

Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panel Meeting
16th September 2009

Present:

Nick Westlake (NW) Chair	Bill Potts (BP)
Sheila Lambourne (SL) Vice Chair	Derek Sullivan (DS)
Barbara McMinnies (BM) Secretary	Margery Franklin (MF)
Chick Lavender (CL) Treasurer	Robert Gristwood (RG)
Bob Begbie (BB)	Muriel Rawsthorne (MR)
Marcella Begbie (MB)	Ian MacDonald (IM)
George McMinnies (GM)	John Stevens (JS)

Staff:

Caroline Titley (CT) – Chief Executive
Linda Wells (LW) – Housing and Community Director
Mike Jones (MJ) – Asset and Business Development Director
Steph Verstraeten (SV) – Resident Involvement and Policy Officer
Emma Martin (EM) – Resident Involvement Assistant
Wendy Smith (WS) – Landscaping Administrator

Observers: Joy Cook, Tim Rawsthorne, Sue Cleaver

Apologies: Herbie Barlow, Michael Marsh and Shelagh Pile

1.0	<u>Introductions, apologies and correspondence:</u>	
1.1	NW welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced MJ. NW asked if when members speak, it would be beneficial to JS to introduce themselves.	
1.2	BM said there was no correspondence.	
2.0	<u>Agree and sign the minutes:</u>	
2.1	The action table was discussed.	
2.2	5.2 – a leaflet regarding the shareholding membership will be taken to the next Customer Involvement Group meeting to be discussed.	SV
2.3	CL said the cheque he had received for the first part of the grant for the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel however, it stated on the remittance advice it was the second half of the grant. EM has spoken with finance and they are aware that this is the first half of the grant and not the second.	
2.4	IM proposed the minutes and MR seconded. The minutes were agreed and signed.	
3.0	<u>Caroline Titley BFH Update</u>	
3.1	CT started by mentioning the TSA first year inspection. The letter from the inspectors has been received with very positive feedback. “Overall we found that Bracknell Forest Homes Is providing high quality services, is well managed both organisationally and financially, and demonstrates very promising prospects for improvement”.	
3.2	The Board will consider the letter on Thursday 17 th September and respond.	
3.3	Services are continuing to improve, for example, void turnaround times are now 17.9 days.	
3.4	Housing Management staff have been reorganised into separate teams now as of 1 st September and this will be reviewed on a regular basis.	

3.5	The STATUS survey will be going out to customers at the end of October. Project Acorn is due to go live in November with training for staff at the end of October. Bracknell Forest Homes has signed the development services agreement with Thames Valley Housing to build new homes in the future. Thames Valley Housing is a very reputable association to work with they are also partners with Bracknell Forest Council.	
3.6	Coffee mornings have been taking place at sheltered schemes across the borough to discuss the “Planning for the Future” project. The aim of the project is to develop a vision for sheltered accommodation and services for the future.	
3.7	The Board Away Day took place on the 11 th and 12 th September, presentations on development, Project Acorn and initial discussions about the number of Board and sub-committee meetings for the next year took place. There is also currently, a vacancy for an independent board member and final interviews will take place on the 28 th September. NW mentioned how there had been lots of local interest.	
3.8	There will also be training for Board, staff and customers. Customers will have the opportunity to take part in the selection process for a trainer.	
3.9	JS mentioned how as the organisation is only 18 months old there is a lot of scope for improvement. Also, in future, JS said how tenants may expect more from sheltered accommodation.	
3.10	DS asked MJ how long the contract with Thames Valley Housing would be. MJ confirmed 3 years. DS then asked what happens after the 3 years are over. MJ said hopefully Bracknell Forest Homes will have gained sufficient knowledge and understanding of development and be able to continue alone.	
3.11	CL suggested combining training for all customer groups instead of separate sessions, as this could save money. NW asked how do we determine what training is needed. SV said a training needs analysis will be conducted. It was agreed SV will work with BM on this.	SV/ BM
3.12	RG asked CT a question regarding finance for the development of new homes. CT said that grants are received to assist organisations.	
3.13	TR asked if the STATUS surveys had been designed, as he felt the “tick box” method does not gain sufficient feedback. LW said they are prescribed by our regulators so that we can be compared across the board with other organisations. LW also said that there will be future opportunities for customers to give Bracknell Forest Homes feedback through questionnaires that are not just “ticking boxes”. MR asked if joint tenants will receive two surveys, LW confirmed yes.	
3.14	NW asked what 3* organisations are targeting for their void turnaround times. LW said our aim is for consistency and between 20 – 23 days. NW asked if distorted figures can be taken out. LW said they cannot be taken out as they have to be counted for statistical analysis.	
4.0	<u>Mike Jones Rechargeable Works Policy and Landscape Update:</u>	
4.1	MJ went through the Rechargeable Works policy page by page and picked out and explained key points of the document. Questions were directed at MJ throughout the discussion of the document.	
4.2	BM said sometimes the term “customer” is used in the same sentence as “tenant”. More consistency is needed. MJ will make these changes to the document.	MJ
4.3	Vulnerable tenants were discussed in the policy; MJ said these repairs will be dealt with on a case by case basis with discretion.	

4.4	BB asked if charges can be appealed against. NW agreed that there should be. MJ said at the moment the complaints procedure should be followed, but if members would prefer a separate appeals process can be put in place.	MJ
4.5	The document was agreed.	
4.6	WS went through each of the Panel members questions and provided the answers.	
4.7	NW asked if Bracknell Forest Homes were working with the Council on grass cutting. MJ confirmed yes, it is beneficial to everyone but will take time.	
4.8	Members of the Panel raised individual questions. EM and MJ took notes on these.	MJ
5.0	<u>Referrals and Any Other Business:</u>	
5.1	DS raised the article that had appeared in the Bracknell News.	
5.2	MJ said he was looking for volunteers for a friend who is currently writing a doctorate to research what involved customers put in and what they get out of being involved. It should take no longer than 30 minutes. If members are interested please speak with BM.	
5.3	BB mentioned the parking situation at Edmonds Court. A suggestion to put cones in front of the entrance for half an hour to deter the drivers was put forward. CL suggested contacting the Neighbourhood Action Group.	
5.4	SV explained what the National Tenants Voice is and that they are currently in the process of recruiting 26 members, the deadline to apply as a volunteer member is the 16 th October. If any further information is required please contact SV on 01344 382913 or Stephanie.verstraeten@bracknellforesthomes.org.uk or CL will put the information on the Tenant and Leaseholders website.	
5.5	SV said that the compact will be reviewed with JF. If anyone would like to join the existing group to please contact SV.	
6.0	<u>Feedback From Other Meetings</u>	
6.1	IM gave out a document which went into detail about what had been discussed at the CIG. Alan Harris, Repairs and Maintenance Manager had attended and spoke of the New Tenants Assistance scheme. SV spoke of ASB policies and the National Tenants Voice. Voids inspections were also discussed and SV asked the group for feedback on how they felt it was going. No one was present to discuss the Voids and Major Works Inspections so IM brought the meeting to a close early.	
6.2	IM explained the idea of the voucher scheme for New Tenant Assistance. TR commented on the number of man hours that would be involved and how expensive it could be. MR said it would not be used by everyone.	
6.3	BB said the SSRA were invited to the Planning for the Future coffee mornings with LW and Julie Rose, Supportive Housing Manager. The meetings have been very well attended. A questionnaire has been issued and filled in by all sheltered tenants and the answers will be discussed at a later date.	
6.4	The SSRA had a meeting today. Planning for the Future was further discussed by the group with Lawrence Millar who led on this. BB said how the meeting had been one of the best and most informative meeting held by the SSRA in a long time.	
6.5	Officers of the Panel were asked to leave the meeting so CL's Treasury report and Spotlight could be discussed.	

7.0	<p><u>Chick Lavender Treasurers report and Spotlight:</u></p> <p>CL gave the treasurers report. There was £419.91 in the bank account at the end of August, there were no queries raised. The first half of the grant £500 had been received and deposited into the bank on the 1st September 2009.</p>	
-----	--	--

Actions Table

Date of meeting	Issue	Action	Progress	Lead
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.	Ongoing - 16/09/09 – MR will take the lead on this point from TR. MR will contact LW.	MR
17/06/09	Review the Compact	JF to conduct review.	Ongoing – 16/09/09 JF returned on the 17 th August and will work with SV and compact group.	JF and SV
15/07/09	CL spoke of a landscaping issue in Harmans Water that has not yet been resolved. Ref 10634.	LW will follow this up.	Ongoing – 19/08/09 CL will speak with the tenant involved for an update.	CL
15/07/09	It was asked what happens if a call regarding landscaping comes in to Bracknell Forest Homes but it is the property of the Council. Do Bracknell Forest Homes pass the details to Bracknell Forest Council?	SP will follow this up	Ongoing – 16/09/09	SP
19/08/09	BB said the weekend call service 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 – 16/09/09	BB