

My Ideas - Procurement

Resident Meeting Summary Sheet



Meeting Details

Meeting Name: My Ideas - Procurement

Date of Meeting: Monday 28th September 11am-1pm

Location / Format: Virtual meeting (Teams)

Facilitator (Role): Tenant Engagement & Scrutiny Officer

Staff: Communications Manager, Software Product Manager, Senior Product Designer

Number of Tenants: 7

Summary

Tenants heard updates on proposals to improve the handling of disrepair claims and the management of car parks and abandoned vehicles. The panel asked how tenants would be protected from high legal fees, kept informed during claims and supported if a named officer was unavailable. The panel also discussed who is responsible for abandoned vehicles and towing costs, and how tenant feedback will influence the selection of a specialist car park management contractor.

Key Discussion Points

- **Disrepair Alternative Dispute Resolution:**
 - Tenants discussed the rise in solicitors advertising disrepair claim services and the risk that legal fees may be much higher than the compensation tenants receive.
 - Tenants heard that Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is being explored as a quicker, clearer route, with a named Midland Heart contact, plain-English information and a clear breakdown of repairs and compensation.
 - Tenants were told that tenants using ADR could leave the process at any time, escalate a complaint to stage 2 or contact the Housing Ombudsman Service.
 - Tenants were informed about how solicitors calculate compensation and retain fees, and for balanced website information so tenants can make an informed choice between ADR and legal action.
 - Tenants questioned the single point of contact, requesting reliable cover if a named liaison officer was unavailable. Staff said a second officer would be trained, records kept up to date and handovers completed.
- **Additional Insight on Car Parking and Abandoned Vehicles**
 - On abandoned vehicles, tenants asked whether they should contact the council, DVLA or Midland Heart. The panel were advised to contact the council first, with Midland Heart stepping in if appropriate action was not taken.

Decisions Made

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- Subject to Executive approval on 6 October, a three-month ADR pilot will begin shortly afterwards in Birmingham Central and will be limited to five claims per month.
- The ADR information provided to tenants will be balanced and designed to support an informed choice rather than direct tenants towards one route.
- A second officer will be trained to cover absences of the named liaison officer, supported by up-to-date records and handovers.
- For abandoned vehicles, tenants should contact the council first; Midland Heart may intervene where the council has not taken appropriate action.
- The final car park management contractor decision will take account of tenant feedback from the previous procurement meeting.

Actions

- A follow up meeting will be organised with tenants to check in on the progress of ADR once it has been rolled out in the new year.

Future Engagement

Next Meeting Date: 19th January 2027

Contact for information or to get involved: Customerscrutiny@midlandheart.org.uk