

MINUTES

Tenants & Residents Consortium

1st October 2009

Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, Leicester

Present:

Graham Carvell	Leicester (Chair)
Adam Khonat	Leicester (Vice-Chair)
Jenny Wilson	Northampton (Treasurer)
Colin Stratton-Baldwin	Ollerton (Secretary)
Angela Stratton-Baldwin	Ollerton
Noorjahan Khonat	Leicester
Dave Pearsall	Northampton
Bernard Wilkinson	Nottingham
Pauline Dakin	Loughborough
Carol Graham	Loughborough
Peter Cowley	NCHA
Sharon Singleton	NCHA
Debs Ramsden	NCHA
Lou Butler	NCHA
Jacqui Kissai	NCHA
Laura Henderson	NCHA

1. Welcome & Apologies

Apologies were received from Hannah Wilson.

Graham asked if additional residents from the Leicester area had been invited to the meeting. Jacqui and Laura said that there had been no request from the TRC for them to invite additional local residents. They pointed out that GNS South residents were already well-represented on the TRC and that they had recently discussed promoting the TRC via invitations to any residents meetings that they held. It was agreed that the TRC would make any requests clear in future.

2. Acceptance of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 3rd September were accepted as a true and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising from the Last Meeting

Involvement of young people

Peter confirmed that a questionnaire had been developed for use with young people and was recently used at Moorgreen outing.

Training

Bernard explained that there were various options for CIH training that tenants could explore.

Disposal of goods policy

Comments from CAPs were received. Angela asked what NCHA were doing about items left in communal areas. Peter explained that this came under the fire risk assessment procedure and that obstructions were removed. Peter confirmed that NCHA has contracts for storage facilities. Angela proposed that if there are any costs relating to storage it should be recharged to the tenant. This was the general view of the meeting.

Financial Inclusion policy

Peter confirmed that tenants' comments had been incorporated and the policy will go to board in November.

4. Guest speaker - Sharon Singleton, Regional Manager, GNS South

Graham welcomed Sharon to the meeting. Sharon said she was happy to give information about the GNS south resident involvement activities. She outlined the dynamics of the area as:

geographically spread;

a lot of flats and accommodation that people see as a stepping stone;

many mixed tenure schemes;

high numbers of BME residents in Leicester and Northampton.

The dynamics of the area presented a challenge for the Resident Involvement Officers and a wide range of methods had been used to ensure appropriate engagement.

This included a wide range of surveys and scheme based, one-to-one consultations. Consultations have taken place in 2009 on BME consultation preferences; a youth and families consultation that led to the bowling activity and provision of information for young people; three-monthly surveys of estate contacts; consultations in Kettering, Churchfield Close, Trackside Close and Leicester City to establish interests in setting up residents association etc. Lunches had been arranged for estate contacts to say thank you and review progress/requirements. Evaluation of estate improvements work was also undertaken by surveying residents at schemes where work had been completed.

Sharon explained that feedback had been received via the tenant census, and other methods, that there were very few people in Northampton who wanted meetings. Two consultations had been undertaken this year using a new postal/email consultation.

Graham thanked Sharon for her overview and for attending the meeting.

Bernard asked if this had resulted in bums on seats.

Jacqui said that, taking the example of the Northampton CAP, the meetings had gradually dwindled but there was a strong group of involved residents who gave regular input. Whereas the February CAP meeting had to be cancelled because only one person turned up, the March CAP consultation using the revised method had resulted in the participation of fifteen members. The following consultation in August had asked members if they liked the new method and 64% said they did. The new method was still being developed and improved. A recent meeting had discussed this with key members and improvements had been agreed.

Sharon said that any involvement was appreciated and if someone only gave one comment and never did so again, they may have given essential feedback.

Peter pointed out that the association was currently looking at TPAS Resident Involvement Quality Standards towards accreditation and one of the requirements would be that we could show a flexible approach. He said Sharon had outlined some good examples of this.

5. Tenant consultation support pack

Peter said that the central issue being consulted on was how much influence the government should have on TSA standards, particularly in relation to rents and resident involvement. eg, they have currently set limits on how much rents increases can be reduced following the credit crunch. Graham said loss of government control could lead to some HAs raising rents above average as well as having the freedom not to raise them (eg. as LAs had not following recession). There was a discussion on the issues. Bernard suggested that government may need to influence rents but should not have a lot of influence on other issues. Colin said that the TSA had been set up to listen to tenants and should not be too influenced by government. Five other residents agreed that there should be very limited influence from government. Two residents said they did not understand the implications enough to comment.

Peter said that he would report the general acknowledgement that there may have to be some influence on rents but other influence should be minimised.

Debs said that she had noted that two tenants felt there was not enough clear explanation of the issues for residents to comment and would give this feedback.

6. Resident Involvement and Service User Involvement Strategy

Peter explained that the RI Strategy is the document which drives RI in all of NCHA. This is complemented by the RI statement, and Person

Centred Services Strategy. The RI Business Improvement Plan lists the actions which are required to meet the objectives in the statement and strategy.

The purpose of the strategy outlines the link between it and the Corporate Plan, highlighting how the Strategy will help NCHA to achieve its Vision and Mission.

The background explains the role of the TSA.

Implementation points out that the Strategy comes to tenants before it goes to Board so that they can have the input in its draft form.

The risks were explained.

The objectives are the general goals of RI; satisfaction, diverse representation, meet service standards, offer a wide range of involvement opportunities, provide good information and resources.

The role of tenants on the Board and bench marking. The Strategy also outlines NCHA's wish to obtain TPAS accreditation.

The 4 strategic objectives gave the 4 main areas which the RI Strategy would achieve:

- Decision making.
- Supporting Tenants, Residents and Service Users.
- Supporting local communities.
- Learning from other organisations.

The strategy outlines the resources and how success is measured.

Tenants were happy with the contents of the strategy and were asked to pass any comments to Peter by 16.10.09.

7. Tenants Improvement Procedure

The TRC agreed that this should go to CAP groups before coming to the TRC. They suggested that the document be re-titled to make it clear it relates to property.

8. Tenants' Conference

This is still being promoted to ensure numbers. Cut off date is October 8th. Friday 2nd is cut off date for tours of the stadium. No tenants will be offered this if booking after this date.

There will be two lunch sessions in 45 minute session. It was agreed that Jacqui and Laura will arrange two games of Bingo for each session. The TRC will provide vouchers as prizes: £5 for a line, £10 for a full house.

Sharon pointed out that other staff were attending as volunteers and would need instructions on what to do. It was agreed that a sheet will be provided.

It was suggested that staff should be introduced so that tenants would know who to approach. There was some discussion on the need to introduce TRC members. Sharon said this was an ideal opportunity to promote the work of the TRC and recruit new members. It was agreed that Graham would give a short introduction and identify members who could be approached by residents.

A last countdown meeting is planned for Thursday 8th October at the Leicester office. Peter suggested that residents should be prepared to talk about issues they are passionate about in the open space technology session.

Expenses - it was confirmed that Ang would give the forms out as tenants register. They should be returned in the morning for Jenny to make payment by lunchtime.

9. Training and Corporate services update

Link has gone to press. Communications CAP held in Northampton on 29th September.

Laura reported that she had undertaken to promote the Maintenance training in GNS south. NCHA courses are also being promoted to groups of tenants.

10. AOB: Application for funding

Castle Station activities group requests £250 for children's panto trip. This was approved.

Sharon asked if any consultation of young people was being done at this event. It was agreed that a copy of the youth questionnaire should be attached with the minutes for information. Heather to request residents associations to use it further as appropriate.

Date and venue of next meeting

Thursday 5th November at Camberley Court. This will be the AGM which will start at 10am. The meeting will follow at 10.30am.