

RESIDENT SCRUTINY PANEL 28th MARCH 2013 – 6PM
TAYSIDE HOUSE, 31 PEPPER STREET, E14 9RP

Present:

Resident Members

Usha Begum
John Courtney (Acting Chair)
Genia Leontowitsch

EEH Officers

Debbie Davies
Peter Griffiths

Apologies

Rubiya Begum
Tahmina Begum
Margaret Donovan
Margaret Hughes
Amina Rashid
Farah Rashid

1. Introductions and Welcome

1.1 Debbie welcomed the group. John volunteered to chair the meeting.

2. Minutes of the last meeting – accuracy

2.1 Minutes of the last meeting were agreed by Genia and seconded by Usha.

3. Matters Arising

3.1. ASB Complaint Case Studies – Peter apologised for the delay in sending the case studies and explained to Genia the complex nature of anonymising the complaints but said they would be sent to her before the next meeting.

3.2. Value for Money Charts Landlord Comparative Statistics

Debbie referred to the bar charts which had been distributed with the papers which showed EastendHomes' costs on various service areas alongside local peers. In general, the charts demonstrated that EastendHomes had similar costs to local peers and that the organisation 'butted up' to THCH on most costs. Also, the charts demonstrated that EastendHomes costs had reduced since 2008/09. In particular, the charts showed:

- Response Repairs – Debbie stated that EeH were in the lower quartile and that EEH were taking steps to ensure improvement in this area. Genia asked about the status of repairs. Genia asked what happens if a target is not met. Debbie said that jobs which go over target are

reviewed at contract management meetings. Genia stated that she thought this was good practice. John stated that some repairs are described wrongly by residents and this causes a loss of time and money to EEH.

- Major Works – Costs are significantly higher than most other organisations and this reflects EEH position in terms of regeneration works on a number of its estates and the considerable investment EEH is making in improvement works.
- Resident Involvement – Genia asked why EEH costs were high. Debbie explained the HouseMark methodology requires that organisations apportion their costs across different service areas. Debbie confirmed that costs were high compared to other providers and that EEH includes a percentage of Housing Officers time in the calculations but others may not. Similarly, comparative tenancy management costs are low and this disparity may be resulting from differences in apportionment.
- Rent Arrears – EEH costs are low, collected arrears are above median, and overheads are low.
- Lettings - Costs for the service are in mid range and performance is just under the mid range
- Anti Social Behaviour - – Costs per case are quite high but there is a high resolution rate. Debbie stated that ASB on the Mile End estates had tailed off following the regeneration works and also Mile End had a higher number of properties and therefore as a percentage the figures needed to be viewed in this context. Genia said that St Georges estate had several kinds of noise nuisance ie motor scooters, youths loitering, etc and that recently when she walked the Island Gardens Area she found that dog fouling was a problem.

Crime Data –

The group reviewed statistics from the Metropolitan Police report which showed comparative crime rates by ward and by borough advance of the meeting. The group looked at the data comparison between wards in LBTH and other London Boroughs. It was noted that Shadwell and St. Katherine's and Wapping were at the lower end of the crime statistics and that Spitalfields was significantly higher. Tower Hamlets as an inner London Borough had one of the higher crime rates

Complaints –

The group reviewed the profile of complaints which EeH had received in 11/12. Debbie stated EEH had achieved a response within its target time frame in over 90% of complaints. The target for this measure is 100% and compared to the national trend EEH do well. Debbie stated that target days were reduced from 15 days to 10 days for Stage One complaints. Debbie advised that all complaints were regularly reviewed to identify if there are any

learning outcomes or service improvements which can be identified as a result of the complaint.

4. Scrutiny Good Practice Example – Tower Hamlets Homes report entitled “Anti Social Behaviour Everybody’s Business”

Debbie introduced the report which had been sent to all group members in advance of the meeting and explained the strategy and process undertaken by Tower Hamlets Homes such as the use of Focus groups, staff interviews, and mystery shopping. Debbie asked what service area the group wanted to focus on going forward, which Debbie said led into the next item on the agenda.

5. Mystery Shopping

Debbie said that a number of residents had been trained in Mystery Shopping by Peter. However, when it came to the exercises they felt uncomfortable with the role and although they were incentivised it proved difficult to obtain meaningful results. Debbie advised that a budget of £3k had been agreed for the group to use to buy in a professional mystery shopping service. Members of the group were invited to form part of the procurement/interviewing panel. Genia said she wanted to hone in on repairs. Debbie said that at the moment the out of hours repair service is currently being reviewed by an EEH working group. Peter suggested that the group also look at the emergency call out service. Genia suggested that the group would benefit from independent support as they began their next scrutiny exercise. The group suggested that they would work with Raj Kumar. Agreed **Action Raj to be sent the terms of reference for this project to provide a written quotation for the work.**

6. Tower Hamlets Offer

Local Offers – The group reviewed the performance data supplied with regards to the Tower Hamlets offers. It was agreed that some elements of the offers were not relevant to EEH residents. –

Repair Performance EEH 95.4% average for other Local Landlords 92.20%.

Tenants Satisfied with Repairs and Maintenance EEH 76.32% Local Landlords 72.80%.

7. Any Other Business

Peter distributed to the group details of a free TPAS course for 23rd April 2013 in London “Getting To Grips With Scrutiny” and asked members of the group to contact him if they wished to attend the course.

8. NEXT MEETING DATE, TIME AND VENUE

**Wednesday 15th May 2013 at 6pm Tayside House, 31 Pepper Street,
London E14 9RP.**

ACTION - ALL