

Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panel Meeting

15th April 2009

Present:

Nick Westlake (NW) (Chair)	Maurice Grant (MG)
Herbie Barlow (HBa)	Shelagh Pile (SP)
Derek Sullivan (DS)	Michael Marsh (MM)
Barbara McMinnies (BM) (Secretary)	Robert Gristwood (RG)
Bob Begbie (BB)	Neville Campling (NC)
Marcella Begbie (MB)	Phil Jones (PJ)
George McMinnies (GM)	Ian MacDonald (IM)
Henry Bone (HBo)	

Staff: Justine Thompson (JT) – Head of Policy and Community Involvement
Amber Pullin (AP) – Interim Resident Involvement Officer
Emma Martin (EM) – Resident Involvement Assistant

Observers: Sue Cleaver (SC)
Margaret Firth (MF)

Apologies: Bill Potts
Chick Lavender
Sheila Lambourne
Muriel Rawsthorne
Linda Wells

Introductions, apologies and correspondence:

- 1.1 NW welcomed everyone to the meeting. Clare Dorning (CD) and Simon Hendy (SH) from Bracknell Forest Council were introduced. The list of apologies was read. There was no correspondence.

Agree and sign the minutes:

- 2.1 DS asked when the Panel Vice Chair election would take place. NW said it would be tonight. BM asked for an update on the Housing Sounding Board vouchers. AP said the vouchers had arrived and the letters are ready to go. BM and NW asked to see a copy of the letter before it is sent. EM emailed the letter.
JT said the TPAS membership has been renewed.
- 2.2 DS said it has been 4 months since he retired from the Board. He would like to send his strong disapproval to the Board that there is still a tenant member vacancy. BB seconded. Everyone agreed.
BM proposed the minutes be signed, GM seconded. NW signed the minutes.

Clare Dorning and Simon Hendy presentation on Choice Based Lettings:

- 3.1 Simon Hendy and Clare Dorning gave a PowerPoint presentation on Choice Based Lettings. Questions were asked and answered throughout. Any one who has any feedback then please speak to JT, AP or EM.
CD said the process of choice based lettings will be reviewed annually. If there are any major problems then these will of course be looked into immediately.
- 3.2 IM asked about armed forces coming home and the strain it would cause on the housing list. CD said it will be considered as and when the issue arises. DS was concerned that the lettings time would be increased. SH and JT assured that it should not extend the time but in some cases it will be re-let quicker. BM asked if the publications where a property has been re-let be specific with names and details of tenants. SH said there will be no personal information only general details such as how long the tenant has been waiting on the housing register, etc.
RG asked how many people are on the housing register at the moment. CD said over 4200 people and about 480 people housed each year.

Bracknell Forest Homes update from Linda Wells:

- 4.1 Linda Wells had sent her apologies; JT gave the Bracknell Forest Homes update. JT said the arrears blitz last month had collected over £40,000. The customer conference was also held last month and the feedback has been very good. Spotlight was delivered to customers over the Easter weekend. RG asked if leaflets and information on debt advice from external companies could be put in reception to make people aware that help is available to them. JT will check if we have copies.

Justine Thompson Board Election Update:

- 5.1 JT went through each document. The single equality scheme, recruitment policy for tenant Board members and the tenant Board member election process was discussed and agreed subject to changes. Changes were made throughout and HBa will forward further changes to the equality scheme. It was agreed to change the word "Hustings" to something simpler, voting or election, etc in the election policy. JT explained that Bracknell Forest Homes is still seeking legal advice on whether employees can become board members and the answer to this will be added to the policy.
- 5.2 The Panel had discussed the expenses proposal at the last meeting. This was put to the Board and was not agreed upon. JT read the new proposal which will be going to the Board to be agreed - £10 per month for broadband, £6 per hour for care (or more on receipt, for example specialist adult care) and Inland Revenue rates for mileage – 40p per mile. The board will make the final decision.

Feedback from other meetings & major works satisfaction surveys:

- 6.1 MM said the last Customer Involvement Group (CIG) meeting was held on April 1st. Mark Hickson, Head of Housing Management attended and went through the Rent and Customer Involvement service standards. Mark Hickson will report back on the changes the CIG made. The next meeting will be held on the 5th May from 10am – Midday at Berkshire Court. The Bracknell Forest Leaseholders Association (BFLA) meeting was held on the 18th March. NC was elected as the new leaseholder representative on the Panel. Mags Mercer, NEAT Manager gave a presentation about the NEAT's everyday tasks. The next meeting will be held on the 7th May. It has been agreed that CIG meetings will be held on Tuesdays and BFLA meetings will be held on Thursdays.
- 6.2 MM said he had received a statement from Bracknell Forest Council as to why the large recycling bins have been taken away. Anyone who would like to read the statement please contact MM.
- 6.3 BB and MB did not have an SSRA update, as the next meeting is not until the 21st April.
- 6.4 RG asked about a customer in Priestwood who was not happy with the work done in the kitchen and bathroom of her property. MM said the problems were taken up with the team at Berkshire Court and the contractors. Clerks of Work visited the customer and agreed that more work would need to be done. MM said most of the properties he had visited gave good feedback. NW asked who picks the properties to go and view. MM said Christine Haines, Resident Liaison Officer. NW said this could be seen as unfair. JT said she would pick the properties from now on so as to avoid deliberately picking customers who are particularly happy or unhappy with the work done. Individual cases regarding major works were discussed. MM spoke of a lady he had put in contact with Pal Sandhu who has benefited very well from the advice given.

Vice Chair Election:

- 7.1 Sheila Lambourne and Robert Gristwood had been nominated and seconded to stand for the position of Vice Chair. Everyone agreed to BM reading out SL and RG's profiles. Voting forms were handed out and SL was elected as Vice Chair.

Any Other Business:

- 8.1 SP said she had recently received some money from Bracknell Forest Council to spend on her ward which is Harmans Water. SP said she consulted with all residents in the area at neighbourhood forums and major issues that were of importance were speeding and parking. SP was accused of not consulting with residents but assured everyone that this was not the case. MB asked if all wards will be receiving money. SP said hopefully they will. RG asked for an update at the next meeting about estate improvements. BB asked if councillors are invited to estate meetings. EM confirmed they are.

Actions Table

Date of meeting	Issue	Action	Progress
20/11/08	TR was questioning that there is no money available at present for major structural repairs.	TR has taken this up with LW.	15/04/09 – MR will contact LW
29/10/08	SP discussed a T.V. aerial issue at Dennis Pilcher House.	LW said this will be RACE communications and as previously mentioned their contract is being reviewed.	Ongoing – 15/04/09 Mike Jones is unravelling the arrangement between the Council and RACE. There is a lot of work to be done to establish information on aerial systems across the borough. Customers will be involved in the review and we will update when there is further information available.
29/10/08	The Panel discussed the TPAS Landlords Accreditation proposal.	NW concluded it was too expensive and it is not urgent, so will be discussed at a later date.	Ongoing – 15/04/09 CL suggested keeping this issue on the actions list for now.
11/03/09	Update on Election process. How are we doing on the election for these specific areas?	GM – Hanworth MR – Binfield	Ongoing – 15/04/09 Flyers have been sent. Closing date 8th May.