

**MINUTES OF TENANTS' LIAISON FORUM**  
**14<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

**Present:**

Mr M Christian	Ingthorpe Tenants' and Residents' Association (Chairman)
Mrs C Thornber	Bostonway Tenants' and Residents' Association
Mr A Pilborough	Munster Avenue Tenants' and Residents' Association
Mrs C Pilborough	Munster Avenue Tenants' and Residents' Association
Mr J Scholey	Sheltered Housing Forum
Mr K Myers	Sheltered Housing Forum
Mrs E Christian	Disability Forum

**In Attendance:**

Councillor Mrs Henderson	Blackpool Council
Councillor Lee	Blackpool Council
Mr P Jefferson	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Mr M Glennon	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Mrs S Grundy	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Ms T Ansell	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Miss Y Hammond	Blackpool Coastal Housing
Ms P Ramsey	Senior Waste and PFI Officer
Miss G Atkinson	Senior Democratic Services Adviser, Democratic Services

**Action**

**1. WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed members of the Forum to the meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Ms D Nicholson, Mrs B. Halpin, Mrs I. Bishop, Ms J. Ellis, Mr C. Holland, Mr B. Rogers and Mrs D. Wightman.

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 13<sup>th</sup> July 2010**

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Mr Glennon reported that a bird table had been purchased in remembrance of Mrs Carol Hardiman who had recently passed away. Mrs Jenny Sanderson had also recently passed away and a bench had been purchased in remembrance which would also be placed in Lowmoor Gardens. The Forum was advised that a small ceremony had recently been held at the community centre for both Mrs Carol Hardiman and Mrs Jenny Sanderson and therefore BCH did not feel that it would be appropriate to invite the families to another.

The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

**4. WASTE COLLECTION**

Ms Ramsey, Senior Waste and PFI (Private Finance Initiative) Officer, provided the Forum with an overview of the new recycling scheme that had been recently rolled out across the town. She explained that the new process required cardboard to be removed from green waste in order to

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maximise the efficiency of the green waste processing plant at Thornton. To resolve this, residents had been provided with a brown sack for paper and cardboard waste. To date, 51,000 households had received the brown sacks over the two-week rollout period. Ms Ramsey added that residents would soon be able to dispose of their food waste in the green bin, as well as in the grey waste bin, once the Thornton plant had achieved the necessary standards.

The Forum was advised that the Waste Services team would be able to attend Tenants and Residents Association meetings to inform tenants about the new recycling process.

In response to a query raised, Ms Ramsey explained that brown sacks were still to be delivered to around 2,000 properties, which would be completed in due course.

#### **5. BLACKPOOL COASTAL HOUSING SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME**

Miss Hammond, Equalities and Communication Officer, provided the Forum with an overview of BCH's Single Equality Scheme. The document had been developed in consultation with BCH and Council employees and would be circulated to tenants, leaseholders and community groups for feedback.

It was reported that the purpose of the document was to incorporate a number of different equality schemes, relating to age, gender, disability, etc. under one scheme, in order to comply with the Equality Act 2010. It also gave BCH the opportunity to review its service provision to ensure that it was accessible to all individuals.

A self-assessment exercise had been undertaken to identify service priorities and key areas for development. Miss Hammond explained that it was essential for BCH to ensure that employees were sufficiently trained to engage and provide a high level of service to all individuals.

The Forum requested that the following points be considered in respect of the Single Equality Scheme:

- Language – to ensure that BCH documents were easy to understand and avoided using unnecessary jargon.
- Training – to ensure that employees were sufficiently trained to deal with a range of issues in a professional and respectful manner.
- Communication – it was important for employees to have face-to-face communication with tenants in order to better understand their needs.

In response to a query raised, Mr Glennon acknowledged that there was currently with an issue with the direct phone numbers for the Customer Involvement Team. At present, the team did not have any desk phones and therefore direct calls would be transferred through to the employee's mobile phone. There had been a number of occasions when callers had been cut off during the call transfer. He confirmed that this was only an issue with contacting the Customer Involvement Team and that the issue would be resolved once the team had moved to the new BCH building in the town centre.

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**6. TENANT LIAISON FORUM CONSTITUTION**

Miss Atkinson advised the Forum that the amendments to the TLF Constitution, which were agreed at the previous Annual General Meeting, had been formally approved by the Cabinet member for Adult Social Care, Housing and Health. An updated copy of the Constitution would be circulated to the Forum.

Georgina  
Atkinson

Mr Glennon reported that the Queen's Park Residents Association had discussed the possibility of amending the Association's Constitution to achieve the criteria for affiliation to the Tenant Liaison Forum. This was due to be considered by the Association's Board of Directors and it was anticipated that an update would be provided at the next Forum meeting.

Mike Glennon

**7. HOUSING MATTERS**

**(a) Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH)**

A brief summary of the activities undertaken within Blackpool Coastal Housing was provided to the Forum. Mr Jefferson advised that since the last meeting, BCH had received the following awards:

- recognition for the handheld equipment used by the Repairs Team;
- the Traveller's Site Community Centre award for its recent work in engaging with travellers in the Mereside area; and
- the Apprentice of the Year award for an employee.

The first installation phase of a new Housing Management IT system was due for completion by October 2010. It was also anticipated that the move to the new building in the town centre would be completed by the end of October 2010.

It was reported that Connaught had gone into administration on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2010 and as a result, BCH had cancelled its contract with the company. A total 33 properties were still due for completion under the Decent Homes Programme, six of which had been prioritised for completion due to a lack of kitchen facilities. A new contractor had been appointed to complete the works and all tenants who had been affected by the disruption had been notified.

Mr Jefferson confirmed that Connaught Environmental had not been affected by the collapse of Connaught and would therefore continue to provide grounds cleaning and maintenance services. BCH were aware of a number of issues regarding the standard of work provided by Connaught Environmental and in response, a series of fortnightly meetings and an Action Plan had been developed to resolve the issues. Contingency plans had also been developed should the contractor fail to improve.

The Forum was advised that issues raised through the Green Warden scheme and directly to BCH had been valuable in monitoring the work undertaken by Connaught Environmental. Members were encouraged to report any further incidents direct to BCH.

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**(b) Sheltered Housing and Community Centres**

A brief summary of the activities undertaken within Sheltered Housing was provided to the Forum, which included:

- a Weekend Scheme Manager for Dunsop Court had been recruited;
- a rotation of Scheme Managers would be undertaken; and
- consideration of purchasing new equipment for community centres would be undertaken, depending on the budget.

A request was made that trolleys be purchased for community centres to assist with the transport of refreshments during events and meetings.

Mike Glennon

**8. TENANT PROJECT FUND**

Mr Glennon reported that the Tenant Project Fund had been launched on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2010. He reminded the Forum that £100k, which had been ring-fenced for 2010/11, was available for tenants and community groups to submit funding applications for projects that would enhance the community. All applications would need to demonstrate feasibility, value for money and intended benefits to the local community.

It was reported that one representative from each TARA would be co-opted onto the Tenant Project Fund Panel to consider funding applications. To date, three applications had been submitted. The Community Foundation for Lancashire had suggested that a briefing session be provided to community groups to promote the fund.

Mike Glennon

Mr Glennon advised that the first round of applications would need to be submitted by the deadline date of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010, in order to be considered in mid-October 2010. It was anticipated that as the availability of external funds was reduced, interest in the Tenant Project Fund would increase.

The Forum was advised that the Community Foundation for Lancashire would review the success of the Fund after the first year.

**9. CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT**

It was reported that the Tenant Conference had been undertaken on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010 at the Winter Gardens. The event, which had attracted over 100 individuals, had focused on the Tenant Service Authority's national standards and the 'local offer' for Blackpool tenants. Around 780 individual consultation exercises had been undertaken during the event, which would be analysed and evaluated to inform the development of the 'local offers'. In addition, the Conference was successful at attracting tenants who did not normally engage in customer involvement activities.

With regard to the Annual Involvement Wards, Mr Glennon advised that the next event would be undertaken in early February 2011 as an afternoon tea and dance. Nominations forms would be circulated with the next rent or service charge statement. The Forum was encouraged to submit nominations for individuals or groups who had positively assisted the community.

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The Forum was advised that as part of the recent review of the Tenant Involvement Structure, a 'Get Involved' Panel had been established, which would focus on customer complaints, access to services and customer care. At the first meeting of the Panel, over 50 individuals had attended. An evaluation exercise had been undertaken in respect of the range of customer involvement activities that were provided by BCH and a report which outlined the findings of the review would be published in due course.

Mike Glennon

An invitation had been circulated to tenants to participate in a workshop to review BCH's Complaints Procedure. This had been scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2010, in the afternoon at Kincaig Community Centre.

With regard to the BCH Academy, Mr Glennon advised that the Academy 2 course had commenced on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2010 and a second round of the Academy 1 course would commence on the afternoon of 13<sup>th</sup> September 2010. Mr Jefferson reported that a representative of the Department for Communities and Local Government had recently commended the Academy programme.

**10. TENANT COMPACT AND INVOLVEMENT STRUCTURE REVIEW**

The Forum was advised that the review of BCH's governance arrangements was ongoing. As part of that process, it was proposed that the Tenant Liaison Forum, in its current form, would be superseded by a Residents Scrutiny Panel which would be open to all tenants and leaseholders. It was anticipated that the proposal would be considered at a Board event that had been scheduled for October 2010. Upon approval, further consultation and discussion with TLF would be undertaken to consider the structure and terms of reference of the Panel. It was hoped that the Panel would be formally launched following the Tenant Liaison Forum's Annual General Meeting in July 2011.

**11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A member updated the Forum on a number of complaints that were raised at the previous meeting, with regard to Munster Avenue. Mr Jefferson acknowledged the complaints and agreed to investigate the matter further.

Peter  
Jefferson

The Forum was advised that the Vice-Chairman had recently moved homes and therefore had become a member of the Muster Avenue TARA. Discussions with the Vice-Chairman would be undertaken to confirm if he would become a representative of that TARA and continue his role on the Forum.

Mike Glennon

**12. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the date of the next meeting had been scheduled for Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2010, commencing at 10.00 a.m. in Committee Room A.

Georgina  
Atkinson

The meeting ended at 11.25 a.m.

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:  
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