

COMMUNITY VOICE

MINUTES OF MEETING

Date: 9th May, 2011

Time: 1pm

Venue: Baptist Church, Scunthorpe

Present: Janine Mee – Warley Road (Chair)
Danny Moore – Market hill (Treasurer)
Alison Highlands – Geographical Rep (Secretary)
Ken Willey – Swinburn Road
Jim Newcombe – Healey Road
Joan Long – Healey Road
Terry Chatwin – Sheltered Housing Rep
Jo West – Sheltered Housing Rep
Steve Taylor – Swinburn Road
Ron Weller – South Killingholme
Mo Weller – South Killingholme
Rukhsana Gul – BME Rep, Crosby
Maria Havercroft – BME Rep, Ulceby
Albert Wilson – West Halton
Richard Leach – Springbank Residents Group
Debbie Lee – Bellingham Road
Pat Devine – Leaseholder Rep
Les Walker – Lodgemoor
Don Robertson – Hillside
Pat Cowdell – Hillside
Steve Dale – Crosby Park
Steve Hepworth – NLH, Director of Operations
Ian Mortimer – NLH, Resident Involvement Manager
Wendy Britcliffe – NLH, Senior Resident Involvement Officer
Karen Cowan – NLH, Head of Supported Housing
Toni Mosley – NLH, Head of Business Improvement
Linder Melbourne – NLH, Contracts and Cyclical Manager
Holly Wilson – NLH, Value for Money & Procurement Manager

1. Welcome, Apologies & Housekeeping

Janine welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained housekeeping items.

Apologies were received from: Mary Southgate, Gwen Burdett, Barbara Cross, Edna Kenyon, Andy Orrey, Neil Keay and Chris Baker.

2. Accuracy of Previous Minutes & Update of Action Plan

It was noticed that although Don, Pat and Rukhsana had phoned in their apologies for the last meeting they were not included in the minutes.

The minutes were approved by Jim and seconded by Ken as a true record with the above amendment.

Update of Action Plan

Wendy gave an update of the following items from the action plan:

Repairs value for money assessment is an agenda item for the meeting.

Letters have been sent out to all resident associations which provides contact details for the Community Payback Scheme.

Letters were sent out to Community Voice members inviting reps to form a working group and names have been received for this. A meeting will be arranged.

The workshop on monitoring transfer promises has been arranged for Friday the 13th of May and there is only a few names down for attending, Wendy asked that reps notify resident involvement of names interested.

Information on the Land Share scheme will be provided at the next meeting.

The first training session on Participatory Budgeting is due to be held on Tuesday 12 May and Ken has details of those people attending. Wendy reminded members that all future training sessions included on the activity sheet for community voice members are to be booked through Ken Willey.

3. Reminder of Enquiry Log – Janine Mee

Janine reminded everyone of the enquiry log.

Discussion Items

4. Resident Involvement Report – Wendy Britcliffe

Wendy provided an update on the resident involvement activities that have taken place since the last Community Voice meeting.

The Tenant Inspectors held a meeting and discussed the inspections carried out during February and March the next meeting is due to be held at the end of May.

The residents scrutiny panel are near to completing the second review which is on call handling. Three members of the panel have resigned which now leaves vacancies which are to be promoted.

The Furniture Steering Group discussed the success of the scheme and they are wanting more donations. They are looking to develop this into a social enterprise in the future.

The Community Voice newsletter is now being produced by the group and have received support from resident involvement. Individuals in the group now have their own roles and will be responsible for developing the next edition in Summer.

Wendy reminded everyone that the closing date for names to be registered for the Tenant Conference is Friday the 13th of May. The Conference is being held on the 19th of May at the New Life Church, Brumby Wood Lane.

Members were asked to promote the garden competition and encourage other tenants to enter. The closing date for this is 25 June 2011. The sub group from community voice will be involved in shortlisting and judging the competition.

5. Grounds Maintenance Service – Linder Melbourne

Linder provided information from the report on Grounds Maintenance and explained details of the contract awarded to Vale Services. Linder asked for any questions.

It was asked why workmen did not know the exact areas of where they were working. Linder replied that there have been problems identifying land owned by NLH but these are being sorted out so that the workmen can be given clear instructions on where to work.

An issue was raised on the standards of grass cutting in South Killingholme that tenants were unhappy with. Linder replied that NLH were aware of these problems and are looking into it at the moment to rectify them. Linder and staff have visited various areas to look at problems reported.

Terry confirmed that once comments are passed onto NLH they are dealing with the problems. Linder replied that it is also helpful for residents to complete the monitoring forms and send them in so they can monitor the issues.

Linder stated that there is training being given at the moment into the surveys needed on the trees situated on NLH land. Once training has been given if there are any questions from residents regarding trees these can be dealt with in more detail.

It was reported that Tideswell Court were experiencing problems with Vale in not having the right equipment to do all the work. The reply was that Vale have now bought new equipment so these problems should improve.

Janine reminded everyone that although Vale won the grounds maintenance contract they have only been working since November so obviously there will be some teething problems, but hopefully once the contract has been running for a while these will all improve.

A member asked who was responsible for the maintenance of trees in tenants gardens. The reply was that the trees in tenants gardens are their responsibility the new policy states that where the property is empty NLH will carry out any work required. NLH will only carry out any work on the trees in occupied properties if the trees are dangerous or causing damage.

Linder stated that hopefully in the next few weeks tenants will begin to see an improvement as NLH and Vale want to provide a good service.

6. Pre-Tenancy Group – Ian Mortimer

Ian gave an update from the report and explained that a group has been formed to look at the procedures in relation to the sign-up process. A small focus group is to be developed to consult on the process and volunteers were asked from community voice to join the group.

Ian asked for any questions from the report.

It was stated that tenants should be vetted more before moving in so that existing residents are considered. Ian replied that tenants are vetted but unfortunately where they are new to NLH it is hard to find a trace of tenancy and their background.

The working group for this will include 3 members from the Menu of Options and 3 members from Community Voice.

The 3 members who came forward from Community Voice are: Steve Taylor, Terry Chatwin and Ken Willey.

Action Plan – To send out invites to the Menu of Options members for 3 reps.

Information Items

7. Decoration Grant Scheme – Holly Wilson

Holly provided a report and informed members that the current scheme is due to expire in November 2011. The scheme needs to be reviewed with a cross section of tenants involved in a focus group. The group will be made up of 3 members from the Menu of Options and 3 members from Community Voice.

The volunteers from Community Voice are: Ron Weller, Maria Havercroft and Alison Highlands.

Action Plan – To send out invites to the Menu of Options members for 3 reps to join the group.

8. Support Officer Service – Karen Cowan

Karen advised the meeting of the progress regarding the Support Officer service and the successful bid for the Supporting People contract. Karen asked for questions from members:

It was asked if the title of Support Officer had replaced the Wardens. Karen replied that yes it was although the details in the job description had not changed.

Karen stated that the service have vacancies as 6 support officers had decided to take early retirement.

Pat wanted to pass on the praise for this scheme and work of the Support Officers.

It was asked if tenants were given prior notice of the costs incurred. Karen replied that they were given prior notice.

The issues regarding the removal of the pull-cords was raised and what was happening now. Karen replied that the pull-cords did not belong to NLH so it was up to the council to remove them and a new program me for this work would be put in place.

The level ~~off~~ support required to individuals will vary and Karen stated that even though a tenant may need this service they do not have to use it as it is entirely voluntary.

9. Tenancy Officer Service – Karen Cowan

Karen provided a report and explained that previously NLH employed a member of staff to offer housing related support to young people. This service has been reviewed as support was required to all categories of vulnerable people and not just young people.

A new member of staff was taken on and the service now includes support for vulnerable tenants to include: young people, old people, individuals with learning difficulties, physical & mental health issues, socially or economically disadvantaged.

Karen asked for any questions.

It was asked if referral forms could be sent out. Karen replied that those members who wanted the forms she could arrange for them to be sent out or email them.

10. Repairs & Maintenance Value for Money Update – Steve Hepworth

Steve provided an update on the responsive repairs service and changes that have been made which included details of the costs and performance. Steve asked for questions from members:

It was reported that following work carried out by contractors ~~that e~~ satisfaction cards were not sent out. Steve replied that hopefully satisfaction from works could be obtained by other means.

A member asked what training and qualifications the multi-skilled workforce have. The reply was that they have been given basic training and were qualified up to NVQ standard.

The involvement of sub-contractors was discussed and how much control over them did ~~NLHwe~~ have. Steve replied that he did not know the exact number of sub ~~- contractorss that were -we~~ used but that all the contractors are given routine checks to ensure the work is up to NLH standards.

Steve stated that NLH aim to check 10% of work carried out over and above the satisfaction cards received.

It was stated that some showers being fitted must have a design fault as the problems tenants are experiencing all seem to be the same. Steve replied that he would look into this.

11. Performance Information March 2011 – Toni Mosley

Toni provided a summary of the balance scorecard and discussed the performance and trends highlighted in the report. Toni asked for any questions from each individual objective:

Corporate Objective 1.

It was asked if we are catching up with all the outstanding repairs. Toni replied that we are now improving on this.

Corporate Objective 2.

It was asked if the new policy regarding complaints was in place yet. Toni replied that the policy is still to be presented to the Board which will take place on the 25th of May.

Corporate Objective 3.

There were no questions.

12. Any Other Business

Wendy informed members of the date for the Blackpool Conference which is to be held on the 14th and 15th of June. Two volunteers from community voice were put forward and will be Terry Chatwin and Ken Willey. At the end of the meeting Ken declined attending and it was agreed to approach another member.

The next NLH Board meeting is to be held on the 25th of May and the Community Voice observers will be Ron Weller, Mo Weller and Maria Haevercroft.

The Board AGM is to be held in September and there will be 2 vacancies for tenant members. There will be an interview process for this and names were asked from community voice to form a panel. This will include Terry Chatwin, Ken Willey, Alison Highlands and Janine Mee. The interviews will take place on the 25th of July.

The gas draw was carried out by the Chair and the number 436 was chosen.

A member asked for an update on the rooms above the Customer Contact Centre in Cole St. Steve replied that it was on hold at the moment as the bids for the work are higher than the amount of budget set aside.

There is a debate at the moment regarding the numbers of Board members required, one proposal is that the number is being reduced from 15 to 12. The reply was that this decision would have to be made by the Board members at their AGM.

Wendy reminded everyone of the “delivery of promises” workshop being held at the Fenestra Centre on the Friday 13th May.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on **Thursday, 9th of June 2011, 5pm at the Baptist Church.**

PLEASE NOTE: time details for meeting above.