

- 1. Report title:** Your Moorlands - Legacy Agreement Update
- 2. Action:**
For information and noting.
- 3. Recommendation(s)**
Information and noting.
- 4. Report of:** Sharon Wheeler – Property Manager South
- 5. Contact details of author:** sharon.wheeler@yourhousinggroup.co.uk
- 6. Confidential report:** No
- 7. Supporting documents:** Appendix 1 & 2

8. Introduction

8.1 In 2017, Moorlands Housing Association transferred its engagements to Arena Housing Group. This means that governance is undertaken by those members of the YHG Common Board who govern Arena and will now also have a specific oversight and responsibility for Moorlands.

A legacy agreement was developed by and for:

- Moorlands Housing Association
- Your Housing Group (YHG)
- Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC)

8.2 The Legacy Agreement is a goodwill agreement between Moorlands Housing Association, YHG and SMDC and sets out the conditions for change to the legal structure.

8.3 This paper provides a performance and development update on the YHG business areas identified in the legacy agreement.

8.4 The information in this paper relates to business activity between April 2017 and March 2018, unless otherwise specified.

8.5 In addition to reporting to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel (COSP), the legacy agreement includes a requirement for a small tenant panel to be convened to join the COSP in reviewing the report. The members of the current tenant panel have stepped down and YHG are in the process of recruiting further members.

9. Housing Management

9.1 In February 2018, Eaton House closed and the Moorlands housing team moved to agile working. This involves using an office in Moorlands House and offering a drop-in service in Moorlands House reception one day a week. Face to face meetings with YHG housing team are available to customers throughout the week. A dedicated free phoneline which connects to Your Response, our customer call centre, is available on reception at all times. Agile working enables staff to spend more time out on their patches, carry out area walk-about and meet with customers.

9.2 In April 2018, YHG restructured its housing management services, and set up a central lettings team. The team now manage the lettings process for all social housing across the group, from receiving notice from an exiting tenant, through to advertising the property and signing up a new tenant. The majority of signups are done digitally, which means a customer can be accepted and signed up for a property within 24 hours of the offer being made. The team work with regional Choice Based Lettings systems and YHG remains part of the Staffordshire Moorlands Home Options Partnership. The Lettings team are based in Warrington and are managed by Kelly Tasker, Service Manager for Lettings.

9.3 The housing team remains locally based, and works closely with the Lettings team doing viewings, and also sign ups, where a customer does not have access to on-line facilities. The housing team also manage all other housing and tenancy issues.

9.4 YHG Customers are able to manage their own tenancies using our on-line portal. To date, 377 customers have signed up to manage their tenancies on-line across the group, with 6 customers in Moorlands, the current low number being due to the staggered roll out of digital tenancies. From May 2018, all new YHG tenancies in the Moorlands area have been digital.

9.5 Compliance

We continue to be 100% compliant in terms of domestic gas servicing, asbestos checks, electrical safety and legionella testing in our flatted blocks. Our Compliance and Facilities agents also do regular safety checks on all our communal areas.

9.6 Anti-Social Behaviour

Tenancy breaches and anti-social behaviour are dealt with by our Legal Co-ordinator. In March, our Legal Co-ordinator set up a partnership with Staffordshire Police, this means staff can apply for enhanced security clearance that will enable us to work

within the Safeguarding Hub at Leek Police Station, and allows us access to any Police station in the Staffordshire area.

9.7 The partnership will also allow us to have controlled access to Police National Computer and use the facilities at Police stations across the county. This will give us a better working relationship with the Police, and improve the service we can offer customers who are experiencing anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse or are otherwise vulnerable.

10. Asset and Investment

10.1 The delivery of work to the Moorlands region has been carried out by Moorlands DLO for the bathrooms and the kitchens, which were completed by the DLO and Novus Property Solution, who were engaged via the Procure Plus Procurement framework. The roofing has been delivered by the Moorlands DLO. The windows and doors have been completed by Emanuel Whittaker via the Fusion 21 Procurement Framework. The heating programme has been completed by Warmer Energy via the Fusion 21 procurement framework.

10.2 There has been an increase in unit cost of the bathroom renewals due to the replacement of wet rooms and the conversions of a number of bungalows to have a wet room to suit customer needs.

10.3 The heating programme has provided complete new systems, including the boiler and full re-piping of the systems and radiators.

11. Repairs

11.1 Following the rolling into the Group, the DLO has continued to deliver the Responsive and Voids works across Moorlands and into Cheshire and the High Peak. Following a review of the repairing obligations across the group's tenancy agreements, a more cost-effective maintenance package has been put in place leading to a reduction in workload for the DLO. Some of the longer serving operatives expressed an interest in leaving or retiring and submitted Voluntary Redundancy applications which we have been able to accommodate. This has enabled the DLO to reduce by six people to twenty six, and continue to deliver the maintenance service required by the new management structure.

12. Community Regeneration

12.1 Employment

YHG deliver work clubs in Leek, Biddulph & Cheadle and have a focus on the Work Routes partnership with REED. We have a contract to engage with 42 customers and to then support a percentage to get in to short and long-term work goals. YHG then receive payment by results which contributes to ongoing costs. This contract is on target.

12.2 In June 2018, we commissioned the Business Pop Up School to deliver a week-long project in advising local people how to turn their dream idea into their own business. This was taken up by 35 local Moorlands customers and was held at the Foxlowe Arts Business Centre, Leek.

12.3 Another future project is Moorlands Place, a local partnership of services which will work together to support families that are struggling to thrive. This is in the early stages of planning and should begin next year.

12.4 Environmental

Working with local stakeholders, we are looking at different methods to combat littering and mistreatment of YHG land. Methods include organising community litter picks and asking customers to become volunteers and lead local clean ups. Focusing on more challenging schemes and areas, we are improving space within communal blocks and surrounding areas, working with the community and bringing in best practice and innovation to combat these issues.

12.5 Commercial

Working with YHG Commercial team, the Community Regeneration team are looking to support new commercial tenants into vacant premises with the view to make the community more appealing and attract sustainable businesses to add value to our neighbourhoods. We have transformed the St Johns Road complex in Biddulph into a YHG Hub and enhanced the amenities for the community element of the Learning Curve. This will bring business and community usage into the area which will also support the surrounding commercial tenants.

12.6 Land Parcels

We are looking at working with SMDC and local stakeholders in Haregate, Leek to turn spare and uncultivated parcels of land into something sustainable for future usage. The project is called 'Project Orchard' and will incorporate re-landscaped areas to make our neighbourhood aesthetically pleasing, along with having a VFM sustainable approach. This will be linked with the community centre and should leave a legacy for many years.

13. Digital Engagement

13.1 We have an on-line portal which our customers can use to access their rent accounts, report repairs and pay rent. All new tenants are signed up digitally unless they have capacity issues, in which case a property agent would visit and assist or discuss other support needed to access the service.