation of the property from an Estate Agent would support the Section 42 (formal request to extend the lease)

Independent lease advice website can be found here <https://www.lease-advice.org/>

Open Housing and the Customer Portal

Peter Holt

The new IT system (Open Housing) brings all the old systems into 1 which will reduce the opportunities for error and provide a more efficient service. It launched in January 2022. Housing Management has already seen massive changes and many benefits, currently the system is focussed on tenants.

The next step is to include leaseholders. Over the next 6 months leasehold financial information will be moved over to Open Housing to enable the system to support leaseholders and Officers.

These changes will require new direct debits to be set up so the Asset Officers will be contacting all leaseholders when they are moved over. There will be three Asset Officers to support this, Nicki, Claire and a new Officer. Interviews for this post are being held next week.

This means that the service charges 2023 will all be on line; leaseholders will be able to check their accounts and see the breakdown of the service charge; section 20 consultations; ground rents etc.

More information will be available at the next meeting.

Procurement Section 20

Peter Holt

All leaseholders will have received a substantial amount of correspondence regarding contractors and work to be done. Responsive repairs use a lot of contractors/subcontractors and many of these contracts are coming to an end thus needing to be renewed.

We need to consult all leaseholds when renewing contracts

The consultation is ongoing as there are 3 stages.

If work is due to happen on your block of flats we would write to you again, you would also be notified of any costs.

For any work to properties we need to undertake the Section 20 consultation. If the work is an emergency needing immediate remedial works and we have no contractor we could do the work and go to 1st tier tribunal to recoup the cost.

An individual issue was raised – Peter to address outside of the meeting.

Parking update

Peter Holt

Before the pandemic there were plans for a parking project to introduce parking permits to blocks of flats across the City. Customers would need a parking permit to park on Housing Land. This was progressing well however it has stalled during and since the pandemic.

The project is now moving along again and the properties this will cover are being finalised. We will write to all residents concerned and let them know what they need to do to get a permit in due course. Only one permit for each property. Visitor permits could be applied for if work was being done on a property.

This project covers Housing land only and will cover garage areas where the garages are being blocked by inconsiderate parking. Parking on the street will not be covered as this is Highways, not Housing land.

The use of Blue badges alongside the Housing parking permits is not clear, Peter will investigate.

Any Other Business

Solar Panels

Can CYC install solar panels on roofs?

Yes, however the cost of these is high and, currently, there isn't a budget. We can pass this to the Capital Project team for consideration.

Waste Stacks

Issue of the waste stacks in our blocks which are constantly getting blocked. Last time I spoke with the plumber who attended he mentioned works were in the pipeline but was unable to give me any other information. – 400 Burton Stone Lane

This issue is ongoing and will be a future Capital project.

Can CYC install Swift boxes

This will be passed to Building Services.

Insulation

Are there any plans to insulate properties?

Currently there are no plans to insulate properties that we are aware of.

Next Meeting

A date in September/October 2022, to be confirmed.

A request was received for Insurance to be included on the agenda.