

Minutes

Minutes of Tenancy and Estate Management Forum Meeting held on Tuesday 17th November 2009

PRESENT:

Ennis Peck (Chair) - EP	Tenant	Phil England (Vice Chair) - PE	Tenant
Janet Glass – JG	NCH	Kim De Vergori - KDV	NCH
Lilian Bird - LB	Tenant	Bernadette Lawley - BL	NCH
Jackie Brown - JB	Tenant	Maria Hemphill - MH	Tenant
Andrew Filer - AF (mins)	NCH	Elizabeth Tiso – ET	Tenant
John Riley - JR	Tenant	Sheila Thwaites - ST	Tenant
Jean England - JE	Tenant	Kathy Mason – KM	NCH
Steve Stott – SSto	NCC	Jacinth Hall – JH	Tenant
Carole Donnelly – CD	NCH	Clive Thorpe – CT	Tenant
Alison Thorpe – AT	Tenant	Margaret Pugsley – MP	Board
Sue Stevenson - SSte	Tenant	Ann Gardner – AG	L'holder

ACTION

1.0 Apologies/Introductions

Apologies given for Sheila Thwaites, Nick Hemphill, Roy Lawson.

EP opened the meeting and explained that as he has been out of the involvement loop for several weeks, PE was to Chair the meeting.

The Forum welcomed EP back.

2.0 Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting

2.1 Item 2.3 – Voids

BL advised that the Voids team **are** achieving 100% post inspections.

2.2 Item 2.7 – Get Involved Week

CD advised that the BME Forum had been asked to support NCH over the week, and did participate in several events.

JB added that she had said that there was not enough publicity in general, not that there were no leaflets.

2.3 Item 2.10 – Estate inspections

KDV advised this information is now on the website, with information available through the new Involvement Calendar.

AF added this Calendar will be developed further over time following consultation with tenants and leaseholders.

2.4 Item 2.11 – Mutual Exchange Publicised in Nottingham Evening Post

KDV updated that staff are still currently absent, but the investigations will be concluded shortly.

2.5 Item 2.12 – Tenant Service Inspectors

KDV advised that she had met with Phil Saunders and that the streets visited on estate inspections have been reviewed.

2.6 Item 4.1 – Family Intervention Project

KDV advised she had been in contact with Paul Martin to arrange a further meeting. He currently has a high workload, so a date will be arranged shortly.

EP enquired whether this could be opened up to other Forums and maybe held as a separate event.

KDV and the Forum agreed this action.

KDV / AF

2.7 Item 6.0 – Lettable standard

BL asked for an amendment to the minutes as the word Decant was used rather than **Decent**.

BL also updated that contractors had previously been used extensively, but were now only being used when specialist works were required.

BL followed up another action point that doors are only changed when required. In the address mentioned the doors had been badly fitted.

2.8 Item 7.2 – Allocations Customer focus Group

KDV updated that volunteers had put themselves forward, and these details had been passed to the Group Chair.

2.9 Item 7.3 – Repairs issue

KDV advised this issue had been passed to the Repairs section and has now been dealt with.

The minutes were signed off as a true representation of the meeting.

3.0 **Anti-social behaviour service update and accreditation feedback**

3.1 KM thanked the Forum for the invite as it had been a year since she had last come along. The presentation is enclosed for people that did not attend the meeting,

3.2 KM provided a performance presentation on the first six months of this financial year, and compares this with data from the last two years. The information shows the number of cases rather than the number of incidents, with there potentially being several incidents within each case. The information also does not include referrals made to support agencies, as this data cannot yet be taken from the software.

- 3.3** The information clearly shows a step change in attitude and approach taken by NCH since the change in senior management towards the end of 2007/08.
- 3.4** KM continued that the numbers of actions taken and the ratios between each is very pleasing. Benchmarking with other organisations is also done against core cities and comparable ALMOs. The Home Office has highlighted Nottingham as a National leader in its approach to ASB and that NCH contribute to this. This benchmarking also proves the service is value for money and effective.
- 3.5** Possession proceedings are only used as a last resort. The group noted that the number of tenancies surrendered after proceedings have commenced has increased.
- 3.6** The figures show 9% of cases are unresolved, which can be down to several reasons, such as where the victim does not want to take things further, or where the perpetrator cannot be identified. This figure also shows that further training is required for staff to use the software correctly.
- 3.7** KM went on to confirm that it had just been awarded the accreditation from the Social Landlord's Crime and Nuisance Group / HouseMark, and NCH is the first ALMO in the country to gain this. The Forum gave a round of applause.
- 3.8** EP complimented Km on the work she is doing, but still feels that there are certain people that get away with anti-social behaviour and crime, especially homeowners.
KM responded by saying that it is the frontline team within NCH that have done the hard work to gain this accreditation and improve the service to its current level. KM advised she would speak with EP outside of the meeting with regard to individual matters.
KM added that NCH does have issues raised with homeowners, and if their behaviour affects NCH tenants or the housing service provided, action can be taken, but sufficient evidence is required for court proceedings to take place. A creative approach to investigation may be required to conclude cases positively.
- 3.9** KDV added that a 'Support and Challenge' group has been established who will engage with alleged perpetrators to divert their behaviour in to more meaningful activities.
The Family Intervention Project can also be used to work with problem families.
- 3.10** CT also extended his congratulations to KM and the frontline team, and asked about statistics with regard to hate crime and disabled or elderly tenants.
KM advised she would find the figures and pass to KM to include with the minutes. KM added that racial hatred is the highest figure, and would also be happy to come along to a future Homes 4 Us

meeting to present information.

3.11 AG asked how long this data has been collected for, and advised of a case a few years ago which was dealt with badly by the Patch Manager.

KM responded that data has been collected for several years, and the case highlighted why the service was fully scrutinised and changed so that those instances don't happen again.

4.0 Public Realm Enforcement Team

4.1 SSto introduced himself as the manager of this new team, and thanked the Forum for the invitation. This team is a new initiative within NCC and has been introduced to target issues with regard to the cleanliness of Nottingham. The presentation has been enclosed for those not present at the meeting.

4.2 SSto started by asking how many cases the Forum thought there had been of fly-tipping and graffiti.

The answer is that there were 12837 instances of fly-tipping with only 6 people being prosecuted; and there have been 8981 instances of graffiti, with only 2 people being prosecuted.

This shows that currently NCC is quite good at cleaning up rubbish and getting rid of graffiti, but not very good at stopping these things happening.

4.3 The plans for the team is to make Nottingham to be the cleanest 'big city'. The team became operational on 17th August and has taken over the role previously done by the environmental health section, and focus on areas such as fly-tipping, graffiti, clearance of private land and trade waste. SSto confirmed that private landowners / businesses have the responsibility to remove waste and graffiti from their own property, but his team have the authority to force them to do so. The team are also responsible for ensuring businesses remove waste using the correct procedures.

4.4 The team is currently only working in 4 wards across the city, but will become city wide shortly. If the notices for doing work expire, the team have the legal right to do the work on their behalf and recharge them for it. Cameras are also being used in covert operations to get evidence against people, especially in fly-tipping cases as they can only prosecute people for this rather than issuing a fixed penalty.

4.5 The team are have several campaigns planned and are also using community engagement to make a difference. They will also accept email photos of unclean areas to challenge them to clear up. He concluded that the team is available for anyone to link in with, and relationships are already being built with NCH.

4.6 MP thanked SSto for coming, and commented on the possibility of being prosecuted for paying someone to get rid of rubbish on their behalf. SSto confirmed the issues of the 'white van man', but

ultimately the householder is responsible to ensure waste is disposed of properly. The team have yet to prosecute a householder for this, and SSto confirmed they would be more interested in the 'white van man'.

4.7 The Forum then passed on several issues for SSto to take forward in the areas they live.

SSto

4.8 SSto also advised on a new pilot for collecting bulk waste that is being trialled in the Bells Lane area, where collections are done on a weekly basis. His team are looking at the street cleaning schedules to alter them so they go round after rubbish collection to tidy up after the lorries.

5.0 **'You decide, we provide' and voids service update**

5.1 MP, SSto, and AT presented this item. The information is enclosed for those not present at the meeting.

5.2 MP, SSto and AT were tasked with revamping the decorating vouchers scheme, working with a lettings manager of NCH. This is now in a pilot phase. A catalogue of materials available has been produced, with no heavy / dark colours to try and alleviate issues of re-decorating when properties are void.

5.3 The main differences with this scheme is that a points based system is used, which is decided by a surveyor with an NCH maintenance manager confirming this amount. The new tenant then chooses which materials they would like from the catalogue, and then these are delivered to the room of their choice within 3 working days. To avoid fraud issues, the Patch Managers then use their New Tenancy Visit to ensure the materials have been used, or if not, the tenant can be re-charged for the cost of them.

5.4 BL added her thanks to MP, SSto and AT for the work they have done on this, and that there had been good feedback so far.

5.5 JB thanked them for the presentation, but asked who tasked them with this project?, and who else had been consulted on this?, as although the title is 'You decide, we provide' the new scheme restricts the choice people have in decorating their new home. MP advised that as time was running out an answer would be sent out in due course.

MP

5.6 BL then handed out an information sheet (enclosed for those not present) on the performance of the voids and lettings service, and advised that she would come back to a future meeting if further information was required

6.0 **NCH business plan priorities**

6.1 JG gave a short talk due to running short of time, asking for the priorities the Forum had as realistically savings will need to be made over the next three years. Paperwork is enclosed for those not

present at the meeting, please pass on any comments to JG using the contact details in the report.

7.0 Any other business

7.1 AF advised that an AGM for the Forum was due in January. Papers will be sent out with the minutes giving people plenty of notice.

7.2 AF also mentioned that a forward plan will need to be organised for next year. Could the Forum please pass any thoughts of agenda items / guest speakers to AF or the next meeting.

7.3 CD informed the Forum that the Audit Commission is looking at recruiting Tenant Inspection Advisors (information enclosed). Please contact CD if you would like further information.

7.4 AF also made another plea for good news stories that could be put in to NCH News and other marketing material. Three suggestions were: Improvement in rents; The lettable standard; and the Improvements in voids

AF

8.0 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on:

Tuesday 19th January,

5.30 – 7.30pm,

Boardroom, Hounds Gate.

This meeting will be the Annual General Meeting of the Forum