



Cosmopolitan Tenants Forum Meeting (Improving Services for Cosmopolitan Tenants')

Thursday 18th December 2008
Thistle Hotel

Present:

Sue Ward	Chair
Alan Heague	Forum Member
Mary Gibiliru	Forum Member
Pauline Davis	Forum Member

Cosmopolitan:

Beatrice Fraenkel	Board Member
Geoff Redhead	Chief Executive
Darren Hartley	Director of Corporate Services
Alec Gaston	Operations Director
Steve Loftus	Resident Involvement Co- coordinator
Ria Simon	Resident Involvement Officer
Sasha Buckley	Resident Involvement Assistant

Introductions/ Apologies

Everyone introduced themselves and welcomed Beatrice to the meeting.

ACTION

Forum action plan achievements:

Sue gave a presentation of the forum achievements over the last 12 months. Sue went through the objectives the forum had set themselves for the year and what objectives they have achieved. The Forum have been looking at ways to develop and promote themselves. The Forum promote themselves via newsletters which they produce twice a year. The Forum also has a sign displayed in the main reception area to promote their services. Sue suggested having Forum questionnaires put out in the main reception area about the Forum for people to fill out whilst waiting to be seen. Sue advised that all the forum action plans have been completed apart from one, which is the role of the forum, which is ongoing. Sue stated two members of the forum are doing the Chartered Institute of Housing course Level 2 and that the Forum have had training on Key Performance Indicators. There will also be IT training provided alongside TPAS training which will be taking place February 2009.

ACTION

Sue stated that culture training is still outstanding and the forum will be looking into this more in 2009.

Some Forum members would like to do the Chartered Institute of Housing level three, however the cost is high.. The Forum suggested to maybe getting other organisations to help

fund the Level 3 course and for the Association to fund for the level 2 so more tenants get a chance to do the course.

Sue advised that the Forum are continually looking at value for money and those road shows and the VERA awards have replaced the Residents days. Once more road shows are carried out, the Forum will be evaluating them to see whether the road shows are value for money.

The Forum have formalised links with both the Repairs Review team and the regeneration and development team and receive minutes from these groups on a regular basis.

Beatrice suggested that the Forum could do a presentation to the board.

Alec suggested the Forum should put all the information they presented in the newsletter so people are aware of the achievements of the forum.

Steve informed the meeting that the Development and regeneration group have also progressed over the months and will soon be looking to produce a newsletter.

- **Presentation on the Tenant Services Authority**

Steve and Mary gave a presentation on the Tenant Service Authority. Mary talked about the two new bodies that are the Tenant Service Authority and Homes and Community agency, which went live 1st September 2008.

The Forum will be looking into this in 2009. The Forum had a training day this took place Wednesday 3rd December in relation to the Tenant Services Authority, which Steve provided.

- **Newsletters and Porter Community Grants**

Alan gave a presentation on the newsletters and the Porter Community Grants.

The newsletters are produced twice a year and are sent out with the Associations What's New newsletter. Alan explained a sub group was formed and due to members of the Forum resigning it resulted in Ria and Alan completing latest newsletter. This cost £1,408.

Alan suggested having more pages in the next newsletter in order to produce more information for tenants. It was suggested that the translation page could be taken out of the Forum newsletter as it goes out with What's New already. Pauline advised that there are a group of students who attend a translation course in Crawford House and it may be worth looking into in order to keep translation costs down.

ACTION

Alan explained to the group that the Porter Community Grants budget is £5000 with a maximum value of £250 being allotted to each project subject to the Forum approving applications. There have been 16-17 applications received this financial year only eight have been successful. Alec asked why only eight have been accepted and what has caused the others not to be successful. Alan advised that there are many reasons applications are denied. Alan explained that some applications are not filled in correctly or there is not enough information, which the forum then reject asking for more specific information and sometimes they do not get a response back.

- **Progress on Delivery Against Objectives for Resident Involvement 2008- 2009**

Alec presented a presentation on the above. Alec stated that there is a forward plan for the improvement through Resident Satisfaction.

There are 38 objectives to link to the plan. Alec asked the Forum whether they would like to receive the progress reports that are presented to the board quarterly and to feedback to him.

ALL

Alec informed there have been proposals made to look at how to get more people involved.

There has been a group set up for mystery shopping the group will be made up of students who completed Level 2 Chartered Institute of Housing course last year.

Alec asked the Forum to think about how they would want to influence the business plan and to look at what they would like to monitor. Alec also asked the forum how often they think information should be provided.

ALL

- **Forum Budget**

Pauline stated £944.80 of the budget has been spent on expenses. This is made up of transport and mileage costs as well as lunch costs for those meetings, which are of an afternoon. £1623.78 has been spent on Training Costs which includes training received to ensure the group is working effectively and efficiently. Also paid for a member of the Forum to attend a conference, and already has a cost in for a future days training.

The forum spent £2255.25 on Miscellaneous Costs this has paid for a 4-page newsletter and this Christmas meeting as a celebration of our work this year. Pauline informed that the forum have spent a total of £4823.83 to date and have £5476.17 left to spend.

- **Forum Objectives for 2009**

Ria and Sasha gave a presentation of the forums objectives for 2009. Ria and Sasha went through a list of objectives the forum has agreed to monitor and challenge the Association in the future. The Forum will be producing two newsletters and will create an action plan for barriers to involvement. The Forum will be carrying out all of their objectives throughout the year. Beatrice thought the way the Forum had an action plan for the year was structured well and asked if she could receive a copy for the year.

ACTION

- **Cosmopolitan and the Forum in the new Regulatory Framework**

Darren gave a presentation on the new framework. Darren stated there is a new regulatory regime established. This is made up of Homes and Community Authorities and Tenant Service Authority.

Darren informed that we are no longer Registered Social Landlords we are known as registered providers. There are two types of Registered Providers which are non – profit organisations and profit organisations.

Darren stated there would be a National Conversation that will be taking place this will be capturing information of tenants' views.

Darren informed the forum the National Tenants voice will be launched in summer 2009.

- **CHA annual review and forward look 2008-09**

Geoff informed the group of how the Association are going to be progressing over the years. Geoff informed the Forum that they had signed a 10 year contract with KHT in June and this was being monitored.

The Association will also be looking at tenant satisfaction levels in 2009. Geoff also stated we will be working with Enlighten on a continuous basis to also help improve tenant services. The tenant Census has been launched and this will be looked at in more detail in January 2009.

- **CHA annual review and forward look 2008-09**

Beatrice said she had enjoyed the meeting and was impressed with all of the outcomes for the year. Beatrice suggested that the Forum could do a presentation to the board on what they have achieved and what there objectives are for 2009 as it would be a good chance for the rest of the board to see.