

COMMUNITY VOICE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12th OCTOBER 2009

Time: 1.00pm

Venue: Baptist Church, Scunthorpe

Present: Janine Mee – Chair

Mary Southgate – Vice Chair

Danny Moore – Treasurer

Alison Highlands – Secretary

Tony Sanderson – Warley Road

Jim Newcombe – Healey Road

Alex Killen – Sheltered Housing

Terry Chatwin – Hallcroft

Richard Leach – RUG

Edna Kenyan – Market Hill

Maxine Woodcock – New Westcliffe

N P Woodcock – New Westcliffe

J Parr – Swinburne Road

Derek Clifford – Lilywood

Rosalie Clifford – Lilywood

Anne Harland – Lodgemoor

Mark Harland – Lodgemoor

Steve Dale – Crosby Park

Ken Willey – Swinburne Road

Karen Cowan – Resident Involvement Manager

Wendy Britcliffe – Senior Resident Involvement Officer

Steve Wardrope – Business Improvement Manager

Steve Evans – Head of Housing Services

Apologies: Shazeda Haque, Pat Devine, Steve Hepworth

1. Accuracy of Previous Minutes & Update of Action Plan

It was stated in Any Other Business that the council paid out £15 million pounds, it should have read North Lincolnshire Homes.

The minutes were approved as a true record with the above amendments.

Update of Action Plan

Communal areas – A priority list is to be sent out when completed to all members of Community Voice.

The trial of weekly payments by direct debit has now been activated and should be working now.

Community Voice Constitution – This item is on the agenda for this meeting.

The finance group have now had their meeting.

Everything else on the Action Plan will be brought forward to the next meeting.

2. Adoption of CV Constitution

The Chair presented the CV Constitution that has now been approved by Board. The meeting was asked to formally adopt the document which was then proposed by Terry and seconded by Tony.

Decision Items

3. Resident Involvement Activity – Karen Cowan

Karen provided an update on the report which had been handed out to all members of Community Voice. There are vacancies on some of the sub and working groups and details are as follows:

Tenant Scrutiny Interview Panel – 4 Vacancies

The meeting elected Terry Chatwin, Mark Harland, Anne Harland and Richard Leach to the Panel. The meeting will be held on the 21st of October at Meridian House at 2.00pm.

Resident Involvement Strategy Monitoring Group – 4 Vacancies

The decision was made that Wendy would write to all members of Community Voice to recruit to these vacancies.

Resident Involvement Working Group – 1 Vacancy

It was decided that this vacancy should be filled by the Chair of Community Voice.

Repairs Stakeholder Panel – 3 Vacancies

The meeting elected Terry Chatwin, Anne Harland and Mary Southgate to the Panel.

Caretaking Workshop

A letter will be sent out to all members of Community Voice and Tenant Inspectors with the date, time and venue of this workshop.

Discussion Items

4. Choice Based Lettings Report – Steve Evans

Steve gave an update from the report which had been handed out to all members of Community Voice then asked for any questions.

It was asked if NLH were merging with any other housing associations. The reply was NLH are not merging with any one else.

A date is to be arranged for a visit to another housing association to see if there is any difference in their working practices. Alison Highlands, Mary Southgate, Alex Killen and Ken Willey will attend this visit.

Further updates on Choice Based Lettings will be provided at future meetings.

5. Customer Access Shop Update – Steve Evans

Steve stated that a new building has been identified in Cole Street for this purpose and hopefully by the end of November it would be up and running. Once open the remaining housing offices will close and weekly surgeries and home visits are being arranged for residents whose local housing offices are already closed. Steve then asked for any questions.

Would there be any room for Community Voice in this building as previously promised? The reply was that unfortunately there was not but other options are being looked into.

What do the residents living in the rural areas do when their housing offices close? The reply was that there would be weekly surgeries in the villages which would be on a specific day each week.

Are the allocations team moving into the new office? Steve replied that yes they would and the telephone number would not change.

When the new office opens will NLH save any money by using this building? The reply was at the moment we don't know but hopefully we would.

Would any staff lose their jobs when the new office is open? Steve replied that staff who are not required in the new office will be redeployed into other positions and therefore no one would lose their job.

6. Equality & Diversity Representation Report – Karen Cowan

Karen provided information from the report which had been handed out to members of Community Voice then asked for any questions.

It was asked are there any areas in NLH with no representation. Karen replied that unfortunately there are but that these areas will be targeted.

A request was made that for future meetings could the time of Community Voice meetings be changed for those members who work during the day and

find it hard to attend day time meetings. With the agreement of the meeting, Karen stated that in the spring we will launch early evening meetings for members who work; this could be done every 3 months.

7. Business Improvement Update – Steve Wardrope

Inspection Update

Steve briefly explained the self assessment document which was handed out to all members of Community Voice then asked for any questions.

A member stated that this was a very interesting document.

It was asked who would carry out the inspection. Steve replied that the inspection is carried out by inspectors from the Audit Commission.

Business Plan

Steve stated that the business plan will go to the next Board meeting which is on the 11th of November. The plan will be refreshed every year.

A forward plan is being developed and will go to the Board. The plan will include views from community voice members and would be reviewed on a yearly basis. Also included would be an assessment on how the service should change.

Performance Information/Scorecard

The scorecard was handed out to all members of Community Voice then Steve asked for any questions.

What are NLH doing about improving the figures of the empty properties and arrears? Steve replied that obviously there was more work to be done but nationally we are one of the best associations in this area of work.

Steve stated that a spot-light report on voids and arrears could be provided at the next meeting.

It was asked how the rent was paid by the benefit department, was it paid to the residents or straight to NLH. Steve replied that it was mostly paid straight to NLH by the benefits department.

It was agreed that spot-light reports on voids, repairs and arrears would be brought to the next Community Voice meeting.

Information Items

8. RI Impact Assessment Workshop Feedback Report – Karen Cowan

Karen gave a brief update from the report which had been handed out to all members of Community Voice then asked for any questions.

It was asked if the minutes of the Sheltered Housing Panel meetings could be given to the residents of Pryme Road as no information is being passed on to them. The reply was that this could be done.

A dedicated page in the Key News for tenants living in Sheltered Schemes was to be looked into.

9. RI Statement Notification – Karen Cowan

Karen stated that over the next 2 months she would be putting this item on the agenda of Community Voice for discussion.

10. Any Other Business

The Chair explained that due to the amount of agenda items for community voice meetings there is not much time left for raising other issues. It was suggested that members hold informal networking meetings to discuss any matters they may have. Karen said that it would be a good idea to arrange a meeting with all members of Community Voice to discuss future timescales, dates and venues for these networking meetings. It was agreed that the Chair would arrange a meeting and discuss with Wendy suitable dates.

The next Board meeting will be at Meridian House on the 11th of November at 5,30pm. Tony Sanderson, Mary Southgate, Janine Mee, Danny Moore and Terry Chatwin will be the first 5 members of Community Voice to attend as observers, for future meetings these members will change to give all members a chance to observe a Board meeting.

It was stated that residents in South Killingholme are having problems getting their repairs done. Steve asked that details are provided to him at the end of the meeting.

It was asked why some blossom trees had been cut back by the caretakers when this was not necessary. It was agreed that without actual details being provided, that NLH wouldn't be able to investigate this allegation.

The issue regarding security chains not being fitted to new doors in the sheltered housing dwellings was raised. Karen stated that following further investigations, security chains can be fitted on the doors.

A request was made by Cherrill Page, a new Board member, to attend as an observer at the next Community Voice meeting. This was agreed.

Richard informed members that the association (RUG) had secured funding of £130k from Playbuild to provide new equipment for the local park.

The closing date for the National Tenants Voice Panel is the 16th of October, anybody wishing to apply must do so by then.

A member asked if a tenant could pay for a NLH gas or electric engineer to fit a cooker in their property. This would mean that residents could feel safe in getting their new appliances fitted instead of having to find their own Corgi registered one. This would be looked into.

Date of Next Meetings

Date: Monday 9th November

Time: 1.00pm

Venue: Baptist Church, Scunthorpe

Date: Monday 7th December

Time: 1.00pm

Venue: Baptist Church, Scunthorpe