



Housing Management User Panel

Board Room, Tarka Housing

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 20 July 2010 at 11am

Present: Paul Raeburn (Chair), Alister Gillies (for agenda item 4) (Tarka Housing)
John Sanders, Mick Bentley, Peter Thompkins, Eileen Brown,
Tony Walker, Eleanor Rogers, Carrie-Ann Persson, Pauline Davies
(Residents)
Jody Hooker (Safer North Devon)

Apologies: Cathy Martin, Kirsty Mather (Tarka Housing)

Absent: None

Minute Taker: Janet Glover/Beccy Shaw

Item		Action By and Date
1.	<p>Welcome and Introductions Paul Raeburn welcomed everyone to the re-arranged meeting and thanked the Panel for agreeing to this. Everyone present introduced themselves.</p> <p>The Panel were informed that Alister Gillies would be attending for the Resident Involvement Update only and this would be moved up the Agenda. Jody Hooker from Safer North Devon will also be attending to discuss the anti social behaviour leaflet.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies and Absentees Apologies were received from Cathy Martin and Kirsty Mather, who was in Newton Abbot today.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes of the last meeting (accuracy) This item was moved up the agenda.</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting were presented and the following amendment was noted:</p> <p>Page 4 Scrutiny Panel - should have read '<i>letters have been sent to 38 tenants requesting an expression of interest.</i>'</p>	

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4.	<p>Resident Involvement Update This item was moved up the agenda.</p> <p>Alister Gillies gave the Panel an update on the projects that he and Laura Wyatt are working on.</p> <p><u>Summer Activities Programme</u></p> <p>The programme has been sent to all tenants and leaseholders. Take-up and feedback has been very positive so far. Places have been bought on Torridge District Council's summer programme and we have sent out a number of these passes too.</p> <p>Mick Bentley questioned if grandchildren were allowed because it is not stated in the programme. Paul Raeburn replied that they were and this will be discussed with Alister Gillies and Laura Wyatt. It was agreed that a note regarding this would go to all tenants with the recruitment taster mail-out shortly being sent. This was later rescinded – see Any Other Business.</p> <p><u>United Community Centre</u></p> <p>A visit to Forches Community Centre has been arranged to see how a successful community centre operates. Committee skills training has been organised for all the committee.</p> <p>Events have been planned for children at the Centre and agencies such as Sure Start and Children's Activity Support Programme (CASP) will hopefully be using the Centre in the near future as well.</p> <p><u>Youth Forum</u></p> <p>Work is continuing and letters are due to go out to the group in the next week regarding a future meet-up.</p> <p><u>Tarka Talk Team</u></p> <p>A meeting with Housing Officers will take place on 3 August 2010 to scope out an outreach project that will focus on assessing and improving services to tenants living in outlying and other areas. The Tarka Talk Team will still be talking to tenants informally, but working in partnership with Housing Officers who will begin the appropriate processes. This will involve a bus used as a mobile office and detailed information will follow.</p> <p><u>Compact Review Group</u></p> <p>The first meeting took place yesterday, which was very productive. A tenant member will report progress to the Tenant</p>	

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	<p>Panel and update them as work progresses. The bulk of their work should be finished by the end of August with the final draft of the new Customer Involvement Agreement going to the Board for approval.</p> <p><u>Recruitment</u></p> <p>The recruitment drive is well underway. Leaflets will be sent out on 22 July 2010 to all tenants advertising three events that have been planned for August in Bideford, Torrington and Holsworthy. The theme of this will be that 'Tarka is a mirror'. Existing involved tenants are not invited. Paul Raeburn announced that to help with recruiting new tenants, extra time will be given to Tarka employees to ring around tenants publicising the events, in the evenings.</p> <p><u>Scrutiny Panel</u></p> <p>Recruitment has started. Two training events are scheduled for 26 and 28 July 2010 for those already recruited.</p> <p>Staff briefings on scrutiny and recruitment will begin from tomorrow.</p> <p><u>Active Tenants Conference</u></p> <p>An Active Tenants Group has been formed and they will be meeting on 29 July 2010 to plan a programme for the event.</p> <p><u>Communications Group</u></p> <p>The Communications Group met and approved the next edition of the Tarka Times.</p> <p>Paul Raeburn requested it be minuted that Laura Wyatt and Alister Gillies have covered a lot of work and have made significant strides in two months which the Panel need to acknowledge. The quality of their work, the programmes and the amount that they have covered within that time should be recognised.</p>	
5.	<p>Anti Social Behaviour Leaflet - Safer North Devon</p> <p>Jody Hooker introduced herself to the Panel and apologised for arriving late.</p> <p>A brief update was given on anti social behaviour and Jody Hooker asked if the Panel would be happy to have a photograph in their magazine, together with a quote.</p> <p>A photograph was taken and Pauline Davies suggested the quote 'don't suffer in silence'.</p>	
6.	<p>Matters Arising from the Last Meeting</p>	

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	<p><u>Page 1 - Paragraph 4</u></p> <p>Paul Raeburn informed the Panel that the use of the Resident Resource Room was still in discussion. Mick Bentley informed the Panel that the room has internet, but no phone line. Paul Raeburn explained that changes will be made if Tarka stay in this office. Tony Walker questioned if the Resident Resource room could be extended through to the reception. Paul Raeburn said this would be a Surveyor matter.</p> <p>There were also concerns with disabled access within Tarka. Paul Raeburn confirmed that if access was an issue for anyone then meeting venues would be moved outside of the office. Pauline Davies said that there was a room at Torridge Training that could be used by disabled tenants.</p> <p><u>Page 2 - Paragraph 1</u></p> <p>Paul Raeburn informed the Panel that the presentation on the arrears process will still be going ahead in the August User Panel meeting.</p> <p><u>Page 2 - Paragraph 5</u></p> <p>The Panel were informed that Eileen Brown and Mick Bentley will be accompanying Andrew McMurray on his Community Visits in Bideford tomorrow. Eileen Brown and Mick Bentley will feed back their opinions.</p> <p><u>Page 2 - Paragraph 6</u></p> <p>Paul Raeburn informed the Panel that the issue raised by Cathy Martin had been resolved.</p> <p><u>Page 3 - Paragraph 1</u></p> <p>Paul Raeburn advised the group that Rupert Warren came for the meeting that was arranged to take place on the 2 July 2010, but unfortunately no Panel members attended. Paul Raeburn will try to arrange another meeting.</p> <p>Tony Walker asked Mick Bentley what the main issues were with Devon Home Choice. Mick Bentley felt that the policy was discriminating and tenants were not involved with the processes. Mick Bentley questioned if Tarka Housing are breaking their policy. Eileen Brown felt that the lettings in sheltered accommodation are not always appropriate for some people and that this is Devon Home Choice getting it wrong. Paul Raeburn was called out of the meeting on an urgent matter and then returned.</p>	<p>Paul Raeburn 9 August 2010</p> <p>Eileen Brown & Mick Bentley</p> <p>Paul Raeburn</p>

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	<p>Pauline Davies felt that people still do not understand the policy and there are problems with bidding for people with children. Paul Raeburn suggested having a surgery for people to drop into and will ask Rupert Warren what other landlords are doing to address this issue. There is an article on Devon Home Choice in the next Tarka Times.</p> <p>John Sanders raised issues with Torridge District Council and banding and requested a meeting. Paul Raeburn will ask Jo Brooks to come along to the meeting with Rupert Warren.</p> <p><u>Page 3 - Paragraph 6</u></p> <p>Paul Raeburn informed the Panel that he has not yet discussed the issue of communal land with Joshua Jackson.</p> <p><u>Page 4 - Paragraph 2</u></p> <p>Eileen Brown queried when the Fuel Poverty meeting would be held in July. Paul Raeburn advised that it was now likely to take place in September. Eleanor Rogers asked if it would be possible to not book the meeting in the first week of September as she will be on holiday.</p> <p><u>Page 5 - Paragraph 2</u></p> <p>Paul Raeburn announced that the Compact Review Group is underway.</p> <p><u>Page 5 - Paragraph 3</u></p> <p>Mick Bentley felt that the Adaptations Policy is wrong in saying that Devon Care help tenants to stay in their homes. Pauline Davies felt that people who need adaptations are not always getting them and John Sanders stated that people cannot be forced out of their homes if they have security of tenure. Paul Raeburn informed the Panel that he will look at the Policy and discuss with Joshua Jackson.</p> <p><u>Page 5 - Paragraph 4</u></p> <p>Paul Raeburn informed the Panel that the permission letters will be put as an agenda item for the next meeting.</p> <p><u>Page 5 - Paragraph 5</u></p> <p>Paul Raeburn explained that the boundary hedge at Copps Close is the responsibility of the nature reserve and we will not be maintaining it. A query was raised over who would be liable if a</p>	<p>Paul Raeburn</p> <p>Paul Raeburn</p> <p>Paul Raeburn</p> <p>Paul Raeburn</p> <p>Paul Raeburn</p> <p>Paul Raeburn</p> <p>Paul Raeburn</p> <p>Paul Raeburn 9 August 2010</p>

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	<p>claim is received for injury and also if the hole next to the sewer was repaired. Paul Raeburn will look into both of these issues.</p> <p><u>Page 5 - Paragraph 7</u></p> <p>Paul Raeburn will check on the outcome of the issue of rubbish in gardens at Morwenna Park Road that was raised at the previous meeting.</p>	<p>Paul Raeburn</p> <p>Paul Raeburn</p>
7.	<p>Grounds Maintenance Review</p> <p>Paul Raeburn informed the Panel that Emma Govier is putting together a brief on how grounds maintenance can be managed. The current grounds maintenance contracts will end in March and May 2011 and the contractors have been informed that we will be leaving the contract.</p> <p>Emma Govier will need some tenants to be involved with the project and Paul Raeburn asked if anyone was interested. Mick Bentley and Pauline Davies put their names forward.</p> <p>Peter Thompkins advised that there have been seven cuts at Chubb/Churchill to date. The cuts have been undertaken every three weeks and nearly into the fourth week and questioned whether twenty cuts would be possible. Mick Bentley stated that a cut was missed to the rear of the properties by him.</p>	
8.	<p>Tenant Services Authority</p> <p>Paul Raeburn informed the Panel that following their visit, the Tenant Services Authority were happy that the majority of promises made to tenants were met and there was no cause for concern.</p>	
9.	<p>Fuel Poverty</p> <p>This agenda item was addressed in 'Matters Arising'.</p>	
10.	<p>Performance Report - Year End 2009/2010</p> <p>Paul Raeburn reported that our main concerns are with former tenant arrears and garage re-lets. The rent loss was high last quarter due to the large number of long-term voids. There is now a new process for garages which should result in improvements.</p> <p>John Sanders stated that the percentage figure on Performance Indicator 10 is incorrect. Paul Raeburn will look into this.</p> <p>John Sanders felt that the target on 'average re-let times' should be 17 days.</p> <p>Peter Thompkins requested that abbreviations be listed on the report to refer to. This was agreed.</p> <p>John Sanders stated that the number in 'percentages of tenants satisfied with lettings process' was for tenants who have moved. This figure does not include people who are on Devon Home</p>	<p>Paul Raeburn</p> <p>Paul Raeburn</p>

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	<p>Choice. We need to include these people instead of just the tenants who have been involved with successful lettings; a statistic is needed for the Devon Home Choice. Paul Raeburn will speak to Rupert Warren to see what survey he is using and report back to the Panel.</p> <p>Paul Raeburn informed the meeting that we cannot stipulate that everyone is unhappy with Devon Home Choice because there have been issues raised with the system.</p>	Paul Raeburn
11.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Paul Raeburn advised the Panel that there had been an issue at Hillgarden Close where a tenant had died and was not found for a period of time. This issue has been reported in the press. Procedures are being reviewed and meetings taking place with Support Advisors to ensure that they have a better understanding of what actions to take in future. A meeting was held with residents following the incident where Paul Raeburn, Andrew McMurray and Caroline Pittwood addressed any worries the tenants may have had.</p> <p>Paul Raeburn advised the Panel that he will distribute copies of the Terms of Reference at the end of this meeting for them to look at in time for next month's meeting.</p> <p>Eileen Brown felt that Support Advisors should be checking on tenants that they are not sure of, even if they have declined visits. John Sanders explained that precautions have to be taken because there are procedures that need to be followed in cases of a death. Eileen Brown informed the Panel that the pull cords work very well. Tony Walker requested clarification of why the Scheme Managers were stopped and Paul Raeburn gave an explanation of the Sheltered Housing Review.</p> <p>John Sanders requested the report following the service charge review meeting. Paul Raeburn will follow this up.</p> <p>John Sanders raised an issue regarding 2 Sandford Gardens where the property is advertised on Devon Home Choice with a much lower service charge than his own property. Paul Raeburn will look into this and advise John Sanders.</p> <p>Mick Bentley raised an ongoing issue at Chopes Close where a trailer is parked on a piece of land that the tenant claims to own. If this is the case, why is Tarka Housing cutting the grass? Paul Raeburn will investigate this issue and report back to the Panel.</p> <p>Paul Raeburn advised the Panel that he was called out of the meeting to discuss the issue of grandchildren attending the Summer Play programme. A lengthy discussion took place and it</p>	<p>Paul Raeburn</p> <p>Paul Raeburn</p> <p>Paul Raeburn</p>

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	was agreed that no grandchildren would be allowed to attend the Summer Play Programme. The note referred to earlier in the meeting will no longer be sent out.	
12.	Date, Time and Venue of the Next Meeting Monday, 9 August at 10 am in the Board Room, to be Chaired by Kirsty Mather.	
13.	Feedback on Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting went well • Prefer the earlier time of 10 am 	

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