**RESIDENT'S FORM**

**COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**Meeting Held on: Wednesday 4th May 2016**

**At Hexagon Housing Association**

**7pm - 8.55pm**

**Present:** Valerie Oldfield (VO) - Acting Chair (AC)

Pam Daley - (PD)

Sharon McPherson - (SMcP)

Barbara Enoe - (BE)

Lorel Enoe – (LE)

Doreen Davis - (DD)

Jacqui Fergus - (JF)

Joanne Best - (JB)

Gaius Vincent - (GV)

Olga Yao - (OY)

**Also present:**

Brian Hughes – (BH) - Resident Involvement Manager – Hexagon

Tracy Inniss – (TI) – Human Resources Manager – Hexagon for item 3

Ian Watts – (IW) – Hexagon Board - Observer

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| 1. | **Acting Chairs Introduction**  The AC welcomed everybody to the meeting and ran through the agenda explaining each item. |
| 2. | **Apologies for Absence**  Received from Shona Muwanga, Sharon Brown and Mark Shaw.    The AC informed the meeting that Hasina Zuberi has resigned from the Residents Forum and from all involvement activities that she was involved in. The AC noted with concern that Hasina was the second resident in as many months to resign from the Residents Forum as well as from all involvement activities. |
| 3. | **Single Equity Plan / Equality & Diversity**  TI introduced the Single Equality Action Plan (2015/16) to the meeting.  One of the issues identified by TI was the need to extend the involvement of residents in Community Investment and resident involvement initiatives across the whole range of diverse ethnicities represented within Hexagon.  TI explained that Hexagon has extended the monitoring among its workforce to include sexual orientation and beliefs.  TI also explained that Hexagon have signed up with Stonewall’s employer code to demonstrate that Hexagon is committed to equality in the workplace  Q – Is there a diversity board for staff?  A – Where we have diversity information this is shared with employees on the staff intranet.  Q – By having such a board it would display to visitors as well as staff that Hexagon is committed to diversity.  A - The point is well made and it is something that we would consider  Q – How do you offer wider involvement of residents whilst achieving value for money?  A - We have not had to cut back on the range of community involvement work, although we’re always mindful of achieving value for money.  TI explained that Hexagon has produced new Aids &Adaptation leaflets targeted at tenants over 65 years.  Currently Hexagon are completing customer profiling to include sexual orientation and religious beliefs as currently happens for staff profiles.  Q – There’s become a trend of institutionalised stereotyping of tenants – for instance there was an interchange between two Board Members at a Board Meeting to the effect that unemployed Hexagon residents are people who do not get up until the afternoon and watch daytime television. I am also aware of how a Housing Officer spoke to tenants about arrears which wouldn’t be expected tolerated as from one adult to another  Q - Incident where a complaint should have gone to HR but it went round in circles. Therefore not confident in how Hexagon is dealing with complaints and discrimination. Institutionalised racism and discrimination stems from bad habits and bad management as it stems from the top, i.e. if not addressed properly by top management. I feel this is in Hexagon.  IW informed the meeting that even though he hasn’t been to every Board meeting in the last three years he has been to most, and in his time on the Board he has never heard anything remotely said about tenants that are alleged here.  AC suggested with regards to the feelings and comments heard here tonight, as HR Manager you may not be in the position to address all this evening, therefore, may I suggested the Mangers Diversity Working Group take the point of institutionalised stereotyping/racism, as some organisations are not even aware that they have areas of this, to look into this within Hexagon to identify further training to cover unawareness.  A – Sorry to hear the comments. All staff undertake Customer at the Heart training and staff are assessed on the basics of how they relate to residents. All staff also received equality & diversity training every two years and we are looking into expanding training of awareness. We learn from complaints so we will look into learning of that complaint and review the involvement of HR with complaints.  Q – Can E&D training be made available to RF members?  Q – It would be good for the Forum to see what the staff training entails.  A – This is something that could be arranged.  Q – How would you go about collecting profile information from unresponsive residents?  A – Sending out surveys doesn’t always get good response. At the end of the day we would have to ask residents, but we need to be clear with residents as to why we are asking for the information. We could also publicise what has come out of the results of collecting this information – the things that has been put in place.  Q – How much training do staff get and how often?  A - All new staff attend a day long E&D training and then receive refresher training every two years. Managers also get tailored refresher training also every two years.  Q – Do staff have targets and what is done if they do not meet them?  A – Yes, there are targets and objectives of different types that they should meet and if for no valid reason they are not met there could be a penalty on staff grading which would then have a impact on their pay.  Q – Experience of eight years on the Board I feel HR do a fantastic job. My concern, as it has been mentioned that it should be led from the top so do the Board E&D training?  A – Yes  Q – Through experience I feel more may be needed. Also I feel that the diversity of people on the Board also needs reviewing in order to reflect sex and BME, noticeably black males, so that if any areas of institutionalised racism this could be addressed.  Q – Would like to see the HR Managers role more prominent within Hexagon with regards to training e.g. x amount of training to reach or could take the form of undertaking mystery shopping of staff to see how they treat residents from diverse backgrounds so specific training for individuals can be identified.  A – All staff have competencies which they are assessed against annually and in those there are be respect for others, and staff are measured against these and that's how we monitor and manage staffs interactions.  Q – Suggestion – with regards to mental illness and wellbeing as more people are taking on more workloads and stress may increase so to take on wellbeing as an avenue.  TI explained how Hexagon provides awareness training for staff on religious belief and sex orientation.  Hexagon encourages partners and contractors to provide training and employment opportunities for Hexagon residents especially for young people and women. We monitor this to identify reasons if it is not working.  TI explained that Hexagon is currently reviewing the Single Equality Strategy which has been in place for three years.  Q – Do you always have the same trainer for E&D as change will incorporate all views, styles and areas?  A – We have used the same trainer for several years. She comes to us with a wealth of experience and is very good at getting key messages across. We are looking into training delivered with assistance from staff e.g. different religious backgrounds etc.  Q – Welcomes the commitment from Hexagon to hear the experience of transgender people.  Q – Do you have a Grievance Policy and procedure for staff and are there any for residents?  A – We have a grievance policy for staff and we also have Dignity at Work policy which deals with E&D issues. There is no grievance policy for residents as this will be the residents complaints policy. |
| 4. | **Resident’s Expenses Policy**  AC explained that the Forum had been consulted on the revised Policy and the response was presented at the last Forum meeting. Subsequently the AC had received the response document to the consultation which the AC then emailed to members. AC explained that some members were unclear on some points of the response. The AC felt that the Forum should give a response on the areas where the Forum felt strongly.  At the request of the AC, BH circulated copies of his response to the consultation. BH explained that the consultation at the previous RF meeting was useful as comments made had helped to shape the final version of the policy. However the consultation has now closed and the policy has been in effect since beginning of April.  The AC informed the meeting that RF members can make a formal statement about the policy to have a further voice on the travel allowance at £5 and also for an increase in vouchers for officers of the Resident Involvement groups to reflect the work that they do. The AC then opened the item up for discussion.  Once clarification was given to one member on the reason for a statement after the close of the consultation, feelings from members included: that there should be a governance budget from which the Board and the RF are financed because the Forum feeds into governance and strategy and requires resources to do so; officers of groups are becoming more pro-active and doing a lot more work and this should be reflected in the vouchers for them especially RF officers function of an elected group that will have increased responsibilities in the newly revised Forum; £5 may have been taken from travel expenses but should be added to vouchers as we are VFM; are we able to show that we are VFM to residents; does Hexagon view the RF as VFM.  BH responded to one question. The question was that the RF member felt that the priorities in the policy are all wrong and asked why do Residents Inspectors get £10 for an inspection and the Readers Panel get £20 for attending a meeting? BH response was that there is a misunderstanding here. The £10 for the Residents Inspectors wasn’t for the inspection but for attending a one-off meeting to be informed of the final outcome of an action plan. This is in accordance with the policy.  The AC invited BH to respond to the general discussion. BH said that he was mystified why this was even on the agenda and was concerned that the RF had wasted 25mins of its time discussing this when there’s more pressing matters such as the General Meeting on 4th June.  The AC called for a vote on whether the RF should have a formal record of statement on the Residents Expense Policy?  FOR – 8  AGAINST – 0  ABSTAINED – 1  Carried. |
| 5. | **RFC Draft RF Documents**  Draft Constitution  The AC announced that if any members had any comments to make on the draft constitution to let her know. The AC then explained that she had rewritten one section and added a new section to the draft. These sections were “Liaising With Hexagon's Board” and “Liaising With Involved Residents And Resident Involvement Groups”  BH said that there are some repetitions and offered to tidy up the document then email it to RF members along with V.5 of the document. The tidied up version would then become V.6. The offer was agreed by the meeting.  Draft Standing Orders and Draft Code of Conduct  The AC took the meeting through the additions she had made to the drafts of the Standing Orders and the Code of Conduct.  IW excused himself from the remainder of the meeting as he had a train to catch. The AC and members thank IW for attending the meeting.  Draft Nomination & Election Process  The AC read out recent amendments that she made to the document.  A member pointed out a change to a statement in the document and expressed dissatisfaction with the amendment that says “There shall be no more than one Forum member from the same household” and questioned where was this agreed?  The AC halted the member from continuing as the time was 20:56, but the member felt passionate about this point and continued which resulted in other members talking and the meeting descended into disorder. The AC halted the meeting. The remainder of item 5 and the rest of the agenda were not discussed. |