

Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panel Meeting 11th March 2009

Present:	Nick Westlake (NW) (Chair)	George McMinnies (GM)
	Herbie Barlow (HBa)	Sheila Lambourne (SL)
	Bill Potts (BP)	Derek Sullivan (DS)
	Barbara McMinnies (BM) (Secretary)	Bob Begbie (BB)
	Muriel Rawsthorne (MR)	Marcella Begbie (MB)
	Tim Rawsthorne (TR)	Robert Gristwood (RG)
	Chick Lavender (CL) (Treasurer)	Michael Marsh (MM)
	Henry Bone (HBo)	Shelagh Pile (SP)
	Ian MacDonald (IM)	Maurice Grant (MG)
Staff:	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)	
	Margaret Firth (MF)	
Apologies:	Ron Godfrey (Vice Chair)	
	Phil Jones	
	Simon Lloyd	

Introductions, apologies and correspondence:

- 1.1 NW read the list of apologies. BM had received letters of correspondence. TR will be resigning as the representative for Binfield due to other commitments. MR will be resigning as representative for Wildridings and would like to stand as representative for Binfield.
- 1.2 Ron Godfrey will be resigning as representative for Hanworth due to health concerns. GM would like to resign as representative for Crowthorne and stand as representative for Hanworth. Due to Ron Godfrey resigning, the position of Vice-Chair is also available. RG said he would like to stand, NW suggested giving other Panel members the time to consider if they would also like to stand. CL has written an article for the next edition of Spotlight highlighting the different areas that are in need of a representative.
- 1.3 BB proposed MR to stand for Binfield and DS seconded. MR proposed GM to stand for Hanworth and IM seconded.
HBa had passed on a letter to BM that he had also sent to Caroline Titley and Karen Novell regarding cavity wall insulation. LW said Karen Novell had sent a reply.

Agree and sign the minutes:

- 2.1 NW asked about points 3.5 and 3.6 regarding parking. LW picked this up in the Bracknell Forest Homes update. NW asked if the vouchers for the housing sounding board had been sent out yet. RE said that we have the letters ready to go, but the vouchers have still not arrived. They should be sent out in the next 2 weeks. NW asked about 8.3. LW confirmed some members of staff are trained in different languages and we do have a member of staff that can sign. We also have "Language Line" who assist with our translations. The actions table was discussed.
- 2.2 CL proposed and BM seconded the minutes.
- 2.3 The minutes were agreed and signed.

Simon Hendy presentation on Strategic Housing:

- 3.1 Simon Hendy gave a PowerPoint presentation about Strategic Housing. SH took questions throughout the presentation and asked for any comments to be passed to CL who can feedback at a later date.

Bracknell Forest Homes update from Linda Wells:

- 4.1 LW answered the earlier question about parking issues in the borough. LW said she had recently met with the Council, who have drawn up a list of problem areas. Bracknell Forest Homes will also draw up a list along with estate meeting information and together with the Council prioritise the streets that require extra spaces. Both the Council and Bracknell Forest Homes have budgets for this particular issue and together by pooling resources should be able to tackle the problem more effectively by working together. LW will bring an update to the Panel after the next meeting with the Council. NW asked if Bracknell Forest Council have a long term plan for the parking issues. LW and SP said no. SP said only that more spaces will be created.
- 4.2 LW passed around extracts from the Corporate Plan, which included priorities, objectives and the visions and values of Bracknell Forest Homes and how they will be streamlined.
- 4.3 LW mentioned the arrears blitz that will take place over the next 2 weeks, from the 9th March to 23rd March. Housing Officers are purely concentrating on collecting arrears whilst Senior Housing Officers are taking over the everyday tasks.
- 4.4 The project to implement the IT system "Northgate" will start on the 1st April. RE will be joining the project team and therefore Bracknell Forest Homes will be recruiting a temp to take on the role of Customer Involvement Officer until Joanna Flaxman is back in July. SL will be assisting on the interview panel, and interviews will be starting on Monday. The Panel thanked RE for all her work.
- 4.5 Contractors including Anglian, Wates and Mitie have been doing very well. Bracknell Forest Homes is paying close attention to one contractor who is not doing as well as the others. If their performance does not increase then they will not be working with Bracknell Forest Homes any longer. BM said she had received an update and the contractor does seem to be improving. Details of the 5 year major works programme will be printed in the next edition of Spotlight.
- 4.6 The Sandhurst and Owlsmoor surgeries are becoming more popular. On the 10th March there were 17 visitors. The lettings policy was approved by the Board last month.
- 4.7 RG asked about the shareholding policy. LW will get back to RG. HBo mentioned that members of Mitie have not been showing their ID when entering customer's properties. HBa asked if customers receive money management training. LW confirmed customers can receive advice and training through the Citizens Advice Bureau and Christians Against Poverty. TR said he had received a letter from the major works contractors that gave very little detail about the work that will be done in his property. LW will look into this. CL mentioned his friend thought the same about a letter he had received. TR will contact LW with what he thinks should be included in the letter.

Volunteers to help update the Compact:

- 5.1 RE said how Ian Harries thinks the Compact could be improved upon and Bracknell Forest Homes would like volunteers. If anyone is interested, please contact EM.

Feedback from other meetings:

- 6.1 CL said he would like to thank everyone who attended the TSA National Conversation coffee afternoon. NW mentioned he had spoken with Caroline Titley who was keen for tenants and leaseholders to get more involved with the TSA. SP would like to become involved also. LW will look into this.
- 6.2 MM said there had not been a BFLA meeting yet. MM said the CIG was well attended however he is keeping a close eye on the lateness of the taxis. Voids inspections are in progress and should start in the next few weeks. MM said he and SL had recently done several major works inspections; the first impressions are very good. Estate Standards have been discussed. The large waste bins are being removed. This in turn, will create more fly-tipping. SP will follow this up. Notice Boards in

MGM flats have been very well received and will be rolled out eventually to all blocks of flats in the borough. The Tenant's Handbook is in progress.

- 6.3 BB said the last meeting of the SSRA was held on the 21st February and was well attended. Numerous topics were discussed, 2 topics in particular. The first was the Handyperson service that is being received by sheltered scheme tenants. Representatives were very impressed with the work he has done so far. The second was the contribution made to the meeting by Pal Sandhu, Benefits Advisor. Mrs Sandhu gave a very helpful talk to all the residents present. Since the start of Bracknell Forest Homes over 1000 tenants have been helped and advised by Mrs Sandhu and her colleague Harpal Ghataora. The work to the windows at Binfield House has started. 10 Representatives from the SSRA attended the National Conversation coffee afternoon, which was run by EM.

Any Other Business:

- 7.1 TR mentioned structural voids. LW said it is being looked into. IM said he had recently spoken with a tenant with 2 young children from Windsor Housing and she had moved into a 2 bedroom house with no boiler. IM said compared to scenarios like this, Bracknell Forest Homes are doing an excellent job.
- 7.2 RG asked if the NEAT are operational and out on the estates. LW confirmed they are. HBo said he had received a copy of his rent statement, and another one had been delivered to his next door neighbour. LW apologised for this error. RE said the membership for TPAS needs renewing and it will cost £1500, CL is the only member at the moment. RE asked if the Panel thought this was worth the money. NW said it would need to be discussed further at a future meeting.
- 7.3 LW mentioned the timetable for the Tenant Board Member elections coming up; it would also be featured in the next edition of Spotlight. CL thought the process should be discussed as there have been some changes made. TR said the process has worked in the past and should carry on. NW said it needs to be decided on. Feedback should go to BM and NW.
- 8.1 Members of staff left the meeting so that the Panel could consider and vote on the Broadband offer.

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.	TR will contact LW. 11/03/09 - There has been no contact from TR as yet.
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 – 11/03/09 11/03/09 - 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 – 11/03/09 11/03/09 - 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 IM – Great Hollands	Ongoing – 11/03/09

