

**Partners for Improvement in Islington  
Residents Forum Meeting**



**Minutes of the Residents Forum**

**Held at 6.35pm on Thursday 20 November 2008**

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**PRESENT:**

<b>Forum Members:</b>	Georgina Galliers	(GG) Chair
	Muriel Duncan	(MD) Vice Chair
	Michael Adedeji	(MA)
	Dave Gorman	(DG)
	Shirley Bryant	(SB)
	Suzanne Bryant	(SuB)
	Dawreen Charles	(DC)
	Laura Young	(LY)
	Chris Graham	(CG)
	Lisa Crowley	(LC)
	Susanne Lamido	(SL)
	Richard Best	(RB)
<b>Observer:</b>	Michael Read	(MR)
	Mr I Choudhury	(IC)
<b>Partners:</b>	Ed Butler	(EB)
	Ami-Anne Spring	(AS)
	Liz Voss	(LV)
	Paula Redpath	(PR)
	Clifford Yeend	(CY)
	John Holman	(JH)
<b>HFI:</b>	Simon Kwong	(SK)
	Eileen Abbott	(EA)
	Martin Church	(MC)

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<b>Apologies:</b>	Sally Ingrey
	Chris Radway
	Chris Matthews

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**1. Minutes and Matters arising from Meeting of 17 July 2008**

**1.1** GG would like it noted that her apologies were given for the last meeting, but that they were not recorded in the minutes. The Forum agreed to add this.

**1.2** Point 1.2 - CG asked for repair job ISL/15483 to be investigated and an update provided. **(Action PR)**

**1.3** Point 1.4 - CG asked if Forum Meeting dates have been updated on the website. **(Action Tom Irvine/EB)**

**1.4** Point 1.5 - GG asked it to be noted that if any Forum Members would like to get involved in writing an article for Partners Customer Newsletter, they need to contact Tom Irvine or EB.

**1.5** Point 4.4 – PR confirmed that when communal light bulbs are changed, they will be replaced with energy efficient ones.

**1.6** Point 4.6 – SL requested to know the outcome. **(Action LV)**

**1.7** Point 8.3 EB confirmed that the next Partners Customer Newsletter will be targeting Leaseholders and that Leasehold Services are part of the Best Value Review. EB also pointed out that they were 2 extra Leaseholders at the meeting.

**1.8** SL apologised for leaving early at the Best Value Review meeting.

**1.9** RB requested for it to be minuted that he was unhappy with the state of entry to the meeting. He had to stand outside in the cold as no one in the building answered the door. The Forum agreed that this was unacceptable. JH also agreed that this was not acceptable and that it would be looked in to. **(Action EB/AS/Tom Irvine)**

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## **2. Works Team Update**

**2.1** LV introduced the item and ran through paper.

**2.2** LV confirmed that she will provide a colour chart to give more detail on the CSCS Cards.

**2.3** SL asked if the cards will be passed on to residents. LV confirmed that they would not, and that Partners Works Team would continue to use their standard I.D Cards when visiting residents. LV also pointed out that the Works Team are currently reviewing their standard I.D Cards.

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## **3. HFI Review of PFI 1 refurbishment programme**

**3.1** EA introduced the item and ran through the paper.

**3.2** At this point in the meeting RB raised the fact that he was very unhappy that EA was referring to PFI 2 within this item, that it was not appropriate because PFI 1 and PFI 2 are very different.

EA responded by pointing out that the reason she was mentioning PFI 2 was because she was trying to highlight that lessons were learnt during the process of the PFI 1 refurbishment and that these were passed on to PFI 2.

11 Forum Members voted in favour of letting EA continue with the item.

**3.3** RB claimed that 100% checks of completed works by independent surveyors were not done. EA advised that this would need to be taken up with Partners.

**3.4** RB asked EA to explain what works were going to be improved for wheel chair users. EA advised that surveys found satisfaction with refurbishment works was slightly lower among residents who use wheelchairs, and as a result of this Partners are working to improve it.

RB pointed out that Islington Council used to be responsible for works carried out to make improvements to the homes of disabled people, for example putting in lifts. RB said that this was an ongoing issue that Partners need to act on.

**3.5** JH pointed out that 2 issues were getting confused: that of the service provided to disabled residents during refurbishment works and that of long term aids and adaptations in disabled people's homes.

EB explained that Partners are looking in to the service that is provided to disabled residents, and that they are currently getting advice from the group Disabliltiy Action in Islington.

LV explained that the Works Team are now working closely with Occupational Therapy.

CY explained that the Repairs Team also work with Islington Social Services.

**3.6** GG requested that an urgent action was made for Partners to confirm at the next meeting what their policy is regarding works to properties with disabled residents. It was suggested that it would be a good idea if someone from Islington Council also attended the next meeting. **(Urgent Action EB)**

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#### **4. Residents Fun Day (4 October 2008) Feedback**

**4.1** EB introduced the item, explained that the day was a success, and that there were 75 guests. EB thanked everyone involved in organising the day and also thanked Forum Members who attended for their help.

**4.2** GG also thanked those who organised and attended and said that the venue was very good.

**4.3** SL requested that the Fun Day is earlier in the year next year. AS agreed that this would be looked into.

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#### **5. HFI repairs Audit Report**

**5.1** MC introduced item and ran through paper.

**5.2** RB requested that he would like to know specifically what is looked into when MC carries out post refurbishment checks. RB also asked to know whether MC would be prepared to look at other items as well. **(Action MC)**

5.3 MC agreed that he would be happy to look at specific items, and also agreed to provide RB with a break down of what is inspected.

5.4 GG explained that herself, DG and MD went to Clerkenwell and spent a whole day with MC while he inspected properties. GG assured the forum that all areas were checked.

5.5 DG explained one thing they found is that some residents' properties were surveyed over the phone rather than face-to-face.

5.6 GG pointed out that they made sure all faults found on that day were rectified.

5.7 SL requested to see a copy of Partners' formal procedure for when residents do not provide access for the Gas Safety Inspection to be carried out. **(Action PR/Heating Team/Housing Management Team)**

5.8 Forum members discussed that Repairs Operatives need to be more equipped to carry out jobs when they arrive at residents homes. Some members reported instances when operatives have not had the correct equipment to carry out the repair, such as ladders.

5.9 LY explained that a Repairs Operative came to her home to inspect damp, but rather than using the appropriate testing machine, he put his hand on the wall and told LY that there was no damp. The operative then advised LY what she should purchase from a DIY store in order to resolve the repair.

5.10 PR explained that all vans have a standard 'Van Stock' which includes ladders, so this should not have happened. PR and CY have taken LY address and committed to looking into the damp repair carried out at her home. **(Action PR/CY)**

5.11 It is agreed that the above will be added as an agenda item to the next meeting agenda **(Action AS/Tom Irvine)**

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## **6. Partners Website**

6.1 SL introduced the item and explained that Partners new website is up and running but that there are number of improvements that still need to be made. SL explained that the website is being developed by Hyde Housing Association and the reason she would like the issue brought to the table is to give Hyde a kick to prioritise Partners. SL pointed out that she would like names of staff included on the website and then changed when necessary.

6.2 GG proposed that Partners should begin acting on the necessary improvements by 7 December 2008.

6.3 EB explained that Hyde does have the job in hand and that he will update SL and MA by 9 December 2008.

**GG, MD, and DG left the meeting at this stage due to prior commitments. MA took over as chair for the rest of the meeting.**

At this point in the meeting RB expressed his concern that both the Chair and the Vice Chair were leaving the meeting and said this was unsatisfactory.

GG apologized that RB was not happy with this, but pointed out that since she began on the Forum in 2002, she has only missed 5 meetings.

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## **7. HFI Consultative Panels Consultative Papers**

**7.1** SK introduced item and gave Doug Goldring's apologies. SK explained that he would only focus on items relevant to Partners.

**7.2** RB asked SK to confirm that the Partners properties are owned by Islington Council. SK confirmed this was true. JH also agreed with this.

**7.3 (page 9)** MR questioned HFI's appeal to the Audit Commission's recent inspection, in which they were first awarded 2 stars and after appeal were awarded 3 Star's with excellent prospects.

SK explained that HFI were not happy with the original award and that they appealed. He pointed out to MR that HFI had been very open with regards to his FOI request. SK also said that it was the Audit Commission who awarded the judgment and that he was laying out the facts in the report.

MA suggested that if MR had any questions then he should put them in writing.

**7.4 (page 9 - 4.4)** RB said to SK that vulnerable tenants are not well supported and that the statement was not correct.

SK explained to RB and the rest of the forum that he was clear what he was here to do and that he was reading excerpts from the Audit Commission's report.

**7.5** RB continued to ask SK questions to which SK informed MA that he would not be able to answer and that he would continue with the rest of the paper.

**7.6 (page 22)** CG asked if Partners void properties are certified as complete before people are able to bid on them under the Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

SL explained that they are not complete before people can bid on them as this happened to her neighbour.

CG pointed out that lessons could be learnt from this area of dissatisfaction.

**7.7** At this point in the meeting MR began to ask SK questions regarding the financial circumstances surrounding one of United House's contractors before the PFI contract was awarded.

MA explained that these issues would need to be added to AOB and that the Forum could not function properly if members did not abide by the protocol.

**7.8** CG asked SK if there was any intention to publish the Forum's feedback in the white unnumbered pages at the beginning of the booklet. CG pointed out

that only 2 lines of feedback was featured; he said this was an insult to the Forum's work.

SK explained that this feedback was on the consultation items and that the panel takes a general view. He agreed that feedback is an issue that needs to be looked at.

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## **8. Equalities and Diversity Update**

**8.1** EB introduced item and explained that he would be bringing the Equality and Diversity Plan and the position statement to the next meeting. EB also said that he would like to get input from the forum for next year's plan at the next forum meeting.

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## **9. Any Other Business**

**9.1** SL explained that she has heard about the Government's Energy Efficiency Programme. SL would like to know how far this will be implemented in Partners properties.

**9.2** RB pointed out that the forum have established that Partners properties are owned by Islington Council, as agreed by SK, however he has a letter with him from Bob Gilbert which states that due to the fact that Partners properties are not owned by the Council, he would not be awarded a grant. RB explained that he wanted someone in the room to respond to Mr. Gilbert's letter.

EB agreed to respond on behalf of RB. **(Action EB)**

**9.3** CG asked what the decision on the Leasehold Management Fee is now, as a result of the LVT case.

EB explained that a joint statement on this is in the process of being prepared by Partners and PLAG.

CG asked to see a report on this.

**9.4** IC pointed out that he has already paid £6000-£7000 for works.

LV explained to IC that this would not have been his final account, and that if the final cost is lower, then he will be refunded.

**9.5** RB raised the issue that he was very unhappy with the entry into the building this evening as he had to stand out in the cold. RB also stated that he wants all Partners and HFI staff to wear name badges, **(Action Partners Staff)**

**9.6** IC explained that on 3 October 2008 he had a leak at his home, 4-5 weeks have now passed but the leak is still there.

CY took IC's address and committed to looking in to the problem. **(Action CY)**

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The meeting closed at 8.35pm.