

MINUTES OF RESIDENTS' FORUM

Wednesday 16th September 2009



Present: James Scott - Resident Involvement Officer
Sally Thirkettle - Housing Manager
Mr B Cotier
Mrs J Simmons
Mr J Simmons
Mrs S Woods
Mr F Woods
Mrs P Kemp

1. INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES

James asked all attendees to introduce themselves. Apologies were received from D. Fitt, R. Beady, A. Rogers, Leigh Tate (Customer Services Manager) and Michael Andrews (Board Member)

2. FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Garden – Laing Road

James advised all that he and Pamela Sadler, the resident in question's Housing Officer, had brought this matter to a conclusion which both addresses the residents' initial concerns and provides increased facilities (namely a clothes drying area) for himself and three neighbours.

Meadow View, St Osyth

Laura Twitchett, Housing Officer, has written to all residents in the area about residents leaving their rubbish out at an appropriate time. Residents reported that this seems to have had the desired effect.

On the issue of youth's behaviour and PCSOs attending at the wrong time of day, Laura has advised the residents in question that the best course of action is to approach PCSOs themselves and explain the situation.

The issue around washing lines has now been resolved and a third line reinstalled.

C-Mail Handy Hints

Unfortunately there was no room for any 'handy hints' in the last C-Mail but this is still considered to be a good idea and will be followed up when space allows

Ewer Court

Clare Bennett, Housing Officer, has been informed about visitors to Scope often knocking on the wrong door by mistake.

Greenstead Rubbish Collection

The latest edition of C-Mail featured an ad for the British Heart Foundation who will collect some unwanted items for free. Other opportunities for free collection will be promoted in the future.

3. COLNE WEBSITE

James asked residents whether they had looked at the revamped Colne website (www.colnehousing.co.uk) and whether they had any ideas for improvements or additions. Some residents do not have internet access and others had not looked at the new website. One resident that had looked at the site said that she thought it was a big improvement. James asked all residents that were able to familiarise themselves with the website and to let him know if they felt they would like to see something on there which is not already in place.

4. HOW ARE WE DOING?

James and Sally talked through some of the Society's performance figures covering areas such as Customer Services efficiency, estate services resident satisfaction, complaints, rent arrears, day to day repairs done within target time, anti social behaviour and voids. Discussion ensued around various areas and residents were pleased that Colne is largely hitting its targets (or appears on course to do so) and that its recording mechanisms are increasingly robust.

5. POLICY REVIEWS

Tenancy Sustainment Policy

Sally informed residents about proposals for a Tenancy Sustainment Policy and the reasons behind such a policy. Discussion ensued around the various issues people may have and residents said that they felt that finding out about specific issues and supporting residents to sustain their tenancy was very worthwhile. Residents agreed that the policy is fine in its proposed form. Residents were asked to get in touch if they subsequently thought of anything that had been missed or that they were unhappy about.

Policy for Compulsory Moves to Alternative Accommodation

Sally outlined the existing policy and directed residents to the proposed additions that she had highlighted in italics. Residents were in full agreement with proposed amendment 3.1 – *“In certain circumstances the Society may not be able to carry out remedial works that are not structural but require the property to be vacant. These works could include, but are not exhaustive, repairs such as damp proofing, repairs to items damaged because of flood, fire etc”* and felt it was a sensible addition. Discussion ensued around the small amendment to 4.2.1 and it was then agreed to be a reasonable precaution, although it was unlikely that it would be enforced.

Anti Social Behaviour Policy

Sally informed all that she was due to review the Society’s Anti Social Behaviour Policy and discussion ensued about what constitutes ASB. Sally asked that residents pick their highest three priorities from a list of seven in order to get some idea about what residents felt were the most important things to consider when reviewing the policy. This, along with the results of the recent ‘Our Priorities 2009/10’ survey, will help to inform the review of this policy. The three areas residents picked as being the highest priorities were (in order):

1. Update website to enable ASB reporting
2. Use of ASB hotline
3. Update leaflets to outline what has happened to various cases

6. BUSINESS PLANNING – DISCUSSION OF ‘OUR PRIORITIES’ SURVEY RESULTS

James talked residents through a brief overview of the results of the ‘Our Priorities 2009/10’ survey that was sent to members of the Society’s Survey Panel. Residents spoke of the importance of choice in large works programmes (e.g. kitchen or bathroom renewals, painting etc) and how it is not just choice of parts and colours that is important but input into the design aspects (especially with kitchens and bathrooms). On the subject of energy efficiency, Mr Simmons suggested fitting timer switches in communal areas that would stay on for a few minutes and then turn themselves off. Residents were also in agreement with the results of the survey inasmuch as updating anti social behaviour complainants on the progress of their case is considered very important, especially as some cases can take quite a while to resolve if court action is necessary. Residents views were largely in accord with the survey results and it was felt that this was a useful exercise to help Colne set its business planning priorities.

7. PAYING THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

James reminded all about the issue raised in the latest edition of C-Mail – i.e. whether Colne should pay the Chairman of its Board of Management (which currently consists of unpaid volunteers). Due to a lack of time, discussion was limited on this subject (although one resident did say that as the Chairman put in a considerable amount of hours each month a payment may not be bad idea). However, a flyer was handed to each attendee containing details about this issue and residents were asked to give the matter some consideration and let us know if they had any further thoughts on the matter.

8. RESIDENT 'ROUND UP'

CONFIDENTIAL – full minutes only available to attendees.

9. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

16th December 2009. Sam's Hall, Imperial House, Rosemary Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, CO15 1NZ