

Tenant Scrutiny Group

Report to Service Quality Committee



Executive Summary

We wanted to follow the process from the first call to finish to understand and recognise where the areas of concerns are, the service failures and to understand the systems used. For quarter 2 we met with 2 schedulers and spent an hour learning about what they do day today. We then met with Kim Jones and Josh Warden to ask further questions.

Findings

- There isn't always sufficient detail in Inspectors reports after initial craftworker visit. The subsequent report is missing essential areas ie measurements of materials required, photo's etc. It still requires another craftworker visit to get the additional information to be able to order materials, stock etc. This results in wasted time and money from unnecessary reworking.
- There appears to be no management of craftworkers holiday. There have been some weeks with high numbers of staff on holiday with no consideration to the impact of the schedulers and the craftworkers diary. One craftworker isn't able to cover the workload for the whole of Saffron. Last minute holiday isn't conveyed to schedulers.
- Quality and depth of trade knowledge of craftworkers employed is varied. Some carpenters cannot do all the carpentry work and plumbers will ask for carpenter callout to remove a shelf. Schedulers don't know which skills each craftworker has to know who to allocate to which job.
- Craftworkers day is 8am – 4pm. There is confusion about when and where the working day starts. Some turn their phone on at 8am at home and then leave to their first job, some attend the Barn at 8am and then don't leave for 30 minutes to an hour. Should they be at their first appointment at 8am? This is the same for the end of the working day, should craftworkers be finishing at 4pm at home or working until 4pm before driving home? Travel time too and from home shouldn't be part of the working day.
- Craftworkers only have a daily view of their calendar, they get the next working day at lunch time. This gives less time to plan and load their vehicle for the working week. Give craftworkers the responsibility for their own working day rather than the schedulers being responsible for managing their workload.
- Concerns over booked and confirmed appointments which craftworker turns up to nobody at home. Waste of craftworkers time which then knocks onto the rest of their day wasted time.
- Out of hours duty craftworker. The craftworkers do a full day and then are on call for the week for any out of hours emergency calls coming in. They may be out until early hours of morning or repeated callouts during night but are still expected to be at work for 8am with a full day calendar work planned. Saffron has a duty of care and H&S responsibility this is a very dangerous practice and could result at best in low productivity with an over tired worker or at worse serious injury or death due to fatigue.

Recommendations

- Review quality of Inspectors role and update training to include necessary information required to remove the additional rework and duplicate attendance.
- Review Craftworker holiday procedures and Saffron holiday policy. There should be a maximum number of staff off at a time and ideally holiday booked in advance to allow for schedulers to be able to manage diaries, except for emergency leave.
- Improved inter-management between craftworkers and schedulers. This would create better working between staff and reduce diary cancellations. The improvement in output and reduced costs in wasted manpower and revisits could be put back into the business.
- Create a skills matrix for schedulers to ensure the right craftworker is assigned the job first time. Provide the opportunity for Craftworkers to upskill.
- Revisit Craftworkers contract terms of working hours. It should be established and understood by all staff what 8am-4pm means and the expectations of their working day. Management should be ensuring that this is adhered to.
- Give craftworker a full weeks calendar view to enable them to plan accordingly. Systems allow it so they should be given responsibility for their own week so they can forward plan where necessary. Onus on them to check regularly as things change.
- Consideration to the possibility of fining tenants for not being there for booked appointments. Exceptions for genuine reasons but serial offenders should be easy to spot. Compensation for tenants when Saffron fail to make an appointment as agreed.
- Review of out of hours working for duty staff. Suggestion that any work done ending between 10pm- 1am should allow a start time of 10 am rather than 8 with the proviso that the duty worker must email the schedulers that evening to inform them so they can rearrange the early morning diary accordingly when they come into work in the morning. Any work finishing after 1am allowed a start time of 12 noon with the same proviso as above. This way it ensures workers are suitably rested and fresh to work removing the potential legal liability from Saffron on their duty of care.

Overall Thoughts

We found the new scheduling team very professional, keen, proactive and enjoying their role. With some gentle tweaking it could make everyone much more efficient, proactive and less pressured which should benefit everyone from Saffron through to the tenants and thus reduce the number of complaints

