MINUTES OF THE ESTATE FOCUS GROUP MEETING ON
2nd JUNE at 10:00am
AT COMMITTEE ROOM 3, CIVIC CENTRE

Officers: T Holliday (TH) – Estate Services Manager
P Baker (PB) – Estate Services Admin Assistant
G Owen (GO) - Southend Borough Council Parks Operations Manager

Residents: C Thipthorp (CT), S Griffin (SG), Y Raimo (YR), S Frost (SF), N Burn (NB),
G Ashdown (GA), B Andrews (BA), P Nightingale (PN), P Somerville (PS), G Scales (GS),
T Brown (TB)

### 1. Apologies For Absence And Introductions.

Introductions were made for TB who joined today’s meeting. (It was agreed by a majority vote later in the meeting that TB could join the Focus Group on a permanent basis.)

GO was introduced to the group who was at today’s meeting to give an update regarding Grounds Maintenance.

### 2. Grounds Maintenance Update

GO updated the group regarding Grounds Maintenance:
As from April 2016, Southend Borough Council took over the South Essex Homes Grounds Maintenance Contract. The team have had a reasonably good start; however works have been weather permitting. Most areas have been caught up on by now. Parks have brought in machinery as a temporary measure to cut and box grass for those areas which require additional attention. There are predominantly three teams which work of the South Essex Homes contract; with one focussing on grass cutting and the other on shrubbery.

SBC plan to use the same members of staff for areas to ensure that the teams get to know the areas as well as residents getting to know the staff.

GO explained that most outside communal areas will be cut at the same time of the Highway verges and the rear communal gardens will be completed by a separate team.

The meeting was then open for questions:

PS stated that they will need a key to access the Avon Way garden which is currently very overgrown. **TH will organise this.**

CT stated that the team will need a key for Nicholson House. **TH to organise this.**

CT also stated that during previous cuts strimmers have been used which caused damage to patio doors and the previous contractor had stated that this would be changed, CT wanted to know whether this would still apply. **GO stated that this is in hand.**

NB stated that edging works are still due at Sherwood Way. **GO stated that hard edging works are completed in the winter season and this will be completed this year.**

NB asked about weed killing and TH stated that this is in hand.

SF stated that when the highway verges are being cut as the cuttings are not
taken away, they end up being trod into communal landings. SF also asked for the pathways to be weed killed at Norfolk Avenue. TH stated he will pass this to the Caretaking Team to complete. 

BA stated that vegetation is currently growing over the pathways at Westwood. GO stated that this will be resolved in due course.

### 3. Minutes of previous meeting.

All agreed that previous minutes were accurate.

### 4. Matters Arising

#### 4.1 Item 4.1 – Veolia

TH stated that residents can report any issues regarding waste collections directly to Southend Borough Council who monitor the contract on 01702 215006. It was discussed that Veolia should attend a future meeting to update the group regarding the recycling and waste collections.

PN informed TH that the refuse bins at Blackdown are always open as they are so full and the Caretaking Team have to keep tidying the area up as litter is blowing around. TH to investigate whether additional bins are required on site.

#### 4.2 Item 4.2 – Noticeboards

In the previous minutes, PN informed TH that there was no information regarding Caretaking Standards or the Estate Walkabout in the noticeboards. PB informed PN that since this meeting she has found out that the noticeboard is broken and therefore this will be replaced in due course. Once this has been installed, all information will be displayed. TH informed everyone that he has been given permission to purchase additional noticeboards for various sites and these will be installed in due course.

SF stated that there is no information displayed in the communal area at Norfolk Avenue. TH will investigate whether a small board (A4) can be installed to provide residents contact information for South Essex Homes.

#### 4.3 Item 4.3 – Service Charges

SF asked TH to explain the recent changes in service charges. TH explained how the service charges reflect the service provided to various sites which have been cross referenced with paperwork that the caretaking teams complete as well as the company vehicle tracking information. Further discussion then took place regarding service charges.

SF stated that the caretaking team had not been to site for some time and she had reported this. PB stated that the department hadn’t received any recent cases regarding this and therefore stated SF can contact her directly on 01702 212673 to report any caretaking issues. TH stated that he will request ad-hoc inspections.

#### 4.4 Item 4.4 – Car Parking Line Painting

BA thanked TH for having line painting works completed at Westwood but asked whether a ‘pick up and drop off only’ sign can be installed to prevent vehicles blocking access. TH stated that when line painting is next completed for various South Essex Homes sites he will investigate whether this can be completed.
5. **General Update On Estate Services**

5.1 **Item 5.1 – Caretaking Services Update**

TH informed everyone that a benefit of the Output Based Specification Basis Service provided is that it has enabled the department to create a deep cleaning team which have been completed various cleaning works. Recent works have been deep cleaning works across Sheltered Housing Schemes and jet washing works. This team also spent additional time completing cleaning works following the fire at Grampian.

TB stated that the 9th floor at Grampian still smells of smoke and a lot of re-dec works are required which he has been told are being organised.

TH stated that new machinery has recently been purchased to improve floor cleaning. This has so far been effective at East Street/ Sutton Road and within some high rise blocks. Cluny House has recently benefitted from the use of new machinery which has been time effective for the caretaking team to use. TH wants to modernise the department where possible and the improvement of equipment is a good step.

PN stated that there has been grease on the 6th floor of Brecon for a few days. *TH will report this to the caretaking team to resolve.* TH informed PN that the Balmoral Estate will have floor stripping and polishing works completed later in the year.

TH informed everyone that a recent department change now means that all caretaking staff are now on the weekend working rota. This will ensure fairness throughout the department as well as benefitting the service provided.

5.2 **Item 5.2 – Recycling Update**

TH stated that Veolia will now been delivering recycling materials which should be completed in due course.

SG asked whether food waste bins will be installed at Nicholson House, CT stated that during a previous resident’s vote this was not desired.

Discussion took place regarding Veolia and recycling.

6. **Agenda Items For Next Meeting**

CT wants TH to give her clarification on whether textile bags are still being delivered.

Veolia Representative to attend to update the group.

7. **Any Other Business**

7.1 **Item 7.1 – Gardens in Bloom**

Sue Rickard was unable to attend today’s meeting and therefore PB updated the group regarding this. *PB to ask Sue for posters to display across sites.*

7.2 **Item 7.2 – Norman Burn**

NB asked TH whether Ashley Seymour; Maintenance Technician could attend the next meeting. *TH said he would take this request into consideration.*

NB also asked about the blue boxes/ bags for recycling. *TH stated as far as he was aware flatted properties will receive blue bags.*

7.3 **Item 7.3 – Shirley Griffin**

SG asked whether there could be some investigation into the improvement of resident access to the external bin area at Nicholson House. *CT stated that this is being dealt with by another department.*
### Item 7.4 – Carol Thipthorp
CT asked TH whether an ambulance bay can be painted in the Nicholson House car park as contractors etc. keep parking in the restricted parking areas. *TH said he will investigate this.*
CT also stated that the ex-wardens gardens are overgrown. *PB to request works to be completed by Southend Borough Council in due course.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Item 7.5 – Stephanie Frost
SF questioned the scoring of the most recent Estate Walkabout Inspection at Norfolk Avenue as it scored an A when there were several issues. *PB explained how the scoring is marked and calculated but stated she would inform the Estate Services Team Leaders to evaluate how they are scoring elements of the inspections.*

| PB |

### Item 7.6 – Patrick Nightingale
PN reported blocked drains. *PB stated that this needs to be reported to Repairs through the contact centre as this is not for Estate Services to resolve.*
PN stated that several repair issues are still outstanding from the Estate Walkabout Inspection. The gate by Milton Hall Primary School requires a nut and bolt to be installed, PN stated that he has been informed that this isn’t for S.E.H to resolve but he believes this is, *TH will investigate.* PN stated fire signs are still not installed, *PB explained that these are being installed across all High Rise Blocks and this will be completed in due course.* Other issues raised were not for Estate Services and therefore PN was advised to contact Repairs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORMATION</th>
<th>TH</th>
<th>PB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Item 7.7 – Glenn Ashdown
GA stated the window cleaning is required for East Street and Sutton Road. *TH to organise.*
GA thanked Estate Services for the quick removal of bulk items on site.

| TH |

### Item 7.8 – Norman Burn
NB thanked Estate Services for recent works completed at Sherwood Way.

| INFORMATION |

### Item 7.9 – Barry Andrews
BA stated that there is overgrown shrubbery blocking pathways at Westwood. *PB will pass this onto SBC to resolve.*

| PB |

### Item 7.10 – Peter Somerville
PS stated that he cannot report repair issues through the telephone anymore as it is saying this needs to be done by the website. *This was discussed as a group and it was confirmed that this is just an alternative option stated whilst you are awaiting someone to pick up your call. There has been no change to how you can report repair issues.*

| INFORMATION |

### Item 7.11 – Gerry Scales
GS asked for the communal windows to be cleaned at Nicholson House. *TH will pass this to the caretaking team to complete in due course.*

| TH |

### Item 7.12 – Yvette Raimo
YR stated that Veolia are not collected the general waste with the recycling and collections are a lot later than when completed on the five day schedule. *TH stated that any issues with waste collection can be reported to the Council.*

| INFORMATION |

### 9. Date of next meeting – 6th October 2016