

Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panel Meeting
20th January 2010

- Present:** Sheila Lambourne (SL) – Chair Bill Potts (BP)
 Barbara McMinnies (BM) Secretary John Stevens (JS)
 Chick Lavender (CL) Treasurer Margery Franklin (MF)
 Shelagh Pile (SP) Robert Gristwood (RG)
 Bob Begbie (BB) Muriel Rawsthorne (MR)
 Marcella Begbie (MB) Ian MacDonald (IM)
 George McMinnies (GM)
- Staff:** Linda Wells (LW) – Housing and Community Director
 George McMorrان (GM) – Resources Director
 Steph Verstraeten (SV) – Resident Involvement and Policy Officer
 Karen Lugg (KL) – PA to Housing and Community Services Director
 Emma Martin (EM) – Resident Involvement Assistant
- Observers:** Tim Rawsthorne (TR), Sue Cleaver (SC), Margaret Firth (MFi), Michael Skinner (MS),
 Dermot McRoberts (DM)
- Apologies:** Neville Campling, Phil Jones, Michael Marsh

1.0	<u>Introductions, apologies and correspondence:</u>	
1.1	SL welcomed everyone to the meeting. The list of apologies was read.	
1.2	SL told the Panel of the sad news that Herbie Barlow had recently passed away, his funeral was 2 weeks ago and that the Panel had sent flowers and a card to the service.	
1.3	BM had received correspondence From Councillor Birch who will be attending the Birch Hill and Hanworth estate meeting.	
2.0	<u>Agree and sign the minutes:</u>	
2.1	CL said that he had received the second half of the Panel grant for £500 and this has now been deposited.	
2.2	CL asked if the 0300 numbers were charged at a standard BT rate. GM said no, from mobiles the rate will vary.	
2.3	RG asked if the Choice Based Lettings had gone live. LW said it was due to go live this evening, but has had no update from Bracknell Forest Council and should be going live by the end of January.	
2.4	6.10 and 6.11 LW said that the documents which details future plans for parking are available if anyone would like a copy. LW said that the local employment figures are as follows: MEARS 14, MITIE 20, Wates 3.	
2.5	BM proposed the minutes, IM seconded. The minutes were agreed and signed.	
3.0	<u>George McMorrان – Tenant Board Member:</u>	
3.1	GMMo gave a presentation regarding the process of electing a new Tenant Board Member.	
3.2	Areas of interest included Advertising, recruitment, the role itself, applications, eligibility checks, references short listing and interviews.	
3.3	GMMo said there was some discussion around whether to hold a Hustings session or	

	<p>whether to do a postal vote, it was agreed a postal vote would be best and should get a higher level of response. A proposed timetable was shown and advertising has been agreed to start in March.</p>
3.4	<p>CL said there might be some confusion with Board elections and Panel elections happening at the same time in May. GM said the most it could be delayed is 2 weeks. GMMo suggested tying the two together and have elections at the same time.</p>
3.5	<p>JS thought there might be too much on, with possible general elections in May also. GMMi said the Panel should work around the Board elections as they are of most importance. The Panel agreed with this.</p>
3.6	<p>RG asked if an independent adjudicator would be present to count the votes. GMMo said that Bracknell Forest Homes felt this was too expensive and not necessary. If a member of the Panel would like to attend the vote count and oversee it. RG felt that an independent person should attend. DM said that an independent adjudicator would be too expensive and that GMMo would be able to conduct the vote with impartial scrutiny. Margaret Firth said she felt an independent person should be present to count the votes.</p>
3.7	<p>SP asked if the candidates can attend the session when the votes will be counted. GMMo said yes, if they would like to. BP said he would be happy to help on the day.</p>
3.8	<p>TR said that the governance around the Shareholding membership was poor and this would be the same. GM said that the TSA are extremely positive about the governance at Bracknell Forest Homes and a reminder about the shareholding membership can be put into Spotlight to encourage customers to join.</p>
3.9	<p>CL asked what would happen if only one applicant came forward. GMMo said they would be elected unopposed.</p>
3.10	<p>The Panel thanked GMMo for attending.</p>
4.0	<p><u>Linda Wells – Bracknell Forest Homes Update:</u></p>
4.1	<p>LW started by saying that Bracknell Forest Homes has signed up to the “RESPECT” standard to deal with anti-social behaviour quickly, effectively and with the help of other agencies such as the Police.</p>
4.2	<p>Currently putting together a family intervention project which is aimed at vulnerable families who experience anti-social behaviour. Bracknell Forest Homes is currently working with the youth offending team, the police and social services.</p>
4.3	<p>There have been 2 successful orders of eviction. One was drug related and the other was due to severe nuisance. The Officer involved, was highly complimented for the way in which the cases were dealt.</p>
4.4	<p>LW said that some issues around the delivery of Spotlight had picked up through the Customer Involvement Group. EM undertook a telephone survey which included properties from all estates. 23 customers said they received their Spotlight before Christmas, 11 said they received theirs after, 11 said they could not remember and 2 said they did not receive a copy at all. LW said Mike Morrissey, Communications and Marketing Officer liaised with Richfield and Royal Mail to see if there had been any problems. Richfield had delivered the copies to Royal Mail on the 18th December and from there they were taken to the Swindon branch. In between then and the delivery date, the bad weather intervened and caused disruption to deliveries. Richfield are confident that they meet deadlines they asked to meet and have offered customers a chance to see the organisation at work with a visit and tour.</p>
4.5	<p>IM said he had received his neighbours’ covering letter in with his. LW said there will be minor errors. DM suggested repeating the phone survey after the next edition of Spotlight</p>

	and see what the results are then. BM suggested local members of staff adding their names to the mailing list and keeping an eye on when Spotlight is delivered to them.	
4.6	LW said that the Independent Resident Inspectors Scheme have decided to inspect Estate Management in Spring, so staff are currently preparing for that.	
4.7	Reading University are doing a research project about the potential use of empty garages and customer involvement in landscaping. MFi said that the group had been to MGM flats and a lot of the children were very interested in getting involved. They were given cameras and asked to photograph the central courtyard with things they like and dislike.	
4.8	LW said that the Audit Commission will be conducting an inspection of Bracknell Forest Homes from Monday 26 th July for a week. A brief will be put together and presented to customers about what the inspection will involve and how the Panel and CIG will be involved. The Panel felt this was a good idea and agreed this brief should be presented.	
5.0	<u>Steph Verstraeten – Compact Review Update:</u>	
5.1	SV had prepared a presentation which gave an update as to what the Compact Review group had been working on recently, upcoming events for when the compact will be discussed with less involved customers and when it should be agreed.	
5.2	CL said he had recently put a blog onto the new Tenant and Leaseholder website; this will hopefully encourage customers who would prefer not to attend meetings to tell Bracknell Forest Homes their thoughts and comments on different topics. This will not only be for customers in Bracknell, but will be cast much wider a field. A vote was put forward whether to continue with this. A unanimous decision was made to continue.	
5.3	Mfi said she had recently completed a phone survey with the NEAT which she found worth while.	
6.0	<u>Discussions on the Voting of a new Chair and Panel Elections:</u>	
6.1	DM wanted to speak to the Panel about the new Chair vacancy and hoped that a good response would be received. DM said that he thought it may be a conflict of interest if the Chair of the Panel was also a member of the Board. For example, a decision that had been made at a Board meeting may have to be relayed to the Panel that the Panel does not agree with would cause tension between the Chair and the rest of the Panel. DM suggested amending the constitution if the decision is made. BM disagreed with this and felt one person could do both roles.	
6.2	BB asked id DM felt there was a conflict of interest with Nick Westlake. DM said no, Nick was already on the Board before he became Chair of the Panel, so there was not a problem.	
6.3	CL agreed with DM and said there may be some situations where there has been a conflict of interest. CL gave examples of other groups with this same issue. MB said it worked for Nick Westlake so it could work for someone else.	
6.4	It was suggested that the discussion be left until the constitution meeting. SL proposed and IM seconded.	
6.5	MR said to send out a letter to all estates to advertise the current vacancies on the Panel.	
6.6	SV said there are currently 6 vacancies. BM suggested bringing everyone's election dates forward and having one election. It was agreed to discuss this when amending constitution. A vote was cast, 10 agreed and 1 disagreed.	

7.0	<u>Feedback from Other Meetings:</u>
7.1	IM had previously handed out a brief update of what had happened at the CIG. Peter Joyce, Landscaping Manager had attended to discuss ideas for the future of landscaping. Joanna Flaxman spoke of Tenancy Management, Major Works service standards and the garden assistance leaflet. Justine Thompson discussed the Vulnerability policy and SV went through the Pre Tenancy information leaflet. MM updated the group on the positive work of the Void and major works inspections so far.
7.2	IM said the estate meeting in Great Hollands had been very well attended and mentioned the landscaping project that would be taking place in Highfields.
7.3	BB said that Tom Jones, Operations Manager attended the meeting and took queries from residents about any repairs issues they had which a lot of members found very beneficial. Brendan Flynn, Facilities Manager also attended to discuss the digital switchover in 2012 and what would be happening to sheltered schemes when the time comes.
7.4	BB also mentioned that the taxi the SSRA have recently used charged a substantial amount for the journey to the meeting. VAT and an administration charge were also applied. BB asked CL if this was common. CL confirmed it is. EM will be looking at an alternative company to use for taxi journeys to the SSRA meetings. BB said that the planning application for the dog kennels near Winkfield Manor had been withdrawn.
8.0	<u>Referrals and Any Other Business:</u>
8.1	RG said that on the Bracknell Forest Homes website the Shareholding Membership policy is due for renewal in January 2010. GMMo said that the policy has only very small amendments to be made. Other than these, no further changes will be made.
8.2	RG asked if an advert could be put in Spotlight to advertise that customers are still welcome to join as a shareholder. GMMo agreed with this.
8.3	SP said that the ward councillors in Harmans Water will be pooling the money they have been awarded to improve the local community and will be replacing the Community Centre.
8.4	SV said that the following policies have been approved by the Operations Committee, Compensation, Starter Tenancy, Succession, Management Transfer and Relationship breakdown.
8.5	SV said that the following policies were available for information; Terminations, Evictions and Illegal Occupiers.
8.6	BM suggested showcasing the Tenant and Leaseholder website in the Boardroom at the next meeting, so that Panel members who do not have the internet can see the website.
8.7	SL thanked everyone for attending.

Date of meeting	Issue	Action	Progress	Lead
17/06/09	Review the Compact	JF & SV to conduct review.	Ongoing – due for completion March 2010	JF and SV
19/08/09	BB said the weekend working at the sheltered schemes is not always working as some residents require visits.	BB will take this to the next SSRA meeting and report back to the Panel.	Ongoing – 20/01/10	BB