

**MINUTES OF TENANTS' LIAISON FORUM
10th November 2009**

Present:

Mr J Newton (Chairman)	Queens Park Residents Association
Mrs C Thornber	Boston Way Tenants' Association
Mrs M Everett	Boston Way Tenants' Association
Mrs C Hardiman	Linden, Edmonton and Washington Residents' Association
Mr T Clayton	Linden, Edmonton and Washington Residents' Association
Mr B Rogers	Melbourne, Brisbane and Hobart Residents' Association
Ms D Wightman	Melbourne, Brisbane and Hobart Residents' Association
Miss G King	Queens Park Residents Association
Mr M Christian	Ingthorpe Tenants' and Residents' Association
Mrs E Christian	Ingthorpe Tenants' and Residents' Association
Mr A Pilborough	Munster Avenue Residents' Association
Mrs C Pilborough	Munster Avenue Residents' Association

In Attendance:

Councillor Lee	Blackpool Council
Mrs S Tomlinson	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Mrs M Cornall	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Ms J Ellis	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Ms S Grundy	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Mrs J Gardner	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Mrs Brenda Giles	Sheltered Housing Forum
Miss G Atkinson	Democratic Services, Blackpool Council
Miss S Baxter	Democratic Services, Blackpool Council

Action

1. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed those in attendance.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Mr C Holland, Mr P Jefferson, Councillor Mrs Henderson, Mrs D Williams, Mrs J Sanderson, Mr M Glennon and Mrs S Buckley.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 15TH SEPTEMBER INCLUDING THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The minutes of the meetings held on 15th September 2009, including the Annual General Meeting, were agreed as a correct record.

4. HOUSING MATTERS

(a) Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH)

A brief summary of the activities undertaken within Blackpool Coastal Housing was provided to the Forum.

Mrs Cornall reported that the BCH Board had recently participated in a strategic thinking event to determine the future direction of BCH and explore areas for further development.

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The recently opened gating project at Argosy Court had received positive coverage in the local media and in national housing publications. It was anticipated that the project would reduce instances of anti-social behaviour within the area.

As part of the Homes and Communities scheme to build 42 new family homes across the borough, a number of tenants had been recently relocated from the Grange Park area. Any issues with tenants that had been reluctant to move had been resolved effectively and all individuals had been allocated with high priority status for their housing bids. The majority of tenants had already been successfully rehoused.

It was noted that BCH had recently reviewed the emergency housing provision to develop an improved model, which was due for completion in March 2010.

(b) Sheltered Housing

A brief summary of the activities undertaken within Sheltered Housing was provided to the Forum.

It was noted that a Supported Housing Co-ordinator had recently been appointed which would reduce difficulties encountered by individuals in booking the centres.

Mrs Cornall advised that the Supporting People Grant was currently being reviewed by the Government. From 2010/11, the grant would no longer be ring-fenced and would form part of Working Neighbourhoods Fund for allocation to local priorities. The Government was considering whether the grant should be ring-fenced again in future. Until further guidance had been provided, BCH was unable to determine the impact that changes to the Supporting People Grant would have on Sheltered Housing. The Forum was advised that BCH would continue to request that funding to Sheltered Housing remained a key priority.

It was noted that funding from the Anchorsholme ward budget had purchased new furniture for the Sevenoaks Community Centre.

The next meeting of the Sheltered Housing Forum had been scheduled for 11th December 2009, commencing at 1.00 p.m. at Dunsop Court. Anyone who wished to attend was asked to inform Nicole John, Supported Housing Co-ordinator.

(c) Performance Indicators

A copy of the Balanced Scorecard to end of Quarter 2, 2009/10, was circulated at the meeting. Mrs Cornall provided the Forum with an update on a number of Key Performance Indicators appertaining to the following areas:

- Business Process
- Financial
- Customer
- Homestop and Emergency Housing
- Organisational Development

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With regard to BUS01, 'The number of properties without a current Landlord's Certificate', Mrs Cornall stressed that adequate annual gas inspections were essential for the safety of tenants.

The Forum was advised that the recent dip in performance relating to CUS03, 'Satisfaction with work undertaken as part of the Decent Homes programme' could be attributed to problems with the doors that were initially installed. Replacement doors had now been fitted and it was hoped that the performance indicator would improve in the next quarterly report.

It was noted that HEH01, 'The percentage of properties let that were accepted on the first offer' and HEH02, 'The average number of offers taken to let each property' had continually failed to achieve target. Mrs Cornall advised the Forum that resolutions to improve this had been unsuccessful and it was possible that the target had been set too high for Blackpool.

5. TENANT PROJECT FUND

Ms Grundy reported that the Tenant Project Fund document had been finalised and would be forwarded to the Reading Panel for consideration. The document would be launched at the Customer Involvement Awards ceremony on 27th January 2010. It was anticipated that any approved schemes would be funded from the 2010/11 fund and therefore it was likely that residual funding from this year's budget would be carried over.

6. CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT

It was reported that the next edition of Viewpoint would be distributed on 4th December 2009. This would include an insert on the Customer Involvement Wards and a nomination form. Mrs Tomlinson invited the Forum to submit any news or information items for inclusion in the Spring edition by 27th January 2010.

The Customer Involvement team had contracted Heckford Printers to draft a new front cover for Viewpoint and two versions would be circulated to tenants for consultation. In addition, two new designated sections were being developed for the newsletter focusing on Customer Involvement and Anti-Social Behaviour.

It was reported that Connaughts would cease grass cutting during the winter months and would be focusing on other tasks. The Green Warden scheme would continue during this period and a workshop meeting with Connaughts would be arranged to discuss any issues that had been identified.

Ms Ellis reported that the Sheltered Housing Forum was now formally affiliated to the Tenant Liaison Forum and introduced Mrs Brenda Giles to the meeting, who was the Chairman of the Sheltered Housing Forum. It was hoped that the Disability Forum would also become affiliated to the Tenant Liaison Forum in the near future.

With regard to the Disability Awareness DVD, the Forum was advised that it had been used as a training tool for recent workshops to front line officers within BCH. This training would be extended to technical officers and contractors. It was anticipated that the DVD would also be included

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within the induction programme for all new members of staff.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Rent Focus Group had been scheduled for 13th November 2009, commencing at 10.00 a.m. at Molyneux Community Centre. The group would review tenant satisfaction surveys and consider the effectiveness of the Rents Team.

In response to a query raised, Ms Ellis reported that there were 22 active members of the Sheltered Housing Forum, with approximately 12-15 attendees at the quarterly meetings. The Rents Focus Group had approximately 8-10 attendees at the meetings. Mrs Cornall added that BCH had identified 245 tenants who regularly participated in consultation activity.

Mrs Grundy reported that the Blackpool Coastal Housing Academy had recently developed eight two-hour seminars based around various social housing topics. A number of these were scheduled to commence prior to Christmas and specific dates would be circulated to tenants in due course. Mrs Grundy advised the Forum to contact her if any members wished to enrol.

It was noted that the second round of the Mystery Shopping exercise had recently been completed. This had focused on the Anti-Social Behaviour Team, which had been relocated to Mereside Estate Office. A lack of awareness with regard to the ASB surgeries was identified, though overall feedback on the Team had been very positive. Mrs Cornall added that this could be attributed to more effective and robust training of officers, based around developing an understanding and awareness of the range of services provided through social housing. BCH was considering enrolling all officers onto Level 2 of the Chartered Institute of Housing certificate. There would also be the opportunity to progress to Level 3.

With regard to the LGBT Forum, it was reported that this had recently been renamed as 'Engage' and its first conference would be scheduled for February 2010. A total of 70 tenants had been identified as LGBT and each received regular invitations to Engage meetings. Mrs Grundy advised that although there was not a high attendance at the meetings, there continued to be a very positive response to Engage via emails and letters.

Mrs Tomlinson reported that the Anti-Social Behaviour Focus Group had regular meetings every three months and feedback would be provided in the new ASB section in Viewpoint. A Lettings Focus Group had also been established and had scheduled the first meeting for 20th November 2009, commencing at 12.00 p.m. at Tarnside Community Centre. The group would focus on the Homestop Service and anyone who wished to attend was advised to contact Mrs Tomlinson.

Mrs Jane Gardner, who had recently been appointed as the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer for the Queens Park and Bisham areas, was introduced to the meeting. ASB surgeries were scheduled on a bi-weekly basis and would be more effectively advertised, in response to the results of the Mystery Shopping exercise.

It was suggested that a calendar be developed to incorporate the whole range of Focus Group meetings and BCH activities. This could be

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updated on a quarterly basis and circulated to all tenants for information. Mrs Tomlinson agreed to action the suggestion.

Suzanne
Tomlinson

7. TENANT COMPACT AND INVOLVEMENT STRUCTURE REVIEW

The proposal to introduce more robust review and scrutiny of BCH services had been recently considered and agreed in principle by the BCH Board. The next stage would be to develop a structure outlining how it would work in practice. Board members had been invited to attend 'The Scrutiny Roadshow' that had been organised by TPASS for 3rd December 2009 at Lancashire Cricket Club. The event would include a number of workshops to explore the operational side of scrutiny.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A discussion took place with regard to the recent planning application that had been submitted by Tesco to build a supermarket at Layton. Councillor Williams advised the Forum that the application had been rejected, on the basis that the store would have a negative impact on local businesses in the area. There had also been concerns with the potential increase in traffic through the area.

The Forum requested that a representative from the Council's Streetscene service attend the next meeting.

Georgina
Atkinson

9. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the date of the next meeting had been scheduled for Tuesday 12th January 2009, commencing at 10.00 a.m. at the City Learning Centre.

The meeting ended at 11.10 a.m.

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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