

Partick Housing Association



Backcourt Management Report

Customer Scrutiny Panel
2015

Customer Scrutiny Panel Statement

Publishing our first report on the PHA Complaints procedure in February 2015 was a major achievement. We received a huge boost in confidence knowing the work we carried out and the suggestions we made received approval from PHA's Board and are now in the process of being implemented.

As a group we have carried this confidence into our second scrutiny exercise, and feel we have again produced a report which provides a number of positive recommendations. We are confident these will result in PHA delivering improved services and will increase customer satisfaction.

Our Panel has grown and we welcome two new members - Jean McGrehan and Alison Sherry. Jean and Alison have made a valuable contribution by bringing their own experiences to this report and the investigation process.

The Panel is made up of eight volunteer tenants and local residents who have been working with PHA to achieve the shared aim of improving services at the Association.

Scrutiny Panel members involved in this report were:

- Barbara Atterson
- David Gibson
- Elaine Gordon
- Liz Kyle
- Gordon McDonald
- Jean McGrehan
- Carol Mills
- Alison Sherry
- Eileen Sparkes

Customer scrutiny brings benefits to all involved, including:

- **Customers** - it aims to improve the services tenants and residents receive.
- **PHA/PWL** - it challenges PHA/PWL to tackle areas of underperformance and to aim for continuous improvement in areas of success.
- **Regulator** - it demonstrates compliance with regulatory standards.
- **Partners and stakeholders** - it illustrates the benefits of partnership working and continuous improvement.

Selecting a service for scrutiny

While reviewing PHA's complaints handling process, it became evident that a significant number of complaints related to the management of backcourts. More specifically, there were issues around a failure to have bins emptied, people using bins properly and information not being effectively communicated regarding these issues. This suggested to the Panel that PHA may experience difficulties with the delivery of these services. In turn this could impact upon the Association's ability to achieve the high levels of customer satisfaction expected by the organisation.

As residents living in properties factored by PHA/PWL, panel members have personal experience of the service. Opinions varied with some members feeling the service was poor to average and others feeling that the service delivery was of a satisfactory standard. Panel members agreed that they had grounds to focus their next Scrutiny Panel project on PHAs management of backcourt services.

The Scrutiny Process

The Panel met once a month over 9 months to research the backcourts services. On completion of the project, Panel members agreed the positive and negative aspects they had identified, detailed their findings and agreed actions which would potentially be of benefit to PHA and its customers.

The resulting Action Plan is shown in Appendix 1. It outlines the Panel's recommendations and how they should be taken forward, identifies a staff member who would have responsibility for the action and a date by which the action should be completed.

Throughout the project Panel members carried out a range of tasks including:

- meeting with a member of PHA staff to gain an understanding of PHA's approach to backcourt management and to provide insight into how the service operated;
- interviewing a staff member from Land Engineering, the current contractor responsible for delivering the garden maintenance, bulk uplift, wheelie bin pull out and bin store cleaning service;
- interviewing a representative of Glasgow City Council Cleansing Department;
- visiting New Gorbals Housing Association;
- inspecting several PHA backcourts
- interviewing a member of Partick & Thornwood Action Group;
- interviewing a PHA tenant; and
- meeting Partick West Councillor Dr Martin Bartos.

Housemark Review of Customer Scrutiny Panel

During the project, panel members met with representatives of Housemark to discuss how they approached the project, any lessons learned and what else they needed to support them through the next stages. This review was facilitated by Lorraine McLaren, Housing Consultant for Housemark, who previously conducted the initial Stepping up To Scrutiny training session with the Panel in July 2014.

During this session Lorraine looked at the Panel's first written report, the different activities they undertook to obtain this information and the process of ensuring that the recommendations they made were acted upon. Lorraine facilitated a structured review with the Panel members, and topics included:

- Subject of scrutiny;
- Barriers to effective scrutiny;
- Communication within PHA around scrutiny;
- Relationships between the Panel and PHA;
- Tenant involvement in scrutiny;
- Resources for effective scrutiny;
- Time required to carry out scrutiny exercises; and
- Key actions resulting from scrutiny.

The exercise helped the Panel to reflect on the last year and acknowledge their progress. Everyone was happy to share with Lorraine their feedback on how helpful the support from PHA had been, particularly through the staff involved in the Panel meetings and the written communication supplied.

Lorraine noted that it was important to recognise PHA and the Panel have been successful in their initial year by publishing their first report and continuing to make developments through their current subject of Backcourts. Lorraine also explained the importance of the Panel having successfully recruited more Customer Scrutiny Panel members since starting a year ago, as increasing the numbers was written into the Panel's terms of reference.

The conclusion to the Housemark review was that the first year had been a great success and that the Panel should continue to develop in the format they had been practicing. The Panel expressed to Lorraine that they continue to be supported by PHA and their keenness to keep working with the Association.

Interview with Pauline Joyce, Senior Housing Assistant

Summary

For the first meeting on the Backcourts Project, the Panel decided that it would be helpful to speak to a frontline member of PHA's staff to gain a general overview of the services provided, common issues and how staff deal with these.

The Panel's initial meeting considered a range of issues involved in delivering a back court management and maintenance service. In doing this, they looked at:

- Refuse disposal;
- The type and range of bins and bin stores in use;
- Land Engineering (LE) responsibilities;
- Glasgow City Council responsibilities;
- Disposal of bulk;
- Garden maintenance; and
- Back court maintenance costs and budget.

Talking to Pauline provided panel members with an insight into a range of issues, which identified some challenges experienced in delivering the current service. These difficulties included the way tenants and factored homeowners dispose of their household refuse and bulk items; the range and type of bins in use throughout the area; and the type of work Land Engineering does on behalf of PHA (further explanation of this is found in the summary of 'Interview with Land Engineering Area Supervisor'). The Panel also discussed the work the Cleansing Department carries out on behalf of the City Council, how this fits with the local PHA-funded service provided by Land Engineering and the work Land Engineering does to maintain common garden areas.

Finally, the Panel discussed how PHA pays for this service. It was explained that the Association charges back the cost of the service to tenants and factored homeowners living in its buildings through service charges and factoring fees. It was noted that any recommendations the Panel may make would impact on budgets and because of this the Association's factoring customers, who receive services through the PWL subsidiary company, would have a direct influence on the ability to improve services through their willingness or otherwise to support any changes.

Following the interview, the Panel concluded that the service PHA provides is very complex. In order for everything to work efficiently PHA, LE and the Cleansing Department must have close working relationships. Panel members were previously unaware of how complex the service was and therefore felt that the majority of Partick residents would probably be in a similar position in terms of understanding roles and responsibilities.

Findings

- The poor condition of some older metal bins could be contributing to backcourt management problems.
- The amount of specific information relating to refuse uplift and bulk disposal is overwhelming.
- Communication links between GCC,LE and PHA has scope for improvement.

Positive Points

- PHA has a process of routinely auditing all aspects of backcourt management.
- PHA has been proactive in organising a 'pull-out' service for blocks that have wheelie bins.

Interview with Land Engineering Area Supervisor

Summary

The Panel met Adam Jackson, Area Supervisor with Land Engineering, to discuss the service LE provides to PHA.

The Panel heard about some of the obstacles to delivering a quality service. Issues included traffic, parking restrictions and road layouts preventing LE from getting into many streets. There can also be occurrences of poor communication between Glasgow City Council Cleansing Department and LE, making it difficult to deliver the service to the highest level.

Adam's general overview of Land Engineering's service provision to PHA is summarised below:

- Adam comes to the PHA offices once a month for a meeting and walkabout with PHA staff. This gives LE an opportunity to raise any concerns they have with the area and discuss them with members of the Housing Services team and vice versa.
- Adam explained the wheelie bin pull-out service provided by Land Engineering. On the morning of a collection, LE visits the property to remove the wheelie bins from the bin shelter and place them at the kerbside for collection. Often Cleansing does not empty these bins. This means that when LE returns to put the bins back in the shelter, they are faced with the decision of returning them full or leaving them in the street, not knowing when they will eventually be emptied. This costs time and uses staff resources that LE has no provision for.
- A close cleaning service is also provided by LE to the blocks which PHA factor, with a charge being as little as £4 per household per month, which is reflected in the basic service provided. However the close cleaning service itself is fragmented throughout the stock profile and due to its complex nature merits its own in-depth analysis. For this reason the close cleaning service does not feature within this report.
- PHA pays LE to provide a pull-out service for bulk items. Adam explained that often Cleansing do not manage to uplift everything that LE pulls out for uplift. Adam advised it is apparent there is also a degree of confusion regarding where bulk items should be left for collection.

Adam suggested that the service programme for LE in Partick is published on the PHA website. This would provide tenants and factored homeowners with access to a clear description of close cleaning, refuse and bulk collection dates. A further suggestion was the implementation of a dedicated visible space in all backcourts for bulk items to be grouped. Adam proposed having a painted out space on the ground next to the bin shelter (subject to funding being available to do this, provision within

the deed of condition to do this and the agreement of the tenants and factored homeowners within each block).

Adam confirmed that Land Engineering operates a similar contract for New Gorbals Housing Association (NGHA). The main difference is that this contract includes the provision of a dedicated contract supervisor who deals solely with the services provided to NGHA. This includes organising waste, maintenance of common grounds and bulk uplift services and co-ordinating staff movements on a day to day basis to make sure the service is targeted at areas of need and 'hot spots'. The cost of this service is included in the contract and paid for by NGHA. It was acknowledged that this type of output specification would have higher costs compared to PHA's current contract which is a cost per job format. Clearly any such change to a higher specification and increased costs would have to be discussed with tenants and factored homeowners before proceeding.

Findings

- Communication issues between LE and Glasgow City Council are affecting LE's ability to provide the best possible service to PHA. Cuts to Glasgow City Council funding appear to have heightened this issue.
- PHA customers are not clear about how and where to dispose of bulk refuse, which is evident from the amount of bulk left throughout Partick in streets and backcourts.
- Clearer information for PHA customers on the services provided by LE and Cleansing would improve the efficiency of these services. This could be presented through information on the PHA website and notices displayed in the communal areas of PHA properties.
- Visits to other housing associations could help the Panel get a better understanding of how to improve partnership working with current and future environmental service contractors.

Positive Points

- There is good partnership working between LE and PHA, with monthly meetings with Housing Services staff to discuss problem areas.
- The LE service is relatively low cost, saving PHA tenants and factored owners' money.

Interview with Glasgow City Council Cleansing Department

Summary

The Panel met with Eddie Scanlon, Assistant Cleansing Manager for the North West of Glasgow Cleansing Department, who explained the service his team provides in the Partick area. This involves waste disposal and street cleaning. Waste includes recycling, general household rubbish and bulk uplift. Eddie explained the bulk uplift service is delivered each Monday. This covers the whole Partick area from Byres Road down to the Dumbarton Road roundabout at Thornwood. Eddie advised it is important that every household who has bulk, calls the Cleansing Department to request an uplift.

Eddie noted there were some difficulties in delivering the service and there were also some very positive aspects including an assisted bulk uplift service for infirm residents, where staff uplift bulk items direct from the home rather than expecting them to take it to the kerb side personally.

N.B. During the process of researching this topic, a Panel member requested an assisted uplift from a member of Cleansing Department staff but no one came to remove the requested item. This was disappointing for the Panel as everyone was in agreement that this was an excellent service for people who needed extra help. It should be stressed, the request to use this service was submitted only once and the service provided on this occasion may not be a true reflection of the service as a whole.

Eddie referred to a number of issues which add to the difficulties experienced in delivering the service. He explained that the transient nature of the community and short term private lets, along with the large student population means there has been a lack of care for the local environment. Cleansing has visited local universities and schools to talk to students about the correct way to dispose of waste and taking care of their environment, as they realise this can be a problem within the area.

Due to budget cuts in the Cleansing Department, there is less staff across the city available to take care of the Partick area. This includes tackling street sweeping, bulk uplifts and general waste disposal.

The Cleansing Department often has to deal with ongoing problems in specific backcourts. The Department has powers to issue residents with a 10 day notice to clean the area and if they fail to do so they will remove the waste but recharge the residents in the whole close for the cost of doing so.

Eddie explained that if any household waste is dropped in a backcourt or close while the Cleansing Department are collecting the bins, on site staff are responsible for picking this up and disposing of it appropriately.

The Panel has noticed that in some Partick closes there are still Glasgow City Council notices of previous waste disposal services. This could be adding to the

confusion amongst some local residents in terms of when to put out and where to place their bulk items for collection.

Positive Points

- The Cleansing Department is proactive in educating people on waste disposal and maintenance of the local environment.
- There is a free assisted bulk uplift service for infirm residents.
- Bulk uplift services can be accessed through the Glasgow City Council smartphone app, My Glasgow, or their website.
- The Council's website has a full list of items that can or cannot be uplifted, and those which are chargeable.

Findings

- It would be helpful if PHA had regular monthly meetings with the Cleansing Department and Land Engineering to keep each other updated with aspects such as fly tipping hot spots, backcourts bin disposal issues and bulk uplift problems.
- Signage in each close telling the residents how to dispose of all types of waste correctly would help the service operate more efficiently.
- PHA's information provided on bulk uplift in the most recent newsletter and on the PHA website is different from the information on the Glasgow City Council website, creating confusion for residents.
- Budget cuts within the Council have affected the services across the city and in Partick, with streets not being swept as often. The problems with litter remain.

Visit to New Gorbals Housing Association

Summary

Adam Jackson from Land Engineering had described - during his interview - how New Gorbals Housing Association (NGHA) had a different approach with their partnership working, compared to what he had experienced in Partick. Adam had explained that the contract with NGHA was a flat cost for an all round service, with an area Supervisor dedicated to working solely for NGHA whereas PHA has a cost per job and all requests go through the LE contact centre. The Panel decided to visit NGHA to learn more about this partnership working.

During the visit, staff at NGHA explained that three years ago they felt they were in a similar situation to PHA in terms of waste disposal and backcourt management. They decided to create a new role for a dedicated LE Supervisor employed to focus solely on co-ordinating the service provided to NGHA to supervise a team of 8 employees. Once a dedicated Supervisor was put in place as a link person between LE and NGHA, there was more ownership of work on site. This job role also ensures consistency of staff and therefore makes processes quicker and more efficient.

The staff at NGHA expressed that this has greatly improved their service. The LE Foreman and NGHA staff carry out a walkabout every 4 weeks. This picks up on estate management issues which are then passed onto the relevant member of staff so that there is immediate ownership of the job.

It was also confirmed that the NGHA contract had a different specification for the maintenance of surrounding grounds. LE charge an output specification rather than a cost per job.

Regarding bulk uplifts, NGHA staff put their success partly down to the modern buildings and streets giving easier access to purpose-built bin shelters. There are also three different collections during the week (one for each area) for New Gorbals. LE also provides an additional two day bulk uplift service between Christmas and New Year, as the Cleansing Department do not uplift bulk during this period. For this LE has an agreement with Glasgow City Council to allow disposal of the waste in the Council's recycling centre at no charge.

Positive Points

- Having a dedicated member of staff as a contact point for both LE and Glasgow City Council appears to vastly improve communication and the service provided.
- An output specification means that the work is carried out as and when necessary, providing a reactive and tailored service reflecting demand throughout the area.
- Modern, purpose-built bin shelters means there is plenty of bin space and easy access.
- Three different days for bulk uplift ensures that all streets are adequately covered.

- The extra bulk uplift service LE provides during the Christmas holiday helps maintain waste control at this busy time.

Findings

- PHA's relationships with LE and the Cleansing Department could be improved by having a direct contact and dedicated member of staff who deals with all environmental issues.
- An output specification contract could prove to be better value for money, as jobs would be attended as and when required.
- Increased bulk uplifts could improve service in Partick, particularly around Christmas time when the Cleansing Department do not perform any collections for two weeks (but obviously there would be cost implications).

Visits to PHA Backcourts

Summary

The Panel visited three backcourt areas: 308 Dumbarton Road, 26 Dowanhill Street and 55 Byres Road. These locations were chosen because of their bin type (wheelie, euro and steel), the layout of the shared backcourt space, access issues and to see if the bins were being used properly. At the Byres Road backcourt site there is an area often used for fly tipping, which was also inspected.

Firstly the Panel visited the shared backcourt at **308 Dumbarton Road**. This is also used by 302 Dumbarton Road and 8 Gardner Street. There are three bin stores in the backcourt, however, it is not clear which block uses which bin store. There seems to be a problem with communication regarding the upkeep of the area as 308 Dumbarton Road is factored by Hacking & Paterson, but 302 Dumbarton Road and 8 Gardner Street are factored by Partick Works Limited. Hacking & Paterson will not accept any issues reported by PHA tenants as they are not the owners of the property, therefore all reporting has to first go to their Housing Officer at PHA who then passes this on to Hacking & Paterson. It was acknowledged that this perhaps leaves room for human error in resolving these issues, as well as longer timeframes due to staff working hours, etc.

On arrival, the Panel saw that rubbish was strewn across the shared backcourt area, although the wheelie bins were not full. The Panel noted that this block used wheelie bins that were too big for the bin shelter and residents could not lift the lid high enough to put their rubbish inside.

At **26 Dowanhill Street** the communal area is sectioned off into individual backcourts for each close. Traditional steel bins are used for household waste, along with blue wheelie bins for recycling. The Panel felt that the corrugated roofs on the bin stores could be a potential hazard for anyone bending down to put rubbish in/pull rubbish out of the steel bins, as the roof was then at the approximate eye level for an adult of average height.

The backcourt area that was sectioned off for use by 26 Dowanhill Street was well maintained and taken care of. It was easy to see into the other backcourts and the general consensus from Panel members was that although the bins and bin stores were not visually appealing due to the types of railings and materials used, the areas were generally tidy and well maintained.

At **55 Byres Road** the backcourts are for blocks accessed by Byres Road, Dalcross Street and Dowanhill Street. The Panel entered the area from a public access lane on Byres Road. They immediately noticed a large amount of bulk waste dumped in the lane entrance, which could either have been placed there for bulk uplift inspection or be a result of fly tipping. This block's backcourts and bin stores were redesigned and improved in 2007 with joint funding from PHA and the National Lottery. The bin stores were on a level access from the lane and euro bins, along with blue wheelie bins for recycling, were in use.

As these bin stores were purpose built they didn't have roofs, resulting in the euro bins inside being easy to manoeuvre and people having full range to open the lids. All were well maintained with no rubbish lying next to them. The Panel concluded that although the improvements to the backcourts had made a huge impact, the resident responsibility was equally important in keeping the area well maintained.

Positive Points

- Level access to bins helped with the removal of rubbish (i.e. the backcourt accessed from Byres Road has wheelie and euro bins that are easy to transport out to the bin lorry).
- Residents taking responsibility for maintaining the backcourts and the bin store areas helped to keep the area tidy, making a great impact on the appearance of the communal areas at Byres Road and Dowanhill Street.

Findings

- There were some inconsistencies which the Panel had not expected to see, such as steel bins being impractical and wheelie bins being a clear solution. However the reality seems to be not so straightforward. Although metal bins may be impractical (i.e. they hold a small amount of waste, rust easily and lids are often left off, resulting in them filling up with water), it is important to acknowledge that the replacement of metal bins with wheelie bins does not guarantee a well maintained bin store.
- The cost to PHA to replace every metal bin with a wheelie bin would be very significant, meaning budget savings would be required within other aspects of PHA's business. Alternatively current rents and factoring charges would need to be increased to cover the cost of this undertaking. The exact cost of such a project is as yet unknown and such costs would need to cover any initial outlay costs as well as ongoing maintenance and replacement.
- Some bin stores are not fit for use due to the change in bin type (e.g. the bin store roof is too low to fully open lids of wheelie bins inside).
- While the renewal of all PHA bin stores would be a positive step for PHA to take, the cost implications would be significant and would require careful consideration and planning, as well as support from affected factored homeowners.
- There are several blocks housing PHA tenants which are factored by third party private factors. In these situations it appears that PWL is more pro-active at resolving issues than the third party factors. There are issues for PHA tenants who live in such blocks when reporting communal problems, such as the property factor advising that they will only correspond with PHA (the property owners) and not the tenants who stay within the property.
- It is important for residents to take responsibility for the communal areas. If there is no service in place, residents must agree with each other on a routine for taking their turn of sweeping out the bin shelter and communicating with each other about any issues of concern.

Interview with Michael McGarry, tenant of PHA and member of Partick & Thornwood Action Group

Summary

Michael has lived in Stewartville Street since April 2015 and has taken a keen interest in his local environment through joining the Partick & Thornwood Action Group, where he has been involved in meetings and regular litter picks of Partick and Thornwood. With this interest in mind the Panel decided to seek Michael's opinions on bulk refuse, fly tipping in his street and maintenance of his back court.

Michael has only used the bulk refuse collection once and at this time he did not realise that there was a telephone number he could call to speak to someone at Glasgow City Council to arrange for a waste uplift. Michael stated he was also unaware of the pull-out service provided by LE.

There appears to be fly tipping hotspots next to where Michael lives in White Street and Fordyce Street. He has noticed couches lying outside in the rain for over a week. Michael was encouraged to call Clean Glasgow to report this issue.

The bins in Michael's backcourt are the more traditional metal ash can style housed in a purpose built concrete bin store. Despite these bins being smaller and less efficient than wheelie bins, he feels that they are used properly and the residents take care of the bin store area. He believes that the main reason for this is that the people who live in his close all speak to each other and one of neighbours takes a keen interest in looking after the building and back court. Whenever this neighbour sees a problem she looks to resolve it which encourages everyone else to do the same. A proactive approach from residents in making their area a better place to live, is benefitting everyone in the building and helping them to build a sense of ownership and community.

Positive points

- Although the bins in Michael's back court are traditional ash cans, they are fit for purpose and are used correctly.
- Bulk refuse is collected on a regular basis from Michael's back court – despite no request for removal being made to the Cleansing Department.
- Having a pro-active neighbour helps the close to come together to take care of their communal areas.

Findings

- Having local groups that empower residents to take care of their environment can have a positive impact on how people view the surrounding area, which in turn encourages others to join in.
- There is a lack of knowledge around the range of services provided and who provides these.

Interview with Ailie Hunter, PHA tenant

Summary

Ailie lives on Dumbarton Road in the Thornwood area and has been a PHA tenant for a number of years. She was invited to speak to the Scrutiny Panel after voicing her concerns about the work being carried out by LE in her back court. Ailie has a keen interest in the local environment and enjoys tending to her own plants in her communal back court.

Ailie explained to the Panel that bulk and waste used to be a problem in her back court but it has not been an issue in recent times. In April 2015 the old ash can bins were replaced with more functional wheelie bins which Ailie feels could be responsible for the improvement.

LE provides a back court service at Ailie's address. This involves regular bin store sweeps, grass cutting and a bin pull out service. Ailie however believes there is a lack of supervision of LE staff as unsatisfactory work often goes unnoticed. Ailie feels that if more time and care were taken by LE to inform and train staff the service would be improved greatly.

Ailie has previously raised her concerns with PHA but to date has not yet had a formal response. She is concerned that PHA is perhaps not holding LE responsible for the level of service they provide.

Positive Points

- When the ash can bins were replaced with wheelie bins there seems to have been an improvement with residents using the new bins properly.

Findings

- It appears that LE staff may need further training on how to properly maintain grass areas in some PHA backcourts. Further investigation by PHA into this claim would be advisable.
- PHA does not appear to be holding LE accountable for unsatisfactory work.
- There appears to have been a failing on PHA's part to respond to the tenant in the correct manner in this instance.

Meeting with Councillor Dr Martin Bartos

Summary

Martin Bartos was elected in 2012 and is the Green Party councillor for Partick West. The Panel decided that it would be helpful to meet with Martin to learn about the most common environmental issues his constituents come to him with. The key issues that Martin highlighted were as follows:

- Many bins are no longer fit for purpose. It was explained that household waste bins are owned by whoever owns the property meaning that PHA and owner occupiers would have a share of the communal bin ownership for their close. This can prove problematic when replacing bins as the owners of the property have to agree to pay the cost of removal of old bins and for their new replacements. However, not all properties in Partick can have wheelie bins as access for their removal can be too difficult for Cleansing Department employees. It is acknowledged that wheelie bins are more functional than ash can bins however in some cases they simply cannot be replaced as collection is not possible.
- Missed bin collections. Access can be difficult for Cleansing Department staff as they do not have keys to every close. This means that they rely on service buttons being active during the time they visit or a resident letting them in to the close. This is an unreliable way of working and often collections are missed due to lack of access.
- Blue recycling bins not being emptied due to contamination. Any blue bin that contains waste other than the materials for recycling will not be emptied by the team who collect the blue bins. There are a number of items that are considered contaminates, most common of these are carrier bags. It is evident from Martin's own experience that carrier bags are often found inside his constituent's communal blue bins. A full list of what can be recycled and what are considered to be contaminates can be found on the Glasgow City Council Website.

Positive Points

- As a Councillor Martin's role is to represent his constituents therefore it was useful to speak with an elected official about the regular complaints they receive from the Partick area.
- Having the discussion with Martin clarified concerns that the Panel already had regarding the replacement of bins. It had previously been unclear who has ownership over communal bins.

Findings

- Issues that the Panel had previously researched were reiterated by Martin, emphasizing that key concerns were valid.

Action Plan

Recommendations and Priority	Comments	Actions	Responsible Staff Member	Implementation Date
<p>Priority 1. When the environmental service contract is up for renewal, it is suggested there should be provision for a specific designated supervisory role from the service provider to act as a direct link between PHA and said provider. The costing and implementation of this should be included within the tendering of the contract, subject to consultation with affected customers on service specification and cost implications.</p>	<p>Panel members are aware that the current contract is due for renewal in June 2016. Recommendations included within the report will be considered as part of the procurement exercise.</p>	<p>Review and invite tendering for the current service contract, scheduled to be implemented in June 2016.</p>	<p>Housing Services Manager</p>	<p>April 2016</p>
	<p>Tenant and factored homeowners will be consulted on both the specification and potential impact on rent levels/factoring costs that a new backcourt management service contract would create. Part of this consultation will involve PHA/PWL staff working with both groups to highlight how the proposed service contract provides, manages and continues to demonstrate value for money.</p>	<p>PHA's Customer Engagement & Community Development short life working group to consider a suitable tenant/homeowner consultation process to be implemented</p>	<p>Housing Services Manager</p>	<p>February 2016</p>
	<p>The key recommendation of having a designated contract manager assigned to PHA</p>	<p>The Panel request that the PHA board report back by April 2016 on whether recommendations will be implemented.</p>	<p>PHA Board</p>	<p>April 2016</p>

	would be contingent upon the cost, value for money, impact on budgets and customer willingness to pay.			
<p>Priority 2. Where possible, efforts should be made to implement a standardised contract which offers an identical environmental and backcourt management service to all PHA tenanted and factored buildings. The desire for a standardised contract should be included within the tendering of the contract.</p>	<p>The Panel understands the implementation of a uniform service contract depends upon both the cost of the contract to PHA and having the agreement of factored homeowners to pay their share of the contract costs. This will involve seeking to engage all homeowners receiving a factoring service and informing them of the contract specification and cost. Owners will then have the opportunity to accept the service or refuse, where there is a majority view within a block.</p>	<p>Review and invite tendering for the current service contract, scheduled to be implemented in June 2016.</p>	Housing Services Manager	April 2016
		<p>Contact all factored homeowners receiving a backcourt service currently. Explain proposed changes to service contract and its implication giving the opportunity to agree or decline take up of service.</p>	Factoring Manager	April 2016
<p>Priority 3. It is recommended that a new service contract for environmental services should charge to an output specification rather than a cost per job contract.</p>	<p>The Panel understands the cost of the contract and that the aspect of value for money would be a main consideration if implementing an</p>	<p>Demonstrate value for money through customer consultation, cost v performance data and</p>	Housing Services Manager	February 2016

	output specification contract. As part of a consultation exercise, value for money in terms of an output specification contract should be considered.	benchmarking. PHA Customer Engagement & Community Development short life working group to consider a suitable consultation process to be implemented.		
Priority 4. PHA should clarify all aspects of responsibility in terms of bulk disposal/collection for tenants/factored customers.	A clear, definitive process is needed to address confusion around the bulk uplift process.	Upgrade the tenants/factor customer's handbook to include this information. Ensure PHA's website and quarterly newsletter has the appropriate information.	Housing Services / Factoring / Development team/s	February 2016
Priority 5. Signage should be placed in prominent areas (closets, bin shelters, backcourt walls etc.) identifying waste disposal area and bulk uplift area.	The Panel has been told that there are potential fire hazard implications with signage and as they have not seen a report on this trusts that PHA will take this into account when choosing location and material of display sign/s.	A number of signs specific to backcourt maintenance to be fitted within the communal areas of PHA tenanted and factored buildings	Property Services team	June 2016
Priority 6. Raise awareness of	Clarity and	Carry out	Development	Ongoing

<p>environmental and backcourt management within PHA staff teams through staff training.</p>	<p>effective communication from PHA staff will help local residents to have a better understanding of how to take care of their local area.</p>	<p>staff training on environmental and backcourt management responsibilities which PHA are accountable for.</p>	<p>team</p>	
<p><u>Priority 7.</u> Investigate the possibility and cost implications of replacing all metal bins with wheelie bin for PHA tenants and engage factored homeowners through discussion to do likewise.</p>	<p>The Panel understands the replacement of metal bins for all tenants would be a significant cost to PHA. It is therefore proposed that a project team identify the current position in terms of the number of wheelie bins currently tied to PHA properties, the number required to provide all tenants with a wheelie bin, the cost implication of this and the cost implication of bringing bin shelters which are not currently suitable to house wheelie-bins up to spec. The project team will then provided a fully costed business case for detailed consideration by the Board in terms of competing budget priorities.</p>	<p>Develop project brief and project team. Develop fully costed business case, including options for detailed consideration by PHA's Board.</p>	<p>Property Services team and Housing Services team</p>	<p>June 2016</p>

