



Notes of the PFI 2 Residents Forum Meeting

15/01/07

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

Present:

Forum members: Shirley Bryant (SB)
Susanne Lamido (Chair)
Susan Bryant (SBr)

Partners: Katrina Dalby (KD), Customer First Officer
(Partnership Team)
Bob Thurgood (BT), Project Manager R2 (Works Team)
Liz Voss (LV), Community & Resident Liaison Manager
(Works Team)
Ed Butler (EB), Head of Quality (Partnership Team)
Ruth Angel (RA) Implementation Manager (Partners)

Homes For Islington: Ivan Willis (IW), Contract Commissioning
Manager
Anthony Jonas (AJ), Performance Manager

<p>Introductions</p> <p>All were welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.</p> <p>SB nominated and SBr seconded SL as Chair. SL was appointed as Chair.</p>	
<p>1. Previous Minutes</p> <p>The content of the previous minutes were agreed, however SB was incorrectly listed as attending. The previous minutes will be updated to show that Ms Chris Matthews attended and not SB.</p> <p>The Chair requested that all future minutes are formally accepted.</p> <p>KD to action</p>	<p>Action Point KD</p>
<p>2. HFI/LBI Consultative Panels Reports January 2007</p> <p>AJ introduced item 2.</p> <p>HFI will present papers at each of the residents' forum meetings. Content will be from both HFI and London Borough of Islington (LBI). Only those items for consultation will be discussed. AJ noted that all</p>	

residents' feedback will be shared with LBI.

The rent review and tenants compact were both available for consultation. The tenants compact/estate security report is not relevant for Partners tenants, therefore only the rent raise was discussed.

The council sets tenant rents within the Government guidelines. Rent rises are set by a complicated formula based on the price index, property location etc. This has resulted in a proposed rent increase of 5% per week. This represents an average of £3.70.

It was discussed whether the increase was in line with other councils and whether the increase should be restricted to every two years in line with private landlords.

The Chair noted that water rate increases are not included in the rent rise as these are the responsibility of Thames Water.

3. Future of the Forum

EB introduced item 3.

Tom Irvine wrote and presented the paper to the round 1 forum in September 2006. The options to the forum are:

1. Maintain two separate forums
2. Maintain two separate forums for a period
3. Merge to make one forum

EB suggested that a practical time for any decision would be after the forum elections in May 2007.

Advantages to one forum include, everyone is a Partners tenant regardless of which round they are on and it would give the forum one voice, all tenants may learn from each others experience, admin savings, HFI interacts with the forums and they may receive different information depending on the discussions and it may change others perceptions of the forums if they are combined.

Possible disadvantages are that there are differences between the contracts, there are different reporting requirements for the two contracts and the forum may need to relocate as the current premises may be too small.

EB stated that it depended on how the residents wanted to take the forum forward. If they want to give the forum a life of its own and not just responding to HFI/Partners they need to think about the best option for the group.

Concern was raised by the forum that as they are new and smaller the members of the round one forum would be more dominant if

there was one forum. There was also concern that works have not yet started on PF12 and that once this happened there may be more interest from residents to join the forum.

EB noted that it is Partners responsibility to ensure that one forum did not dominate the other.

AJ noted that there are strong reasons to bring the two forums together. Although there are differences between the contracts, they are predominantly the same. An identical service is provided to tenants by Partners. If the two forums do not agree on specific action Partners can legitimately take no action.

EB noted that the paper was concerning the formal meetings and that a PF11 and PF12 review group could be established which would develop resident involvement.

LV stated that PF11 internal works would be completed before the end of 2007.

The Chair proposed that this proposal is discussed again in May 2007, however as a result of the works finishing in PF11 soon it would be logical to join the forums sooner rather than later. This would give Partners time to raise the profile of the forums before the elections.

The Chair noted that communication between Partners and the forum has declined. She suggested that e-mail should be used as it is easier and quicker.

EB stated that the Quality team is now in place and they will be improving communication.

LV stated that the Works team will be arranging open days every two months. When works are taking place there will be an opportunity for residents to meet locally with their RLO's every Thursday between 10-1400.

4. Performance at a Glance

IW noted that the void relet times for PF12 are high. This is partly the fault of HFI as some properties had already been void for a high number of days prior to transfer.

The Chair asked whether the relet targets were realistic. IC stated That they were and EB stated that in PF11 it is 25 days and HFI it is 25/26 days. AJ noted that for the first six months of the contract Partners has a performance holiday.

The Chair noted that there was little information about tenants.

EB stated that tenancy audits are carried out each quarter and this information can be added to the performance feedback.

Action
Point EB

5. HFI Comment on Partners' Performance

IW introduced section 5.

It was noted that rent arrears at the beginning of October 2006 were £666000. At the end of November these had increased to £684000. HFI are keeping an eye on this as debt rises over Christmas. Partners will bring down this figure. Partners collected 98.8% rent which is higher than the target of 97%. All correspondence, complaints and member's enquiries were dealt with within the 10 working day target.

The Chair noted that there had been issues with neighbours during Christmas. She had to call the community police as she couldn't get hold of her tenancy officer.

EB agreed to investigate this. Tenancy officers are often out of the office as they are on their patches. We need to look at getting messages to them. He noted that we have recently received the results of the status survey which includes Partners and showed that ease of contact was in line with other organisations.

Action
Point EB

IC discussed the performance basket. This incorporates a number of performance indicators and enables a rank out of 10 to be given. If a service received a score higher than 7 they are considered to be performing adequately. PF12 received a score of 7.45

EB stated that Partners does perform in parts of the service and we need to ensure that we do this across the whole organisation. We need to use PF11 as a learning experience.

The Chair noted that the Repairs performance is improved under Partners. The service is more efficient and staff have the tools to do the job. Her neighbours agree with her.

6. Tenants Handbook

RA introduced section 6.

A tenant's handbook is being devised and we expect that it will be available in the spring. RA is leading on researching the content and is keen for residents' feedback.

RA provided a range of other organisations handbooks for reference. The Chair stated that she prefers pictures and bullet points as these catch the eye and are easier to read. It was suggested that it should include ASB, location of the police and fridge magnets etc with Repairs number.

RA asked who would be interested in providing feedback. All forum members agreed to help.

EB noted that a similar exercise is being undertaken for leaseholders.

7+8. Annual Plan + Reasons for Dissatisfaction

EB introduced items 7 and 8.

EB is creating a service plan for Partners 2007/2008 and is consulting the people listed. The plan will include Partners objectives for the coming year and may include old items, things that have happened already but we want to do more on, HFI, LBI, surveys and the Government. EB wanted to bring it to the forum for their ideas. Any can be e-mailed to Ed.Butler@partnersislinton.net or discussed with Ed by calling 0207 2887732.

The Chair noted that she would like ASB and litter included.

EB asked how the forum wanted to see things going in the future. The forum belongs to the tenants and they should tell Partners how they want it to develop. They could remove the formal approach and focus on key themes, e.g. BME involvement, involving those who work/don't work, reasons for dissatisfaction etc. EB has previously run focus groups and will take the forums views on who should be included and what should be discussed.

The Chair requested an update on dogs. Some dogs are ferocious and scary. A residents forum member stated that under the terms of the tenancy agreement only one pet is allowed.

EB stated that we need to be aware of a problem to action it and LV added that it can be difficult to prove.

The Chair enquired whose responsibility neighbour disputes were. EB stated that these are Partners responsibility and we would use tools such as mediation, ASBO's and eviction to remedy.

The Chair noted that there is a lot of rubbish and recycling in her area.

AJ confirmed that LBI are responsible for refuse collection.

The Chair noted that when action has been taken by tenancy officers there is no feedback to other parties involved.

EB stated that we couldn't provide specific feedback on individuals because of data protection, however we could provide general feedback.

SB advised that sometimes tenants just need a sympathetic ear, especially older people.

EB agreed and advised that sometimes we can be 'over efficient'

The Chair suggested that a separate telephone number is allocated for the Repairs line.

Action
Point All

9. Works Team Update

LV introduced section 9.

The Works team are currently working in the grey and blue zone. There are 1-2 RLO's, a manager and supervisor per zone. We are about to move into the yellow zone in March and the green zone in February. The RLO's will now be contacting residents in these areas.

The Works team now has a permanent property at Wharfdale Road. This means that they can invite residents at specific times etc as they know that they will be based there. They can also use this property for residents to view the refurbishment and meet the teams and answer questions. Residents can also use this property for respite during works.

The kitchen supplier has been changed. The kitchens are now slightly different colours and the work surfaces are thicker (18mm instead of 12mm) During an open day residents were asked to comment on the new kitchen units and the response was unanimously in favour of them.

A programme of future meetings will be published and anyone from any forum can attend. These will not start until March. Leaseholders have joined with the round 1 meetings and the attendance has grown. A leaseholder guide is being produced and it will include information on section 20's and appointments.

The Chair enquired about double glazing being used on street properties which were on main roads.

LV agreed to investigate and report back. She also had heard this at a leaseholder meeting. BT added that if we renew a whole box frame it has to be double glazed; however he had not heard of this before because of problems associated with the conservation area.

Action
Point LV

10. Any other business

The Chair asked whether Partners has the names, addresses and e-mail addresses of the forum members.

EB agreed to write to the forum members and ask for their e-mail addresses

Action
Point EB

The meeting closed at 8.00pm

Next meeting: Thursday 8th March 2007 at 6.30pm