



Ashfield Homes Limited

Gateway Meeting

DATE: 24th August 2011

TIME: 2:00pm

LOCATION: Sherwood Room, Ashfield Homes - Head Office

PRESENT: Mr P Bingham – Assistant Director of Technical Services (Chair)
Mr K Hornsby – Tenancy Services Manager
Mrs J Mylotte – Performance and Business Improvement Manager
Ms N Walsh – Supported Housing Manager
Mrs K Dhanda – Temporary Tenant Participation Officer
Mr P Curry – Housing Management Administration Assistant (minutes)
Mrs C Kidger – Gateway Member – Kirkby
Mrs R Parsons – Gateway Member – Sutton
Mrs P Weldon – Gateway Member – Sutton
Mrs M Foster – Gateway Member – Sutton
Mr T Miller – Gateway Member – Hucknall
Mr R Pearson – Gateway Member – Huthwaite
Mrs D Woods – Gateway Member – Kirkby
Mr J Marriott – Gateway Member – Kirkby
Mrs H Sinden – Gateway Member – Hucknall
Mr J Parry – Gateway Member – Rural
Mrs C Wakefield – Gateway Member – Sutton
Mr V Foster – Gateway Member – Sutton
Cllr T Keetley – Board Member (Special Interest Observer)

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Mr A Sutton – Gateway Member – Sutton
Mr A Aram – Gateway Member - Kirkby

1. Welcome

2. Apologies

Mr K Scott – Assistant Director of Housing Services
Ms J Worthington – Tenant Participation Officer
Mr A Farquhar – Gateway Member – Sutton (resigned)

3. Introductions

4. Minutes from the previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes from the last meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Repairs and maintenance standard – Paul Bingham advised that this is outstanding, however it will be available to discuss at the next Gateway meeting.

ACTION

Re-housing homeless applicants – In response to Mr V Foster's request Kevin Hornsby advised that in the financial year of 2010/11 26 Homeless applicants were re-housed by Ashfield Homes through Ashfield District Council's lettings policy.

Transport to Gateway – Mrs P Weldon advised that she felt that it was unfair for certain members to make their own way to the Gateway and others have transport provided. Mrs Weldon, Mrs M Foster and Mr R Pearson advised that they are happy for Mr V Foster to contact them if he requires a lift. Kevin Hornsby advised that Gateway members can claim for any out of pocket expenses they incur by attending the meeting. Kevin to circulate expense policy to all members prior to the next meeting.

KH

Attendance of Elected Members/Board Members – Mrs C Wakefield stated that at the last Gateway it was raised that Members did not wish Councillors or Board Members to attend future Gateways. Kevin Hornsby advised that within the Tenant's Compact the Gateway model consists of 16 members and 4 special interest seats, where non-members can attend the Gateway as an observer, if they have a relevance to the meeting. Kevin stated that as Cllr T Keetley was an Ashfield Homes Board Member and the lead Board Member for Housing Services he was attending the meeting in the capacity of a special interest observer.

5. Purpose of the Gateway

Kevin Hornsby gave an overview of the role of the Gateway. The Gateway is a crucial part of the Company and will provide tenants with the opportunity to be involved in the decision making processes of the Company.

6. Performance Update and Future Reports

Paul Bingham advised that due to the request to review performance, using existing reporting information within Ashfield Homes, Jo Mylotte - Performance and Business Improvement Manager had been invited to the meeting to discuss performance information.

Jo Mylotte gave a presentation to the group surrounding the Performance and Business Improvement section and how performance is reported at Ashfield Homes. Good practice examples, current AHL formats and a draft performance report for Gateway were distributed to the group.

The group accepted the draft performance report for future meetings subject to:

- The inclusion of the targets.
- Percentage of tenants in arrears of £1000 or more is to be replaced with percentage of rent collected as a percentage of rent due.
- Performance report to be provided with the agenda.
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) can be scrutinised and reviewed in the future.

Jo confirmed with the group that once completed this performance report/poster shall replace the current monthly performance poster that is produced. The group agreed to have this performance report generated on a bi monthly basis.

Ashfield Standards

Kevin Hornsby advised that an update will be provided at each meeting on the Ashfield Standards, as they are our direct offer to tenants and it is the role of the Gateway to ensure we are tracked against these standards.

ASB Standard – Kevin advised that the diversionary activities have been delivered. Over 1000 tenants and residents attended four events across Ashfield. Positive feedback was received. Kevin advised that feedback and outcome reports will be produced for the next meeting.

Mr R Pearson asked if a profit and loss sheet could be produced for the Ashfield Show. Paul Bingham advised that there is a cost element for Ashfield Homes for their stand, but the main costs are incurred by ADC and therefore this would not show a true reflection.

7. Service Update – Nicky Walsh – Supported Housing Services Manager

Nicky Walsh provided a presentation to the group surrounding the Supported Housing Services section, including current services, future funding cuts and the potential for the long term future of the service. During and following the presentation Nicky took the following questions:

- Mrs C Parsons asked, “if funding for the call monitoring service ceases in 2013, will people receiving the lifeline service for free have to pay”. Nicky advised yes they would have the option of paying for the service, if they wish.
- Mr J Marriott asked, “if all current users paid for the service would it be self funding”. Nicky advised that the service would still require additional funding to continue to operate.
- Mr R Pearson, “have shared services been considered”. Nicky advised that it had been considered in the past, but no local authorities would commit to a shared service. Nicky stated that another local authority had approached AHL regarding taking on their call monitoring service. This is to be pursued further.
- Mrs C Wakefield asked, “if redundancies would be made within the Supported Housing Section”, Nicky confirmed there would be, however some positions had been ‘ring-fenced’ within the Company to minimise the impact.
- Mrs C Wakefield asked, “if the Old People’s Road shows would continue, Nicky stated that other events had replaced these e.g. Tenants Conference and that future events could be considered through the mini Gateway”.

Mini Gateway

Nicky confirmed that this is still being implemented, the level of commitment is expected to be much lower than the main Gateway, to reduce barriers to service users. Any interested parties should make their interest known to Kevin Hornsby. During the meeting Mrs M Foster, Mrs C Wakefield, Mrs D Woods and Mr V Foster indicated they would be interested in becoming members. Mr V Foster also advised that his mother would like to become a member.

8. Tenants Compact Update

Kevin Hornsby gave the group an update as follows:

- Gateway now has 14 members, two further to be recruited for Hucknall before the next meeting.
- Once the Gateway has a full complement of members, five volunteers will form the scrutiny panel.
- 4 applications have been received for Mystery Shoppers, 9 applications have been received for Tenant Inspectors and 2 applications have been received to be both. An induction is to take place 23/09/11, where an action plan/structure will be produced, which will be discussed at the next Gateway.

9. Training Needs/Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH)

Kevin Hornsby and Kiran Dhanda are to produce a training plan for Gateway members, Kevin asked members what training requirements they have.

It was agreed that training on Company/housing finance and computer skills/IT would be provided in the future. Kevin advised that there may be some additional training scheduled, some courses will be voluntary and some mandatory. Further information on training will be provided in the future.

Kevin Hornsby gave a brief overview of level 2 vocational award in community action in housing provided as part of the Active Learning for Residents scheme through the CIH. The course will run over a 6-9 month programme with AHL staff providing support to learners as recognisers. Up to 7 positions will be available, if there are more applicants than positions, a selection process will be adopted. KH advised that he would provide further information to Gateway members upon request and any interested parties should contact Kevin or Kiran directly.

10. Tenants Conference

Kevin Hornsby advised that the conference will take place 19/10/11 at the Icon Business Centre. Kevin wishes for tenant's to be involved from the start, 4 Gateway members will sit on the planning group, they will meet 6 – 7 times to plan an agenda for the event. The first meeting will take place 5 September 2011 at 10.30am. Mrs M Foster, Mr V Foster, Mrs D Woods and Mrs H Sinden volunteered to attend. Mrs Foster agreed to give Mr Foster a lift, if he called her on 04/09/11.

11. AOB

Mrs C Wakefield advised that during the pre-meeting the group agreed that at the next meeting they wished to discuss repairs, tenant cash back scheme and if time permits, Anti-Social Behaviour. Mrs Wakefield also noted that the group would prefer to discuss a smaller number of agenda items, in more depth. Paul Bingham advised that he would invite Chris Clipstone – Responsive & Voids Maintenance manager and Justin Catton – Planned, Cyclical and Estate Maintenance Manager to the next meeting and Kevin Hornsby would give an ASB update.

Mrs H Sinden asked if Paul Bingham was aware of a contractor offering burglar

alarms for £99. Paul advised that the Police offer a subsidised scheme and residents should be very careful of who they invite into their home.

Paul Bingham advised that health and safety concerns have been raised over visitors to head office leaving mobility scooters within the building. Paul asked if the weather is fine if they could be left in the secure area at the side of the building and further guidance will be sought from risk management where they can be stored if there is wet weather.

PB

Mrs P Weldon asked about a section in the tenants newsletter where net curtains are required to be fire retardant. Paul Bingham advised that these are for communal areas only, if it can't be evidenced that net curtains are fire retardant the tenant will be asked to remove them.

Paul Bingham provided an overview of one of the Company's key tasks and targets to review and investigate the possibility of implementing a more flexible repairs appointment system. PB advised that the Company already offers a morning and afternoon appointment and following investigations it would be cost intrusive to implement a new flexible appointment system.

PB sought views on this and with agreement of the Gateway proposed to cease the consideration of adopting a more flexible appointment system and to approach the current appointment system software provider to see if they can provide any further of flexibility to the current system. The Gateway confirmed that they were in agreement for Paul to proceed on this basis.

Paul will provide feedback at future meetings. Mrs C Wakefield suggested that evening and Saturday morning appointments should be better publicised. PB said that this had been openly advertised in the past, however, agreed that this could be done again in the future.

PB

Mrs C Wakefield suggested that a separate area of the website should be created, specifically for the Gateway. Kevin Hornsby advised that this already exists and that we could work with the Gateway to develop further articles.

KH

12. Future Meeting Dates and Times

Kevin Hornsby advised that the Gateway will take place on the following dates at Ashfield Homes Head Office:

Tuesday 25th October 2011 at 2pm

Tuesday 20th December 2011 at 2pm

13. Close