

Leasehold Focus Group Meeting

Date of Meeting

21 May 2025, 17:30pm –19:00pm

Minutes of Meeting

Attendance: Leaseholders (LHs): Katy Baker (KB), Stewart Auginer (SA), James Williams (JW), Ian Ward (IW), Carl Jursa (CJ), June Eggett (JE), Norman Ives (NI), John Clarke (JC), Yvonne Doyle (YV), Ian Smith (IS), Mr & Mrs Reid (MMR)

		Action
1	<p><u>Welcome</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• KB asked for permission to record the meeting via a minute-taking app—consent was unanimous.• JW opened the meeting, invited introductions, and covered housekeeping protocols.	N/A
2	<p>Terms of Reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• JW explained	N/A
2	<p><u>Apologies</u></p> <p>Marilyn Riley (MR), Iwona Kalisz (IK)</p>	N/A
3	<p><u>Guest Speaker – Stewart Auginer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• JW introduced SA, the Estate Services Manager.• SA provided background on his role and the Estate Services Team—emphasised recent joining and plans for service improvements.• Duties overview included responsive services and caretakers' daily tasks.• SA noted their bulky-waste van has been out of service for 3 weeks; replacement expected tomorrow.• SA asked if anyone had any questions.• CJ queried if caretakers have H&S training and repair-reporting capability.• IW advised caretakers had confirmed they do report repairs. He also raised concerns about a window falling from the tower block and anti-social behaviour resulting in mess in stairwells and lifts.• SA confirmed that for serious incidents (e.g., bodily fluids), a team would respond immediately. Otherwise, services are responsive.• JC asked for a clearer definition of caretakers' duties (e.g., weeding, garage areas, wall marks).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ SA clarified: weeding on pathways (if a trip hazard), not flowerbeds.○ Wall/marque marks should be addressed per benchmark standards but aren't currently.	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JC offered time-stamped photo evidence of missed duties to send to KB. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SA stated Mondays are scheduled for deeper cleaning; weekends/bank holidays operate a skeleton service. ○ JC said weekend cleaning isn't happening; staff are diverted before completing tasks. ○ SA to address specific issues at Beaver Tower and ensure staff complete their tasks before being reassigned. ○ SA confirmed cleaners are using a time-stamped photo system ("photobook" via House Mark). JC claimed they sometimes use outdated photos. SA emphasised all photos are now timestamped and asked for suggestions; JC recommended better supervision (though staff capacity limits this). • NI noticed job adverts for new cleaners (two vacancies and two off sick); he reported cleaning standards are "below par" at Riverstone. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NI noted floor buffing used to happen monthly but has stopped. SA explained this is due to short staffing; efforts will resume periodically, subject to staff training. ○ SA is locating the buffing machines and exploring if hall floor marks can be removed. ○ NI praised cleaners who are doing well. ○ SA invited reports of any staff misconduct. ○ NI questioned why cleaners are weeding unnecessarily; SA confirmed weeding should be restricted to pathways. ○ IW asked about smashed glass cleanup—SA clarified this is within caretakers' remit. • JC noted grounds maintenance isn't managed by Estate Services; KB agreed this will be addressed separately. • IB (likely IW?) mentioned bins haven't been emptied properly for weeks, weeds haven't been sprayed, and increased fly-tipping has raised costs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SA confirmed caretakers will spray pathway weeds. • Before SA's departure, he reiterated: staff must be informed of any issues via email at estateservices@seh.southend.gov.uk, to enable service improvement 	<p>KB to arrange for guest speaker from GM for future meeting.</p> <p>SA to respond to JC list of questions supplied prior to the meeting.</p>
4.	<p>Proposed works – S20s</p> <p>a. Door-Entry & Venting Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JE confirmed no door entry system at her block – JW advised that only current door entry systems will be upgraded and no new ones. • IW requested technical details and camera functionality. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ KB clarified the system would include a camera and mobile-app functionality. ○ IW requested involvement from Kevin Hazelwood; KB replied that all leaseholders can request full S20 contract documentation and will connect him with the project 	<p>JW/KB to request further info from project Surveyors</p>

	<p>surveyor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IW also asked about venting systems. KB promised to arrange further detail. JC commented that Beaver Tower installation had already taken place and explained the process and that he undertook the work personally in his own property. <p>b. Sub-Mains & Other Project Detail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IW and IB asked for details regarding sub-mains—they will be provided by the project surveyor. JW said some contracts from previous years were delayed and rolled over due to budget constraints. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> He reminded leaseholders they may comment on these works and challenge appointed contractors. 	to supply to IW & IB
5.	<p>Financial Paperwork</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IW requested a clearer breakdown of actual service costs on his statement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KB welcomed the feedback and stated statements will be reviewed for improvements going forward. JC announced his intention to dispute all service charges for the year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KB advised he should write formally to the Leasehold Team with any disputes IW asked about legal requirements for issuing Reserve Fund statements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JW confirmed they are legally required. KB provided update that Reserve Fund Statement for years 22/23 & 23/24 that have been missed are currently in process and will be issued shortly. Also advised that Reserve fund statements for 24/25 will be issued in September along with the actual service charges. NI asked if the paladin bin charge for Riverstone includes an extra collection on top of the council tax payment one like it does at the Queensway tower blocks – JC also asked in Beaver Tower does too <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KB confirmed would need to check this information and come back to them. 	JW/KB to check the Paladin bin charge and what is included.
6.	<p>Vermin & Fly Tipping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IS, JE, and IW reported vermin/rat problems on Queensway estate, linked to improper rubbish disposal. They called for enhanced bin-hire (Paladin) or extra waste collection akin to tower blocks. JC complained SA's responses lacked firmness; KB agreed to seek more decisive follow-up. 	<p>JW/KB to enquire if extra collection can be arranged.</p> <p>KB to follow up with SA</p>
7.	<p>7 Key Outcomes of Leaseholder Participation. -You said, we did.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attendees recommended increased leaseholder engagement (e.g., visuals/posters, mail drops) to encourage participation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JW asked for suggestions on how this could be improved – they can be emailed into us. KB confirmed following the previous meeting and IK volunteering to take part, an 	

	article is now in the current Insight magazine - 'Life as a Leaseholder'	
8.	<p><u>Any other Business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JC suggested KB and JW be given greater authority to act on leaseholder complaints. 	
9.	<u>Date of next meeting – Wednesday 1st October 2025 4 to 6pm</u>	

