



## **Cosmopolitan Tenants' Forum Meeting**

(Improving Services for Cosmopolitan Tenants')

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2010**

**Board Room, Cosmopolitan Head Office**

### **Attendance:**

Mary Gibiliru	Chair
Bob Gleig	Forum Member
Brian Gibson	Forum Member
Alan Heague	Forum Member

### **Cosmopolitan:**

Steve Loftus	Resident Involvement Co-ordinator
Emma Hartley	Continuous Improvement Manager
Sasha Buckley	Resident Involvement Assistant
Colin Croxton	Tenancy Management Co-ordinator
Julie McNally	Resident Involvement Officer
Kelly Harris	Allocations Assistant
Darren Hartley	Chair of the Board

### **Apologies:**

Alan Bocking	Vice Chair
Karen Cheung	Income Management Co-ordinator

### **Introductions and Apologies**

Mary welcomed everyone to the meeting. Sasha gave apologies from Alan Bocking and Karen Cheung.

### **ACTION**

### **Matters Arising/ Minutes of the last meeting**

The Forum approved the minutes from the previous meeting.

### **Hard to Let Budget-**

Kelly gave apologies for Karen and provided a brief presentation on 'Hard to Let' properties. She advised the Forum that the Association has a £10,000 budget per year to furnish hard to let stock. This also helps support vulnerable residents who are not in the position to afford to furnish their homes. It Costs a total of £1,840 to furnish a one bedroom flat and Kelly asked the Forum for their views on whether this was value for money and cost effective.

Forum members stated that the costs for furnishing properties were excessive.

Darren asked how many properties a year do the Association furnish?

Kelly replied that two properties are furnished each year.

Darren stated that this initiative is a positive for the Association in the long term as tenancies are held for longer.

### **VFM- TPAS Conference/ Training Application Form**

Steve asked the Forum for their feedback on the training and evaluation forms That had been sent out to them.

Bob responded by saying he felt the form is simple and easy to fill out

Brian advised he found the form straight- forward for residents to use.

Alan requested that value for money should be added onto the evaluation form.

Darren advised he felt that value for money should be left on the application form so the cost can be looked at before the training is approved. Julie suggested amending the form to say how many residents will benefit from the training on the form as this also captures value for money.

Darren added that box 4 on the evaluation form should be changed to help evaluate if the training was cost effective. All of the Forum agreed.

Steve advised the group that he would update the form.

**SL**

### **ASB Training**

Colin provided a presentation to the Forum on the Tenancy Management Team's approach to dealing with Anti Social Behaviour.

The Forum thanked Colin for providing this information and stated that they had found it to be useful. Colin advised them to contact him if they require any further detail.

### **Resident Involvement Impact Assessment**

Steve provided background to the Resident Involvement Impact Assessment and advised the Forum on the purpose of this document. He explained that an impact assessment is carried out every year to review and evaluate the influence, outcomes and benefits of residents in the work of the Association.

Steve referred the Forum to the impact assessment framework of SOHA Housing Association, who's document has been recognised as an example of good practice. Steve has adopted this framework and applied it to Cosmopolitans. He asked the Forum if they were agreeable with this approach.

Darren asked about the role of the Forum in populating the framework. Steve advised that he will be liaising with staff and the residents in the Service Review Teams and members of the Forum will have the opportunity to participate during this process.

Emma suggested that Steve should work with the Service Review Team's and report back to the Forum on a monthly basis to show their input.

Julie added that this would help collate all information as it is hard to collect everything on a yearly basis.

All of the Forum agreed and asked for the impact assessment to be put as an agenda item for each meeting. Emma also added that feedback from residents with regard to the impact, assessment should be highlighted at the beginning of the minutes.

Steve proposed that the Forum members should examine SOHA Housing Association's approach to resident involvement. Darren provided their website details [www.soha.co.uk](http://www.soha.co.uk)

### **Annual Report**

Emma handed out a draft copy of the annual report to the Forum and asked for them to fill in the Questionnaire and return it in the pre paid envelope for them to return their feedback by Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. She added that she wants the annual report to be more resident led and will be asking residents to sign off pages in the report. Sasha to send copies of the report out to Forum members who were not at the Meeting.

**SB**

Brian Gibson suggested that the Forum can meet up to discuss the report. Steve encouraged the Forum to agree to this suggestion. Emma added if they wanted her to join them to discuss any issues she, would do so.

### **Partners in Participation (PIP) and Liverpool Housing Excellence and Efficiency Group (LHEEG)**

Steve and Julie provided a joint presentation to the Forum on PIP and LHEEG. Both projects are similar in their approach with Social Housing providers Working together to provide training and good Practice initiatives to residents.

Julie advised that PIP now has a website set up on line and advised the Forum to have a look at it. The website address is [www.piponline.info](http://www.piponline.info).

Darren enquired if the PIP website had any information on from the CHA website, Julie advised it did.

Mary asked Steve about the worklessness project with LHEEG and asked how long it had been running for? Steve advised Mary that the initiative is due to launch in September.

Alan challenged the CIH LHEEG project and stated that funding should have been made available for residents wishing to continue at level three.

Emma stated that level two is a stepping stone course and budgets would have to be compromised if residents wanted to attend the level three course. Steve added that bursary placements were available through Blackburne House.

### **Proxy Voting**

Alan informed the Forum and staff that he has discussions with a consultant (Mark Williams from Postal) regarding proxy voting. He was advised that any voting that needs to be carried out needs to be into the constitution.

After some discussion Steve suggested that he would draft some information with Alan's help and provide this to the Forum.

**SL**

Darren advised the Forum to look at a model constitution on TPAS website for examples of proxy voting.

### **AOB**

Sasha asked for feedback on the Satisfaction Survey and Post Tenancy Visit form from Karen Cheung. All of the Forum agreed that they were happy with the form. Bob added that he had made comments on his form and asked Sasha to forward this onto Karen.

**SB**

Julie advised the group there will be a Tenant Auditors meeting taking Place Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September. Julie will be writing out to residents To invite them along to the meeting and she will provide feedback to the Forum on this project in the future.

**JMC**

Steve asked the Forum for their views on the consultation which had been carried out for the Resident Involvement Best Value Review. He stated that 270 residents have been written to from the Resident Involvement Database. There was a total of 27 returns. Tenant Auditors had also contributed to the Project by making phone calls top residents. A total of 67 phone calls were made and 40 tenants were engaged with. The Forum felt that the response was low and further consultation should be carried out.

Steve added he is looking at co-ordinating the Best Value Review with the KHT call centre. Staff at the call centre can consult with residents who are Reporting repairs. The Forum felt this was a good way of communicating with the residents and get more feedback. Emma added that her team do follow up calls on the repairs Questionnaire and could also contribute to the Best Value Review questions.

Steve informed the Forum that Ria will be returning back to work Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September.

**Date and time of next meeting: Friday 1<sup>st</sup> October at 12:00pm.**