# Minutes of the RCVE AGM 07.12.23

# The Premier Inn Albert Dock (14:00 – 15:15)

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|  | **Attendees:**  **RCVE:** Vic Andrews,Keith Harkness, Jonothon Laycock, Viv Fleming, Paula Simpson,  David Otty, Carole Warburton, Rachel Roche, Jackie Lewis  **Riverside:** Elaine Bateson, Chris Colman, Charlene Little , Steve Hewitt, Rebecca Gorman,  Andrea Thorn, Sarah Wall | |
| **1** | **Welcome and Introductions**  **VA** opened the meeting and thanked all for attending today’s session. A warm welcome was made to the newest members of the RCVE, Rachel Roche and Jackie Lewis, and to Jules Jackson who was unable to attend today.  VA explained that the first item on the agenda had been withdrew. JL request it be minuted that he was not happy this had been removed last minute. | |
| **2** | **Apologies** | Patrick New, Jo Young, Julie Jackson |
| **3** | **Previous Minutes** | Minutes from previous AGM on 7.12.22 were agreed as a true record. |
| **4** | **Finance Update** | **SH** advised that account balance as of 07/12/2023 was £44,29.50  Annual accounts have now been finalised and just require signing off by VA and VF.  **VA** enquired about VF being setup on Bankline and EB confirmed that this was ready to go once VF was able to use her Riverside email. AT confirmed that this was still on the system. **EB** to follow this up. |
| **5** | **General Review of RCVE Constitution** | *RCVE undertake a General Review of RCV Constitution (Ensuring there is transparency and process in relation to decision making at every level)*  **JL** requested that this be amended to say, ‘Rapid Review.’  All agreed that this review should be undertaken. Any changes made will be sent to Riverside Group for approval. |
| **6** | **To consider the following proposals:**  **A)** Review the RCVE Expenses Policy (to ensure no ambiguity exists) | All were in agreement that this should be undertaken. |
|  | B)Governance Training programme | It was proposed that the RCVE produce and develop an RCVE Governance Training programme – all were in agreement. |
| C) ED&I Officer Role | It was proposed that moving forward the RCVE create an RCVE ED&I Officer – all were in agreement. |
| D) Triennial Selection Process | *RCVE review the current Triennial selection process for selecting RCVE members including the need for an independent Customer selection panel and assessment day. And if possible, develop a transparent and Democratic process with regard to recruitment and the Selection/Election of RCVE Members, that provides an opportunity for all members of RCV to participate in Triennial Elections. With the first of such elections to take place and be completed by 1st June beginning*  **VA** explained that this would be looking at replacing the independent panel and assessment day.  **KH** talked about the previous way this was held with Tpas members present but VA explained that this was the old way of doing it – need to be more democratic and give an opportunity to all RCV members (every customer) to vote in elections. It was agreed by all that the practicalities of this would need to be explored further. VA reiterated that a recent Tpas report recommended that we needed to explore this.  **DO** felt that customers would not know who they were voting for.  **SW** shared that local engagement is being increased with local Hubs etc. and these will feed into this, but it will take time to embed.  **JL** suggested that the election cycle be adapted but mentioned a recent ‘wide ranging survey’ that only attracted a very small number of responses from members and any change needed to reflect a better democratic process than we currently had. He also suggested that, between elections it would be best to retain some sort of co-option selection. He also talked about digital elections where candidate profiles would be put on the website and customers would be able to vote for their choice.  **AT** suggested that this be chunked down into regions to make the process easier, and this may be less intense.  VA closed by saying that there would need to be a great deal of discussion on this, it was not easy to do within such a large Landlord as Riverside, and that it could have to form part of our ongoing plan,  but today we are just agreeing to explore the recommendations and will try to come up with a plan for the best way to do this. All were in agreement. |
| E) Induction Training Package | *RCVE develop a new induction training package for members of the RCVE.*  All agreed this should be undertaken. |
| F) Working Partnership | *That despite recent difficulties RCVE will continue developing clear partnership working with Riverside’s Customer Involvement and Engagement Team.*  VA emphasised that team building was pertinent especially with new members joining the RCVE and all agreed. The ongoing, but stalled work with Tpas should be kickstarted soon into 2024 |
| **7** | **To also Consider the following Proposals:** |  |
| G) Legal Entity | *To investigate the Options open to the RCV to become a legal entity (RCVE Officer’s recommendation)*  **JL** talked about a couple of different models of non-profit that can be looked at. He explained how, at present, the RCVE cannot sign contracts, cannot have a bank account in their own name etc. because they do not have a legal status. He suggested that the advantages and disadvantages should be looked at in making the RCVE truly independent.  **DO** felt it needed to be discussed further.  **VF** felt they needed more information.  **PS** was against the idea and felt it was unnecessary.  **VA** again reiterated RCVE were only being asked to explore possibilities at this stage, that any changes, particularly that alter the constitution would require to be fully reviewed and agreed by the full RCVE. He felt that the RCVE would take everything into account and especially would not want to damage or reduce the close working relationship with Riverside as their critical friend.  VA asked if all were happy to explore the possibilities that are open to the RCVE – all agreed. |
| H) Customer Complaints Panel | *To re-define the objectives of The Customer Complaints Panel (RCVE Officer’s recommendation)*  VA explained the discussions from a previous meeting that included Ombudsman recommendations, (landlords make complaints process shorter and easier to understand and tenants have the right to refer complaints to the ombudsman after stage 2).  The function of the complaints panel will change to more of a scrutiny of statistics data – every 2 months complaints that have reached that level will be scrutinised.  The panel will not be asked to reach a conclusion; that will go straight through to the Ombudsman.  Purpose of the Group:   * What lessons have Riverside learnt ensuring actions that come about help to reduce number of complaints. * Co-production – what that means. Rename and replace section 9.   **JL** felt it was more of a quality assurance issue, about whether process was followed correctly. He again felt there was one slight problem and that is about getting responses to consultations; response numbers are limited.  **AT** felt that it was very wordy, and this may put people off completing. This needs to be worked on to increase response rate. |
| **8** | **Reflections**  **2022 to 2023** | **VA** addressed the group to say that as usual a lot of work has been completed as a tenant group. He felt that the work that was being done with Tpas since November 2022, had been put on the back burner due to difficulties faced by the RCVE over the last year. This needs to get back on track.  More members are needed for the RCVE panel, and recruitment is being undertaken by RCVE, EB and the CI&E team.  **CL** added that the team had come a long way this year in developing additional panels which will help promote additional assurance for the RCVE. The link between regional level and RCVE is working quite well.  CL also reflected that ED&I had received really good support from RCVE to develop new panels; these will provide an additional layer of consultation. |
| **9** | **The Year ahead** | VA updated members on the year ahead:   * Continue to work alongside Riverside and reacquaint ourselves with what came out of the TPAS November 2022 report. * Get Tpas recommendations back on track and broaden as necessary. * 3 scrutiny topics have been agreed for 2024 and Kevin Farrell from Tpas has been engaged to assist with these. * Ongoing recruitment onto the RCVE. * JL confirmed that the first North Regional Hub meeting has been set for Feb 13th, 2024.   **Jackie L** asked:  Where do we stand; are we independent of Riverside? Are they obliged to listen to us? Or can they just close us down on their whim?  **VA** explained that the RCVE cannot tell Riverside what to do and they are not obliged to listen, however, as Chair of the RCVE he felt that the RCVE are definitely listened to especially when it comes to Scrutiny. He gave examples of this. He also spoke about the changes brought about by the Grenfell tragedy and the resultant Government white paper and regulator requirements of social housing landlords.  **AT** agreed. She emphasized that customer involvement and engagement is really important to Riverside; only customers can truly tell us where we get it right and where we get it wrong. She reiterated that Riverside are committed to listening to customers. |
| **10** | **Any Other Business** | **VA** gave thanks to Chris Collman for all his hard work and support whilst CL was on maternity leave. In fact, RCVE thanks was due to all CI&E team members for their work over the past year.  He also thanked everyone for joining today and wished everyone a Merry Christmas. |
|  | **Meeting ended at 3.15pm** | |

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