



**Notes of the PFI 1 Residents Forum Meeting
18/01/07**

Held at the Partners Office, Colebrooke Place, N1 8HZ

Present:

Forum members: Georgina Galliers (GG) Chair
Muriel Duncan (MD) Vice Chair
Leigh Norgrove (LN)
David Gorman (DG)
Sally Ingrey (SI)
Rosemary Hilton (RH)
Helen Crawford (HC)
Juwon Ogungbe (JO)

Partners:	Tom Irvine (TI)	Customer First Manager
	Ruth Angel (RA)	Implementation Manager
	Liz Voss (LV)	Community and Resident Liaison Manager
	Ami-Anne Spring	Customer First Administrator

Homes For Islington:	Jane Mugridge (JM)	Contract Commissioning Manager
-------------------------	--------------------	--------------------------------------

Apologies: Chris Radway
Anne Greensmith

Introductions

All meeting members welcomed and introductions were made.

GG to chair the meeting. MD appointed as vice chair.

1. Minutes and matters arising.

The Chair introduces the item

LN- Why has there not been a Leasehold Representative at the

<p>Residents Forum?</p> <p>LV- I represent the Leasehold Team as well as the Works Team.</p> <p>TI- I agree there has not been a member of Leasehold Management for the last couple of meetings; we will try to arrange for the new head of leasehold, Mike Edmund to com along to the next meeting.</p>	<p>ACTION POINT (TI)</p>
<p><u>2. HFI/LBI Consultative Panels Reports January 2007</u></p> <p>JM introduced item 2.</p> <p>Outline of Consultative Panels Reports was given. The report is split into 9 sections: 7 are for information and 2 are for consultation, items for consultation will be discussed in the resident's forum.</p> <p>Discussed points raised in Panel Report.</p> <p>a) Rent Review.</p> <p>JM outlined that the proposed rent increase for 2007/2008 will be an average of 5% or £3.70 per week, the formula for this being RPI @ 3.6% + 0.5% growth + £2. The implementation for this will be on 2nd April 2007.</p> <p>The Chair requested to know who decided how the rents will be increased as they have not been discussed as of yet, and as she is on the panel she would have expected to have been consulted about this.</p> <p>JM advised that the Head of Finance has set the rates in accordance with Government formulas.</p> <p>The Chair requested to know why the sums of 5% increase and +£2 had been decided, and what do these sums relate to. All members agreed that they would like to know how/why these costs are calculated.</p> <p>JM explains that these reflect increasing costs and agrees to provide a breakdown of the proposed rent increase for 2007/2008.</p> <p>b) Tenants Compact and Estate Security</p> <p>JM explained that the above concerns monies that are made available for local housing, budgets set aside that are locally determined. These are estate based monies and are not available for street properties, therefore they do not really apply to Partners For Islington, and are just for information.</p> <p>Forum members raised the issue that the emphasis on monies made available for Environmental works is only ever for estate properties and never for street properties. No money is made available to improve the appearance of communal areas on street properties, often leading</p>	<p>ACTION POINT (JM)</p>

to some looking rather un-kempt, these areas are left to deteriorate, being covered in rubbish and looking un-tidy.

LN would like to know who is responsible for the up-keep of these areas, as it is not written anywhere on the tenancy agreement, areas such as railings/footpaths/gates/walls. LN had to pay for a damaged wall to be re-built herself as the council offered no help.

RH explains that she has reported a large amount of rubbish being left in communal areas by tenants.

JM explains that Health and Safety should pick up these issues. Also that there are differences within the PFI1 and PFI2 contract regarding walls etc.

TI says that generally in street properties the responsibility for keeping any communal area tidy would lie with the tenant or leaseholder. Tenants and leaseholders do not pay a charge for cleaning of communal areas or gardens and many of them want to look after communal areas and gardens themselves. However if there are issues of anti-social behaviour this will need to be reported to the Partners for investigation. Similarly, any repairs in communal areas should be reported, or any health and safety concerns.

LN disputes that the tenant/leaseholder is responsible for the communal area, aside from their own garden.

The Chair suggests that a questionnaire is produced for tenants/leaseholders to raise these issues.

TI explains that these queries should be taken to the leasehold team and the housing management team for answers and clarification.

JM will investigate as to whether Partners for Islington can have a portion of the money made available.

The chair states that all tenants/leaseholders should be treated the same, regardless of whether they live in a street or estate property.

**ACTION
POINT
(JM)**

3. Item Brought Forward, Future of the Forum

TI explains the purpose of item 3: to discuss the future of the Residents Forum now that both PFI1 and PFI2 are in action.

The options for the Forum are-

- a) Maintain 2 separate forums.
- b) Maintain 2 separate forums for a period.
- c) Merge into 1 forum.

Should the Forum merge? TI would like to discuss the advantages and

disadvantages of a possible merge.

The Chair says that general consensus from previous discussions is that the information PF11 Forum members have will benefit PF12 Forum members as they are new to Partners.

TI explains that PF12 members have been meeting as a group with the Council, as PF11 members did before PF11 started, therefore they are in the same situation. Does the forum agree that the advantages of 1 forum outweigh the advantages of 2 forums, in the long-term?

YES- 5

NO- 1

UNSURE- 2

The Chair believes that 1 forum in the long term is better; however this needs to be reviewed in the meeting.

HC would like to know what PF12 members think?

TI says that PF12 members agree that in the long-term 1 forum is favourite. The Forum is unsure of how soon 1 Forum would be better than 2. TI understands that by the end of their meeting most members were in favour of 1 forum.

The Chair states that she has heard that PF12 don't think that PF11 have made very much progress.

TI explains that he is not aware of this and has not heard any comments from PF12 members to suggest this. It is best to avoid any competitiveness.

The Chair says that they should know the history of PF11 and what they have achieved over the years.

TI explains that his impression is that PF12 have been generally positive about Partners and about the PF11 Forum.

DG asks how many times PF12 members have met as a group?

TI says twice with Partners for Islington and approximately 30 times with Islington Council.

LN explains that the amalgamation of 2 groups can be very difficult and would like to know how Partners For Islington are going to do this?

TI explains that there are more similarities within the 2 groups than dissimilarities, and that the issues in both forums are the same. However there are contractual differences, therefore performance will have to be recorded separately. Partners certainly do not want to bully the forums in to doing something they don't want to do. TI thinks that 1 voice for partners will be more powerful.

DG thinks that the members will benefit more from 2 forums as PF11 have more experience.

The Chair asks do the schedules of works for PF11 and PF12 differ?

LV says not particularly.

JO explains there will be a group dynamic if there is 1 forum and suggests that there might also be sub-committees.

SI says that PF11 residents may have already had refurbishments and PF12 will not have, therefore time may be taken up discussing different things.

LV explains that the agenda for both PF11 and PF12 Forums is very similar for the January meetings of the Forums.

The Chair explains that the members want to know answers to our questions.

LN says that from a resident's point of view 1 forum makes sense, but how can residents be sure they will get the same response for one meeting, as they would for separate meetings?

TI explains that with 1 forum nothing can be hidden, and all members will know all contractual facts.

MD asks when the first batch of PF12 properties will be finished?

LV explains that they already have finished.

MD says that as complaints will already be coming in, may be 1 forum will be best.

TI explains that the election for members in the residents forum(s) will be in May.

The members request that in the next meeting in March should consist of both PF11 and PF12 members. So that they can get to know each other and see how the meeting goes.

TI agrees that in the long-term there will be 1 residents forum, in the short-term they will remain separate and in March 2007 both forums will meet.

4. Performance at a Glance

TI introduces Performance at a Glance and explains each section.

LN asks regarding the Refurbishment Process section, what the difference is in the number of completed tenanted flats, in comparison to the number of completed leaseholder flats. She would like to know

if leaseholders are discriminated against as she sent her Section 20 Notice back in August 2006 and works have still not started, she has also sent e-mails and has still not been given a start date for the works.

LV advises that a batch of Section 20 notices are sent out and then processed. This means that all of the leaseholders in a block may not received their Section 20 Notice as of yet, which will hold up the process.

TI explains that all leaseholders living in the same block should receive their Section 20 Notice at the same time in order for works to be carried out promptly. This will need to be investigated.

**ACTION
POINT
(TI)**

5. Homes For Islington comment on Partners Performance

JM introduces the section, talking through notes and points out that generally performance from Partners for Islington is good, however the works satisfaction figures are disappointing. Both Partners for Islington and United House have an action plan for future works therefore this should improve.

LN asks what Partners for Islington and United House propose to do to improve the situation, in particular for leaseholders?

TI explains that 2 meetings are arranged within the next 7 days to address this situation.

6. Tenants Handbook

RA explains that Partners for Islington need to produce a tenant's handbook. The hand book needs to be interesting, relevant and custom made for Partners for Islington tenants. What RA would like is for members of the forum to look at drafts of the hand book in order to give feedback and suggestions. Examples of handbooks are shown. This process will involve 2 meetings, and if necessary this can be done over the telephone.

The Chair asks will this idea just be a fly by night idea or will it be followed through?

RA explains that the handbook is essentially for Partners for Islington to give their message to tenants, and there is a budget attached. However if any members would like to be involved in the process, if their ideas are not able to be used, there will be a commitment to tell the individual the reasons why they cannot be used.

The Chair asks if any members would like to take part?

GG, MD, DG all agree.
JO agrees- via telephone only.

RA plans to gather the contact details of those members who would like to take part.

**ACTION
POINT
(RA)**

7+8. Annual Plan + Reasons for Dissatisfaction

TI explains the aims of the Annual Service Plan. This is to be created for 2007/2008 and it will be the responsibility of the Quality Team to ensure that actions on the plan are carried out.

TI would like members of the forum to contribute ideas to the planning process; this can be done during the meeting this evening or via e-mail/telephone until the 31st January 2007.

LN suggests that a satisfaction survey should be compiled, as a way for tenants/leaseholders to voice their opinions.

The Chair suggests that the issues regarding street property communal areas, such as walls/gates/paths should be added the next resident's forum agenda, as something more concrete needs to be relayed to the tenants.

The Chair asks will forum members still be able to contribute to the Newsletter as planned. The Newsletter will need to be more 'For the People' and personal, involving different age groups, interviews with tenants/leaseholders. The Chair suggests that the charts and graphs on the information that is usually given out are not appealing. Future communication should involve real people.

LN explains that communication for leaseholders needs to be improved in general. Also the way in which statistics are presented needs to be improved, for example broken down in to tenants and leaseholders. LN would also like to know how many of PF12 residents are leaseholders?

RA says that 1/4 of PF11 are leaseholders and 1/3 of PF12 are leaseholders.

TI suggests that if members have further ideas regarding the Partners Annual Service Plan, please either call or write in to the Quality Team.

The Chair explains that there is an issue with dog barking in her road. This was between 1.00am and 4.30am this morning. The chair believes that neighbours are going to start complaining about this soon.

DG suggests that this is an environmental issue.

TI explains that this is an issue for Housing Management.

The Chair suggests that a letter should be sent to the owner of the dog to advise them that they have been making noise and that it has been reported to Partners for Islington.

JO also advises that skips that are not part of Partners for Islington works are being left in the street for people to dump rubbish and waste

**ACTION
POINT
(TI)**

in, for example fridge-freezers/cookers.

LN explains that these skips are also taking up parking spaces.

MD says that when designing the front of properties there needs to be enough space for 2 dustbins. There is currently not enough room, especially now that tenants are expected to recycle their waste. This is also leading to a rat/mice issue.

TI asks for all members to phone/write in with any further issues that they would like to develop.

TI requests that if members have any issues they would like to raise regarding Reasons For Dissatisfaction to please phone/write in to Partners for Islington.

9. Works Team Update

LV briefs the forum on any news and updates regarding the Works Team, using the handout.

As the meeting was coming to an end no further questions were asked regarding the Works Team.

10. Any other business

The Chair would like to thank Partners on behalf of all members of the residents forum, for the Christmas party held 19th December 2006.

The Chair would also to thank all members of tonight's meeting for coming along despite the terrible weather conditions.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm

Next meeting: Thursday 15th March 2007 at 6.30pm