



Hackney Homes Ltd

ITEM 3

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

On 12 May 2011 at 6.30PM

Present	Charlotte Graves (Chair) Muriel Gordon David Larkin Joyce Brown Ben See Danny Neeson Irene Lewington George McGee May McGee Andrea Rawlings Deborah Salvador David Larkin	Officers Faisal Pirbhai Neehara Wijeyesekera Jim Paterson (part) Scott Lawrence (part) David Saxon (part) Ruth Clapham (part) Olaide Oyekanmi Minutes Tess Merrett	Observer Keith Spencer
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1. Welcome & Introduction	Charlotte Graves introduced herself and all attendees then introduced themselves		
2. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies • Declarations of interest 	Apologies were received from: Denise Bingham, Terry Edwards There were no declarations of interest. The Chief Executive's update was taken as the first agenda item.		
4. Chief Executive's Update	Charlotte Graves gave a verbal update. Cllr Karen Alcock, Deputy Mayor, who was lead member for housing with the		



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<p>Update from Officers</p>	<p>strategic housing portfolio was shortly to go on maternity leave. Cllr Philip Glanville would be the lead member for housing during this period and would become cabinet advisor for housing, in place of Cllr Tom Price on Cllr Alcock's return</p> <p>Decent Homes Hackney Council and Hackney Homes had secured the second highest amount of DH funding in London and officers from Hackney Homes and the Council were working closely together on a draft programme. It was hoped that this would be agreed very shortly and then communicated to all residents.</p> <p>Money Hackney Homes had to make increased savings next year and Charlotte Graves said she would be meeting with all the service heads on how to do this without affecting the delivery of front line services nor the repairs budget.</p> <p>Jim Paterson said that under the restructure, Mel Cameron was the new dedicated Liaison Manager. He would have a Senior Liaison Officer and 5 Liaison Officers in his team. This structure would provide the link between different Hackney Homes' departments and the Neighbourhood Panels. Paperwork for the new structure was being finalised and the structure should be in place by the end of July.</p> <p>The 184 budget had been slightly overspent with the EIB being slightly underspent for the year. This EIB underspend would be transferred to cover the overspend in the 184 budget. Walkabouts for these budgets had commenced and would continue throughout June. There was a dedicated</p>		

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	<p>estimator in post who would decide where to place the works i.e. external contractors, Hackney Alliance or the DLO to ensure best value. Jim Paterson said he was working closely with Neehara Wijeyesekera and Christophe Tabi and their teams to ensure a seamless approach.</p> <p>Neehara Wijeyesekera said that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 136 staff had now been TUPED across from the partners and staff were coming round to the Panels to introduce themselves. • Induction sessions for the new staff had been held around the borough • David Saxon was the Lead Officer for Hackney South whilst Ruth Clapham was the Lead Officer for Hackney North. Both David Saxon and Ruth Clapham were working on estate inspections and would provide regular updates for the Panels. • Neehara Wijeyesekera introduced Scott Lawrence who was the new Leasehold Services Manager. • The Tenancy Agreement was under review and the consultation process would begin shortly. • Universal Housing Training was being undertaken for both Hackney Homes Staff and Council Staff <p>Scott Lawrence, the new Leasehold Services Manager said that the priorities for the Leasehold & Right to Buy Teams were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging more with Leaseholders • Improving communications • Engaging with absentee leaseholders • Improving the accuracy of charges 		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the transparency of the process and publicising this more widely. <p>David Saxon said he was looking at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving customer services across all the Hackney South Offices. For example, residents could get estate parking permits from any Hackney South office • Reviewing the patches and patch sizes • Reviewing the estate managers' roles • Rolling out the vulnerable visiting project • Officers would be coming to the Panels to give updates. <p>The Group asked whether the Parking Permits applied to only Estate Permits or included street parking permits. It was confirmed that only Estate Permits could be obtained from the Hackney South Offices.</p> <p>Ruth Clapham said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She would be looking at a vulnerable visiting project in due course • Residents' voices were being heard and taken on board • There was a new Tenancy Manager in place • Now that the partner staff had been TUPED across, Hackney Homes could use all of the resources in the borough <p>Walkabouts</p> <p>Jim Paterson said that officers recognised that the same issues were being</p>		



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	<p>brought up on walkabouts and that there was a backlog of outstanding works. The proposal was to miss one cycle of walkabouts to allow the backlog of works to be reviewed. . Neehara Wijeyesekera said that staff would undergo more training and be refocused and both his teams and Jim Paterson's teams would work closely together on this. The backlog of works would be reviewed and categorised and prioritised. For example, any health & safety works would be a priority whilst some "wish list" works may not be able to be undertaken. However, once the list was reviewed, all the Panels would be informed of what would be able to be done together with a timescale. The Group asked that the schedules of work be made available on the website.</p> <p>The Stamford Hill Panel listed the following questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would panels be updated • Who would monitor the process • How would leaseholders be informed • If work was suspended would Leaseholders get a reduction in service charges <p>Jim Paterson said that the new liaison officers would be the link between Hackney Homes and the Panels and they would liaise closely with Neehara Wijeyesekera's team.</p> <p>Charlotte Graves said that the current proposal was just to suspend one cycle of walkabouts to enable Officers to catch up and the Group were not being asked to consider anything else at this moment. Health & Safety works however would continue as a priority.</p>	<p>Coms Team/J Paterson</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>



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	<p>Quarterly walkabouts in Stoke Newington were undertaken slightly differently with the Estate Services Officers undertaking the walkabouts with residents and picking any issues up. Neehara Wijeyesekera said that this model was similar to Jim Paterson's new structure which would bring some consistency across the borough.</p> <p>The Central Panel said that a break in the cycle seemed reasonable but it was important that the break allowed Officers to deal with the issues. It was also important that residents were involved in walkabouts not just officers.</p> <p>It was noted that small estates were sometimes neglected in walkabouts which could lead to issues with squatters for example.</p> <p>The Clapton Panel considered a break sensible and the current system was not working well.</p> <p>All the Group members did not feel they could make the decision to take a break in the cycle without the consent of their Panel Members.</p> <p>The Group was asked to email their responses to either Jim Paterson or Maggie Jennings by the 20th May.</p> <p>Housing Management The Group considered that sometimes, suggestions put forward by residents to Officers were not communicated. The Group welcomed the idea of a one stop shop and the vulnerable persons visiting project. However, it was felt that there was no local knowledge in the neighbourhoods from the Leasehold Services Team and the Leasehold</p>	<p>Group Members</p>	<p>20 May</p>



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	<p>Services Team should communicate more with the Neighbourhoods. There was a view that the attitude of some staff towards the Panels could be improved and there was also a view that it was difficult to get Estate Managers to resolve anything. It was important not to miss this opportunity to work in partnership with residents. Charlotte Graves said that Jim Paterson's new structure was very much built around working with the Panels.</p> <p>Scott Lawrence said that the Leasehold Services Team were now working closely with the Neighbourhood Offices and now that all staff were Hackney Homes' Staff this made things much easier.</p> <p>David Saxon said that the vulnerable visiting team should be in place in the South area in June. He also said that in the Homerton Office, the most experienced staff were placed on reception which allowed the majority of queries to be answered straightaway rather than having to be referred on. Feedback from Residents indicated that this was successful.</p> <p>Ruth Clapham said that the vulnerable persons visiting project would not be in place in the North Region in June however, she would arrange to meet with David Larkin to discuss this matter.</p> <p>Neehara Wijeyesekera said that the cultural attitude within Hackney Homes was fundamental to the success of customer services and it was important to get this right. Feedback on particular issues would be helpful.</p> <p>It was noted that vulnerable people could get overlooked and it was important to identify those people who needed extra support.</p>	<p>R Clapham/D Larkin</p>	<p>Done</p>



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	<p>There was also a perception that if Residents complained about the behaviour of tenants sub-letting from Leaseholders, they were made to feel a nuisance. Charlotte Graves said that if people sub-letting from leaseholders were causing problems then Officers would deal with it.</p> <p>The Group said that it was important to publicise ASB resolutions and Managers should contact leaseholders who were sub-letting to nuisance tenants.</p> <p>The Group asked what had happened to the vulnerable residents' register. Charlotte Graves said that Universal Housing would allow officers to flag up vulnerable residents but we needed to identify them first.</p>	<p>Coms/N Wijeyesekera</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>5. Communication – what is being put in place to improve/the continued use of the language of bureaucracy</p>	<p>Olaide Oyekanmi and Faisal Pirbhai gave a presentation. It was noted that many estates did not have TRAs which meant that they could not access the funding available for events. Olaide Oyekanmi said that as Hackney Homes could only hand out funding to constituted TRAs, Hackney Homes would arrange any events for those estates which did not have constituted TRAs. Faisal Pirbhai said that the Communications Team had been working with various unregistered groups to organise events for them.</p> <p>The Group asked that something be put in the Residents' Newsletter for vulnerable residents such as a contact telephone number for them.</p> <p>It was noted that the Group considered the current Hackney Homes Website to be uninspired and it also contained out of date information. Olaide Oyekanmi said that this was being looked at and welcomed suggestions.</p>	<p>Coms</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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	<p>The Group asked how estates got to be earmarked for events. Olaide Oyekanmi said that for such events as Estate Safety, those estates with safety problems would be earmarked. Some estates because of the geographical layout, were not suitable to host events. The Group asked whether the Residents' Newsletter could feature an estate and its events. It was also suggested that a bulletin could be drawn up about what was happening in different Neighbourhoods. Charlotte Graves asked Olaide Oyekanmi to liaise with the Council's Communications Team on this.</p> <p>It was noted that there were still internal communication problems around responding to emails promptly. Stamford Hill Panel had started taking out Stage 1 Complaints to address this issue. The Group said that often Residents were more aware of what was going on than staff were and this needed to be addressed. Communication around Decent Homes was cited as an example. Charlotte Graves said that Decent Homes was a specific problem given that the programme had not been agreed and therefore Officers could not communicate anything. It was hoped that the programme would be finalised very shortly at which point all Residents would be informed. The Group asked that if there was a further delay in agreeing the programme, something be sent to Residents informing them of this.</p> <p>The Group thanked Olaide Oyekanmi and Faisal Pirbhai for their presentation.</p>	<p>Coms Team</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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<p>6. Issues Around the Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Joyce Brown from Mesh asked when the Communal Heating report would be finalised. Charlotte Graves said that the final report had been taken to the A&F Committee on Monday 9 May. Once it had been through the Council then the outcome would be reported to Residents.</p> <p>Danny Neeson said that for Central Panel, there was an issue around the digital aerials. Low rise and houses had not been included in the original specification for the programme and this needed to be address.</p> <p>David Larkin said that he was formally inviting representatives from the Street Properties Forum to attend the Stoke Newington Panel. There was also an issue with communal areas in multi occupied street properties not being eligible for 184/EIB funding and this needed to be looked at. The Stoke Newington Panel had taken a vote of no confidence in the Asset Management Team. The Panel also wanted the recognition criteria to be looked at. Faisal Pirbhai said that this had been identified as something to be overhauled.</p> <p>Ben See from the Street Properties Forum said that there was an issue with the digital aerial programme in the fact that cables had not been pushed through properly and he had made several FOI requests about this. Charlotte Graves asked for specific examples to be identified outside of the meeting for Officers to inspect.</p> <p>Andrea Rawlings said that Priestly Close had now been constituted as a TRA and a fun day was being held on 28 May 2011 and all were invited to attend.</p>		



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<p>3. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2011</p> <p>6. Agenda Items for 7 July Meeting</p>	<p>Charlotte Graves said that Tess Merrett would circulate an update for the action points from the last set of minutes. Tess Merrett asked for Group Members to let her know of any inaccuracies in the minutes.</p> <p>There was a correction to Item 6</p> <p>Muriel Gordon had asked whether a structure would be available at the Stamford Hill panel meeting the following week and Sharan Sewa had said it would but if that was not the situation she would advise. As a subsequent matter arising, the structure had not been available and the panel had not been advised to this effect.</p> <p>The Group discussed items for the meeting scheduled for 7 July 2011.</p> <p>It was agreed that the 7 July meeting would be a themed meeting and the themes would be.</p> <p>Asset Management Digital TV aerials</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.</p>		

Signed as a true record of this meeting _____ Chair Dated _____