

COMMUNITY VOICE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7TH DECEMBER 2009

Time: 1:00pm

Venue: Baptist Church, Scunthorpe

Present

Janine Mee – Chair
Mary Southgate – Vice Chair
Danny Moore – Treasurer
Tony Sanderson – Healey Road
Jim Newcombe – Healey Road
Edna Kenyon – Market Hill
Ken Willey – Swinburn Road
Richard Johnson – Hinman & Lindum
Don Robertson – Hillside
Alex Killen – Sheltered Housing
Mark Harland – Lodgemoor
Ann Harland – Lodgemoor
Jo Parr – Swinburn
Richard Leach R.U.G
Audrey Birkenshaw – Elsham
Terry Chatwin – Hallcroft
Steve Dale – Crosby Park
Karen Cowan – Resident Involvement Manager
Wendy Britcliffe – Senior Resident Involvement Officer
Steve Evans – Head of Housing Services
Toni Moseley – Policy & Performance Manager
Lisa Fleming – PR & Communications Manager

1. Welcome & Apologies

Janine welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies: Shazeda Haque, Steve Hepworth, Andy Orrey, Mark Rosten, Steve Wardrope

2. Accuracy of previous Minutes & Update of Action Plan

The minutes were proposed by Terry Chatwin and seconded by Tony Sanderson as a true record.

Update of Action Plan

Business Plan – A meeting has been arranged for the 14th of December at 10am at the Baptist Church, Scunthorpe and Community Voice members were invited to attend.

All other items outstanding on the Action Plan will be discussed at future meetings

A networking meeting took place on the 4th of December but only a few members attended. It was decided that future meetings would be held every 3 months and if necessary extra meetings would be arranged.

3. Reminder of repairs Log

Janine reminded all Community Voice members that a repairs log book was available to everyone at all meetings. This should be used to note down any individual issues.

Discussion items

4. Audit Commission Inspection – Karen Cowan

Karen gave a brief update on how the inspection went as Steve was unavailable to attend the meeting. Karen thanked everyone involved with attending the focus groups and work which had been done.

A draft written report of the inspection will be prepared for January and the final report to be made available by February. This will include the official response given from the Audit Commission.

Karen asked for any questions:

When would NLH get the official rating? This would be included in the official response provided in full by February.

Would Community Voice be given a copy of the draft report? Karen replied that the draft report was confidential at this stage but that once the official report is produced then this will be made available to all.

5. 3 Items – Toni Mosley

Performance Information/Scorecard

Toni provided information on the scorecard and stated that all properties owned by NLH now have a valid gas certificate. Toni then asked for any questions:

A request was made for the page numbers to be included in the Scorecard as members were having difficulty following the information. These will be included in the future.

Action – Toni to ensure page numbers are included on the Scorecard report.

It was asked what the extra care scheme is. Toni replied that it was facilities for tenants who need more care than sheltered housing can provide. It was then asked why NLH does not have these schemes. This was due to the cost involved and provisions needed.

If tenants who require a gas certificate are in hospital how can they make arrangements for this to be done? The reply was that if necessary enforcement would need to be used but this is very rare as usually entry by NLH is available with the aid of a key holder.

How much does staff absence affect the repairs ratings? The reply was that all categories are calculated including staff being off.

It was asked why the figure for gaining access to properties has fallen. The figures actually represent the properties where access had been denied for whatever reason.

Single Equalities Scheme

Toni gave a brief update on this scheme. Work will start on developing a strategy document to include an action plan that would address weaknesses. A series of workshops would be held to produce a draft document that would be submitted to the board by April. Toni asked for any questions:

Could individuals with equality issues be involved with the workshops? Toni replied that it would be a good idea for a mixture of representation to be included in the group.

It was asked if the workshops would be looking at other organisations to get information. The reply was that we would tap into other organisations where applicable.

Service Standards

Toni provided information on the Service Standards and explained these had been the first set of standards for NLH and was introduced in December 2008.

The Audit Commission provided feedback regarding the improvements identified for the standards.

The standards are due to be reviewed and invites will be sent to Community Voice members to attend a separate meeting to discuss the service standards.

Toni stated that there are new policies in place so it should become easier to monitor the standards. Tenants should be able to look at the service standards and report back on areas where the standards are not being met.

It was stated that the service standards on communication should be looked at as there are problems with these.

6. Grounds Maintenance – Steve Evans

Steve gave an update on grounds maintenance and explained that meetings were taking place with staff and the sub group of community voice to look into the service provided. From this NLH would put proposals together and look at ways for monitoring the service. Steve asked for any questions:

It was asked when the new contracts for ground maintenance were due. Steve explained that these are due for renewal in April.

The ownership of land was discussed and members felt that tenants need to be provided with more information on who actually owns land so this can be explained at their individual association meetings.

A suggestion was made about approaching other organisations to provide a new contract. Steve explained that we have received feedback from other organisations who have expressed an interest in the grounds maintenance contract.

A member asked if the contract was renewed every year. Steve stated that the contract was renewed every 5 years.

Information items

7. Digi-TV – Lisa Fleming

Lisa gave a brief presentation on the new Digit station set up by NLH in partnership with the following agencies: Humberside Police, Humberside Fire Service and NHS direct.

NLTV is a new digital television channel which will provide residents with instant access to public services from within their own home. The service is available through digital television and is active 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Leaflets which provided details on the service were handed out. This scheme will be piloted until October. Lisa asked for questions:

Could the scheme be used by Resident Associations to promote any events they were having. Lisa stated that these could be included.

Is there a charge for tenants using the service? Lisa explained that the 4 partner agencies of the scheme were charged for this and it was a one off payment divided between them.

It was asked if another organisation wanted to join the scheme would they be able to. Lisa stated that other organisations could join and this would reduce the costs to all partners.

Would there be a page for tenants to ask questions about the scheme. Lisa replied that at the moment this is not available but once training had been given then this could be looked into.

How would tenants who do not subscribe to satellite TV or have a computer gain access to this service. The service is available through free view.

It was asked if this scheme could be used through your mobile phone and if so would there be a charge. Lisa replied that people who have a mobile with internet connection could receive it but there would be a charge.

8. 5 Star reward Scheme – Wendy Britcliffe

Wendy provided an update on the tenant reward scheme and explained that the working group had been involved in developing the scheme. All the work for this had been completed and the scheme will be promoted in the Key News etc. This will be launched in April and the first draw will take place at the June meeting of Community Voice. Wendy then asked for any questions:

It was asked when the application forms would be available for residents. Wendy explained that forms would be included in the next edition of the Key News which is due out this week.

9. 4 Items – Karen Cowan

Resident Involvement Activity Report

Karen provided an update on the activity during the month of November.

Karen stated that the members of Community Voice who showed an interest in the scrutiny panel will meet in January to discuss the process in more detail.

Karen stated that the cheques for grants were now ready for all Resident Associations who are eligible and these will be sent out to the individual associations. Karen asked for any questions.

A request was made for computer skills training for members of Community Voice who need it. Karen replied that training could be done in-house but it would only be basic and with 4 members at a time. It was suggested that Community Voice could look into paying for further training through Adult Education or other agencies that would provide training.

It was stated that it would be an advantage if there was a room for Tenant Inspectors, Community Voice members or Resident Associations to access computers for their own benefit.

Edna stated that Market Hill have a space for a room to be set up to train Community Voice members with computer skills. It was suggested that Edna would contact Cherrill and Betty to gain computer training. A vote was asked for and the decision was unanimous that Edna could go ahead with this arrangement.

Action – Edna to approach Cherrill to ask if she would be prepared to provide computer training to volunteers.

A suggestion was made about a representative from the TSA attending a future meeting to discuss how they work. Karen stated that it would be better to hold a separate workshop for this which would allow more time for a presentation and questions to be raised.

Action – Karen to contact the TSA with a view to them addressing NLH volunteers at a meeting.

It was suggested that Community Voice members could visit other organisations to see how they work. Karen stated that this could be arranged as there are sufficient funds in Community Voice budget for this.

Tenant Conference

Karen stated that the first Tenant Conference will take place on the 27th of January. At the conference there will be awards given out for volunteer of the year and group of the year. Nomination forms are available from Resident Involvement for individuals to complete. Karen gave a brief update on what the conference would involve.

CV – The Way Forward

Karen put forward the suggestion for a separate meeting to be held to undertake a SWOT analysis of the CV structure to date (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). This would allow members to agree the direction that they want CV to go in and could be used to agree an action plan to ensure that the targets are agreed. The meeting agreed with the suggestion.

Action – Karen to arrange a CV SWOT analysis meeting.

Cooker Safety Initiative

Karen stated that this had been looked into but was not feasible to be carried out by NLH. However, NLH has negotiated a discount for our tenants with the Gas Company who can, upon request from the tenant, connect their cooker at an agreed cost to the tenant.

10. Any other Business

Janine asked if NLH had a list of contact details for all Resident Associations so that Members of Community Voice could attend their meetings as observers. Karen stated that Resident Involvement do have a list and asked members interested to contact her.

Names were put forward for attending the next board meeting as observers which included: Ann Harland, Mary Southgate and Terry Chatwin.

Alison asked if a member of Community Voice would be interested in becoming a stand-in Secretary for when she was unavailable to attend meetings. Richard Leach agreed to be the stand-in for Alison.

Janine asked that if anyone had items to be discussed under Any Other Business could they please contact her before the meeting.

A hard copy of CV Officer details will be given out to all members of Community Voice.

Action – Wendy to print out Officer contact list and distribute at next CV meeting.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Date: Monday, 8th February 2010

Time: 1:00pm

Venue: Baptist Church Scunthorpe.