

Tower Shared Owners Forum

Notes of the meeting held 26 February 2008, Trafalgar Hotel, 2 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2TS

Present: Steve Nunn, Kevin Jones, John Barr, Peter Brewer (Tower Homes) Irene Addis (L&Q Resident and Chair of the Group Residents Board) Julia Gooch, Kirsten Downer, David Fisher, Paul Sannett, Christine Eyers, Mary Wigzell, Helen Beatty, Shirley Spooner (Tower Residents)

Apologies: Swasi Maini (Tower Resident)

	Item	Action
1.	<p>Resident Involvement structure across the Group</p> <p>Steve provided the Forum with some background information about Tower Homes and its position within the London & Quadrant Group. He also outlined the new Governance structures that are now operating in the Group which give residents a much greater role in influencing the business of the organisation.</p> <p>Irene Addis was then invited to say a few words about Resident Involvement within the Group and the role of the L&Q Group Residents Board, which she Chairs, and which in future will also be attended by the Chair of the TSHO.</p> <p>Steve asked Forum members who are interested in becoming the Chair and Vice-Chair of the TSOF to drop Peter an e-mail to put themselves forward and explain why they believe they are suitable for these positions.</p>	
2.	<p>Draft Tower Shared Owners Constitution</p> <p>Kevin Took the Group through the draft TSOF Constitution and invited the Forum to comment on the draft. The following points were made:</p> <p>Bridged pointed out that Section 6 –<i>Selection of Chair and Vice Chair</i>, was contradictory in that it stipulates that the Chair and Vice Chair can only serve for 3 years. Yet it then goes on to say that the holders of these positions cannot stand for more than 3 consecutive 3 year terms! Tower Officers acknowledged the error and will consider a solution which will be put to the Forum.</p> <p>David suggested that section 4 i) of the draft constitution could be tidied up by scrapping the words that are currently in the document and replacing them with the following paragraph:</p> <p><i>'Members of the Forum will serve for a maximum period of 3 years. Members are bound not to contravene the equal Opportunities Statement, Confidentiality Declaration or Code of Conduct in any way. The Chair and Vice Chair reserve the right to revoke membership of the Forum and will inform the member(s) concerned in writing. Their decision will be final and not subject to appeal.'</i></p>	SN, KJ, JB, PB

2. Cont	<p>Members are asked to consider this change and unless there are any objections, which should be brought to Peter's attention, this amendment will stand.</p> <p>Kirsten asked whether it would be possible to have rotating Chairs and Vice Chairs to share the responsibility of having to attend additional L&Q Resident Board meetings. This point will be considered by Tower Officers to explore the viability of this suggestion for this to be discussed and agreed by the Forum.</p> <p>Paul stated the need for a Vision Statement for the TSOF, which could be inserted at the top of Section 3 – <i>Aims and objectives of the TSOF</i>, and which would clearly define the role of the Forum. This point will be considered by Tower Officers to explore the viability of this suggestion for this to be discussed and agreed by the Forum.</p>	<p>All Forum members</p> <p>SN, KJ, JB, PB</p> <p>SN, KJ, JB, PB</p>
3.	<p>Tower's Draft Resident Involvement Statement</p> <p>Peter took the Forum through the draft 2008/09 Residents Involvement Statement and in particular the objectives that have been set for 2008/09. The proposals were well received and a number of points were made by the Forum in relation to the subject of resident involvement</p> <p>Bridged and Julia thought the idea of providing IT training to Tower residents was a good one.</p> <p>Bridged and Kirsten suggested that future consideration also be given to other capacity building projects such as horticulture and mediation services.</p> <p>Shirley and Paul whilst acknowledging the benefits of providing residents with training opportunities feel that it is very important to consider the cost implications of embarking on 'capacity building initiatives'. In their view Tower's main priority should be to reduce the rent and service charges that residents pay.</p> <p>Officers assured the Forum that careful thought is always given to how much such projects cost to run and by and large the funding that finances these schemes comes from separate grants provided by the Government.</p> <p>Shirley and Kirsten thought there are some practical measures that can be taken to help Residents to engage more effectively with Tower. They believe for example, that many residents don't know how or who to contact to discuss issues relating to the services they receive. It is particularly confusing when shared owners live on a mixed tenure schemes where the grounds maintenance and communal cleaning services are provided by London & Quadrant. Officers promised to look into this to come up with possible ways to address this weakness to discuss with the Forum.</p>	

3	<p>Tower's Draft Resident Involvement Statement</p> <p>Peter took the Forum through the draft 2008/09 Residents Involvement Statement and in particular the objectives that have been set for 2008/09. The proposals were well received and a number of points were made by the Forum in relation to the subject of resident involvement</p> <p>Bridged and Julia thought the idea of providing IT training to Tower residents was a good one.</p> <p>Bridged and Kirsten suggested that future consideration also be given to other capacity building projects such as horticulture and mediation services.</p> <p>Shirley and Paul whilst acknowledging the benefits of providing residents with training opportunities feel that it is very important to consider the cost implications of embarking on 'capacity building initiatives'. In their view Tower's main priority should be to reduce the rent and service charges that residents pay.</p> <p>Officers assured the Forum that careful thought is always given to how much such projects cost to run and by and large the funding that finances these schemes comes from separate grants provided by the Government.</p> <p>Shirley and Kirsten thought there are some practical measures that can be taken to help Residents to engage more effectively with Tower. They believe for example, that many residents don't know how or who to contact to discuss issues relating to the services they receive. It is particularly confusing when shared owners live on a mixed tenure schemes where the grounds maintenance and communal cleaning services are provided by London & Quadrant. Officers promised to look into this to come up with possible ways to address this weakness to discuss with the Forum.</p>	SN, KJ, JB, PB
4.	<p>Date of the next meeting</p> <p>Peter confirmed that subject to the Board Room at the Trafalgar being available, the next meeting will be in June and asked Forum members to confirm which of the following dates is suitable for them.</p> <p>Monday 2 June; Monday 9 June; Monday 16 June; Thursday 19 June</p> <p>Forum members are asked to let Peter know their preferred dates.</p>	All Forum members
5.	<p>Suggestions for the work plan for 2008</p> <p>John asked the members whether they would like him to share with the TSOF Performance Indicator information and</p>	All Forum

	<p>Case Studies to highlight how Tower is performing in delivering services to customers. He also wished to know whether the Forum wishes to have an input in the development of new policies and procedures.</p> <p>John also asked the Forum for their advice on how resident involvement can be developed and how the profile of low cost home ownership generally can be raised both within the L&Q Group and externally. The TSOF Chair and Vice Chair could for example play an active role in the L&Q Resident Board meetings.</p> <p>Members are therefore asked to consider these points and direct suggestions to Peter.</p>	<p>members</p> <p>All Forum members</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>Steve advised the Forum that steps will be taken to publicise the establishment of the TSOF in the Windows Newsletter and Tower's Website. Residents will be invited to put forward suggestions for discussion at the TSOF. Members are also asked to say whether they mind their names and the schemes they live in (without giving precise addresses) can be placed in the article.</p> <p>Kirsten asked that each member of the TSOF be given up to 3 minutes to air their views or issues for discussion by the Forum. Members are therefore asked to consider this proposal and unless objections are raised and directed to Peter, this arrangement will be put into action at the June meeting of the TSOF.</p>	<p>All Forum members</p> <p>All Forum members</p>