

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

Minutes of the Residents Forum

Held at 6.35pm on Thursday 17 September 2009

At the Town Hall, Upper Street, Islington



PRESENT:

Forum Members:

Shirley Bryant (SB)
Michael Adedeji (MA)
Muriel Duncan (MD) *
Georgina Galliers (GG) *
Chris Graham (CG)
Rose-Marie McDonald (RM)
Susanne Lamido (SL)
Richard Best (RBe)
Lisa Crowley (LC)
Tim Clarke (TC)
Richard Bunting (RBu) *

** co-opted to the membership during this meeting*

Partners:

John Holman (JH)
Tom Irvine (TI)
Katrina Dalby (KD)
Ed Butler (EB)
Liz Voss (LV)

HFI:

Jane Mugridge (JM)

Apologies:

Saeed Abdulrahim
Michael Read
Suzanne Bryant
Paula Redpath

Observer

One observer

1. Decisions about Forum

- 1.1** EB Introduced the item and explained that the purpose was to decide on the following: membership co-option, election of Chair, election of Vice-Chair, election of Associate Director for Homes for Islington's Performance Management Committee.
- 1.2** SL nominated herself for Chair and SB nominated MA. Both candidates were given the opportunity to present to the Forum.
- 1.3** SL was candidate 1 and said she was standing because she wants to bring the Forum into the public domain and let people know what is going on. There are lots of issues that she would like to follow through. SL has taken it upon herself to do everything that is asked of her. As she is retired she has time to take on the responsibilities.
- 1.4** MA was candidate 2 and said that he had been on Forum for a few years and seen how it works. He makes contributions to the agenda and he thinks that he has a determination and likes to see things completed. MA said that there are some deficiencies in Islington but he doesn't want to complain and wants to see things done. MA said that he wants communication to be outgoing and show people what we can do.
- 1.5** The outcome of the vote was candidate 1 received 7 votes and candidate 2 received 3 votes. SL was elected Chair.
- 1.6** Nominations for Vice Chair were requested. Nominations were made from MA who was candidate 1 and RBe who was candidate 2. Both were asked to present to the Forum.
- 1.7** MA was candidate 1 and said that he still wanted to work for Forum and that he would be a good complement to SL. MA said that he would seek the co-operation of all members.
- 1.8** RBe was candidate 2 and said that he had been on Forum since it started. He was aware of problems that it faced initially and thinks that some have been dealt with and some haven't. RBe said that he is retired and has time to give to Forum. RBe was secretary of New River Tenants Association which was the only one representing street properties. He has an insight in what went wrong with the properties and why PFI was needed. New River has over 5000 tenants. RBe said that they meet on a regular basis and he has a good feeling for the way people are seeing PFI.
- 1.9** The outcome of the vote was candidate 1 received 3 votes and candidate 2 received 6 votes. RBe was elected Vice Chair.

- 1.10** The Forum was asked to make a decision on the co-option of members. The Forum unanimously accepted GG, MD and RBu onto the Forum.
- 1.11** SL stated that she felt that Partners' communication had sometimes let the Forum down. SL wants Forum members to feel like Partners are interested in them and wants members to be looked after. Some things have taken too much time to sort out and there have been issues with childcare. Partners should be more proactive with members and not use Data Protection Act as a means to hinder communication, but should share personal news about Forum members with other members of the Forum.
- 1.12** TI stated that Partners will not disclose personal information about Forum members to anyone without the consent of the individual concerned. MD agreed and said that she would say if she wanted things shared with Forum. SL agreed.
- 1.13** SL stated that she attends as Associate Director to Homes for Islington Performance Management Committee. The Forum confirmed that they are happy for her to continue to attend as Partners representative. SL confirmed that she will continue with it but if anyone else is interested they can take over. CG stated that we should have someone come back and say what the remit of the Committee is. Often with meetings of this sort there is a code of conduct which members have to sign to say they operate on behalf of HFI rather than on behalf of tenants. JM confirmed that HFI consolidated their meetings. They decided that there were too many so they created the PMC which combines the meetings. Once a year they will look and scrutinise the PFI contract.
(Action HFI attend next meeting and explain)

2 - Meeting minutes and matters arising

- 2.1** SL introduced the item
- 2.2** CG noted that item 2.2 recording a correction about PFILAG should read CG and not GC.
- 2.3** Item 2.4 regarding booking the Town Hall from previous minutes. TI confirmed that he has been in touch with the Council and that the room booking for the January meeting cannot be made until November 2009.
- 2.4** It was noted that item 2.6 did not include a key word in the minute. The Forum requested that minutes should include enough information for someone who did not attend the meeting to understand what was being discussed. This particular item was about the Council Tax £100 rebate for older people which had been closed at the last meeting.

- 2.5 MD noted that item 2.9 regarding a function for the elderly is in progress. MD also stated that she wants to organise an Italian and Caribbean Christmas party.
- 2.6 GG stated that she had a phone call from Connect. They would like to come to a meeting and tell us what they do. SL stated that she wasn't sure whether the content was in the remit of the Forum's agenda but that the Forum does want more speakers.
- 2.7 EB confirmed that he has spoken to Liz Mercer from Islington Disability Action who wants to attend the November. A Connect speaker could possibly be on the agenda for the January meeting.
- 2.8 The Forum gave GG permission to speak to Connect and arrange for them to come to the January meeting.
- 2.9 CG stated that they are waiting for Sean McLaughlin to attend the Forum
- 2.10 SL commented that the latest Gazette was the best we have ever seen and that she would like something about visitors in the next edition.
- 2.11 RM stated that there are digital aerial problems in street properties. SB stated that they need an update on aerials. **(ACTION HFI to provide update on digital aerials)**
- 2.12 CG stated that any items in the Gazette should be reviewed by the Forum.
- 2.13 MA asked whether there is a discount for the elderly regarding the digital switch over.
- 2.14 EB confirmed that the previous meeting discussed discounts for the elderly in connection with council tax.
- 2.15 GG stated that Partners were due to update the Forum about 2 meetings ago about this. The digital upgrade scheme was mentioned and the Forum was going to get a preview of what the scheme was about. Nothing concrete has been provided.
- 2.16 TI confirmed that information did come back to the Forum about it.
- 2.17 JH suggested that the Forum only need to go to action table and agree minutes.
- 2.18 The Forum confirmed that the actions arising from the minutes were all completed.

3. Works Team Update

- 3.1 LV introduced this item
- 3.2 SL stated that there are still instances of people not flushing down drain pipes. This leads to scaffolding going up again so the pipes can be flushed though. This is a waste of money. It should be mandatory on their checklists. **(ACTION LV make sure down pipes are washed down / flushed through when scaffolding is up)**
- 3.3 GG said she received a letter from Partners to say scaffolding was going up within a month to do painting. GG's elderly neighbour contacted her 2 weeks ago to say that scaffolding was going up. The contractors did not ring the bell and have ruined the front garden. It has taken a week to get rid of sand that was on boards. Ladders were left down and there was no netting. GG rang the number on the scaffolding to say that the ladders were not attached there was no netting and the workman had gone. The people who answered the phone had subcontracted the work and were only interested in whether the residents had notified their insurers. GG still doesn't know who is in charge.
- 3.4 TI confirmed that this is Partners Repairs team and not the Works team.
- 3.5 MA stated that in last meeting said we need a central number. MA commented that his roof fell through on Saturday because of bad preparation and planning. He called the out of hours number and they didn't take any responsibility for contractors. Partners needs a single point of contact on the website.
- 3.6 CG stated that it is not tenant's responsibility to have insurance. Landlord should not act negligently. The contractors think that it doesn't matter about safety as long as people have insurance. It is not tenants' responsibility to be insured and you can't guarantee the insurance will pay out. It is landlord's responsibility to make sure scaffolding is protected.
- 3.7 LV circulated the Works team scaffolding letter and boiler information.
- 3.8 RM stated that when scaffolding put up at her house it should have been left so that the Repairs team could check if the problem had been fixed, but they came and took it down. They were supposed to let RM know when they were coming and take it down. **(ACTION Repairs attend next meeting to discuss scaffolding and LV to add info to scaffolding letter to say when scaffolding will come down.)**
- 3.9 JH stated that there should be one point of contact. **(ACTION update at next meeting)**

- 3.10** MD enquired whether windows can be cleaned while the scaffolding is up. **(ACTION check if windows should be cleaned after cyclical maintenance). (AP include article in the Gazette about scaffolding)**
- 3.11** LV confirmed that the kitchen design leaflet will be distributed. A draft copy will be available in 2 weeks. **(ACTION LV to email to Forum)**. LV stated that the Works team are changing their literature at the moment. The after care pack is being revised as feedback has shown that residents don't realise when their refurbishment has finished. They often think that if something is on snagging list it will be done. The Works team are also revamping heating design and energy efficiency info so residents can see how to save money and lower their carbon footprint.
- 3.12** SL gave permission for the Forum to email LV directly with their comments.

4. Performance

- 4.1** TI introduced this item. There were no questions.

5 Boundary Walls

- 5.1** Paula Redpath gave her apologies for not delivering this item. TI presented the item.
- 5.2** TI confirmed that residents should ring Repairs if there is a problem with any fence or wall. The Repairs team will inspect and make sure the area is safe and take any action needed to make it safe.
- 5.3** PFI1 property boundaries are the responsibility of Partners. PFI2 properties have dual responsibility. Homes for Islington (HFI) are responsible for the side and back boundaries and Partners are responsible for the front.
- 5.4** When an item is referred to HFI residents are written to and given name and contact number of who is dealing with their repair. All further correspondence should be with them.
- 5.5** Boundary walls can be more difficult as they are expensive to maintain and repair. Partners has a budget and programme of works.

6. Residents Forum Communication

- 6.1** EB introduced this item
- 6.2** EB introduced a mini Residents Forum communication plan based on what happens now. If the Forum would prefer something different they need to tell Partners. EB talked through the paper.

- 6.3 EB asked all members who would prefer items emailed to them and who prefers them in the post. **(ACTION Partners to send both email and paper copies of Forum papers to all members where email address is held)**
- 6.4 All Forum members said they wanted things emailed and posted to them. SL requested whether the Forum can we have letters emailed instead of posted.
- 6.5 The Forum confirmed that their minutes should only be available on the website after they are approved.
- 6.6 SL requested that the Forum receive the minutes when they are sent to HFI. Any errors can be fed back then. **(ACTION Forum to check minutes before go on HFI website.)**
- 6.7 MA stated that due to the delay of 2 months before the minutes are checked could they be sent out separately before the meeting?
- 6.8 CG confirmed that the minutes to go HFI because there used to be a system of meetings that took place as part of the Council's committee to feed back to the landlord. The Council wanted a short chain of command otherwise it took too long to feed back. HFI are standing in for the landlord and want small chain to them. Partners Residents Forum minutes should be approved before they go on HFI website.
- 6.9 JH stated that the Forum has to approve the minutes. They should be put on HFI's website once they are approved. **(ACTION EB to ensure that minutes go on HFI website once they are approved)**
- 6.10 RM requested that we have a 'draft' watermark on the minutes until they are approved. **(ACTION Partners)**
- 6.11 CG enquired why do HFI get to discuss the Forum agenda.
- 6.12 JM confirmed that they have a brief discussion about what is on agenda don't change anything. They sometimes like to add something.
- 6.13 SL asked whether Partners can check the agenda with chair and agree it and then give it to HFI rather than at the same time?
- 6.14 EB amended Ami's number. It should read 020 7288 7742.
- 6.15 SL stated that the Forum needs to have a response from Partners within a fair timescale.
- 6.16 Members of the Forum were given a training form. They were asked to complete and return it

6.17 **(AP Partners to add new Forum members to website including PFI1/2)** SL stated that a photograph can be included and that Forum members should give any to Partners.

6.18 CG noted that he received the latest training info from Trafford Hall. They have good accommodation/bar/bursary for travel. **(ACTION Partners to look at Trafford hall)**

7. Letter to Simon Kwong / Sean McLaughlin

7.1 Item introduced by CG

7.2 The Forum agreed the letter should go to Sean McLaughlin rather than Simon Kwong because policy and strategy still with council not HFI.

7.3 SL thinks it will help give the Forum more teeth with Council. SL stated that some letters should go from the Forum rather than Partners.

7.4 EB confirmed that it is ok for letters to be developed outside of the Forum but they should come to Forum to be authorised.

7.5 JH stated that letters should be on Partners Residents Forum paper. **(ACTION TI to email the letterhead to SL)**

7.6 MA did not like the tone of the back of the letter. CG confirmed that he only wanted to send front page and the rest was just for info.

8. HFI Consultative Panel Papers

8.1 JM introduced the paper but there was no discussion as the meeting ran over time.

8.2 **(ACTION Forum to send an questions to JM)**

8.3 CG noted that the papers were not on HFI's website

9. Any Other Business

9.1 RBe stated that AOB should be 30 minutes long

The meeting closed at 8.30

Actions arising from Forum minutes – September 2009

ITEM NUMBER	ACTION FROM MINUTES	UPDATE	OWNER
1.13	Explain role of Homes for Islington Performance Management Committee at next meeting	<p>Complete. Response supplied by Mike Sims, Company Secretary, HFI:</p> <p>The Performance Management Committee replaced the Contracted Services and Managed Property Sub-Boards and is responsible for scrutinising performance by HFI and it's partners of customer facing services. The Committee also carries out project based scrutiny of selected customer-facing services, and recommends changes to improve the way that HFI delivers customer services. The Committee is also responsible for monitoring petitions received at Panels to ensure that these are properly addressed and to arbitrate on those petitions where residents have received what they consider to be an unsatisfactory conclusion to the matter.</p> <p>PMC meets four times per year, with two meetings having already taken place in May and August. Future meetings are scheduled to take place on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday 23 November 2009 • Monday 1 February 2009 <p>Associate Directors are appointed by the Board to sit on this Committee in order to bring direct feedback from local residents and panels to the scrutiny of HFI's contractors, partners and customer facing services. Associate Directors represent the area in which they sit on a panel, in contrast to Board Directors who represent HFI and Islington borough as a whole.</p>	HFI

2.11	Update on the digital upgrade and how this impacts on Partners residents	Complete. Response supplied by Ferenc Morath, HFI: The digital TV Aerial upgrade programme is progressing well and is likely to be completed ahead of scheduled. Partners and HFI have agreed that a pilot scheme is to be carried out to Grosvenor Avenue and surveys have been drawn up which have been approved by Partners. HFI are committed to delivering the digital aerial upgrade to this pilot block and will be scheduling the work at an appropriate time.	HFI
3.2	Works team to ensure down pipes are washed down / flushed through when scaffolding is up	This is completed as a standard part of the specification for external works on all properties.	LV
3.8	Repairs attend next meeting to discuss scaffolding used during cyclical works	Thomas Dezso, Service Manager, Repairs Team, will attend the meeting of the Forum on 19 November 2009.	Repairs
3.8	Amend scaffolding letter to include when scaffolding will come down	It is not possible to give a firm date for when scaffolding will come down before the scaffolding is erected. The Works Team is considering introducing a separate postcard giving notice of when scaffolding will be struck.	LV
3.9	There should be clear contact details given to residents to call with queries about cyclical decorations including scaffolding issues	Telephone numbers 0800 587 3595 and 020 7288 8310 are supplied as contact numbers for residents to call with queries about cyclical decorations including scaffolding issues.	Partners
3.10	Check whether windows should be cleaned after cyclical maintenance	The cyclical decorations programme for 2009 is finished apart from 6 properties containing leaseholders. The Repairs Team is considering this for future years' cyclical decorations programmes.	Repairs
3.10	Include an article in the Gazette about scaffolding	This is planned for the Christmas edition of Partners Gazette.	KD

3.11	Email kitchen design to Forum	New draft leaflet about kitchen design is included in the Works Team update section of the papers for the meeting of 19 November 2009.	LV
6.3	Partners to post <i>and</i> email Forum papers to all members where email addresses are held	Complete.	Partners
6.6	Forum to check minutes before they go on HFI website	HFI has agreed to this approach. Minutes will be posted on HFI website once agreed.	Partners/HFI/Forum
6.10	Minutes to include a 'draft' watermark until approved	Complete.	Partners
6.17	New Forum members to be included on Partners Website	Complete.	Partners
6.18	Consider Trafford Hall for Forum trainings	Partners has contacted Trafford Hall who have confirmed that LBI tenants in homes managed by Partners would be eligible for their subsidised courses. See agenda item 9 on meeting of 19 November 2009.	Partners
7.5	Provide Chair with Forum letterhead	Complete.	TI
8.2	Any questions about HFI's papers should be sent to JM	Forum action.	Forum