

## TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS PANEL

To: Councillors Sherwan Chowdhury, Lynne Hale, Maddie Henson, Oliver Lewis, Dudley Mead, Michael Neal, Joy Prince

A meeting of the **TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS PANEL** will be held on **Wednesday 15th October 2014 at 6:30pm**, in **The Council Chamber, The Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**.

JULIE BELVIR  
Council Solicitor & Monitoring Officer,  
Director of Democratic & Legal Services,  
London Borough of Croydon  
Bernard Weatherill House  
8 Mint Walk  
CR0 1EA

MARGOT ROHAN  
Senior Members Services Manager  
020 8726 6000 extn.62564  
margot.rohan@croydon.gov.uk  
www.croydon.gov.uk/agenda  
6 October 2014

### AGENDA - PART A

#### 1. Disclosure of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that it is a requirement to register disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) and gifts and hospitality in excess of £50. In addition, Members and co-opted Members are reminded that unless their disclosable pecuniary interest is registered on the register of interests or is the subject of a pending notification to the Monitoring Officer, they are required to disclose those disclosable pecuniary interests at the meeting. This should be done by completing the Disclosure of Interest form and handing it to the Business Manager at the start of the meeting. The Chairman will then invite Members to make their disclosure orally at the commencement of Agenda item 3. Completed disclosure forms will be provided to the Monitoring Officer for inclusion on the Register of Members' Interests.

#### 2. Welcome and Introductions

#### 3. Apologies for absence

#### 4. Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 22nd July 2014 (Page 1)

To approve the minutes as a true and correct record.

#### 5. Responsive repairs contract progress

Verbal report from Lorraine Smout (Head of Responsive Repairs)

**6. Window cleaning**

Verbal report from Fiona Bowman (Head of Facilities Management) with the contractors, SSB and Interserve

**7. Grounds maintenance**

Verbal report from Barry Lambton (Green Spaces Manager) and Quadron

**8. Veolia contract**

Verbal report from Malcolm Kendall (Head of Environment & Leisure) with Paul Southall from Veolia

**9. Planned Maintenance Reprocurement update**

Verbal report from Judy Pevan (Service Manager Stock Investment)

**10. Scrutiny of Neighbourhood Warden service**

Verbal report from Chris Stock (Resident Involvement and Scrutiny Manager) and Tenant Scrutiny Panel members

**11. Feedback**

- a) London Tenants' Federation – Michael Hewlett
- b) Mayor's Housing Forum - Michael Hewlett
- c) ARCH – Michael Hewlett
- d) Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance (CVSA) – Guy Pile-Grey
- e) Croydon Congress – Marilyn Smithies
- f) All Ages Inter-generational update – Sian Foley

**12. Resident Involvement Activity (Page 11)**

FOR INFORMATION ONLY - Report attached.

**13. Any other business**

**14. Dates of Future Meetings**

all in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Croydon at 6.30pm:  
4 February 2015  
29 April 2015

**AGENDA - PART B**

None

## **TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS PANEL**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 22nd July 2014 at 6:30pm in The Council Chamber, The Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**

**Present:** Michael Hewlett (Joint Chair), Marilyn Smithies (Joint Chair), Syed Ahmed, Aishnine Benjamin, Ken Coates, Chris Crossdale, Bernard Daws, Jim Mansell, Peter Mason, Julian Paine, David Palmer, Guy Pile-Grey, John Piper, Stephen Pollard, Kim Wakely and Colin Wood.

**Councillors:** Sherwan Chowdhury, Maddie Henson, Michael Neal, Joy Prince and Alison Butler (Deputy Leader (Statutory) and Cabinet Member for Homes and Regeneration)

**Observers:** Leonard Asamoah (Head of Housing Solution)(, Ken Constantine (Sustainable Communities Manager), Tim Nash (Resident Involvement Co-ordinator), Judy Pevan (Stock Investment Manager), Bob Richardson (Head of Planned Maintenance & Improvements), Elaine Wadsworth (Head of Housing Strategy & Commissioning), Sheila Howard (Shrublands) and Yaw John Boateng (Tenant Scrutiny)  
**Note taker:** Margot Rohan (Senior Members' Services Manager)

### **A12/14 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest at this meeting.

### **A13/14 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

One of the Joint Chairs, Michael Hewlett, welcomed all to the meeting. The panel members introduced themselves. Membership is now on a purely voluntary basis, so anyone can ask to be added to the distribution list.

### **A14/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Oliver Lewis and Sian Foley (on leave).

### **A15/14 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5TH FEBRUARY 2014**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 5 February 2014 were agreed as a true record of the proceedings.

## OVERVIEW OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S PRIORITIES FOR COUNCIL HOUSING DURING THE NEXT FEW YEARS

Councillor Alison Butler highlighted the new administration's goals as being 'ambitious for Croydon':

- The Council is here to protect and enhance housing stock.
- Housing is a huge issue in Croydon for all areas: social housing, housing associations and the private rented sector.
- 500 families are currently living in B&B accommodation as there is nowhere to house them.
- Over 2000 families are living in temporary accommodation.
- There is a lack of supply.
- Decent homes are required.
- New administration has a strong commitment to the new Clean and Green agenda.
- More people are now living in the private rented sector than in council housing.
- Poor landlords cause fly tipping, ASB.
- Fairness commission - concerned about equality and opportunity across the borough.
- Strongly in favour of London living wage.
- Looking at regeneration of existing housing stock.
- Want people to live in mixed communities.
- Decision to withdraw pension funds from tobacco industry - will reinvest in housing stock.
- Need for bungalows - to enable people to move from large family houses and downsize.

The following issues were raised:

- Is it true that 2 office blocks are going to be taken over houses put there?

Councillor Alison Butler: The office blocks are being converted by a different organisation. The Council will take them over as emergency housing, so we do not have to put homeless people in B&B.

- Fly tipping is a major irritation which has been building up over the years.
- There are areas which are left deteriorating - why can they not be used temporarily by the voluntary sector?

Councillor Alison Butler: There will be a school on the old General Hospital site. Temporary classrooms will be available for September this year. When looking at building new homes, we will be considering community space.

- People on the edge of Waddon but not on the estate are not benefitting from the building there.

Councillor Alison Butler: The Clean and Green agenda will be benefitting all, not just those on estates. We need to know what areas require regeneration under this agenda.

- What about New Addington?

Councillor Alison Butler: There are strong talks around redevelopment of New Addington. Discussions about what should happen in Central Parade - new facilities, new pool. Regeneration needs to be appropriate.

**A17/14**

## **PLANNED MAINTENANCE RE-PROCUREMENT**

Judy Pevan and Bob Richardson presented plans for the re-procurement of planned maintenance and improvement works:

- Part of bigger plan to get better value for money for all repairs and maintenance.
- Covering works on Croydon owned or managed homes.
- Procuring general building, kitchens & bathrooms, windows, roofs, lifts, new wiring, central heating etc.
- For all work which is not responsive but improving and enhancing.

Issues:

- 60 different contracts currently - much more efficient to manage smaller number of contracts and contractors.
- Defining similar areas of work for each contract.
- Economies of scale and value for money.
- Long term contracts up to 15 years.
- Looking at other areas of the Council where similar works required, such as schools. Social services could use contracts for residential homes.
- Prepared information from TLP feedback on ways of improving procedures.
- Customer feedback important.
- Feedback sessions will be set up shortly.

Proposals being put forward:

- Whilst in proposal stage, there will be conversations with Cabinet Members for Homes & Regeneration and for Finance & Treasury.
- Looking to build into project the ability to deliver economic development opportunities.
- Need to enhance corporate social responsibility and increase opportunities for Croydon people and businesses.
- Social impact - education, training, apprenticeships for local people - maximise benefits with contractors.

- £25m annual expenditure - as much as possible to stay inside Croydon.
- Advantage with long term contracts - encourages opportunity for long term investment and arrangements.
- As project develops, there will continue to be conversations with many people within the Council.
- By October, should have a finalised proposal.

The following issues were raised:

- Regarding maintenance work for tenants - can leaseholders pay for similar work being carried out in Council properties?

Bob Richardson: Yes, we will try to include this in the proposal.

- 15 year contract - can you choose a Croydon contract over an outside one?

Judy Pevan: Under EU legislation we cannot specify Croydon business. Council will give lots of indicators of what is required. Through competitive dialogues, contractors will be clear what is wanted to benefit the area.

Bob Richardson: EU regulations include things like local opportunity. We could argue that a local contractor would have more opportunity to fulfill social value areas. We can choose to give certain areas (such as social value) more weighting during the evaluation of bids.

**A18/14**

## **DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT/INCLUSION**

Elaine Wadsworth gave a verbal report, standing in for Chris Stock, who was absent on sick leave:

- The Council wants to get as many people as possible using the internet to carry out their interactions with the Council.
- Using the internet is affecting people's life chances eg ability to find work and save money through comparison websites; some services are only available online.
- For organisations, it is much more cost effective if customers are getting information and interacting online – if 70% customers can serve themselves, this frees up staff to focus more time on the other 30% who are vulnerable.
- 25% of households are registered with the Council online through My Account.
- As a landlord, the Council is keen that tenants and leaseholders are signed up.
- In 2017 there will be a universal benefit (single benefit); the government's target is for 80% of claimants claiming online. The money will go straight to tenants (at the moment, housing benefit is paid to landlords) and it will be far more costly for the council to collect rent than now.

- The council pays 46p for cash transactions through the post office whereas it costs nothing to collect rent payments online.
- Barriers - no access, lack of confidence, fear factor.
- Survey of tenants to provide intelligence of what needed.
- People can now pay their rent online - about 2,000 paid online in June.
- Looking at an app for paying rent by mobile phone.
- Investigating training and support for tenants and organisations - will need different solutions for different groups of people.
- Also considering installing wi-fi links to blocks of flats and promoting best internet provider deals.
- Looking for tenants to act as digital champions to help with promotion and act as a sounding board on new initiatives – several tenants volunteered and will be contacted separately.

There was a 5 minute break due to excessive heat in the Chamber. The meeting was continued in the Mayor's Reception Area.

**A19/14 POP BUS**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

**A20/14 RECOMMISSIONING OF YOUTH PROVISION SERVICES**

Ken Constantine briefly explained the highlights in the tabled report:

- Commissioned youth provision services.
- Contract £445k over 3 years.
- Range of positive activities across estates.
- PlayPlace, Croydon Youth & Information and Crystal Palace Football Club Foundation awarded contracts.

The following query was raised:

- No increase in funding?

Ken Constantine: Budget the same but wanted to ensure no reduction in service, so previous year's already good performance was set as a minimum target in the specification set by the Council to achieve - more for the same money. Residents and young people contributed to the evaluation.

Councillor Michael Neal requested a breakdown of the youth clubs - now attached.

**A21/14**

## **FEEDBACK FROM TENANT SCRUTINY**

Chris Crossdale (Tenant Scrutiny Panel) explained that the Panel had just finished reporting on Neighbourhood Warden service. Colin Wood mentioned that a meeting of Leaseholders took place last week and, unusually, 40 attended. This was a good attendance, compared to previous ones in single digits, but there are 2,000 leaseholders in Croydon. The 6 speakers from the Council had a hostile reception. A lot of questions were genuine and justified but some were not. Council Officers had a hard time in responding. There had been an individual surgery prior to the meeting. Grounds maintenance was raised as an issue from a number of leaseholders, also service charges, responsive repairs, dog fouling, noise etc.

It was suggested that the Scrutiny Panel might look at the Quadron contract (new ground maintenance contractor). In view of criticisms directed at the Council, it would be useful to have another Leaseholders meeting in a couple of months, to give the Council a chance to answer leaseholders' questions.

**A22/14**

## **ELECTIONS**

### **Election of Chair** - Nominations received:

Marilyn Smithies

Proposed by: Peter Mason    Seconded by: Bernard Daws

Michael Hewlett

Proposed by: Julian Paine    Seconded by: Chris Crossdale

Result:

Michael Hewlett    8

Marilyn Smithies    6

(Note: Rule introduced this year to prevent people standing for more than 3 years - but it is not retrospective).

Michael Hewlett was duly elected.

### **Election of Vice-Chair** - Nominations received:

Marilyn Smithies

Proposed by: Julian Paine    Seconded by: John Piper

Marilyn Smithies was duly elected unopposed.

### **Elections to other groups:**

#### **a) Croydon Congress**

Marilyn Smithies was prepared to continue in this role and was duly elected as no one else wished to stand.



**b) Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance**

Guy Pile-Grey was prepared to continue in this role and was duly elected as no one else wished to stand.

**c) Election to London Tenant Federation (x2)**

Michael Hewlett was prepared to continue in this role and was duly elected.

Chris Crossdale also indicated he was interested in attending.

**d) Election to ARCH**

Michael Hewlett was prepared to continue in this role and was duly elected.

**A23/14**

**FEEDBACK**

**London Tenants' Federation - Michael Hewlett**

- 1-19 September - Examination in public of the Mayor of London's alterations to the London Plan (Housing questions 2-4 September)
- Grant from London Trusts
- If do not get funding from other trusts, may possibly ask London authorities to contribute
- Only organisation in London which brings together tenants and leaseholders across all the London boroughs
- Next meeting 5 August

**Mayor's Housing Forum - Michael Hewlett**

- Meets twice a year but no meeting since December 2013

**ARCH - Michael Hewlett**

- Tenants' annual conference Thursday 18 September in Birmingham Town Hall - each borough can send 5 members
- Commissioned consultation to see where ARCH should be going
- ARCH was formed to promote social housing in Councils to government

**Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance - Guy Pile-Grey**

- If there are questions about the voluntary sector, let him know so he can raise them at meetings

### **Croydon Congress - Marilyn Smithies**

- No meeting since 7 November 2013
- Lack of feedback following meetings

### **All Ages Intergenerational Update - Ken Constantine**

- 4th edition of '2Views' inter-generational magazine went out with latest Open House
- Discussions taking place over next edition - possibly being an insert in Open House and about developing an electronic version
- Developing family/community clubs - Green Lane, Handcroft, Croftleigh, New Addington and Tollers estate areas
- Extending to Longheath and Queens Community Centre (Pawsons Road), where we are piloting a Parents Morning Club with Amicus Horizon
- Planning Active lifestyle Lifestyle sessions at Fieldway Community Centre (and may extend to other areas)
- Theresa Rogers leading Family / Community clubs project
- Agreed at residents panel meeting on 10 July that 'All Ages' & 'Youth Services' residents panels will be combined, will meet quarterly, and to arrange third 'All Ages' event next summer (2015)

### **Resident Involvement Champions - Tim Nash**

- No longer accredited as such but we have more recently been arranging the **London Tenant Scrutiny Network**
- Taken on mantle of leading on arranging events for officers and tenants to discuss resident scrutiny
- Event on 10 July at BWH - 60 attendees
- Evaluation - feedback helpful

**A24/14**

### **RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITY REPORT**

#### **Questions raised:**

- What about training?

Tim Nash: A more detailed plan is being developed, making more accessibility to training for others. Brochure to go online (also in hard copy) with links to other organisations which can provide training in particular areas.

- For some of the surveys it just says 'a survey has been carried out'. Are the results available?

Please contact Tim Nash ([tim.nash@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:tim.nash@croydon.gov.uk)) regarding any specific surveys. Results of surveys are normally available on request or via the website, but this can vary, according to who has requested or commissioned the survey.

**A25/14**

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Michael Neal thanked the panel for their support during the years of the previous administration and welcomed the new administration aboard.

### **Ground Maintenance**

The Chair expressed disappointment in the new procurement contract for ground maintenance. The service is worse than before. There have been frequent requests to meet but the issue is getting worse. Housing Management needs to look at the contract.

A number of Panel members pointed out issues which particularly need addressing:

- Grass cutting
- Hedge cutting (lack of)
- Weeding (lack of)

Councillor Michael Neal requested someone from Recycling and Waste Collection on Estates to be at the next meeting.

Two officers from Hammersmith & Fulham were present and pointed out that they have used Quadron for 4 years and are aware of how unresponsive they are. They have been trying to get them more involved through Estate Inspections.

Yvonne Murray: We are getting Quadron to engage and attend meetings.

Dave Sutherland: It is a new contract - a council-wide corporate contract which Housing buys into. Housing contribution stayed the same and should be getting the same or better service. It normally takes about 6 months for a new contractor to 'get up to speed'. But Quadron Landscapes looks like a disaster. Department of Development & Environment officers are trying their best to get it sorted out. They are on the case and reporting daily. The issue has been raised with the Cabinet Member and department Director.

**Household waste collections and food bins**

The hot weather is causing disgusting state in food waste bins - they need to be collected twice a week and other waste at least once a week.

Dave Sutherland: Discussions are going on with Veolia - they are aware something needs doing. It needs a corporate solution.

**Lighting**

An update was requested.

Judy Pevan: We are procuring and have identified the need for certain areas to be renewed.

**Responsive repairs**

A panel member pointed out that there are a number of repairs which are not being completed, despite numerous requests.

Dave Sutherland: Email Lorraine Smout and you will get a response.

**A26/14****DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Wednesdays in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Croydon at 6.30pm:

15 October 2014

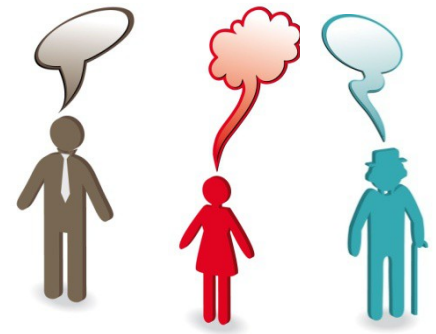
4 February 2015


The meeting ended at 8:57pm.



## Resident involvement & scrutiny team activity sheet:




July - September 2014



Activity	What has happened
<a href="#">Housing services forums</a>	<p>The panel met in July and September, both meetings were attended by more than 30 residents.</p> <p>In July the panel heard from officers about the selection process for the future contractors who will be carrying out our planned maintenance and improvement works. Residents will be involved in the procuring of the contracts by means of working groups.</p> <p>The September meeting heard from officers regarding the work of the tenancy teams and about the wide range of initiatives available to get Croydon tenants and leaseholders online.</p> <p>100% of those who completed feedback forms felt able to take part and thought the meeting was useful.</p> <p>The next meeting is on 25 November.</p>
<a href="#">Your housing, your questions</a>	<p>An event especially for Leaseholders took place on 15 July. It was a popular event attended by 55 people. The focus was on issues of specific interest to leaseholders, such as service charges and the cost of improvement works. The event included a surgery and presentations from service managers followed by Q&amp;A sessions.</p> <p>Feedback forms were only completed by 18 attendees. Of these all felt welcome, however only 78% felt able to take part. 83% considered the event to be useful.</p> <p>The next YHYQ will be taking place in New Addington on 7 October and will be open to all tenants and leaseholders.</p> <p> We will be trialling a new format following feedback from residents. The event will be held in a surgery format to enable residents to ask more individual questions. There will also be information stands provided by relevant third parties, such as Axis repairs.</p>
<a href="#">Sheltered housing panel</a>	<p>The panel meeting in July was attended by 21 residents.</p> <p>Agenda items included support for older and vulnerable tenants in relation to repairs services and Age UK Croydon's new information and advice services. There was also a discussion about the council's initiative to help more tenants access services and information on-line and the IT training and support available for older people. Several panel members took the opportunity to join training schemes.</p>

	Next meeting 31 October.
<a href="#">Housing disability panel</a>	<p>The panel met on 23 July with 16 residents attending.</p> <p>The panel discussed IT training and the report from the Croydon adult social services user group (CASSUP). They were also given an update on the re-procurement project for home adaptation services by Corinne Masters, head of housing renewal and Jacky Reeve, major adaptations and projects team leader.</p> <p>Those that completed feedback surveys showed that all felt welcome and able to take part and 100% considered the event very, or quite informative.</p> <p>The next meeting is on 18 November.</p>
<a href="#">Resident involvement group (RIG)</a>	<p>The group met in August and 10 residents attended an agenda-packed meeting.</p> <p>The council are keen to increase numbers of residents who are online and RIG considered a number of options that will help with this work, including providing more IT training, providing access to low cost hardware and broadband connections.</p> <p>The group also agreed that a specialist group of residents and officers be established to consider issues related to the housing revenue account (HRA). The HRA is primarily funded by council rents and service charges and pays for the day to day running of the housing service.</p> <p>Residents also gave their views on some revised information about resident forums and also looked at an updated Code of Conduct and the proposed training leaflet.</p> <p>Feedback forms indicated that all felt able to take part and that the meeting was useful.</p>
<a href="#">Housing Sounding board</a>	<p>Membership currently at 443.</p> <p>Members were invited to take part in online pharmacy survey, YHYQ leaseholder event, housing finance group, web site testing and neighbourhood voice.</p> <p>The HSB form is being updated and the scheme will be re-launched soon, as the housing involvement database or 'Housing I.D.'</p>
<a href="#">Adult social services involvement</a>	<p>Croydon adult social service user panel (CASSUP) met in July. The panel received an update and discussed the Croydon adult autism strategy; agreed to conduct a customer satisfaction survey regarding domiciliary care services and planned the next 'talking about adult social care' (Taasc) event.</p> <p>The Taasc event took place on 24 September. The event was attended by 45 residents and 8 officers from adult social services. Hannah Miller, executive director (adult services, health and housing), provided an introduction and Q&amp;A session. This was</p>

	<p>followed by a 'speed dating' style session, with senior managers from different sections of adult social care speaking with service users in small groups. 96% of the people who completed feedback forms found the event useful and 100% felt welcome and able to take part. A full report on the event will be distributed and published on the Council's web site.</p>
<a href="#">Surveys</a>	<p>The following <b>new</b> surveys have been carried out this quarter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Adult safeguarding - a survey of clients who have been through the safeguarding procedure. The purpose is to ascertain whether the reported issue has been dealt with and resolved to the clients' satisfaction. The results are being used to improve the safeguarding service going forward. This is a pilot survey running until December 2014.</li> <li>◆ Internet access - a face to face survey of a range of tenants and leaseholders across the borough regarding internet access. The results are being used by the housing strategy team, who are looking at the viability of wireless internet installation on some council estates in the borough.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Scrutiny panel</a>	<p>The panel have completed their scrutiny of the neighbourhood wardens' service. Their findings and recommendations have been presented to officers in housing management and all the recommendations have been accepted. The report and action plan can be seen on our <a href="#">web site</a>.</p> <p>The panel have now started work on their next topic for scrutiny which is the 'Anti-social behaviour' service. They have already had briefings from Council officers and the next stage will be to plan the exercise, look at the methodology and to schedule the work.</p>
<a href="#">Housing Complaints panel</a>	<p>At the September quarterly meeting the panel looked at performance reports from the council's and repairs contractor's (Axis) contact centres. The panel discussed the reports and asked questions where appropriate.</p> <p>The panel will also now be working with Croydon Churches Housing Association (CCHA) which has asked if it can use the panel as its 'designated person' in the event of a complaint being received by CCHA. A representative from the association attended the meeting to discuss this further and the panel are looking forward to working with them.</p>
<a href="#">Neighbourhood voice (NV)</a>	<p>99 NV forms completed by 42 residents this quarter.</p> <p>A phone round of neighbourhood voices was carried out during June to check that they are happy with the scheme and follow up any outstanding issues that they have raised. This phone round has increased the number of forms returned.</p> <p>The NV form has had some minor changes to it, to make the format clearer for residents.</p> <p>NV news has been sent out to all voices, along with a survey asking members for their views on the scheme.</p>
<a href="#">Mystery shoppers</a>	<p>A mystery shopping exercise is being planned to check the service provided in Access Croydon.</p>

	 <p>This area was identified by the scrutiny panel through the Contact Centre action plan. Scenarios have been devised and a training session took place in September. The mystery shop will take place in October.</p>
Residents' training	<p>In June two resident members of the housing complaints panel attended a 2 day course on local resolution of complaints. Both residents felt this course will prove useful for their work with the panel.</p> <p>Two members of the housing scrutiny panel (HSP) attended a good practice sharing event in London, arranged by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS). The event was a good opportunity to share ideas and check if our approach to scrutiny could be improved. Another member of the HSP went on a one day course to improve their understanding of 'value for money'.</p> <p>Seven residents attended an introduction to IT session provided by staff from the IT section of Axis Europe, our new repairs partner. This was well received by everyone who attended and Axis hope to provide more sessions in future.</p> <p>Five members from the complaints and scrutiny panels attended a one day session about performance information, provided by TPAS. All attendees agreed the session showed them how to understand complex performance information and how to use it as part of their work.</p>
Involve e-newsletter	<p>Issues were sent out to around 1270 people in July and 2250 in September.</p> <p>The newsletters covered various housing or wider involvement issues such as promotion of YHYQ, housing finance group, digital inclusion, summer fun on estates and the Big Energy Switch.</p>
Other activities	<p>Three residents attended the Open House editorial meeting in July.  Their views and comments, in particular about a reminder for tenants' contents insurance, will feed into the autumn issue of the newsletter due out at the end of October.</p> <p>A small group of officers and residents met to discuss setting up an HRA (housing revenue account) focus group which will look at how housing finance priorities are decided. Recruitment for this group is underway.</p> <p> The idea was suggested initially by a resident and was also one of the recommendations in the neighbourhood warden scrutiny report.</p>