

Tenant & Leaseholder Panel

Meeting held on Tuesday, 16 April 2019 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Marilyn Smithies (Chair);
Jill Arboine, Binta Barry, Ishia Beckford, Monica Binns, Yaw Boateng, Peter Cooper, Susan Devonish, James Gitau, Petra Johnson, Desmond Ojumu, David Palmer, Guy Pile-Grey, John Piper, Sharon Swaby, Jamil Tarik, Kim Wakely and Oriel Weekes.

Councillors Patricia Hay-Justice, Richard Chatterjee and Lynne Hale

Also Present: Councillor Alison Butler, Interim Director for Council Homes, Districts and Regeneration, Director of Housing Assessments & Solutions, Acting Head of Assets and Involvement, Regeneration Manager, Resident Involvement Manager, Senior Resident Involvement Officer.

Apologies: Teresa Cox, James Fraser, Jamil Tarik and Councillor Pat Clouder.

PART A

Before commencing the meeting, members of the panel held a minutes silence in remembrance of Bernard Daws who was a former member of the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel.

13/19 **Welcome and Introductions**

The panel members, councillors and officers in attendance introduced themselves.

14/19 **Disclosure of Interest**

There were no disclosures at this meeting.

15/19 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

16/19 **Action Plan**

The Resident Involvement Manager updated members of the panel on the following action points:

- The TOR's and KPI's of service improvement groups had been agreed following a meeting that was held with members in March 2019.
- The celebration of 100 years of council housing was being held in Croydon Town Hall, August 2019.
- Panel members would receive training questionnaires for them to fill out in the next few weeks.

17/19 **Waste Collection**

The Contracts Technical Officer informed members that:

- There are 4 contract monitoring officers who check Veolia carry out their core services of waste collection.
- Online complaints regarding refuse services increased sixfold since significant changes were made to this service area.
- In the last six months, the Council's recycling collection rates increased from 38 percent to 44 percent.
- Bin collection performance was being monitored in areas such as Fieldway, New Addington to improve communal collections and the management of refuse bins
- The Contracts team continue to liaise with the housing team and Veolia to ensure effective mechanisms are used to respond to bin queries within 48 hours
- There would be a change in bin collection days and bin crews would be made aware of which days once this had been finalised.

In response to questions, it was said that the Council would raise the member's queries with Veolia directly to find solutions and improve bin maintenance and collections. Furthermore the issue of cleaning and sweeping of residential areas and estates would be reviewed so that it is done thoroughly.

The Chair suggested that this item should be on the next agenda so that the appropriate officer could report back on the steps taken to address these issues.

Members of the panel **NOTED** this report.

18/19 **Health & Safety Panel**

The Resident Involvement Manager informed members of the work being carried out on the Health and Safety Panel. It was said that the panel's aim

was to make it easier for residents to report housing safety issues to the Council, therefore enabling residents to become more involved and knowledgeable in ensuring the safety of their homes. This would help benefit both the council and public to reduce accidents in residential buildings. Topics of discussion for the panel would include gas safety, electric safety and Asbestos amongst others.

Members of the panel also heard a proposal for setting up an online group on Facebook to help promote the group and increase the ways in which members communicate with one another. Residents who are not able to access the internet or use IT would still receive an open house newsletter and would be contacted by telephone so that their feedback is not ignored.

In response to questions, it was said that residents who join the Health and Safety Panel would definitely have a voice and their opinions would be necessary to help address safety concerns.

Members of the panel **NOTED** the contents of the report.

19/19 **Future proposals for Open House newsletter**

The Resident Involvement Manager informed members of what changes were being made to improve the Open House newsletter using a slide presentation. Officers proposed an A4 four-page newsletter instead of the A3 eight-page one which was being published. The newsletter would be printed in colour and distributed four times a year to tenants and leaseholders. Members of the panel were informed that the revised newsletter would still provide important information and would continue to be engaging for residents.

In response to questions it was said that Editorial Open House Newsletter Panel was still active and the Open House newsletter would also be circulated to local councillors and libraries.

Members of the panel **NOTED** the contents of the report.

20/19 **Scrutiny update**

Yaw Boateng informed the panel that the review for the council complaints process which the Tenant Scrutiny Panel used to identify many good ideas from other local authorities.

The aim was to have the final report completed between May and June which would then be published online.

Members of the panel **NOTED** this update.

21/19 **Resident Involvement Activity Report**

This report was attached for information only

a) London Tenants' Federation - Jamil Tarik

Absent.

b) ARCH - Yaw Boateng

The panel was informed that the next ARCH conference would be held in Brighton on 3rd October 2019. There were five spaces available and panel members were told to contact the Resident Involvement Manager if they were interested in attending.

ARCH had also met with ministry officials recently to tackle the issues of the social housing green paper. 'See the Person' (formally known as Benefit to Society) was also working to reduce the stigma associated with social housing tenants.

c) Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance (CVSA) - Guy Pile-Grey

Absent.

d) All Ages Inter-generational update and Youth Provision and Communities Fund - Sian Foley

In Sian Foley's absence, the Chair provided a summary of what work was being carried out for All Ages and Youth Services. A copy of the handout of the updates and the Community Fund Progress Report was published and circulated to panel members after the meeting.

Members of the panel **NOTED** these updates.

a) Community-led Housing

The Regeneration Manager presented a slide presentation and briefed members of the panel of how the council would help encourage Community-led Housing.

Schemes such as the Community Land Trust (CLT) and Co-housing would provide affordable homes which would be community owned and managed by residents.

In response to questions it was said that as part of the consultation, local residents would be notified and would have the opportunity to visit a Community-led housing site. Bids for these homes will be assessed

based on the how well the site works, neighbours and how it impacts the local community.

It was also stated that the pilot for community-led housing had been proposed to start this year and Cabinet approved for one-hundred percent of these homes to be affordable. The social rent levels would be determined by what type of bids the council received from resident groups.

On the subject of garden maintenance, members of the panel heard that Veolia is not responsible for the ground maintenance of residents and was now being monitored by Council staff. Officers suggested providing an outline of this function at the next meeting.

24/19 **Elections**

The Resident Involvement Manager informed members that a vote would be held to elect a new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel. The panel thanked the chair for her leadership and contribution as Chair.

Nominations for Chair were made for Yaw Boateng and Marilyn Smithies and panel members were asked to vote using ballot papers.

Members of the panel **RESOLVED** to appoint Yaw Boateng as the Chair of the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel.

Nominations for Vice-Chair were made for John Piper and Petra Johnson and panel members were asked to vote using ballot papers.

Members of the panel **RESOLVED** to appoint Petra Johnson as the Vice-Chair of the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel.

25/19 **Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 2 July 2019 at 6:30pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX.

The meeting ended at 8.38 pm

Signed:

Date: