

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



Minutes of the Residents Forum

Held at 6.35pm on Thursday 19 March 2009

PRESENT:

Forum Members: Georgina Galliers (GG) Chair
Muriel Duncan (MD)
Susanne Lamido (SL)
Lisa Crowley (LC)
Dawreen Charles (DC)
Sally Ingrey (SI)
Chris Graham (CG)
Dave Gorman (DG)
Chris Matthews (CM)
Chris Graham (CG)
Michael Adedeji (MA)

Observer: Rose-Marie McDonald (RM)
Mary Morris (MM)

Partners: Ed Butler (EB)
Liz Voss (LV)
Paula Redpath (PR)
Tom Irvine (TI)
Ami-Anne Spring (AS)

HFI: David Selo (DS)
Ivan Willis (IW)

**Disability Action
in Islington:** Liz Mercer (LM)

Apologies: Shirley Bryant (SB)
Suzanne Bryant (SuB)
Anne-Marie Greensmith (AG)

Item added to Agenda:

Talk given by Liz Mercer from Disability Action in Islington

LM introduced herself and the item, explaining that she worked for Disability Action in Islington (DAII).

LM advised that DAII is run by and for disabled people, and led and shaped by local disabled people. The organisation aims to give people more control over their lives, and to assist them in challenging any exclusion they experience.

DAII runs a drop-in for disabled people. The definition of disability is very broad. Anyone who has an impairment or long term illness. At the drop-in people can receive advice for any issue they may be facing, or make appointments for issues they face. This can include debt advice including rent arrears. The Citizens Advice Bureau run it, but DAII host it.

DAII has also assisted HFI and Partners in understanding how to ensure their services are accessible. This has included advice on how Partners and HFI provide information about their services, and training delivered to staff of Partners.

LM distributed some printed materials about DAII, and said she would circulate electronic versions of the documents through Partners.

GG thanked LM for her attendance, and said the Forum would like to invite her back again for another slot on the agenda.

1 – Minutes and Matters Arising

- 1.1 PR confirmed that job ISL/23537 (item 1.1) was reported as an overrun and that in this month 100% of jobs completed on time was not reported.
- 1.2 TI confirmed (item 1.2) that when minutes refer to previous minutes, the explanation will be fuller to avoid members having to refer back.
- 1.3 CG requested that details of future meetings should be under the Residents Forum Section on Partners website, as well as on the front page. **(Action Quality Team)**
- 1.4 TI apologised for the error in date details of future meetings. GG pointed out that there is no need for these dates to be shown as provisional because all members are aware that meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of every other month.
- 1.5 CG requested (item 1.4) an update on the Leasehold Management Charge. EB advised that a decision has been made and that information will be sent to Leaseholders in a newsletter. CG requested that this information should also be shared with the forum in the minutes, not by e-mail.
- 1.6 GG advised that if any information is sent by e-mail, she would like a copy to be put in an envelope and she will come and collect it from Partners office.
- 1.7 SL pointed out (item 10) that there is still no action plan for imposing tenants' conditions. EB explained that the Best Value Improvement Plan addresses this, copies of which have been given to the Forum. TI also

pointed out that during the meeting HFI will be responding on the issue of bin and bike storage.

2 – Discussion about Forum Terms of Reference

- 2.1 SL introduced item and ran through paper, explaining that she has been working on improving and updating the forum's TOF. SL told the forum that she would like to get their views on the suggested changes (marked in red on the paper). See preamble on paper.
- 2.2 TI pointed out that Forum are not able to change anything in the TOR at this meeting, due to the 14 day notice period needing to be adhered to. He explained that items can be discussed and noted, then another paper sent out and the 14 day notice period applied.
- 2.3 The following was decided by a majority vote -
- The venue for the meeting should change to Islington Town Hall
 - Name tags and table cards will be provided
- 2.4 After further conversation it was decided that the Forum would hold another meeting on 2 April 2009 at Partners Colebrooke Place Office, to discuss these issues fully and in more depth. The Forum advised that they do not want any members of Partners or HFI staff to be present.

3 – Works Team Update

- 3.1 LV introduced item and paper and asked the forum if they had any questions.

No questions were asked.

4 – Works Team Door Pack. What information should go in the door pack?

- 4.1 LV introduced the item and paper.
- 4.2 LV advised the Forum that sample door packs were available to look at on the table. This included the 1st Visit Pack and the Door Pack. LV told the group that a new DVD will also be available within 2-3 weeks.
- 4.3 LV invited the Forum to look at the Residents Forum paper draft and come back to her with any comments or suggestions.
- 4.4 SL requested a copy of the Residents Forum document, not a PDF version. **(Action LV)**

5 – Key Performance Indicator Summary

- 5.1 TI introduced the item and paper, and asked the Forum if they had any questions.
- 5.2 GG advised that after contacting Partners to book Gas Safety Checks for herself and a neighbour, she received a letter 2 days later advising her to book the appointments; she called again and confirmed the appointments had already been booked. 10 days later her neighbour received a letter advising that Partners were going to take her to court because no appointment had been made. GG explained that her neighbour was upset and worried by this.
- 5.3 TI advised that this will be investigated and Partners will report back. (Action TI)

6 – HFI consultative panels central papers

- 6.1 DS Introduced the item and paper.
- 6.2 DS referred the forum to the paper *Questions Arising from Area Panels* and pointed out the Council's response to Partners question on bicycle storage.
- 6.3 DS advised that on instruction from the Government, all rent increases have been frozen, tenants will be notified of this if they have not already been.
- 6.4 SL asked DS about the new regulation in place for pensioners to receive a £100 Council Tax rebate.

DS advised that new Council Tax bills will explain any rebates.

- 6.5 DS advised that dates, times and venues for future meetings can be decided at the meeting tonight.

The Forum agreed that future meetings will be held on the 3rd Thursday of every other month at Islington Town Hall.

- 6.6 GG asked DS why the Forum needs the whole HFI consultative panel booklet, when only a few pages of it concern Partners residents.

DS advised that he understands the frustration, and that he will take this back to HFI. **(Action DS)**

- 6.7 CG commented that if any residents wanted to form a TRA, then it should not be the landlord that determines the constitution (pg 11).

DS agreed that the wording is incorrect and that it should read Review of Tenant and Residents Association '**Model**' Constitution. DS explained that the idea of the model is to encourage more TRA's to set up.

6.8 GG referred to 4.1 (pg 11 item 4.1)) and asked DS who ran the petition?

DS confirmed that he would take the question back to HFI and provide an answer. **(Action DS)**

6.9 SL asked DS if the training (pg 21) applies to Partners residents?

DS explained that this would depend on the item and that he would find out. **(Action DS)**

IW pointed out that the training generally does apply to Partners residents as well.

6.10 SL advised that she attend the Local Conversation (pg 11 item 3.4) at the Emirates. She was embarrassed that Partners were low on ticks compared to other RSL's and Landlords.

6.11 The majority of the Forum agreed that the diagram of HFI's finances (pg 35) was not helpful and that there is insufficient information. The Forum were dissatisfied that there are no figures to back up the diagrams, and that there is no mention of Partners.

DS explained that the diagram was not intended to go in to detail, but to simplify using bullet points, as finances can be very complicated.

EB suggested that DS takes the feedback back to HFI. **(Action DS)**

Comfort break 8.00pm – 8.10pm

Muriel Duncan leaves meeting due to work commitments

7 – Forum Agenda Forward Plan

7.1 TI introduced the item and paper.

7.2 TI advised the Forum that the idea of the item was enable Forum members to decide agenda items for future meetings. TI pointed out that there are already 2 items on the plan, Repairs and Sustainability.

7.3 GG advised the Forum that IW has provided a list of suggested topics. EB emphasised that these are suggested topics and that the Forum are welcome to choose other items if they wish.

7.4 The following items were chosen by majority vote, as key items for forward planning at the moment (provisionally):

- Quality of refurbishment work. Continue with quarterly reports/May meeting
- Repairs Audit – March 2010
- Leasehold Services (and charges)

- 7.5 MA asked if there will be the facility for residents to track repair progress online.

PR advised that repairs can be reported online, but that the option to track the progress will not be available.

- 7.6 CG requested that there is some flexibility in the planning to ensure that any new Forum members are given the opportunity to decide and be included as well.

8 – Annual Service Plan 2009 / 2010 – further opportunity for comment

- 8.1 EB introduced item, advising members that the draft plan has now been posted to all members. EB asked if there were any final comments.

The Forum had no comments.

9 – Partners Corporate Social Responsibility activity

- 9.1 TI introduced the item and paper, explaining that this is a follow up to the meeting in November, where Forum members asked Partners to provide a summary report on actions Partners are taking to promote sustainability.

- 9.2 GG asked who at Partners has been offering work placements.

TI advised that the Works Team and the Repairs team are looking at opportunities to do this.

- 9.3 PR confirmed that the Repairs Team have recently taken on 2 apprentices; one of them is from the Islington area. The Repairs Team have also contacted local schools offering site and office opportunities.

- 9.4 SL advised that work experience is carried out by year 10 students every year. SL asked if Partners can identify what places are available (how many and what they involve) and feed this back.

TI confirmed that Partners could report on this again with more information.

10 – Any Other Business

- 10.1 SL raised the issue of combination boilers being installed during the refurbishment process.

TI explained that the type of boiler installed is dependant on the water pressure in the individual property and residents are consulted. TI

advised that he will get feedback on this from the Works Team. **(Action TI)**

- 10.2** EB asked the Forum if they like the satisfaction card example passed around at the beginning of the meeting.

The Forum agreed by majority that they did like the card, but that question on Ethnicity is irrelevant.

- 10.3** IW pointed out that LM from DAII spoke about building our knowledge base and understanding our resident's accessibility needs. IW explained that when we analyse the information, we are trying to see who is dissatisfied.

- 10.4** GG commented that 9 out of 10 people reporting repairs are known to Partners and that Partners should be aware of their needs already.

- 10.5** MA commented that in the middle of a repair, the repair is the most important thing.

- 10.5** CG advised that he thinks IW's point is relevant, and that other areas are missing from the form, such as language.

- 10.6** SL said that she thinks the form is an insult and that she would not fill it in.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.