

TENANTS', LEASEHOLDERS' AND RESIDENTS' CONSULTATIVE FORUM MINUTES

10 DECEMBER 2014

Chair: * Councillor Glen Hearnden

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

* Denotes Member present
Denote category of Reserve Members
† Denotes apologies received

21. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Manjibhai Kara

Councillor Jean Lammiman

22. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that no interests were declared.

23. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of 7 October 2014 be deferred to the next meeting of TLRCF to allow them to be cleared by Harrow Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations.

24. Public Questions

25. Petitions and Deputations

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions or deputations were received at this meeting.

RESOLVED ITEMS

26. Fire Safety

The Chair of the Forum advised that the guest speaker, Borough Commander Richard Claydon, was unable to attend as he was needed to attend to a large fire in Burnt Oak Broadway. The Chair also advised that the Fire Service dispensed a lot of free advice, and would be happy to conduct home visits to advise tenants, residents and leaseholders about the best ways to keep their homes at a minimum risk of fire.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be deferred to a future meeting of Tenants', Residents' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum.

27. Moving From Decent Homes to Better Homes Standard

An Officer introduced a Tenants' and Residents' Association representative to begin the report of the move from the Decent Homes to Better Homes Standard.

The report included the following:

- There had been two consultations led by the Asset, Data and Planning Team, and they had taken into account suggestions from tenants, including making properties more secure, warmer and to install higher quality bathroom and kitchen refurbishments. Storage and accessibility issues were also raised.
- The Better Homes Standard would launch in April 2015, and would focus on family wellbeing and energy efficiency;
- The current quality of homes in Harrow provided scope for an ambitious programme, the crux of which would be refurbishment and regeneration as well as improving the external environment of Harrow homes;

- Examples of innovative improvements included a stopcock mains water button to turn off the water to the property, this would save water and was low maintenance;
- External wall insulation and rain-screen cladding would significantly improve the thermal efficiency of properties;
- Passive ventilation systems, which would require virtually no maintenance, could reduce condensation in a property by up to 97%;
- Motion sensor lighting in communal areas would be a low-maintenance and low-cost way to light communal areas;
- A live interface would be developed for tenants, residents and leaseholders to communicate directly and efficiently with the Asset, Data and Planning Team on improvements to, or surrounding their homes and this would be developed in the following year;
- The thresholds for modernisation were being reduced, from 40 years to 30 years for bathrooms and from 30 years to 20 years for kitchens.

After taking questions from tenants and residents, an Officer advised that:

- All bathroom suites were fitted with layouts that complied with the law;
- All upgrades of television aerials had already taken place;
- Renovation and repair work would be carried out with long-term sustainability in mind, and structural issues would also be taken into account;
- The energy efficiency of homes in Harrow was above the national average;
- The £15000 cap on repair bills for leaseholders would not apply to homes being repaired under the Better Homes Standard, as the cap is only applied when general funding is used but the Better Homes improvement works would be funded from the Housing Revenue Account;
- Tenants' and Residents Associations and the tenants and residents themselves would be encouraged to communicate with Resident Involvement about specific aspects of their environment that needed to be improved.

28. Resident Scrutiny Panel Update

The Interim Chair of the Tenants' and Residents' Scrutiny Panel presented a report, which included the following:

- The Scrutiny Panel decided what aspects of housing and delivery they wanted to scrutinise, and could take suggestions from residents;
- A door-knocking survey undertaken by the Scrutiny Panel regarding estate inspections had revealed that many of the tenants and residents surveyed had not heard of estate inspections;
- Safety, parking, cleanliness and maintenance were topics that had been highlighted by residents as areas that ought to be scrutinised;
- The findings of the Panel were presented to Officers of the Council, who were obligated to consider the findings and report back on whether or not recommendations had been accepted, with the reasons for those decisions;
- Tenants and residents were encouraged to join the Scrutiny Panel.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted.

29. Awards and Recognition

A representative from Honeybun Tenants' and Residents' Association gave a recap of the presentation given at the October meeting of TLRCF. The team of volunteers involved in the Day of Action had since been nominated for a Harrow's Heroes Award.

Certificates were presented to the team of volunteers to recognise their hard work in organising the Day of Action on Honeybun Estate and to congratulate them on their nomination for a Harrow's Heroes Award.

RESOLVED: That the awards and recognition be noted.

30. Suggestions for agenda items for next meeting

Suggestions were made for the agenda of the next meeting of Tenants' Leaseholders' and Residents' Consultative Forum:

- Plans for a derelict site on Kenmore Park Estate;
- A report on the rat problem experienced in some areas and whether this affected the whole borough.

RESOLVED: That these items be included on the Agenda of a future meeting of Tenants' Leaseholders' and Residents' Consultative Forum.

31. Any Other Urgent Business

RESOLVED: To note there was no other urgent business to be discussed.

32. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 10 February 2015.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.10 pm, closed at 9.00 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR GLEN HEARNDEN
Chair