



Minutes of PBHA Forum 25.04.19 Isledon Canteen

Present: 3 tenants
LP, VM

Minutes: LP

Together with Tenants

National Housing Federation (NHF) have put together a charter – ‘Together with Tenants’. PBHA has signed up as an ‘early adopter’. It focuses on our accountability for decisions, and listening to tenants.

We’re looking at how we can strengthen what we already do to make sure we’re complying and going above the requirements of the charter.

Wider context - Green Paper on social housing and governance. Need for increased ‘consumer protection for tenants’ – debate about whether social tenants need a different body for this. Govt recognising that social housing is in v short supply, need to build more social housing and 2 need greater protections for tenants, redress when things go wrong. A lot of the focus is around the larger housing associations, a lot have merged, with 100,000s of tenants.

At the moment VM reports to the board on all aspects. One option is that tenants also do a report this could be in response to the annual report. Tenants could report to the organisation separately.

Another idea is a tenant conference

Tenant –tenants’ conference – should send something out to people to make the agenda. Maybe then more people will come. Make sure there’s food etc. Something to incentivise people to come and give their views. Suggestion that vouchers should be given. Lunch at least should be provided.

Attendance at forums are low - we would like to look at different ways of getting people engaged in the forum and other kinds of decision-making.

Tenant raised many people don’t know when the forums are happening need to text. Texting service will soon be in operation LP is texting people that she knows would like to know via text please add your name to this list by contacting LP.

Tenants need to be incentivised to participate. Tenant suggest paying to participate. We can’t afford to pay everybody to participate and to bring their views but it may be possible to remunerate people for specific pieces of work, for example property efficiency panel.

Rethinking the forum

VM –forums could be neighbourhood based – could then invite others organisations/people key to the community to be part of it. Could then bring in things that connect people collectively.

Lani – doing meetings about local issues, or people’s particular interests. Could then have the forums based on particular topics and it would be a way to get to know your neighbours. Eg. community based, health in the borough, whatever people wanted, crime, rubbish. Those kinds of things. People get more interested, then from that, people might come to particular ones, might encourage them to get more involved in other activities because more neighbourhood focused.

Lani- Need also different ways of getting involved in PBHA policy work. Forum – seems to be seen as one of the only ways people can feed in and it shouldn’t be that. E.g. if people are interested in how tenants are communicated – could have a group of tenants who are on a kind of advisory board on marketing, with training and incentives, would also be useful for work/CV.

One tenant thought this was a good idea as it would enable us to get to know our neighbours and what’s happening. An another point was made that things need to be clear and to the point straight away.

Efficiency Panel

It was mentioned that tenants care about what happens with property and how decisions are made around that, but it’s difficult to get views. So PBHA are taking forward the idea – which came from tenants- of an efficiency panel. Tenants will be selected and trained to be part of this. It would evaluate contractors, review priorities, give ideas about what the priorities for expenditure should be.

VM I’ve developed some questions that we need to address when setting up the panel, through discussions with tenants:

- Tenants surveys
- Research asking what other things tenants think we should focus on
- #how we are dealing with particular contractors
- How people are selected? How be representative? Should people be nominated?
- Should we seek representatives from different services or neighbourhoods
- How ensure a diverse range of views are heard
- Different training
- What kind of info they need? Eg. Money spent on repairs/services and how this breaks down, how we develop our contracts

Discussed some individual problems and how sometimes this may be a house-wide issue that needs to be treated as that. Also issues about non-satisfaction with contractors. These are all issues that could be brought up through the efficiency panel.

The proposal would be for any tenants to put themselves forward and be interviewed for the role. If accepted, they would be paid in vouchers equivalent of the London living Wage - £10.50per hour. The expectation would be that they are working for this, not just turning up and giving their views.

One tenant said they would think about going for this, once they've seen some more information.

How to communicate this idea to tenants.

- On the website – draft code of conduct. Can you send something out to the tenants?
- At the tenants forum.
- Text service won't be set up by then.

Report from Clissold

Tenant – Patrick's passing was a loss for us. He had an important role, and we don't have many tenants from the old time and he was actively contacting and supporting them. He will be sorely missed. There has been some encouragement that we're having a memorial day. Bianca has been in touch with the family and is waiting to hear from them about when they can come. Will be on a Friday in either May or June.

Sadly Gordon Lyall also passed away. It was discussed that we need more opportunity to talk about dying and funerals. We will have this opportunity again this year with Gentle Dusk coming and commemoration services, hopefully in early November.

Concerned about the garden project and how it's going. More volunteers are needed at Clissold Garden. There is a concern that there is no organisation to give to the produce to, since the coffee shop closed.

There is a Gardening workshop every Wednesday. Coming back, in May with the tablets.

LP – We'll have a hubs strategy meeting soon, so this is really good to feed into.

There was a suggestion that we work together more to tidy up the hubs and do a BBQ in the Summer. Commemoration benches are also being made – tenants are liaising.

Satako's teaching

Satako will be teaching classes at the hub on 'enrichment'. This will include using IT to do research, tablet, smartphone, laptop, map and internet search. Then we'll agree on a place, or two, to go to and go as a group. The classes will run for 10 weeks – 10am-1pm on Wednesdays.

In the future, Satako will be training people in the outpost shop on Holloway Rd in retail.

And in the future, she'd like to do more 1:1 help, to find paid/voluntary jobs.

VM- we are looking for reception volunteers!