

TENANTS', LEASEHOLDERS' AND RESIDENTS' CONSULTATIVE FORUM MINUTES

8 JULY 2015

Chair: * Councillor Glen Hearnden

Councillors: * Mrs Camilla Bath * Manjibhai Kara
* Ms Pamela Fitzpatrick

* Denotes Member present

54. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note that no Reserve Members were in attendance.

55. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Declarations of Interest made by Members.

56. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of 28 April 2015 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

57. Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put, or petitions or deputations received at this meeting.

RESOLVED ITEMS

58. Harrow Weald Tenants' and Residents' Association

The Chair of Harrow Weald Tenants' and Residents' Association gave a verbal presentation regarding local activities, which included the following:

- Harrow Weald Tenants' and Residents' Association met at the Good News Church Hall and the Julie Cook Community Centre on Augustine Road;
- local activities included a weekly coffee morning on Mondays, and Keep Fit sessions for the over-50s on Tuesdays;
- Harrow Weald Tenants' and Residents' Association selected a charity to support every year, and this year's charity was the London Air Ambulance;
- Harrow Weald Tenants' and Residents' Association events, meeting dates and activities were advertised on notice boards around the area;
- Housing Officers and the police regularly attended the meetings, so residents had an opportunity to get issues resolved;
- The Young Gardeners had won awards in last year's Estates in Bloom competition, and the Association hoped to win more awards for the estate this year.

The Chair of Weald Village Tenants' and Residents' Association gave a verbal presentation regarding the "Pocket Park", which included the following:

- the Association had applied for a Mayor Of London Grant to build a pocket park on an empty patch of grass in 2012, but had been unsuccessful;
- they had been successful upon their second application, and the local community had contributed to the pocket park;
- the 23rd Harrow Cub Scouts had achieved their Gardening Badge from their work on the pocket park.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted.

59. Be Dog Smart - Dogs Trust

The Education and Community Officer from Dogs Trust gave a verbal presentation about the work of Dogs Trust and important information for dog owners or those considering dog ownership. The presentation included the following:

- Dogs Trust was the largest animal welfare charity in the UK, with 22 homing centres;
- services provided by Dogs Trust included free workshops for dog owners, vouchers for vets' bills, and veterinary care for dogs whose owners were homeless;
- microchipping of dogs was mandatory, and was available for free at all Dogs Trust centres;
- dog fouling could incur an on-the-spot fine of eighty pounds;
- Dogs Trust had a fostering programme for dogs who needed looking after for a short amount of time, but they do not offer a kennels service.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

60. Building Awareness about Child Sexual Exploitation

An Officer presented a verbal report and presentation to raise awareness about child sexual exploitation (CSE), which included the following:

- the community played a key role in protecting children from CSE, and there were also many agencies working together to help;
- CSE could happen in different ways, and children could be groomed through social media;
- CSE was widely underreported, particularly by victims who were boys and those from ethnic minority groups;
- grooming by groups or gangs had increased, and victims were getting younger;
- abusers would treat the young people like adults to try and control them;
- children and young people who are being exploited may feel like they have no one to talk to about what is happening to them, and may be more likely to use drugs and alcohol;
- changes in a young person's behaviour such as becoming withdrawn and irritable, missing school and coming home late, could be warning signs for possible exploitation;

- Internet Service Providers were able to block websites, but websites could easily be re-opened under a different name;
- it was important for parents to be vigilant about children's internet use, and children often had smartphones and tablets that they would carry with them everywhere.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

61. Developing a New Housing Website With Your Help

The Web Development Team presented a verbal report and consultation exercise about the development of a new housing website, which included the following:

- the new website would contain personalised information for residents such as rent balances and a repairs tool;
- there would also be separate portals for Housing Benefit and Leaseholders;
- the repairs tool would allow residents to click on a picture of a room, then click on a picture of the item that needed to be repaired;
- repairs could be logged and tracked using the tool;
- the housing website would also feature information about local events, tailored to each user;
- other channels of communication would remain open for people without internet access.

Attendees completed the consultation exercise with the help of Officers.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted.

62. Housing News Update

An Officer presented a verbal report to update attendees on Housing News, which included the following:

- a few of the Estate Services Team were office-based, and the remaining staff worked on the estates, tidying communal areas and reporting outstanding repairs;
- the Estate Services Team were also responsible for the hire of eight community halls across the Borough, which could be hired by members of the public;

- staff from the Public Realm Team and Members of Tenants' and Residents' Associations assisted the Resident Services Team with cleaning up and improving an estate;
- for residents in sheltered housing accommodation, extra care and support was available for those over 60 or with additional health needs;
- Support Coordinators were available for home visits for residents in sheltered accommodation;
- £23 million per year was collected in rent, and help was available for people struggling to pay their rent;
- Tenancy Management staff were available to ensure residents were abiding by their tenancy agreements;
- the Tenancy Fraud team would investigate any reports of fraud or sub-letting.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted.

63. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Tenants', Residents' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum would be 6 October 2015 at Rooks Heath College, Eastcote Lane, HA2 9AH.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.05 pm, closed at 9.10 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR GLEN HEARN DEN
Chair