

Minutes

Minutes of Tenancy and Estate Management Forum Meeting held on Tuesday 17th March 2009, 5.30pm

PRESENT:

Ennis Peck (Chair) - EP	Tenant	Phil England (Vice Chair) - PE	Tenant
Kevin Butt - KBu	Tenant	Kim De Vergori - KDV	NCH
Lilian Bird - LB	Tenant	Ben Chilvers – BC	NCH
Jean England - JE	Tenant	Maria Hemphill - MH	Tenant
Andrew Filer (mins) - AF	NCH	Richard Holland - RH	NCH
Margaret Pugsley - MP	Tenant	Tony Stubbings - TS	Tenant
Keith Bradbury - KBr	Tenant	Elisabeth Tiso - ET	Tenant
Clive Thorpe – CT	Tenant	Alison Thorpe – AT	Tenant
Sue Stevenson – SS	Tenant	Robert Morrell – RM	Tenant
John Riley – JR	Tenant	Linford Stevens – LS	Tenant
Jackie Brown – JB	Tenant		

ACTION

1.0 Apologies

Sheila Thwaites, Frank Griffiths, Roy Lawson, Cynthia James, Nick Hemphill, Sue Taylor (NCH)

2.0 Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting

2.1 The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

2.2 Item 2.2 – Tenant & Leaseholder Resource Centre

A steering group meeting has been arranged for the 16th April to progress the Resource Centre.

**Sue
Taylor /
Sue
O'Connor**

2.3 Item 2.5 – Hounds Gate CCTV Cameras

The decision on the future of the business reception is still pending. A report is going to the Executive Management Team this week. KDV will update at next meeting.

KDV

2.4 Item 3.4 – Voids

Rubbish is still being left by NCH / Contractors in gardens of void properties after work has been completed. KDV to speak with Sue Taylor.

**KDV /
Sue
Taylor**

2.5 Item 3.8 – Voids

No update on this. KDV will take away and action.

KDV

2.6 Item 3.11 – Voids

Figures will be given as a handout as part of agenda item 7.

2.7 Item 5.2 – Family Intervention Tenancies

The Government guidance with regard to Family Intervention Tenancies was late being issued. NCH are currently looking at the necessary policies and procedures. This will be reviewed by the Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Group before coming to the next TEM Forum.

2.8 Item 5.6 – Competency of Housing Office staff

KBu raised an issue with regard to an allegation that incorrect information had been given by the Bulwell Housing Office. KBu to discuss the case with KDV outside of the meeting.

3.0 **Performance report to Area Panels**

3.1 Figures up to 28th February 2009 were distributed. KDV brought to everyone's attention the overview of performance on page 2. As it is a lot of information to take in, it was suggested Forum members take the document away to read and feedback any problems or issues found.

3.2 EP raised the question as to whether all the information is valuable. AF responded by saying that most Area Panels have simplified the document to give them what information is useful for them. EP requested AF to action this and bring back to the next meeting for discussion.

AF

3.3 MH asked how many bid refusals can someone have before action is taken. KDV replied that they can have an unlimited number of refusals, but if they refuse 3 properties they will be invited in for an interview to discuss the situation.

3.4 AT raised an issue seen on page 15 showing a low number of VMS surveys being returned. KDV said that the Business Improvement Team (BIT) are looking in to other options such as doing telephone surveys to increase response. Phil Saunders (BIT Manager) has also been mentioned as a possible future guest speaker, so could answer the Forums questions then. The group agreed that KDV would invite Phil Saunders to the next meeting. It was suggested HPMS could do the surveys, but then would lose the neutrality of the surveys. It was then suggested Tenant Services Inspectors (TSI) could be used to help complete surveys. It was noted they would not be covered by insurance to do home visits, but could do this over the telephone. KDV / Sue Taylor to discuss this with Louise Painter. TS mentioned another reason why surveys were not returned could be due to outstanding repairs being done to property, and so is not a priority to tenants. TSIs are still finding repair issues with void properties. KDV to discuss the lettable standard with Sue Taylor. JB also suggested having a VMS workshop at a future event to show how valuable the information is to NCH in improving standards.

**KDV /
Sue
Taylor**

4.0 Debt management & money advice

- 4.1** BC presented a general overview on what the Income Management team were doing. Recent achievements were discussed, along with information with regard to raising debt awareness, and also future plans. Slides of the presentation are enclosed.
- 4.2** MP raised the point of Rent Cards having the address and phone numbers of The Guildhall on them rather than Hounds Gate. RH responded that as NCC are ultimately the landlord this is correct, but will review and update the Forum at the next meeting. **RH**
- 4.3** MP also raised the point that amending details with the NCH home insurance provider is very long winded. BC will look in to this and feedback at the next meeting. It was also mentioned that Nottingham has a high population of tenants and leaseholders that have learning difficulties or who are illiterate, so what help is there for them. In reply BC stated that the insurance company has advisors that can help in these situations, or the Financial Inclusion Officers are there to help. **BC**
- 4.4** JB raised her concerns that more time should be allowed by NCH allowing tenants to deal with any problems they have. With the joint debt working protocol mentioned in the presentation, a consistent approach needs to be taken when escalating arrears. This is all part of the Rents Manual that the Rent Account Managers follow. If any individual cases, please contact BC directly. **BC**
- 4.5** JB raised the issue about young BME tenants being high risk. BC replied that this has been identified, and Financial Inclusion Workers are prioritising these areas to help educate those tenants, and are also doing pre-tenancy work to ensure new tenants are aware of their responsibilities and have any support in place before taking on a tenancy.
- 4.6** MH asked how many external enforcement agencies NCH use. BC confirmed only Moorcroft is used by NCH.

5.0 Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Group update

- 5.1** MP presented this item as Chair of the ASB Scrutiny Group. A handout was given to members for information.
- 5.2** AT asked whether there was a link from NCHs Violent Persons Alert to the partner contractors which raised any issues. KDV replied that she would check with Ian Rabett (Health & Safety Manager) as he is undertaking work on this. **KDV**
- 5.3** KBU stated that the first step to alleviate ASB or rent problems is always the hardest. Could any more be done to help make this first step earlier. KDV to discuss with the Service Heads to include in future Service Improvement Plans, and advised that performance was now monitored for resolution on 1st, 2nd and 3rd intervention. **KDV**

6.0 Rents Panel update

- 6.1 RH presented on this item on behalf of JR and CT (Chair and Vice Chair of the Rents Panel). A handout was given to members for information.
- 6.2 PE suggested a 'Thank You' was put on the rent statement when payments were made on time. RH to take this to the Rents Panel.
- 6.3 TS stated that in the current climate, a big problem is where people are made redundant, and then get in to arrears. RH responded by saying that the Money Matters magazine has lots of useful information in. Financial Inclusion Officers also get involved in helping these tenants. The Income Management team and Rents Panel are also working more with Housing Benefit to ensure information sharing is improved to help this issue. The Income Management team also have a free texting service, which could be utilised to give people information about benefits.
- 6.4 RM asked whether the Rents Panel is selective. CT replied by stating the Panel is open to anyone who wishes to attend. AF to add RM on to the mailing list.

RH

AF

7.0 Allocations Customer Focus Group update

- 7.1 KDV presented on this item in the absence of the Chair or Sue Taylor. A handout was given to members for information.
- 7.2 AT raised the issue that there is no representation from Homes4Us at these meetings. KDV will take this away and feedback at the next meeting. It was mentioned that this group is not selective. Details of future meetings will be given at the next meeting as they have yet to be finalised.
- 7.3 KBU asked whether the figures given out were for brand new tenants, or did they include transfers. KDV replied that she was unsure, so would speak with Sue Lomax and feedback at the next meeting.

KDV /
AF

KDV

8.0 Any other business

- 8.1 AF gave a plea for articles that could be submitted for NCH News. Any ideas to AF. PE stated that this Forum had never been mentioned in NCH News. AF to take this up with Martin Valentine.
- 8.2 MP raised an issue for the Repairs department that was in Inside Housing with regard to Corgi being replaced. AF to pass information on to Chris Raynor.
Martin Bates, 28 Day Servicing Team Leader, and he says that all Corgi registration cards are currently being transferred over to Gas Safe. They are in communication with Gas Safe and all our engineers should have their new cards by 1st April (just a few cards outstanding at the moment). They are also updating the gas servicing appointment letters with the new arrangements and also updating the vans with the Gas Safe logo.

AF

AF

8.3 AF mentioned that the Involvement team were going to hold another 'Get Involved' week w/c 27th July 2009. Any ideas for events please pass to AF.

AF

9.0 **Date of Next Meeting:**

Time: 5.30pm, Tuesday 19th May 2009

Location: Boardroom, 14 Hounds Gate.