

Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panel Meeting
16th December 2008

Present: Nick Westlake (NW) (Chair)
Ron Godfrey (RG) (Vice Chair)
Maurice Grant (MG)
Derek Sullivan (DS)
Margaret Firth (MF)
Muriel Rawsthorne (MR)
Tim Rawsthorne (TR)
Chick Lavender (CL) (Treasurer)
Barbara McMinnies (BM) (Secretary)
George McMinnies (GM)
Cllr Shelagh Pile (SP)
Bill Potts (BP)
Bob Begbie (BB)
Marcella Begbie (MB)
Robert Gristwood (RG)
Phil Jones (PJ)

Officers: Linda Wells (LW) – Housing and Community Services Director
Ruth Edminson (RE) – Interim Resident Involvement Officer
Emma Martin (EM) – Resident Involvement Assistant

Observers: Sue Cleaver (SC)
Simon Lloyd (SL)

Apologies: Mark Hickson
Henry Bone
Herbie Barlow
Sheila Lambourne
Michael Marsh

Introductions, apologies and correspondence:

1.1 NW read the list of apologies. There were no correspondence.

Agree and sign the minutes:

2.2 BB had a query regarding the windows issue at Binfield House. BB contacted SP, who said that Simon Rosskilly was now responsible for the planning application at Binfield House regarding the windows.

2.3 RGo expressed his concern that on the actions table, certain issues were marked as complete when in fact they were not. This has now been altered.

2.4 SP said she had not heard anything from Dennis Pilcher House regarding the aerial problems. LW explained what had happened, and that Mike Jones will be looking into the contracts with RACE communications.

2.5 SP also said two letters from residents at Dennis Pilcher House who also had problems with RACE communications were sent.
SL suggested when the contracts are reviewed; their customer service standards are also investigated.

2.6 The minutes were agreed and signed.

Tenant Handbook:

- 3.1 BM mentioned how she thought the handbook had already gone to the printers. MR said it had, but there were issues with the binder. It was too hard to open and it was felt that an easier method of opening the binder was needed, especially for people with arthritis, etc.
- 3.2 RGr asked about the repairs targets. LW said this table is the same as it was before, but Martin Thomas Head of Repairs and Maintenance, will be reviewing and developing the policy and standards in the future.
- 3.3 LW said if anyone has any specific changes they would like to make, then to contact Justine Thompson via email Justine.thompson@bracknellforesthomes.org.uk or via post to Berkshire Court by the end of December or beginning of January.

3.4 The document was agreed.

Draft Lettings Policy:

- 4.1 LW explained the purpose of the documents. The document was discussed page by page and notes were taken by EM and LW.
- 4.2 RGo asked if the document is statutory, then why are the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel reviewing it. LW said comments and questions are always welcome on all documents.
- 4.3 TR said surely once Choice Based Lettings is introduced, this will extend voids turn-around times.
- 4.5 RGr asked if convicted criminals are moved into the area will they be named. LW explained that, that would be a matter for the police and the police would advise Bracknell Forest Homes of any decisions that are to be made.
- 4.6 There was a discussion regarding the five working day period detailed on page four. NW, PJ and MF agreed that they did not think this was long enough and would hope Bracknell Forest Homes would do everything they can to get in contact with this tenant about being re-housed. LW confirmed this and email will also be added to the document as an alternative method of contacting a tenant.

Bracknell Forest Homes Update from Linda Wells:

- 5.1 LW said recruitment was well under way, positions for the NEAT had all been filled and all members have now started. Other positions such as plumber, performance analyst and landscaper have also been recruited.
- 5.2 A survey about different rent payment methods will be going out to the Housing Sounding Board.
- 5.3 Bracknell Forest Homes have been in contact with the local press regarding sheltered schemes. This is to increase awareness about any vacancies available within sheltered schemes.
- 5.4 A major works monitoring group has been put together including NW, BM and DS. There have been some communication problems with Mitie; however Karen Novell is aware of this and dealing with it.
PJ asked about LAD's. TR said are Mitie not keeping their communications promises. LW said the contractors have committed themselves to improve.

Referrals and Co-Optees document:

6.1

CL said he thought the information regarding co-option should be in the constitution. NW, BM, CL and RGo will have a meeting to discuss this further. A vote was held whether the co-option information should stay in the document it is in, or only be in the constitution.

Feedback from other meetings:

7.1

MR said she had attended the last Customer Involvement Group meeting and it was announced Sheila Lambourne will be resigning as Chair. The position is now available.

7.2

BB and MB said they had gone out with the rest of the SSRA to The Manor for Christmas lunch instead of a meeting.

Any Other Business:

8.1

RGr asked about the Compact. RE said it would be going out to the Housing Sounding Board for feedback. RGr also asked about the constitution. NW said it was agreed and signed.

8.2

TR spoke of the Foundation Trust for Heatherwood Hospital and Wexham Park and becoming a member. TR handed out application forms at the end of the meeting.

Decisions taken

Issue	Decision taken	Voting details
Co-option information to stay in this document as well as in the constitution.	A vote was cast	2 votes for, 7 against, 0 abstain.

Actions

Date of meeting	Issue	Action	Progress
20/11/08	BB was concerned about the amount of time it had taken for the new windows to be installed at Binfield House due to the planning application. BB would like to know who to contact to get an update.	CT said some applications take quite some time. She will speak to Julie Rose and chase this.	Julie Rose will contact BB with an update. Dec - BB was given an update from SP.
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.	TR will contact LW.
16/12/08	DS asked what the fundamental differences were between the Customer Involvement Group and the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel	This has been passed to LW.	LW will contact DS with information.
16/12/08	PJ had spoken with a couple from Ascot about rent arrears, housing benefit and the lack of customer service and advice they had received.	PJ has taken this up with LW.	LW will contact PJ.
16/12/08	RGr gave LW a list questions	RGr has taken this up with LW.	LW will contact RGr regarding the questions.

Date of meeting	Issue	Action	Progress
29/10/08	T.V. aerial problem at Rothwell House.	LW advised this was now fixed and RACE communications contract with Bracknell Forest Homes is being reviewed.	LW to feedback to BB and MB of the outcome of the contract review. There are no longer aerial issues with the sheltered schemes. All aerials in the borough will be reviewed for the digital switchover in 2012. Ongoing
29/10/08	Resident Inspectors to attend a meeting on the 12 th Nov, to discuss the outcome of the inspection at Berkshire Court.	LW advised that as soon as the report was approved it would be passed to the Tenant and leaseholder Panel to look through.	Ongoing.
29/10/08	Windows at Dennis Pilcher House have still not been done.	LW will pass this onto surveyors.	LW has passed to surveyors and contacted BB and MB. Julie Rose has confirmed the order has been placed for the windows to be completed. Ongoing
29/10/08	Birch Hill School invoice still outstanding for CL.	EM will contact BH School and request another invoice. There are two dates listed on the invoice. CL only needs one.	EM has contacted BH School who will resend the invoice from 17 th April 2008. EM to track invoice for one of the dates. EM has contacted BH School again, they will be sending a separate invoices for both dates.
29/10/08	SP said Simon Hendy from BFC would like to attend a Panel meeting.	RE to invite Simon Hendy to next meeting.	Ongoing
29/10/08	SP discussed a constituent who was nominated for a property in July, and has only just been able to move in.	NW suggested the Panel looking into the nominations process and policies and procedures for this.	Ongoing
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.	LW to feedback to BB and MB of the outcome of the contract review. There are no longer aerial issues with the sheltered schemes. All aerials in the borough will be reviewed for the digital switchover in 2012. Ongoing 16/12/08 - SP would like an update
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.