



Hackney Homes Ltd

ITEM 3a

Part A Minutes of Resident Liaison Group Meeting, held at Christopher Addison house, 72 Wilton Way Hackney E8 1BJ

On 10 September 2009 at 6.00PM

Present	<p>Rupert Tyson (Joint Chair) Cllr Tom Price (Joint Chair)</p> <p>Brian Marsh Muriel Gordon Mavis McGee David White Gordon Guthrie Shirley Bogan Tom Woolley Terry Edwards Danny Neeson Denise Bingham</p> <p>Housing Partner Representatives Elliot Brooks Nii-Amon Nikoi</p>	<p>Officers Charlotte Graves Gary Penticost Tom Hunt Tom Hogan Malcolm Brewer Sunny Vadher Alan Turner</p> <p>In attendance Linda Kelly (part)</p>
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Item	Open to the Public	Action	Date
1. Welcome Introduction &	Tom Price welcomed everyone to the meeting and all those in attendance introduced themselves. .		
2.	Apologies were received from:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies • Declarations of interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Ferman • Joyce Brown • Tony Goodchild <p>Brian Marsh and Rupert Tyson declared they were Board Members of Hackney Homes.</p>		



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<p>3(a) Minutes of 2 July 2009</p> <p>Matters arising</p>	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July were agreed as a true record and signed accordingly.</p> <p><u>Energy Costs</u> Gary Penticost said that a report had been presented to the Audit & Finance Committee held on 13 July and the Committee had asked officers to prepare a further report for the meeting scheduled for 2 November 2009 which amongst other things should analyse the advantages/disadvantages of direct/indirect heating. The utility contract prices were in the process of being agreed and it was anticipated that these would be agreed by the end of September. The current method of calculating the charge was based on an historical pooling system whereby points were attributed to reflect the number of rooms that received direct/indirect heating and these points then reflected the charge that was made. Alternative methods of calculating this charge needed to be considered.]</p> <p>The Group expressed concern about the length of time it was taking to prepare this report. Gary Penticost said that the review of heating costs was a large piece of work and it was important to review everything thoroughly. Although the full report was going to the November A&F meeting work such as improvements to the controls on communal systems was currently being carried out. The Group considered that charges should be based on actual meter readings not estimates. Charlotte Graves said that the issue of meter readings would be addressed in this review of heating charges.</p> <p><u>Underground Car Park at Shoreditch House</u> Elliot Brooks said that the local Estate Manager was keeping the Chair of the TRA informed about progress and the night club owner had been given 10 days to remove the barrier failing</p>	<p>G Penticost/N Isaac</p>	<p>January</p>



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<p>3(b) Rolling Register</p>	<p>which Hackney Homes would undertake the work and recharge.</p> <p><u>Cleaning Statistics</u> Tom Hunt said that a set of common standards had been agreed across the borough and three of the five neighbourhoods had now received training on these. Training was being arranged for the remaining two neighbourhoods. The Group considered that the cleaning services needed more resources. Tom Hunt said that Officers were reviewing the methods of working and would prepare a report for a future meeting.</p> <p>Gary Penticost gave a verbal update on progress with the Decent Homes Programme which was proceeding on target. £38m had been committed and the 2nd phase of Procurement 2010 had now started.</p> <p>The rolling register was noted.</p>		
<p>4. What's happening at Hackney Homes?</p>	<p>The Chief Executive and Heads of Service then gave a verbal update on the key issues in their areas.</p> <p><u>The Chief Executive</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers were working hard on budgets for the next financial year. • Work was being done to streamline bureaucracy to make more efficiency savings so that front-line services could be protected. • Service Planning was also taking place for 2010/11 and as we were half way through the financial year, Officers were reviewing their areas to ensure that we kept on target. • The Audit Commission was coming to visit Hackney Homes shortly and 		

the next Inspection was likely to be in 2 years time but we could get a Short Notice Inspection sooner

- The number of consultants working throughout Hackney Homes had now been reduced to the last few.
- The next area Officers would address was the number of temporary staff. Temporary staff had now been mapped to all directorates and a review was underway to evaluate whether to recruit permanently to these posts. E.g. some were covering maternity leave or long-term sickness.
- There had been several fun days throughout the borough and the Chief Executive thanked all those involved in making them such a success.

The Group asked that given the level of reserves in the HRA, why was it necessary to keep making savings. Charlotte Graves said that she regularly discussed the level of reserves with the Director of Finance and Resources at Hackney Homes and with the Chief Accountant at the Council and both considered the reserves to be at the right level.

Director of Property Services

- 2 more apprentices had been employed
- Repairs were at target or above
- Telephone surveys by Kwest were currently being undertaken on satisfaction with repairs and early indications were positive
- The London Boroughs of Haringey and Southwark had approached Hackney Homes for advice on good practice in property services

<p>Update from Partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hackney Gazette had published a very positive story about Hackney Homes in respect of our proactive fire risk assessments and procedures. <p><u>Head of Estate Environment</u> The key issues for Estate Environment were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review of all standards and services across the borough • A complete patch review to ensure that resources were accurately targeted. • The building up of a bank of permanent peripatetic staff which would reduce costs on temporary staff. <p>The Group asked that standards were set for leasehold & income. The Group also asked that proper consultation took place regarding the service level agreements (SLAs) between the estates and Estate Services. Tom Hunt said that Officers were in close contact with Residents regarding the SLAs.</p> <p><u>Interim Head of Housing Services</u> The key issues for Housing Services were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review of all the housing management contracts • The review of the Housing Services Structure • The review of how we approach anti social behaviour (ASB) • Tenant Participation reviews <p><u>Pinnacle</u> The key issues for Pinnacle were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Piloting software for dealing with rent arrears • Estate Inspections & Walkabouts – providing feedback on the outcomes • Training Estate Managers on how to deal with ASB • Discussions with Mouchel on the success of its recently set up central 		
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	<p>ASB Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service Training for all staff. <p><u>Pathmeads</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of Resident Satisfaction Levels • ASB – how to deal with low level cases • Ensuring Rent Arrears targets are met <p><u>Mouchel</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worklessness – Mouchel were in the planning stage for using an employment and outreach organisation A for E to help with the worklessness strategy • Reorganising the rent arrears team in Homerton to ensure rent arrears targets were met • ASB now in a centralised team although there was still a presence at De Beauvoir. <p>The Group welcomed the introduction of software to help with rent arrears and asked if information on occupancy and recharges was available from the local estate managers. Charlotte Graves said that Hackney Homes acknowledged that the databases were outmoded and needed a thorough review and update and this should help in the provision of information in the future.</p>		
<p>5. Feedback from Service Improvement Committee</p>	<p>Terry Edwards, Chair of the Service Improvement Committee, gave feedback on the outcomes of the last meeting. The Service Improvement Committee's purpose was to ensure continuous improvement of services. Complaints were reviewed at each meeting together with one other area of service, the last meeting discussed the worklessness strategy. The current trend in complaints</p>		

	<p>was a decrease in stage 2 complaints which indicated that more stage 1 complaints were being satisfactorily resolved. There had been no maladministration findings by the Ombudsman against Hackney Homes.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Terry Edwards for the feedback.</p>		
<p>6. Housing Management Contracts</p>	<p>Malcolm Brewer introduced the report. The questionnaire seeking Residents' views on the housing management contracts was being sent to all Residents. The Group asked if any telephone surveys were being undertaken. Malcolm Brewer said that there were not but that prepaid envelopes were being included with the questionnaire to encourage Residents to respond. The level of returns varied depending on the survey subject from 5% to 30% and a full analysis with return figures would be included in the feedback report. The Members of the Resident Liaison Group were asked to encourage Residents in their neighbourhoods to return the questionnaires.</p> <p>The Group noted the report.</p>		
<p>7. Estate Garages and Other Associated Areas</p>	<p>Gary Penticost introduced the report. The Council had given project approval at the end of July for Hackney Homes to review garages and other ancillary buildings in its management. Since approval was given, 194 garages illegally occupied have now been repossessed. The project is due to be completed at the end of this financial year and should result in a maximisation of potential income as all garages, ancillary buildings and unused areas would be reviewed to ensure that all illegally occupied buildings were re-possessed, were fit for purpose and thus could be rented. The income raised would go into the HRA. The Group asked how the Estates would be informed of any garages which were available for rent. Gary Penticost said that the Neighbourhood Offices would be able to provide this information.</p> <p>The Group noted the report.</p>		

8. Feedback from the Stamford Hill Focus Group

Muriel Gordon, the Chair of the Stamford Hill Panel gave feedback from the Stamford Hill Focus Group. The Focus Group comprised Residents, Hackney Homes and Pinnacle staff and met with an independent facilitator to discuss and review a range of topics. The Group had met 4 times in the last two years. The aim of the Group was to focus on issues that particularly concerned residents and to seek improvements in standards. The following topics had been covered in the last two years.

- Communication
- Resident participation
- Service standards
- Role of the estate management
- Working with residents
- Communal repairs

Feedback from the outcomes of the Group's meetings was being compiled. The Focus Group had recently looked at communal repairs and particularly the inspection process which was in existence as well as residents' expectations. The recommendation from the focus group was that the three types of inspections in place needed to be looked at as the estate inspection process was not working as well as it could. As a result of this, an estate inspection steering group had been convened which included Partners from each of the Neighbourhoods. The proposal was to break down the two main inspections, monthly and quarterly and to plan the process from scratch. The Group would be looking at Resident Participation and the Housing Management Contracts when it met in February.

The Chair thanked Muriel Gordon for the feedback.

<p>9. Update on Health & Safety</p>	<p>Gary Penticost introduced the report. The Group asked what enforcement measures were in place to ensure that the use of communal areas did not pose a fire risk. Gary Penticost said that bi-monthly meetings with Estate Management took place to review the use of communal areas. If anything posed an immediate risk it would be removed. All Hackney Homes' blocks of 6 storeys or more had now been fire risk-assessed. Completion of the fire risk assessments for blocks of between 3-5 storeys were due to be completed by the end of September and other blocks by the end of March. The Group asked if there was a procedure to replace any fire retardant materials which were damaged or removed during other works. Gary Penticost said that this would be picked up by the operatives, logged and then maintenance would go and resolve. There was concern that some ventilation blocks had no grilles. Gary Penticost said that all the ventilation systems throughout the borough were programmed for assessment.</p> <p>The Chair asked that a further verbal update on fire risks was given at the next meeting.</p>	<p>G Penticost</p>	<p>November</p>
<p>10. Service Standards Review</p>	<p>Tom Hogan introduced the report which set out the proposals for the Review The Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commended the inclusion of leaseholds in the review • Asked that vermin could be included in the emergency standard <p>There was some concern that windows in communal areas were not cleaned both inside and out. Tom Hunt said that he would look into this matter. The Group were also concerned about how issues with trees which were causing a nuisance were dealt with. Tom Hunt said that if necessary, Officers from Hackney Homes would deal with this and then recharge accordingly.</p> <p>Neehara Wijeyesekera said that the Review of the Compact would also be</p>		

	linked with the Review of Service Standards. The Group noted the report.		
11. Review of Tenancy Conditions	Tom Hogan introduced the report which was to notify the Residents' Liaison Group of the review of Tenancy Conditions which was currently underway. It was noted that the statutory consultation process could take 6 months. The Group asked that the keeping of pets be included in the review as nuisance pets often caused problems. Elliot Brooks said that Residents should not wait until the Review was complete before reporting issues around nuisance pets. The Group noted the Report.		
12. ETRA Review	The Group were asked to note the dates and to let Residents within the neighbourhood areas of the deadlines. The Group noted the report.		
13.AOB	The Group reported that the EIB procedures were still not operating effectively. Gary Penticost asked that details of where this was the case be reported to him. Tom Price noted that the membership of the Group had now been clarified. The Group asked how for clarification on the use of small specialist companies since the procurement of the new contractors. Gary Penticost said that Hackney Homes had procured the use of 2 companies Crispin & Borst and Morrions to support the work of the DLO and that these companies often used the smaller specialist companies. However, Hackney Homes Contract was with Crispin & Borst and Morrions.		



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<p>14.</p>	<p>The meeting closed at 7.35.</p> <p>The date of the next meeting is 12 November 2009 at Christopher Addison House</p>		
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Signed as a true record of this meeting _____ Chair Dated _____