

**Partners for Improvement in Islington
Residents Forum Meeting**



Minutes of the Residents Forum

Held at 6.35pm on Thursday 15 January 2009

PRESENT:

Forum Members:

Muriel Duncan	(MD) Vice Chair
Susanne Lamido	(SL)
Lisa Crowley	(LC)
Dawreen Charles	(DC)
Sally Ingrey	(SI)
Shirley Bryant	(SB)
Suzanne Bryant	(SuB)
Chris Graham	(CG)
Chris Radway	(CR)

Observer:

G Padreddii	(GP)
Rose-Marie McDonald	(RM)
Givlietla Fafak	(GF)

Partners:

John Holman	(JH)
Ed Butler	(EB)
Liz Voss	(LV)
Paula Redpath	(PR)
Tom Irvine	(TI)

HFI:

Anthony Jonas	(AJ)
Jane Mugridge	(JM)

Apologies:

Georgina Galliers
Dave Gorman
Richard Best
Chris Matthews
Ann-Marie Greensmith

1. Minutes and Matters arising from Meeting of 20 November 2008

- 1.1** Point 1.2 about repair job ISL/15483 – CG requested to know how it fitted into the job completion reporting. CG also requested that job ISL/23537 be looked into: how it feeds into the reporting structure. **(Action PR)**
- 1.2** SL suggested the minutes were short on explanation. Where referring to points on previous minutes, the minutes should explain what the issue was so that minutes of meetings can be understood without referring to previous minutes. **(Action TI)**

- 1.3 CG said dates of meetings need to be more obvious on the website. EB agreed this would be done. **(Action EB)**
- 1.4 Point 9.3 CG asked for an update on the Leasehold Major Works Management charges. EB advised that there is a meeting on Tuesday 20 January 2009 to review this. An update should be available for the next meeting. **(Action EB)**

2. Works Team Update

- 2.1 LV introduced the item and ran through the paper.
- 2.2 LV explained that the Works Team is ahead of the programme and is now slowing down its activity to ensure it delivers the best possible customer care. The Works Team will be opening 14 properties per week. SL asked why the Works Team is slowing down the programme. LV confirmed this was to ensure high levels of customer care.
- 2.3 LV explained what the different CSCS colour cards mean.
- 2.4 LV talked through the process map for dealing with adaptations to properties outside the scope of the standard major works. LV explained that the Works Team are trying to work with the Council's Occupational Therapy team so that adaptations can be carried out during the major works. Sometimes this cannot be done, and in these cases the adaptations would be referred to the Repairs Team who would liaise with Occupational Therapy.
- 2.5 Observer (GP) stated that she had problems from her refurbishment which remained outstanding. She confirmed that Bob Thurgood is attending next week.
- 2.6 EB said Partners apologises for mistakes that have been made, but also should point out that resident satisfaction with works is now very high, at about 90%.
- 2.7 SL suggested that future updates could have more detail about the programme, such as when scaffolding is going up where. EB said the Works Team could consider whether any more detail should be provided. MD said that the Forum has enough papers to read and that the Works Team update provides sufficient detail in its current format.

3. Door Packs for residents during refurbishment

- 3.1 EB explained the item. The Forum was asked what information, if any, should be included about the Residents Forum in the Door Pack. The reason for the item is a staff suggestion with the aim of raising the profile of resident involvement and the Residents Forum.
- 3.2 LV explained what the door pack is. There are now two packs: a "pre-visit" pack and a door pack. The pre-visit pack contains lots of information about what to expect – the Resident's Guide to Works, DVD,

etc. The door pack now therefore contains mainly information needed during the works, such as white goods forms; kitchen design; heating design; contractor details; asbestos form; damp survey; signing in sheets.

- 3.3 SB suggested the pre-works information pack could include a brief summary of what the Forum is and what it does, and tell residents they can find more details on the website. (**Action LV**)
- 3.4 CG suggested there could also be information about the Leaseholder Forum. The Forum agreed that information about the Leaseholder Forum would not be appropriate as the pre-works information pack is for tenants for internal works.
- 3.5 There was a discussion about whether there should be more telephone numbers included in the door pack / pre-works information pack. An observer (GP) commented that she couldn't get hold of her Liaison Officer. SB commented that her Liaison Officer always called her back the same day.
- 3.6 SuB commented that signing-in sheets were not always being used in her experience. LV said she would look into this. (**Action LV**)

4. **Best Value Review Update**

- 4.1 JM talked through the executive summary of the Best Value report. She highlighted the aim of delivering customer priorities and increasing satisfaction.
- 4.2 JM tabled a draft Best Value Implementation Plan. JM highlighted some of the points on the plan:
 - o R2 (Complaint escalation rate)
 - o R4 (Raising overall satisfaction, communication)
 - o R10 (Repairs sign-off rate)
 - o R12 (Repairs satisfaction)
 - o R13 (Repairs appointment slot – asking Rydon if this can be done)
 - o R19 (Communication with leaseholders)
 - o R24 (Telephone calls being responded to and named contact details)
 - o R25 (Learning from complaints)
 - o Various items about resident involvement
 - o R35 (Satisfaction with ASB)
- 4.3 JM asked the Forum to come back to her within the next week with any comments on the Plan. (**Action Forum members**)
- 4.4 SL suggested that the plan should include an action to look into tenants not following tenancy conditions with respect to dogs – a tenancy pet audit. JM advised that the Best Value plan includes an action for Partners about enforcing tenancy conditions.

- 4.5 CG tabled a report about the repairs satisfaction card currently used by Partners to monitor resident satisfaction with repairs. CG suggested that the card does not currently ask some important questions including: "Did the operative have with him/her all the information that you as the person requesting the repair had imparted?" and "Did the operative have with him/her all the information that they should have had from the landlord in order to carry out the work".
- 4.6 CG explained that his experience on a repair was that the operative who attended had limited information about the job, although CG had provided extensive written information about the repair.
- 4.7 CG commented that the current repairs satisfaction form does not include a question as to whether the repair has been completed. EB pointed out that Q5 on the current form asks "overall how satisfied are you with the standard of this repair?" which is a standard question asked by housing repairs service providers.
- 4.8 CG commented that it should be a housing manager's job to sign off a repair as complete. PR explained that when an operative asks for a resident's signature, the resident is confirming that the operative has attended, not to confirm the quality or completeness of a repair.
- 4.9 JM suggested that the Forum could recommend that Partners provides a report as to what the repairs procedure is including the follow-up of uncompleted jobs. **(Action PR)**
- 4.10 CR commented that he thinks the repairs service is a shambles and that things only get done if you chase continually. He agreed that seeing the procedure would be a start.
- 4.11 Observer (GP) commented that she recently had a repair completed and the plumber was excellent and did a very good job. She would like to have submitted this comment but did not want to put her name and address on an open post-card in the post. EB said this was helpful feedback and Partners will look at this and the format of the form **(Action EB)**
- 4.12 MD summed up asking Forum members to pass their comments on the Best Value action plan to JM.
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5. Identifying Service Development Priorities for Annual Plan 2009-10

- 5.1 EB explained that service plan would be strongly informed by the Best Value Plan. Partners has already consulted staff about priorities for next year. Staff have identified sharing information internally; improving resident satisfaction; improving systems and processes; update service standards; improve communication with tenants and leaseholders; corporate social responsibility. Partners at this stage is inviting suggestions from the Forum. A draft annual plan will then be circulated to Forum members in two weeks. **(Action EB)**

6. HFI Consultative Panels Consultative Papers

- 6.1.1** AJ introduced the item. The first paper was the London Borough of Islington report on the Rent Review 2009/10. AJ highlighted the recommendations in section 2 of the report.
- 6.1.2** The Forum discussed the merits of options 2a (higher rent increase to reduce the deficit) and 2b (higher rent increase to provide for an energy efficiency fund).
- 6.1.3** AJ noted that all Partners properties will have loft insulation through Partners refurbishment programme. None will have cavity walls. Very few will have communal boilers.
- 6.1.4** CG commented that spending money on windows such as double glazing is not cost effective. He commented that the government makes a profit from council housing; that the concept that we have to continually cut costs is wrong. He suggested Forum members look on the "moonlight robbery" website.
- 6.1.5** LC commented that she would be happy to pay extra if she thought it would do anything, but did not have faith that it would.
- 6.1.6** The Forum decided by majority to recommend option 1.
- 6.2.1** AJ highlighted the other reports for consultation in the pack, noting that they were mainly relevant to HFI residents, not Partners.
- 6.2.2** Report 2. CR asked what the position is regarding bike storage provision for street properties. AJ explained that the report is specifically about bike storage provision for estate properties. CR commented that this is an example of Partners residents losing out; bike storage is an issue for street properties too. CR suggested the Council and HFI should look at innovative ways of addressing this problem for street properties, such as converting parking spaces into bike spaces. AJ said that HFI is piloting the schemes at this stage and he will take these comments back. **(Action AJ)**

7. HFI Draft Business Plan 2009-14

- 7.1** AJ introduced the item and took the forum through the paper.
- 7.2** AJ highlighted the similarities with the draft action plan from the Best Value Review of Partners' services, indicating that both HFI and Partners have similar areas of focus, such as complaints escalation, communication and dealing with anti-social behaviour. CG commented that ASB management should be out of general taxation, not rent.

8. Equalities and Diversity position statement

- 8.1 EB introduced the paper for information. EB confirmed any comments from the Forum would be welcome and should be sent to EB.

9. Repairs Team van stock and equipment

- 9.1 PR introduced the item, explaining that the Forum had requested the agenda item at the last meeting.
- 9.2 PR reported that the Repairs Team does a lot of work on van stock and equipment as it is in the interests of both residents and the Repairs Team to maximise the number of occasions on which the repair can be completed first time.
- 9.3 PR commented that it is impossible to have every possible material and part for every potential repair in every van. The repairs team keeps detailed computerised records of stock and materials used, and has an intelligent system which orders stock when required. Quantities of materials and parts used are analysed and van stock is reviewed to ensure it includes the materials most likely to be needed.
- 9.4 CG commented that there ought to be energy saving bulbs included in the standard van stock.

10. Any Other Business

- 10.1 SuB raised the issue of residents not waiting until collection day to put rubbish out. She said that there is a problem with rodents in her area. SuB asked what if anything will the Council do to stop rubbish being put out on the wrong day by residents. Will they actually enforce the requirement to put rubbish out on the day of collection? TI said Partners would ask the Council to respond. **(Action TI)**
- 10.2 MD commented that street properties typically do not have enough space for residents to put bins out properly and this leads to problems. CR suggested HFI should look at a contract variation asking Partners to carry out works to improve bin storage. AJ commented that cost will be a consideration but HFI will consider. **(Action AJ)**

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.