

COMMUNITY VOICE - MINUTES OF MEETING

Date : 7th June, 2010

Time: 1pm

Venue: Baptist Church

Present: Janine Mee – Warley Road (Chair)

Mary Southgate – Sheltered Housing (Vice Chair)

Danny Moore – Market Hill (Treasurer)

Alison Highlands – Geographical Rep (Secretary)

Ken Willey – Swinburne Road

Brian Duff – Swinburne Road

Edna Kenyon – Market Hill

Denise Trowsdale – Victoria House Barton

Maureen Weller – South Killingholme

Ron Weller – South Killingholme

Mark Harland – Lodgemoor

Ann Harland – Lodgemoor

Alex Killen – Sheltered Housing

Jo Parr – New Westcliff

Barry Pridmore – Beechway

P Stephenson – Beechway

Steve Dale – Crosby Park

Cherrill Page – Geographical Rep, Belton

Joan Long – Healey Road

Jim Newcombe – Healey Road

Terry Chatwin – Hallcroft

Andy Orrey – Chief Executive

Steve Hepworth – Director of Operations

Karen Cowan – Resident Involvement & Community Development Manager

Wendy Britcliffe – Senior Resident Involvement Officer

Toni Mosley – Policy & Performance Manager

P J Crawford – Housing Officer, Ashby

Sam Charlesworth – Housing Officer, Ashby

1. Welcome, Apologies & Housekeeping

Janine welcomed everyone to the meeting and also welcomed Denise as a new member & the two housing officers as observers.

Janine gave everyone's congratulations to Andy on becoming the new Chief Executive of North Lincolnshire Homes.

Apologies received from: Betty Parsons, Richard Leach, Shazeda Haque & Peter Woodcock.

2. Accuracy of Previous minutes & Update of Action Plan

The minutes were approved as a true record.

Update of Action Plan

The previous minutes have been amended.

A working group meeting has been arranged for the 14th of June to discuss the format for the Annual Report.

It was decided that a leaseholder rep would be co-opted onto Community Voice until a meeting of the Leaseholders Panel had been arranged where they could elect their own representative.

The other items on the Action Plan have been completed.

3. Reminder of Repairs Log – Janine Mee

It was noted that on the agenda it still stated Repairs Log although it is now known as the General Enquiries Log.

Janine reminded all Community Voice members that the General Enquiries Log book was available for everyone at all meetings. This should be completed during the break for individual enquiry issues.

Decision Item

4. Audit Commission Action Plan – Steve Hepworth

Steve provided information on the Audit Commission Action Plan and asked for any questions on this.

Due to the length of time it would take to go through the information it was suggested that a separate meeting be arranged to discuss this further. Karen stated that a separate meeting would be arranged for all members of Community Voice.

It was asked if there was a problem with one item on page 3 of the Action Plan as this was a different colour from all the rest. Steve stated that there was no problem but that individuals that updated the information used the colours available to them.

It was suggested that the meeting should be representative of all tenants of NLH. Steve replied that it would be as the meeting would be with the members of Community Voice.

Discussion Items

5. Service Charge Position Statement – Steve Hepworth

Steve provided an information pack on the Position Statement and asked for any questions

It was asked if the services which are included in the un-pooled list were now being charged for. Steve replied that a decision had not yet been made about the un-pooled services but that the Audit Commission had stated that these services should be charged for, it was recommended that only tenants who used these services be charged.

It tenants who have the alarm pull cords in their properties no longer want these would they still be charged? The reply was that from July only those who use them would be charged.

Who would be responsible for deciding on what the increase of charges will be? Steve stated that the increases were set by the costs of these charges.

It was asked if someone was going to look into the administration costs for making the changes to the charges. Steve stated that if we had to go back and change tenancy agreements to cover all

charges it would not be viable so therefore only new tenants would be charged.

Are we any further forward regarding setting up individual meters for power usage. Steve stated that NLH were still looking into this.

It was stated that the system is still unbalanced as tenants are still paying for services that they do not receive. The reply was that although the rents can not be reduced the money taken from these tenants would go into other NLH departments i.e. repairs.

Further consultation will be carried out and a report provided to Community Voice on the consultation exercise.

It was stated that the Audit Commission had noticed some weakness in the charges made to tenants.

Andy stated that NLH would not make any charges which would be unfair.

It was stated that leaseholders were only charged for communal areas.

6. Services for Older People – Steve Hepworth

Steve stated that North Lincolnshire Council have sent out the contract specification and indicated that tender bids are to be submitted by the 18th of June. This will be a three year contract and will include different levels of support.

Steve stated that in July the service for the alarm systems would transfer back to North Lincolnshire Council and all tenants with alarm systems would be given a choice whether they wanted this service.

It was stated that tenants are not being informed when support officers are not visiting their properties. Steve stated that hopefully by July there would be an improvement to the service.

A request was made that the name be changed back to wardens service. Steve replied staff did prefer the name of Support Officer.

7. Resident Involvement Activity Report – Karen Cowan

Karen provided information on the activities carried out during the month and asked for any questions.

Could a member of the Scrutiny Panel also be a Tenant Inspector?
Karen confirmed that they could.

Jo stated that as a new Tenant Inspector she found the first meeting was good and very informative. Jo also said that she was happy with the help received from Mark.

Karen stated that she would set up a meeting to go through the various strategies/documents that are due for reviewing. Invites for the meetings will be sent out to community voice members.

Karen provided an example of a new logo to be included in paperwork which shows the joint commitment of NLH & volunteers. A vote was carried out for this to be adopted. The vote was unanimous so therefore the new logo will be used in future.

8. Performance Information Scorecard – Toni Mosley

Toni provided information on the balance scorecard and explained the performance and trends included. Toni asked for feedback on the new layout of the scorecard.

It was asked if the properties which are hard to let were included in this scorecard. Toni replied that all properties were included.

Could the information on these properties be detailed separately?
Toni replied that the information was included in spotlight reports separately but not on the scorecard.

Karen asked everyone if they liked the new scorecard and was it user friendly. Everyone was in agreement that the information was easier to follow in this format.

Information Items

9. TSA Self Assessment – Toni Mosley

Toni gave an update on the TSA assessment and feedback from the consultation which was included in the document provided. Toni asked for questions from members.

It was asked if the monitoring of this document would be done by the Scrutiny Panel. The reply was that all resident involvement structures would be involved in this.

Would the Scrutiny Panel only cover Resident Involvement. Karen replied that the Panel would cover all services of NLH.

10. TPAS Accreditation – Karen Cowan

Karen reported that we have now received the 3 star accreditation from TPAS. A report was provided and Karen explained the areas that had been highlighted as best practise within the organisation.

TPAS reported that Community Voice was a very good umbrella group.

Karen thanked everyone for their help in achieving this standard, then asked for any questions.

How long did the accreditation last for? This will be for 3 years and then we can re-apply after that time and hopefully pass again.

A suggestion was made that induction paperwork be available for new members. Karen replied that in future this would be done.

It was stated that when talking with members of NLH workforce the staff were a lot happier in their work.

11. Forward Notification of AGMs – Karen Cowan

Karen provided advance notice of the Annual General Meetings:

15th July – Review of Community Voice constitution & code of conduct.

6th September – Community Voice AGM.

22nd September – North Lincolnshire Homes AGM.

Cherrill stated that the process to become a Board member was easy to follow and as a new member she was very happy.

Karen reminded members that anyone who was interested in applying to become a Board member would need to be registered as an Ordinary member of NLH.

Karen confirmed that one tenant board member will be standing down at the AGM and interviews for the vacancy are due to take place in July. The selection panel will include: Terry, Ken, Mary, Janine & Brian.

It was asked who are the Ordinary members. Karen replied that any tenant could become an Ordinary member by signing up for it.

It was asked if the rules of membership onto the Board had been changed to accommodate a leaseholder. The reply was that the rules had not been changed as a leaseholder is still a tenant of NLH.

Discussions took place on the number of membership and if this could be changed. Karen stated that this would normally be done at the AGM but at the moment it is equally represented.

12. NLH Update (Verbal) – Andy Orrey

Andy thanked everyone for their congratulations in receiving the position of Chief Executive.

There is now a vacancy for a new Director of Finance and interviews will be starting soon.

Andy stated that hopefully by the end of the year there will be a new Head of Maintenance. Andy asked for any questions.

It was asked if housing officers were now given more authority to make decisions and get things done. The reply was that they have.

It was suggested that managers were given more power to make decisions.

Andy stated that at the moment NLH only lease the Meridian House building and that the owners want to sell. NLH will look into whether they wish to buy the building.

A plan has now been developed regarding the condition of the garages and work that is required to them or if they need to be demolished. It was stated that tenants should be kept involved in the negotiations so they know what is happening.

Andy stated that NLH were still looking into leasing the upstairs of the Cole Street customer office for meetings. Some work will be required to make it suitable, e.g. a lift for disabled.

It was asked if due to the coalition government would NLH now lose the gap funding. Andy replied that after talks with the bank we are more relaxed in that we won't lose any funding.

13. Tenant Reward Scheme & Gas Servicing Draws – Wendy Britcliffe.

The draws were made by the members of Community Voice. Wendy explained that the names drawn out for the tenant reward scheme would require housing management checks before monies are released.

14. Any Other Business

Edna thanked everyone for the flowers and fruit basket she received from Community Voice.

Janine informed members that a car-boot is being held on the 26th June starting at 8am on Healey Road, everyone is welcome.

Wendy informed members that the next meeting for the Handy Van review group will be held on the 14th June at 1.30pm.

Booking of taxis for future meetings of Community Voice is to be confirmed at the next resources meeting.

Edna reminded everyone that basic computer lessons are being held every Friday at 2pm in Crosby House flats.

It was stated that rumours have to be stopped as tenants in Pryme Road are being told their bungalows are being demolished. Karen stated that once a decision about the bungalows has been made a meeting with the tenants will take place which should stop the rumours.

Issues were raised regarding the Improvement Works in South Killingholme. It was agreed that a public meeting would be arranged to discuss this further. The contractors, TLO and reps from NLH will be invited to attend.

15. Details of Next Meeting

Date: 5th July, 2010
Time: 1pm
Venue: Baptist Church