

Shareholder Committee Summary

The Shareholder Committee requested that the Acting Corporate Director of Resources write to the Corporate Management Team and Stakeholders to obtain a collective view on the performance of NPS and makes any appropriate recommendations to the Committee as necessary.

Responses were received from the following sources:

- Peterborough Highways Services;
- Community Services;
- Aragon Direct Services;
- Medesham Homes;
- Interim Development Director;
- Strategic Education Capital Programme Manager;
- Members.

It is important to look to the detailed comments but at the same time look at the themes that can be derived from the comments in order for appropriate recommendations to be made. There were 5 main themes in terms of the points raised:

- 1) It is clear from the comments that there is ambiguity in understanding of relationships from users on the end to end property function including:
 - a. The client side responsibilities
 - b. NPS Responsibilities
 - c. Aragon Direct Responsibilities
 - d. Legal Services Responsibilities
 - e. Procurement Responsibilities

This theme underpins a number of the more direct property comments and it is key that following the return of services previously run by Amey to Council control through Aragon Direct Services that interactions are becoming better.

However for the interface to be correct, and property service users and members to be able to have one source of contact for property queries, working across all the above groups must get better and work closer together.

As a first step on this path, all property information is now being transferred to a single property system (Technology Forge).

There has already been an initial meeting in late October which brought the groups a) to e) above together, but work now needs to be accelerated in order that:

- Queries be channelled through one source - the Property Client;
- That NPS, as the Corporate Landlord, has sight of all the work going on and can ensure strategies and work being undertaken are at the correct quality level;
- That when works are undertaken either by Aragon Direct Services (or any other contractor) that progress and records are appropriately captured to ensure that the Council.

With this there will be clarity on

- What work is being undertaken, by who and progress;
- The condition of all the Council's buildings (responsibility of Aragon Direct Services);
- If there are queries – these are linked to those individual buildings and can be tracked.

Work is already moving forward. Regular meetings are taking place between the Property Client, Aragon Direct Services, and NPS. These meetings now need to be expanded to ensure that the Aragon Client side is included in this overall governance process. In addition a Monthly “property” meeting now needs to be convened from January to make sure all bases are covered.

Accompanying this will be a clear communications strategy to ensure all stakeholders understand the interactions, responsibilities and escalation routes.

Recommendations

- **Ensure and validate that all Property Data is transferred onto the Technology Forge System**
- **Set up monthly meetings of key internal stakeholders**
- **Produce a Communications Strategy to ensure all stakeholders understand the end to end property process, points of escalation and responsibilities of the different parties.**

- 2) Too much focus on Sand Martin House (SMH) in relation to “staff buildings” and not enough focus on other delivery locations (including budgets);

This point is taken – there has been significant investment in SMH and also now the upgrade of the Town Hall to ensure that the Council is using cost and energy efficient buildings. The Council also have commercial tenants paying market rate rent and service charges which require dedicated oversight. This has been the focus of the Council’s accommodation strategy. However, as part of the asset review being undertaken there is a need to review all locations to ensure needs and efficient use of the assets are maximised. General property queries are targeted to the Aragon Helpdesk in the first instance for all buildings (there has been no change to this policy)

Recommendation

- **Review all locations to ensure needs and efficient use of the assets are maximised**

- 3) Inconsistent responsiveness from NPS Staff;

This will be followed up. As part of the process described in 1) above, if there is an issue there will be a clear line into the Client manager so that the issue can be escalated and resolved.

Recommendation

- **Monthly meeting of in house stakeholders to pick up issues as a standing item**
- **NPS to provide a service response standard to ensure communications are consistent and response times are measurable.**

- 4) Positive views of NPS’s strategic work;

- 5) Concerns on operational matters including:
a. Work around the CAT process;

This is now linked into the asset review presently being undertaken. The CAT process need both Property and Service input to ensure it works properly. This includes property looking at different options for properties that are not able to progress through the CAT process.

- b. The end to end Housing process (including property costs);

This has been an issue. Housing Property Data capture has been an additional service being managed by NPS over the past year and client queries which are not property related have increased. Housing “assets” are on Technology Forge and with the recent move to centralise the end to end Housing process in one Department there is now traction in this area.

- c. Client provider responsibilities with Aragon;

Part of the recommendation in Theme 1 above.

- d. A clear Asset Management Plan (and why repairs in certain places has stopped);

The asset management plan is part of the MTFs and is limited by the amount of funding available. This will be picked up as part of monthly meetings as per item b) above. Repairs are a delivery responsibility of Aragon.

- e. Links with Hamson Barron Smith and how this is commissioned and if it is value for money;

Recommendation

- **Market testing to take place to ensure VFM is being exhibited**

- f. Under-researching of selling packs – causing delays in transactions

This has been acknowledged as an issue on recent transactions with final information only coming out after a number of iterations across all inputs to the property service. Selling packs will now be fully reviewed by Property and Legal Services before passing to respective clients and customers.

Recommendation

- **Ensure revised process used for selling packs and similar deliverables**

- g. Communication verbally is generally good, subsequent actions agreed at meetings (or on the telephone) are slow to be followed up and frequently customers are told that they are “awaiting instructions from Officers within the Council” – links to point 1 above;

See Theme 1 above – is a link to all 3 recommendations

- h. 141 Lincoln Road being without heat for 3 months and Kingfisher Centre without hot water for 3 months;

See Theme 1 above – it a link to all 3 recommendations

- i. Lighting at the Town Hall.

See response to Theme 2 above

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