

MINUTES OF TENANT LIAISON FORUM MEETING – 13th November 2007

Present:

Chairman – Mr C Randall, Munsters Residents' Association
Mrs J Feeney and Mrs C Thornber, Boston Way Tenants' Association
Mr M Christian, Ingthorpe North Tenants' and Residents' Association
Mrs C Hardiman, Linden and Edmonton Residents' Association
Mrs D Wightman, Melbourne, Brisbane and Hobart Residents' Association
Mrs G King and Ms C Cook, Queens Park Residents Association
Mr T Clayton, Washington Court Residents' Association
Mrs A Stringer, Grange Park Residents' Association

Councillor Mrs Henderson
Councillor Lee

In Attendance:

Mr P Jefferson, Mr T Fitzgerald, Miss J Ellis, Mr I Butterworth, Mrs M Cornall and Mrs S Weston, Blackpool Coastal Housing
Miss G Atkinson, Legal and Democratic Services

Action

1. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Mrs M Horn, Mrs A Allen and Mr B Rogers.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – 11th SEPTEMBER 2007

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Tenant Liaison Forum held on 11th September 2007 were agreed as a correct record.

4. SCOTTISH POWER UPDATE

Ian Butterworth, Empty Homes Manager, informed the Forum that the alliance with Scottish Power which provided Council tenants with preferential utility rates was due to expire in April 2008. A non-profit organisation, EBICo, would be able to provide an alternative utility service to low-income tenants and offered a one-tariff rate system. This would ensure that tenants on pre-payment card meters would be on the same rates as those paying on a quarterly bill basis. It was reported that pre-payment meters could cost an individual household up to £150 more per year.

The Forum was advised that an incentive through Scottish Power had granted Blackpool Coastal Housing £15 for every utility agreement with Council tenants. At present, this figure totalled £8,355 and the Forum was asked to consider what this money should be allocated to.

It was felt that it would be beneficial to establish a working group to undertake a meeting in the new year to discuss the proposed alliance with EBICo and consider costs. The working group would also discuss the use of the money raised through the Scottish Power incentive.

It was requested that existing utility provider details be made available by BCH to new tenants moving in to Council properties so that they were able to easily transfer to a new utility provider if they wished to.

Ian
Butterworth

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5. HOUSING MATTERS

(a) Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH)

Members of the Forum were advised that the announcement of the bid that Blackpool Coastal Housing had submitted for the refurbishment of Council properties was imminent.

(b) Sheltered Housing and Community Centres

Jenni Ellis informed that Forum that the Sheltered Housing Forum had recently reviewed the results of the Sheltered Housing Satisfaction Survey and had established three key focus areas: safety and security; safety improvements; and involvement with service users. The areas would be monitored in an Action Plan which would be made available at the next TLF meeting.

Jenni Ellis

Work in each of the community centres to achieve compliance with Disability Discrimination Act regulations was due for completion by mid-November 2007 and the majority of centres were now re-open.

(c) Performance Indicators

The Forum was provided with a balanced scorecard outlining each of the Performance Indicators and a commentary sheet providing further information on each indicator.

Members were provided with an outline of each of the Performance Indicators and areas of priority.

(d) Audit Commission Inspection of the Housing Services

It was reported that the Audit Commission inspection would commence on Monday 19th November 2007 for a period of two weeks. Various focus groups for tenants had been organised as part of the inspection process, alongside interviews with Blackpool Coastal Housing employees, board members and Councillors.

It was anticipated that the results of the inspection would be announced in January 2008.

(e) Customer Suggestion Scheme

The Forum discussed a suggestion that residents be encouraged to attend local residents' forums through the receipt of a £10 voucher. It was agreed not to pass this suggestion, as it would encourage participation on the forums for the wrong reason.

An update on previous suggestions that had been agreed by the Forum was provided at the meeting.

(f) Mystery Shoppers

It was reported that Julia Grimshaw had undertaken training with a number of volunteers in order to undertake a mystery shopping exercise and further information on this would be provided at a future meeting.

Julie
Grimshaw

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6. TENANT LIAISON PANEL WORKSHOP

(a) Monitoring of the Action Plan

Members were informed that the Panel had considered the Blackpool Compact and Action Plan at the previous meeting and had reviewed progress made on the items.

(b) Funding of Tenants and Residents Associations

It had been agreed that the £500 funding granted to each of the Tenants and Residents Association remain at that level and that further funding be made available through bidding application process.

(c) Constitution and Membership of the Tenant Liaison Forum

Nothing to report.

(d) Tenants and Residents Association Website

It was reported that the web site was currently under construction and that an I.T. assistant would be at the next Panel meeting on 5th December 2007.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was felt that it would be beneficial to undertake future TLF meetings at alternative venues, such as the Solaris Centre, Blackpool Football Club and the City Learning Centre.

The Forum raised a number of issues with the current Lettings Policy for Sheltered Accommodation and it was reported that this was currently being reviewed by the Council's scrutiny function.

The new Asset Management Service was fully operational and provided monitoring and support to new Council tenants.

The Forum was informed that BCH was currently recruiting tenant inspectors for repairs undertaken in properties and were invited to forward any volunteers who would be willing to participate in this work.

8. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting had been scheduled for Tuesday 15th January 2008 at 10.00 a.m. An alternative venue for the meeting would be considered.

Georgina
Atkinson

Ian
Butterworth

(The meeting ended at 11.25 a.m.)

For any queries regarding these minutes please contact:

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