

**SUSSEX NETWORK MEETING**

**12:00 to 13:30 Tuesday 13 October 2020**

**Venue – Virtual via MS Teams**

**Chair – Marisa Freeman (MF), Team Manager Extra Care**, Optivo

**Minutes – Marisa Freeman**

**ATTENDEES:- Marisa Freeman (MF) - Optivo, Robin Deane (RD) – Optivo, Vicky Elliott (VE) – Wealden DC, Carl Lewis (CL) Sussex Housing & Care, Shaun Thurston (ST) – Lewes & Eastbourne Homes, Zola Thomas (ZT) – Wealden DC, Liz Martin (LM) Wealden DC.**

**GUEST SPEAKERS:- N/A.**

**KEY MESSAGES AND ACTIONS**

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| **Welcome & apologies** | Introductions were made and thanks to those joining. |  |
| **Actions from last meeting** | **There were no actions from the last meeting.** |  |
| **Round the room** | Focus this time was on COVID and how things have developed from the last meeting when the country was in full lockdown.  VE – Scheme Manager at Grants Hill, talked about experiences of working on site. They’ve implemented the test and trace app and have a QR code for visitors to use. Wealden have been providing lots of guidance and reassurance to their residents. They have a sign in book too.  ST – impressed with how residents have adapted. Have been busy completing risk assessments. Scheme Managers only on site 2 days per week. The rest of the time working from home. Some residents have asked for refunds on Service Charges. ST felt it important to help residents understand the type of work a scheme manager is working on, even if not on a scheme.  MF will share the Risk Assessment document Optivo have completed to the group.  RD – talked of different experiences in different schemes. Some residents were refusing to allow staff to come into the building and at other schemes residents insisted on continuing with bingo, despite clear government guidance being shared.  LM – has been trying to find creative ways of getting residents back together. On one scheme they are piloting the use of Perspex sneeze screens to enable staff to have face to face contact with residents. They will then have a rota system with restricted access with relaxing slightly allowing one person per household. They are considering providing gloves. They’ve also completed a survey asking residents what’s gone well.  Currently working with IT department to re-establish Retirement Housing forum. IT will provide with the training.  CL – Their scheme managers are only in two days a week. They too have had questions about service charges. CL has produced a “day in the life of a Scheme Manager” to help residents understand how involved their roles are. They’ve recently completed a survey asking residents for their thoughts on the use of communal areas.  ZT – Lounges remain closed. FAQs has been produced along with Newsletters being sent out.  RD – Scheme Managers back in 2 days a week. 5 rounds of welfare hero check calls to every resident were carried out from March to August. A competition was launched for creative residents, ie, knitting, painting, poetry and received a huge response. Prizes were given to the winners. Planning in progress for Resident Steering group to take place via zoom with the support of scheme manager hooking up ipad to TV | **MF** |
| **Lounges** | Communal lounges – all lounges are still closed for all organisations. No plans as yet to re-open |  |
| **Re-lets** | All are now letting flats in accordance with COVID regulations, observing social distancing guidance. |  |
| **Gardens** | Some differences here.  Sussex Housing & Care have kept garden areas open to encourage people to use the areas. Gazebos have been erected.  Wealden have kept the gardens open throughout and no advantage has been taken. Social distancing has been observed by moving furniture and leaving only 6 seats.  Optivo kept the gardens open, but residents were reminded not to use as a public space as they are private gardens. |  |
| **Loneliness & Isolation** | LM’s team have been creative, with quizzes, recipes and linking up with befriending organisations such as Age UK.  MF talked about the Top Tips that’s been created through a project group working on loneliness and isolation. This has been created around COVID. Every resident will receive this document. |  |
| **ERoSH report** | RD chair of ERoSH gave updates of what’s being worked on currently. Regional Networks, Publish good practice guidance, resident engagement, ASB, LGBTQ. Members should be able to view things on the website. Currently working on a 5 year business plan. The accreditation is highly recommended to organisations to obtain recognition for the great work being done.  ERoSH are now looking at what happens next … Considering a digital scheme managers network. RD asked for suggestions. |  |
| **Any other business** | LM – front line issues can be challenging for Scheme Managers, so a platform for them would be useful (Scheme Managers network).  **RD – suggested having a focus on different subjects, ie, one meeting regarding fire safety, the next could be ASB.**  **ZT – would be interested in Resident involvement**  **VE – felt a specific meeting for Scheme Managers would be good, to discuss topics and interact with each other to get good ideas.**  **The future – MF asked all to contact her with Agenda suggestions, and any guest speakers. It would also be good to have a rotating minute taker. The next meeting will take place in January** | **all** |
| **Date of Next meeting** | **Meeting closed 13:30**  **Next meeting – Tuesday 19 January 2021 via MS Teams 13:30 to 15:00** |  |