

Cheshire Regional Consultative Committee

MINUTES

of the meeting held on Tuesday 22nd September, 2009

Present: Eric Jones, Grant McKenzie, Jean Fagan, Rachel Shearin, Margaret Frain, Alan Winchester, Stan Snowdon, Sylvia Holland, Brian Campbell, Andrei Szatkowski, Alex Morrish, John Royle, Deborah Sayers (T.S.A), Geraldine Porter (Minutes)

Apologies: Jean Fagan, Bridie O'Reilly, Bill O'Hara, Philip Bradley, Sheila Clarke

		Action
1	<p>The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming Deborah Sayers from the T.S.A.</p> <p>There had been a request from two residents (husband and wife) to become members of the RCC. Eric said that they could be invited along as Observers but that only one member per household could be a member.</p>	Geraldine
2	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved	
3	<p>Matters arising. The cheque had still not gone out to the Newton office for the successful Community Chest application. Gerry was to look into this.</p> <p>There was discussion about the resignation letter from Jack Keats which had not been sent to the CRCC as it should have been. It was decided that there was no point in pursuing this matter now but, in future, members resigning should send resignation letter to the Committee.</p>	Geraldine
4	<p>Sale and Timperley.</p> <p>Andrei apologised that progress had not been as speedy as it should have been. There had been a change of local management and there was the problem of how the local budgets are allocated to properties. There was a commitment that the transfer will happen. The residents have to be consulted. Eric pointed out that it was 12 months since this had originally been discussed and still nothing had happened. The Committee would not accept more excuses based on technicalities.</p>	Alex
5	<p>Belong Magazine</p> <p>A meeting was to be arranged with members from the Committee and Andy Carberry and the editor of Belong. Grant said there was</p>	Eric

	<p>no mention of the Cheshire website. Members wanted to know how the editorial panel was set up. It was thought that the format was o.k. but the content was poor. There were not enough contact numbers of staff and organisations. Brian had attended a focus group where they said that the plans in the pipeline to improve the magazine. The committee wanted to know if it was cost effective: it looked very expensive. Andrei said that a new group – Communications Group – had been established and Belong came under their remit now. Stan said that they needed to get a professional in to evaluate it. Andrei said that the Panel volunteers included people with a PR and Marketing background.</p> <p>6 Asset Management</p> <p>John Royle, Head of Asset Management, reported that the department had been carrying out an exercise to cleanse the data held on the properties in the various subsidiaries. Templar region was the last to be evaluated. The Group stock was in good condition overall. The Decent Homes Standard has given a benchmark to work to and Regenda were working hard to reach the standard across the Group. In the future environmental requirements will be important such as heating replacements and re-glazing of properties. Heating should be done before kitchens are put in. There had been feedback from customers about heating costs. John had organised three planning days with all the surveyors. He was aware they needed to look at gutters (cleaning and fitting deep flow gutters where necessary). This will be picked up on a cyclical and reactive basis . He said that they hadn't previously listened to customers enough and hadn't communicated what they were going to do and what they won't do - and why. He was aware that his department needed to communicate more with the Neighbourhood Officers and staff on the front line as they were the ones who were interacting with the customers and got to know what the problems were at first hand. Rachel asked about the internal painting at Greengates. For years they had been told it would and then would not be painted and it was in a bad state. John would look into it. Brian said that he had been told that gutters would be cleared prior to painting, however this hadn't always happened. Stan said that Seddons had been excellent. John said that Regenda had now entered into a three year contract with Seddons. Brian asked if Regenda adhered to national or local standards and who determines which is used. The company can be criticised but if void standards are followed exactly the cost can be too high.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Website Update</p> <p>Grant reported that the website was receiving 400-600 hits per month. It should be a channel of communication. However it needed content from staff, residents, committee members, etc.</p>	<p>John</p>

<p>8</p>	<p>On the website there was a series of links with maps, etc. He had used one of these links to report a fault at a sub-station and it was fixed in three days.</p> <p>Sheltered Single Interest Group</p> <p>Janet Hardwick's paper was explaining what the Group was and asking for someone from the CRCC to sit on the Group. The first meeting was to be at Regenda House and then it would be held at different subsidiaries. The object was to look at Sheltered Schemes. There needed to be one person from each RCC and one from a Sheltered Scheme. On 1st October it was National Older Persons' Day. The first meeting would put together the constitution and what should be discussed in the future. The first meeting was due to be held on 22nd October, 11 – 3 p.m. at Regenda House. Alan and Rachel volunteered to attend. Janet was to send a link to Grant to include on the website. There was also to be a Forum in Manchester on 9th October at the Town Hall, 11 – 3 p.m. on Unequal Ageing. If anyone was interested they should let Janet know.</p>	<p>Alan Rachel</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Community Chest</p> <p>Vicarage Way – This bid was put through by a recently formed Residents' Association on a family scheme in Macclesfield. It was for security measures to prevent ASB. There were details of the bid in the pack. The maximum amount that could be awarded was £500 and addition funding would be sourced elsewhere. Alex said he wished to support the bid. Eric said that he thought the bid should be successful and asked for a vote. Alan proposed and Stan seconded that it should be awarded. The proposal was carried.</p> <p>Priesty Fields – Alex was to visit the unsuccessful applicant from Priesty Fields and get the application changed to fit the criteria. If it was sorted it could probably go to the next informal meeting and be passed there. There was still £7,000 in the pot. Alex would provide information for the next CRCC meeting of the total, the reducing total and the geographical spread of the funding. He pointed out that not all the bids needed to be for gardening projects as the majority had been so far.</p>	<p>Alex Alex</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>TSA-CRCC</p> <p>Stan had prepared a report (Response to Consultative Document 2) to be sent to the TSA and he did a brief presentation on the report. (See attached Response).</p> <p>Stan said that residents had been frustrated that things did not</p>	

happen as per the Cave report. Now we had the TSA and residents were looking to them to help sort problems. Residents had seen the development of tick box strategies. He felt that Management had formed the RCCs to tick a box. Members of the CRCC had been waiting for some information from Regenda for up to 12 months. There was poor communication which engenders poor motivation amongst members of the RCCs. There should be national benchmarks – e.g. complaints statistics - then management could assess themselves against the national standards. There should also be a change in the management process. The leadership style should be addressed. The approach has to be rigorous and systematic. The TSA should be resourced properly and there will be a cost implication. The CRCC were looking to the TSA to help improve performance and identify .key performance areas for individual housing providers. They should agree objectives and accountability. The biggest problem as Stan saw it was communication – or lack of it.

Eric asked for a vote of thanks to Stan for all his hard work.

Deborah explained her role. From November she will be going out to consult with residents. Feedback will be crucial to form Standards. Tenants need to be comfortable with what Resident Involvement means. Local standards will be developed. There will be a Tenants' Standards Advisor to ensure there are no issues and no bottlenecks. The TSA will work with providers to see why requests from tenants have not been activated. There will be co-regulation in future between housing providers and the TSA. Brian asked if this wasn't a watering down of the system. Deborah said that the tenants will be telling the providers what to do and the TSA will be monitoring them. There will be a National Standard and tenants will be setting up local standards. The TSA is currently funded by the Government but the expectation is that the housing providers would have to pay in the future. Amanda Newton is leading the National Conversation. Grant said that on the TSA website it looks as though the ethos is being evolved as it goes along. Deborah was asked if the TSA would provide individual responses to complaints, etc. She said that complaints would still go the Ombudsman. However if there was a Group complaint or they identified a trend the TSA would investigate. Housing providers should be analyzing the complaints procedure. Stan said that the TSA should be able to make their own decisions and not have to go to another body. Deborah said that the TSA would have authority. If the tenants are missing out in any way the TSA will work with the Landlord and Tenant. Eric asked what would happen if Regenda was not carrying out what the residents were asking for. Deborah said that trends in performance failure would be monitored and they would intervene if necessary. Andrei said that the Regenda Complaints procedure went through three stages and ended up with the Independent Housing Ombudsman

<p>11</p>	<p>who would make a judgement. There is a time scale and judgement is binding. Grant asked about the website of the TSA and Deborah said that from December there would be a portal.. Deborah would welcome feedback. Eric thanked Deborah for attending the CRCC..</p> <p>Resident Involvement Update</p> <p>A paper was included in the pack from the Resident Involvement Team. The main pointers were: <i>RCC Expenses</i> – should be submitted to Geraldine at the Macclesfield office <i>Contractor/Customer Charter</i> – a document has been drafted for comment and will be launched in the Nov/Dec edition of <i>Belong</i>. The final document will be circulated to all RCC members, readers and email group <i>Resident Interpreters Project</i> – project is still progressing well <i>Resident Inspectors</i> – The two resident inspectors have now completed their first Quality Assurance Audit of the sign up process. <i>Communication Champions</i> – There were four expressions of interest from the leaflet in the Summer <i>BELONG</i> magazine. All of them have journalistic/editorial experience <i>Resident Scrutineers; Resident Signers</i> – still recruiting <i>Regenda VIPS</i> – Nominations will be collated by the RI team and the result will be announced in <i>BELONG</i>. <i>Financial Inclusion</i> – a report has been circulated to all RCC Members and others and comments have been fed back to Head of Business Excellence <i>Access and Customer Care</i> – a report has been circulated to all RCC members, etc. and comments fed back to Head of Business Excellence <i>TSA Update</i>- all RCC members have been provided with a summary of the TSA draft standards for their comments which are to be sent direct to the TSA <i>SSC Open Day</i> – RI team were working with SSC <i>Lettings Review</i> – Starting in August <i>Regenda Website</i> – being test driven by some residents <i>Apprenticeships</i> – 6 apprentice opportunities have been secured for younger residents with painting contractors <i>Regenda's local conversation – February 2010</i> –Progress will be reported back on a regular basis <i>Single Interest Group – Sheltered Housing</i> –Interviews for representatives from the RCCs have taken place and initial meeting is due to take place in October, '09 <i>Repairs Core Groups</i> – CORE Groups are progressing well</p>	
<p>12</p>	<p>Director's Overview – Andrei Szatkowski</p> <p>See attached report (Appendix B)</p>	

13	Neighbourhood Plan Update – Alex Morrish See attached report (Appendix C)	
14	Any Other Business There were questions about the Complaints System. Andrei said that the Management System internally has been updated. Statistical information on Complaints was being collated. RCCs would be consulted about compensation levels for monetary awards where necessary.	
15	Date of Next Meeting The date of the next informal meeting was 3/11/09 at 11 a.m.. Geraldine was asked to book Wilmslow, Parish Hall as the Library was not available. The next meeting of the full CRCC Committee was December 8 th , 2009 at Macclesfield Library.	