

Minutes

Homes 4 Us

Monday 8th February 2010

2pm – 4pm

Tenant Resource Centre, Hounds Gate



PRESENT:

Jenny Grant (Vice Chair)	J.G,
Alan Darby	A.D,
Christopher England	C.E,
Ruth Haywood	R.H.

Officers:

Gary Rackstraw	G.R	NCH E & D Research Officer,
Vincent Bryce	V.B	NCC E & D Consultant,
Cheryll Rawling	C.R,	NCH Tenants and Residents Officer.

Apologies: Clive Thorpe (Chair), Alison Thorpe, Elaine Graham, Loveleen Labana, Linda Kerry, Sue Stevenson, Sue O'Connor.

1.0 Welcome & Apologies

The Vice-Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for introductions.

2.0 Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of 14th December 2009 were agreed as a true record

3.0 Matters Arising

4. Helpline for Tenants; JG stated that there is a need for a helpline for disabled Tenants. It could

ACTION

be placed in the Tenants resource Centre. It is a way for Tenants needs to be met. The Homes 4 Us Forum need to implement this. GR said that this was a great idea but there are several issues that need to be taken into account. Firstly, there needs to be a guarantee that the phones will be manned by Forum members at the times the Forum advertises. Secondly, it is a great way for people to develop skills but the Forum members involved need a lot of information and training before it is set up, and thirdly, it needs to be passed through the Executive Management Team. VB stated that the helpline could be in use one or two days per week. This needs to be decided on and the proposal put to EMT. GR said that the next step is to arrange a meeting with the Involvement Manager, and the Vice-Chair. JG stated that as a trained trainer she would be willing to train other Forum members. VB stated that there could be a link between the idea of the helpline and customer profiling. RH said it was a good idea that she didn't want to see fail she suggested that the forum could survey tenants to see if they would use a helpline. VB suggested completing an impact assessment and make sure the telephone number is put on all stationery. Timescale for the impact assessment – mid April.

CR to arrange meeting with involvement Manager, and Vice-Chair

CR to complete impact assessment

5. Skills Analysis; CR stated that some members of the forum were uncomfortable with the idea of completing a skills analysis. It was suggested that Forum members should be asked if there are any skills that they want to develop.

4.0 Gary Rackstraw – Customer Profiling.

GR introduced himself as the Equality and Diversity

Research Officer for Nottingham City Homes and explained that he had been invited by the Chair to the last meeting but was given no remit.

- 4.1 GR handed out a copy of make yourself heard, the draft booklet for customer profiling. He told the Forum that it was also going out in next months Tenants News and he is also looking at it going out onto Estates. This is the first step to make sure that NCH have the appropriate information because there is concern regarding the lack of information held on disabled tenants. GR asked the Forum for their views on the booklet.

CE did not like the use of the word mental. GR said that he could put in sub-categories. There could also be an option to put additional information on.

CE responded that he preferred the category of health related long term illness. VB agreed that that category was worded quite carefully and gives a lot of choice. He also suggested GR could change the wording of mental to emotional/mental distress. GR asked that if the forum members have any other issues with the leaflet they pass them to CR who will forward them to him.

GR to change wording

CR to send out copies of leaflet to forum members

- 4.2 JR suggested that it would be a good idea to explain why information such as 'do you have a bank account' is needed. GR said that a bit more information would be helpful. A lot of information is currently out in the housing offices such as financial inclusion, but it can be put into the tenant newsletter again.

- 4.3 CE said that NCH is looking at making savings and a lot of housing offices are closing. CR stated that NCH were currently consulting with tenants over the rent.

- 4.4 GR informed the forum that there was a meeting of the Editorial Panel, 10.30, Thursday in the resource centre. As the theme of the Tenant Newsletter was

equality and diversity it was an opportunity for forum members to look at the stories going out. JG offered to attend.

5.00 Nottingham City Council (NCC).

- 5.1 VB explained to the group that NCC and the BME forum were holding monthly meetings to look at wider issues. Homes 4 Us have issues with adaptations which is an NCC issue. VB agreed to arrange a meeting between Carole Donnelly, Haseeb Ahmad and the forum Vice-Chair to look into the ratio of issues that are NCH to issues that are NCC and how we can work together and have meetings. The meetings can be bi-monthly as with the BME forum or there could be two or three meetings a year whereby the forum pick the theme. Hopefully the dates can be worked out at the Managers meeting. VB asked the forum members when they would want a meeting on adaptations. The forum members decided that May would be the best month. They would like to invite Steve Williams.
- 5.2 VB stated that NCC has a Community Equality Forum. The next meeting will be on Friday 12th February 11am – 1pm at the voluntary action centre. Is it possible for one or two people to attend this meeting and vice-versa from the Equality Forum? JG stated that she may not be able to attend the meeting at such short notice but could the need to allow taxis using bus lane please be bought up. At present only green taxis can use the bus lanes but a lot of disabled people use other taxi companies and can be in a lot of discomfort sitting in traffic. CE and RH said that they could not attend but CE stated that he would be interested in future meetings. CR agreed to attend the meeting on behalf of the forum if other members couldn't attend.

6.00 Moving Forward 2010

Copies of the Homes 4 Us action plan were sent out to forum members prior to the meeting.

6.1 Increase membership – More involvement in City Wide Events. CR stated that Sports Relief are holding a sponsored 1 mile walk/run at the Trent Embankment on 21st March. This would be a great opportunity for the forum to promote themselves citywide. The forum members agreed that this was a good idea. They would like high visibility vests with the Homes 4 Us logo to wear on the day. CR agreed to arrange this with procurement.

CR to procure Hi Vis Vests

6.2 Increase awareness of Homes 4 Us company wide. CR suggested that the forum could make a presentation that would be taken to area panels, toolbox talks and Wednesday morning training sessions at the housing offices by forum members. The forum agreed that this would be a good way to promote the forum to NCH staff who can then in turn promote the panel city wide. RH volunteered to help make the presentation.

RH to make presentation

6.3 It was suggested by members of the NCH Board that Homes 4 Us join RADAR, the disability network. CR handed out copies of various RADAR publications. The forum agreed to join. CR to arrange.

CR to arrange for H4U to join RADAR

6.4 VB had been invited to the meeting to find ways that the forum could work in partnership with NCC.

7.0 Grants

This was deferred until the next meeting.

8.0 Any Other Business

- 8.1 JG suggested that housing patch managers could carry Homes 4 Us business cards that they could hand out.
- 8.2 CR stated that the forum must start planning the Homes 4 Us conference. It was decided that the best time to hold the conference would be during the getting involved month in September. It was agreed to have the conference as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Date and Time of the next Meeting
Monday 8th March 2010
5.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.
Tenant and Leaseholder Resource Centre