

MINUTES OF TENANTS' LIAISON FORUM
10th May 2011

Present:

Mr M Christian	Ingthorpe Tenants' and Residents' Association (Chairman)
Mr J Scholey	Sheltered Housing Forum (Vice Chairman)
Ms E Welsh	Friends of Horsebridge
Mr K Myers	Sheltered Housing Forum
Mrs E Christian	Disability Forum
Mrs I Bishop	Disability Forum
Mr B Rogers	Melbourne, Brisbane and Hobart Tenants Association
Mrs M Horn	Grange Park Residents Association

In Attendance:

Mr M Glennon	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Mrs S Grundy	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Ms S Tomlinson	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Miss J Ellis	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Mrs S Buckley	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Mr M Glennon	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Mr I Grimshaw	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Mr I Fairclough	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Mrs H Master	Social Housing and Development Worker, Housing Client Team
Miss C Mason	Arts Engagement Manager, Blackpool Arts Service
Miss G Atkinson	Senior Democratic Services Adviser, Democratic Services

	Action
<p>1. WELCOME</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed members of the Forum to the meeting.</p>	
<p>2. APOLOGIES</p> <p>Apologies were submitted on behalf of Mr P Jefferson, Mr C Holland, Mrs M Cornall, Mrs C Thornber and Mrs and Mrs Pilborough.</p>	
<p>3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 15th MARCH 2011</p> <p><u>Page 4, Item 8 – Any Other Business</u></p> <p>With regard to Blackpool Coastal Housing vehicles parked on the grass areas around Munster Avenue, Mr Grimshaw reported that the drivers had been advised about the issue and would be reminded again in the near future.</p> <p>In relation to the cracked footpaths on Horsebridge Road, Mr Grimshaw advised that Connaught had undertaken a number of repairs; however there was still a number of outstanding works to be completed which would be undertaken by the Council's Street Scene department. The costs involved would be charged to Connaught.</p>	
<p>4. COMMUNITY BASED ARTS PROJECTS</p> <p>Miss Mason, Arts Engagement Manager, provided the Forum with a presentation on a number of projects that had been developed to engage communities with art. The three-year Community Arts</p>	

MINUTES OF TENANTS' LIAISON FORUM
10th May 2011

Programme, which was in its second year of delivery, was funded through the Arts Council England and was delivered by Blackpool Council's Arts Service.

Members were advised that the aim of the programme was to engage local communities in a range of arts-based projects. Miss Mason encouraged the Forum to promote the Community Arts Programme within their areas and to contact the Blackpool Arts Service if members were interested in becoming involved.

In response to a question raised, Miss Mason advised that a number of projects, such as the Arts Awards, were heavily subsidised and therefore a subscription fee per individual was required. However, there was the discretion to accept a smaller fee in certain circumstances.

5. BLACKPOOL COASTAL HOUSING AND COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT AGREEMENT 2011-2015

Mr Glennon referred to the document that had been circulated prior to the meeting. He explained that a large proportion of the content had already been previously considered at a number of Workshop meetings and was now presented in a single document that was due for completion in the near future.

The Forum was provided with a brief overview of each section within the document. With regard to Section 9, 'Community Partners – Recognising Community Groups', Mr Glennon advised that community groups would no longer be required to achieve a set criteria or be formally affiliated to Blackpool Coastal Housing. Alternatively, the Community Partner would need to sign a Partnership Agreement.

With regard to the required proportion of tenants and leaseholders, it was proposed that to become a Community Partner the Association / Group must have at least 33 per cent of households being tenants or leaseholders within the geographical boundary, in addition to one third of the membership of the Association / Group Committee as either a secure tenant or leaseholder.

In response to a query raised, Mr Glennon advised that BCH would work with existing partners, such as Advice Link and the Council for the Voluntary Service, to deliver the relevant training for tenants involved in Customer Involvement activities. This would achieve value for money and avoid any unnecessary duplication.

With regard to Section 10, 'Monitoring and Reviewing the Agreement', it was anticipated that the Get Involved Panel would undertake future monitoring. An annual review of the Agreement would also be undertaken by BCH.

Mr Glennon advised that the completed draft document would be presented to the Workshop for consideration, prior to submission to the Council for formal approval.

Mike Glennon

MINUTES OF TENANTS' LIAISON FORUM
10th May 2011

6. BLACKPOOL COASTAL HOUSING (BCH)

Mrs Buckley reported that the new Sheltered Housing arrangements for the Supporting People service had commenced on 1st April 2011. The service would be based on a needs assessed basis that was undertaken as part of the Support Plan process.

In response to a concern raised regarding the reduction of home visits, Mrs Buckley advised that frequent home visits would continue for the most vulnerable tenants. Furthermore, the number of visits would be discussed and agreed within each individual tenant. A number of complaints were raised with regard to the Vitaline service over the previous Bank Holiday weekends and Mrs Buckley agreed to investigate the concerns raised.

The Grounds Maintenance contract had been awarded to Fylde Borough Council and would come into effect on 1st June 2011. The Forum was advised that a robust tendering process, which had involved three tenants, had been applied. An advertising campaign would be undertaken to inform tenants about the new contract and the Green Wardens would continue to monitor the new contractors.

With regard to CCTV and security at Queen's Park, the Forum was advised that a meeting with the Residents Association had been scheduled for 24th May 2011.

Members were informed that the quarterly performance indicator report would be presented at the next meeting. Since the last meeting there had been a significant improvement in the recovery of arrears.

In response to a concern raised regarding a reduction in estate walkabouts, the Forum was advised that in light of budget cuts there had been a recruitment freeze. A number of vacant posts had not been filled, resulting in a staffing shortage. The number of estate walkabouts would be reviewed in response to the shortages.

7. TENANT PROJECT FUND

Mr Glennon reported that the second round of applications had been submitted by the deadline date of 31st March 2011. A total of 21 applications had been submitted, totalling £178,000 in potential projects, which would be reviewed at the Panel meeting scheduled for 16th March 2011. The remaining amount in the Tenant Project Fund was approximately £51,500.

With regard to the future of the Tenant Project Fund, the Forum was advised that in light of the significant budget cuts there would be no additional funding available for future years. However, any under spend from 2010/11 could be carried forward.

The monitoring of funded projects to assess value for money and impact would be considered by the Panel.

Sharon
Buckley

MINUTES OF TENANTS' LIAISON FORUM
10th May 2011

8. CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT

Members were informed that a focus group would be established to consider the Blackpool Coastal Housing Annual Report 2010/11. Two tenants from the group would also be involved in the editorial process.

An annual review of the Customer Involvement activities to assess value for money and impact would also be undertaken to determine whether any activities needed to be improved or discontinued. Tenants would also be involved in the review process.

With regard to the housing redevelopment at Grange Park, Mr Glennon reported that up to 70 tenants had been relocated to alternative accommodation while the work was undertaken.

A discussion took place with regard to the annual Tenant Conference and the Forum was asked to submit ideas on the structure of the event, particularly to improve attendance figures.

TLF Members

9. PROPOSED NEW CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT AND SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

Mr Glennon advised that the proposals for the new Customer Involvement and Scrutiny Arrangements had not been considered by the Council prior to the Local Election on 5th May 2011 due to the commencement of the purdah period on 25th March 2011. It was anticipated that the proposals would be considered by the new Cabinet Member in the first instance, once Council had reconvened.

An outline of anticipated timescales was outline to the Forum, as follow:

- June – Formal Council decision.
- June – Advertisement for Blackpool Tenants and Leaseholders Assembly (BTLA) Members in Viewpoint.
- July / August – Interview and recruitment of BLTA Members.
- August / September – First formal Improvement Panels.
- September / October – BLTA training.
- November – BTLA first scrutiny review.

Mr Glennon advised that the Service Improvement Panels (SIPs) would focus on key issues and quarterly performance indicators. The training would cover an understanding of the scrutiny process, together with key scrutiny skills.

It was anticipated that following Council approval of the new arrangements, the Tenant Liaison Forum would be disbanded and its responsibilities be adopted by the Get Involved Panel. The Panel would not have any decision making powers.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Forum considered an application for project funding which had been submitted by Grange Park Residents Association. Mrs Horn, representing the Association, advised the Forum that the funding would be allocated to the Cherwell Club to provide a camping trip for those members who had gained sufficient credits through involvement with community activities. The Forum agreed to support the funding request.

MINUTES OF TENANTS' LIAISON FORUM
10th May 2011

A discussion took place with regard to the Community Partner Group that would be established under the proposed arrangements. Mr Glennon advised that the Group would have informal meetings and that details on the operation of the Group would be considered once it had been appointed.

A concern was raised with regard to the empty flats located above the shops at Chepstow Gardens. A member reported that there had been attempts to break into the properties. Mr Grimshaw agreed to investigate the concern raised.

Ian
Grimshaw

A member reported that there was a high proportion of cracked flags around Aysgarth Court. Mr Grimshaw agreed to investigate the concern raised.

Ian
Grimshaw

11. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting and Annual General Meeting had been scheduled for Tuesday 12th July 2011, commencing at 10.00 a.m. in the Boardroom, Coastal House.

Georgina
Atkinson

The meeting ended at 11.50 a.m.

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact Georgina Atkinson, Senior Democratic Services Adviser (Scrutiny) Tel: (01253) 477164, e-mail: georgina.atkinson@blackpool.gov.uk

Further update from Sharon Buckley, Supported Housing Manager, following the meeting:

Sharon Buckley has looked into the issue of tenants contacts over the bank holiday period. Vitaline are not contracted to carry out scheduled calls or visits on a bank holiday, only to provide an emergency response. However, the Sheltered Support Officers will ensure that anyone with a contact due on a bank holiday will receive this contact the following working day. This will ensure tenants do not miss their contact for that week. Any further queries on this issue please contact Sharon Buckley: 477949.