

Money Matters Meeting Minutes 17.1.08

Present:- Kay Glew, Fiona Heighton, Robert Powell, Pamela Perks, Isabella Clamp, Charles Templeman, Paul Harrison, Ken Cheal, Robert Forster, Ann Howard, Janice McNay, Mandy Peacock.

Apologies:- Francis Sedgewick, Marianne Ward, Phyllis Goldsbrough.

Item No.	Subject	Action
1.	<p>Apologies and Minutes of Last Meeting</p> <p>Apologies received from Francis Sedgewick, Marianne Ward and Phyllis Goldsbrough.</p> <p><u>Minutes of Last Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former Tenants Arrears – The Audit Commission report in December 2006 stated that there were weaknesses in the systems for rent accounting and the monitoring of debt. The current procedure was discussed and each letter reviewed – feed back provided and all agreed that the letters were an improvement and were less wordy and more harsh as recommended at the last meeting • Credit union loans - non-members can now apply for loans and instant loans are also available. • Rent statements – new style rent statements received – all agreed they are a huge improvement. • Taxis – comments received that drivers were impolite, didn't know directions and that cars were dirty. A different company, Station cars, is now being used. All agreed Station cars were an improvement. <p>Bob asked for an update on the collection of water rates and whether they were still being collected through rent accounts.</p> <p>Kay explained that the agreement would be reviewed 2009/10 as Tristar are "tied in" to a contract until this time.</p> <p>Kay advised that as a company we are not currently promoting water meters as the water rates are collected through rent accounts, and we should have a more green approach. Ann queried how the</p>	

	<p>meters work and Kay explained that you only pay for what you use. Ann suggested that Tristar should distribute some information regarding meters as many people will understand how they work and Janice also advised that a free assessment can be requested to quote how much customers would pay if a meter was installed.</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<p>Performance Indicators – Janice McNay</p> <p>Janice asked the group about what format they would like performance indicators to be reported in and asked what sort of performance information they felt should be monitored.</p> <p>Janice explained that currently the following is reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of current rent collected. • % of tenants in seven weeks arrears. • % of tenants served with a Notice Seeking Possession. • % of tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears. • Total dwelling rent arrears collectable. • Former Tenants Arrears collected. • Recharge cash collected <p>And asked whether the group would like any other information to be reported.</p> <p>The group requested that information be recorded about the number of people evicted and rehoused within a twelve month period.</p> <p>The group also requested that performance be added as a standard agenda item.</p>	<p>Fiona to add performance information as a standard agenda item.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Access to Services – Mandy Peacock</p> <p>Mandy explained that Tristar would shortly be having one golden number and asked the group for their preference of three based on how easy it would be to remember:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0845 850 1098 • 0845 850 0006 • 0845 085 0007 <p>The group agreed that 0845 085 0007 should be used.</p>	

	<p>Mandy then asked the group about the procedure to be used once the new number is in use and an old freephone number is dialled.</p> <p>The options are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apologise and issue the new number to be dialled; • have a three month period where callers are put through automatically to the new number and played a reminder message that the number has changed; • to have a three month period where callers are out through and then a one month period where the new number is issued to be dialled. <p>The group decided that option one should be used as customers will not take note of the new number until they have to.</p> <p>Ann asked Mandy how the new number would be advertised and Mandy advised that customers will be advised via letter, Tristar News, the internet, in local Neighbourhood Housing Offices and by providing fridge magnets.</p> <p>Bob asked whether the company would save money by using the new number and Mandy explained that it would as the freephone facility is expensive.</p> <p>Mandy also explained that if Tristar charge 3p per minute we will incur slight charges for the new low cost telephone number, however, if we increase the charge to 5p per minute, Tristar will received money to inject back into the business.</p> <p>Mandy asked the group how much they felt was reasonable to expect to pay and everyone agreed 5p to allow the company to put money back into services.</p> <p>Paul asked whether the freephones available in Neighbourhood Housing Offices will still be free and Mandy agreed to confirm and feedback at the next meeting, however, thought that it would as the line is a Tristar extension.</p>	<p>Mandy to feedback at next meeting.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Website</p> <p>Kay asked the group whether anyone had ever logged onto the Tristar website and nobody had.</p>	

	<p>Kay explained that it is currently in need of improvements and would like the groups' opinions on how to do so. Funds are now available to allow us to make the improvements and Kay and the I.T Team will be working to improve the layout and content of the pages.</p> <p>Kay explained that currently each page can only have one picture displayed and an improved system would allow more graphics to be used.</p> <p>Kay asked what information should be included on the first page and the group felt that contact details needed to be displayed and where to received help and advice.</p> <p>The entire group felt that there was currently too much information displayed and that it would be better if a picture link was available which took you to the page from where you required information.</p> <p>Kay advised that she hoped to make the website more interactive so that customers could view their rent account on line, can be consulted, provide feedback, etc.</p> <p>The group were shown examples of other organisations' web sites and agreed that some of the others looked much more interesting and that Tristars could be greatly improved.</p> <p>Some of the group discussed their literacy around pc's and Paul and Pam stated that it has been mentioned at a previous meeting they attended that there may be I.T courses available. Fiona agreed to discuss with the Customer Involvement Team and feedback at the next meeting.</p> <p>Ann suggested that pc's should be available in each of the Neighbourhood Offices to allow customers to check their own rent accounts.</p> <p>Fiona distributed a copy of a new rent record which had also been designed and will be issued with rent statements which allows customers to record their payments as some customers have found it difficult to keep track when using paypoint.</p> <p>Ann suggested that agenda's and minutes should be circulated by e-mail to save the company money and</p>	<p>Fiona to confirm and feed back.</p>
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	provided her e-mail address for future correspondence.	
5.	<p>Media</p> <p>The group discussed any issues, events, new services, etc which could be included in articles for the Tristar News, website or local press and all agreed that an article should be included in the Tristar News and information out on the website regarding local Patch Officers.</p> <p>Information should also be publicised around estate walkabouts and the group suggested that a time is specified for people to meet.</p>	
6.	<p>Reverse of Letterhead</p> <p>Fiona distributed copies of Tristar's current letterhead and asked the group to compare the information displayed on the reverse with the information displayed on letterhead from Housing Hartlepool.</p> <p>The group preferred Housing Hartlepool as the information was displayed more simply with pictures and logos. In comparison the group thought that Tristar's letterhead looked "boring".</p> <p>The group liked that Housing Hartlepool had displayed the National Debt Advice Line and suggested Tristar add this to the information currently included.</p>	Fiona/ Kay to review letterhead used.
7.	<p>Campaigns</p> <p>Fiona distributed last years Easter campaign and asked whether the group thought we should use the same campaign this year or whether a new campaign should be developed. The group liked the current campaign and it was agreed that it should be used again.</p> <p>The summer campaign has already been suggested by Charlie, "stay ahead this summer" and it will be sent to for design in the coming weeks. Once designs have been drafted they will be brought to a future Money Matters meeting for comments before printing.</p>	
8.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The group queried whether the Anti-Social Behaviour group meetings were still being held as there hasn't been one for some time.</p>	Fiona to confirm meetings

	<p>Fiona agreed to query and feed back.</p> <p>The group suggested that the Anti-Social Behaviour Team could publicise information about the number of customers evicted for anti-social behaviour. Fiona agreed to forward the suggestion to Paul Noddings.</p>	<p>still held and forward suggestion for article to Paul Noddings.</p>
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