



# **Metropolitan Housing Partnership's (MHP)**

## **National Residents Group (NRG)**

### **Development Weekend, Business Plan and Annual Workplan**

#### **Notes**



**19-23 March 2010**

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## **Introduction**

The main reasons for organising the weekend were for the group to work together to finalise their 2010/11 Business plan and also work on what they want to achieve over the coming year. Also the members of the National Resident Group are coming to the end of the second year of their two year term. However, in their March meeting they agreed with the CEO and Director of P&P to continue for a third year so that the longevity of the group can be maintained. The Resident Involvement Strategy Manager is also leaving his post and will not be replaced immediately. Some members may choose to leave because of other commitments and there are some places to be filled. The group will decide this weekend how many new members will join the group in September 2010.

The group will also spend a full day finishing the second year of Development training with Engage Associates. This training was devised by the group and has helped them understand the intricacies of social housing and the numerous ways that customers can be involved in the landlord decision making process both in this country and elsewhere.

## **Friday 19 March 2010 (16:00-19:00):**

### ***Attendance***

Elspeth Anderson, Michael Barron, Mary Burt, Terry Curtis, Daniel Happi, Alan Jones, Terry McLoughlin, June Thompson, Stephanie Mathias and Anne Travis (from 18:00).

Francis Brazil (Resident Involvement Strategy Manager, MHP)

### ***Apologies***

None – full attendance.

### ***Ice breaker and skills analysis***

Francis asked the group to individually fill out a 30 question scoring card (1 poor, 10 excellent) on issues that they should have some knowledge of. Francis has devised an Excel scoring sheet which will calculate the NRG's overall performance. This can then be used to work out the best plans for training over the coming year. This will be ready Sunday morning for us to work on. The overall group results will be appended to the 1-2-1 report. Individuals can talk to Francis directly if they want to discuss their own results.

The group then broke into 5 pairs to work on the next part. Francis explained that individual's blogs needed to be updated for the business plan and the website. Only 2 NRG members had written up a new blog. To make it more interesting and to get all done Francis gave each pair two other group members to write their blogs. They could base it on what was there, however,

ensuring the theme of the member, their member route, their strengths and something anecdotal was included.

- Stephanie and Daniel → Elspeth and Michael
- Terry Mc and Michael → Mary and Terry C
- Terry C and June → Alan and Daniel
- Mary and Elspeth → June and Anne
- Alan and Francis (Anne had not yet arrived) → Terry Mc and Stephanie

All took part and 10 interesting blogs were produced. Each member can add or change if they wish. All to type up the blogs and send to Francis for inclusion in the Business plan.

**Action ALL**

### ***Outcomes for the weekend***

The NRG then worked in three groups to put on flip charts what they wanted as individuals and what they wanted the group to get out of the weekend:

Group	Individuals
Finalise all outstanding documents including the business plan	Understanding of what we have achieved on how this can be benchmarked
Agree the selection process and how many new members to join the group in September	An appreciation of the value of individuals opinion
Review what the group has learned so far → come to an understanding on where next	To take ownership
Complete a good workplan which is more challenging → there is a realisation in MHP that the NRG have upped its ante and now our views will be listened to	Begin contacting the group outside of meetings → make better use of the internet and phone calls

The group then discussed these and all felt that they were achievable. They will be revisited at the end of play on Sunday along with any that were not achieved. A plan would be formed to move forward.

### ***NRG selection for September***

It was agreed with the CEO and Director of P&P at the 6 March meeting that the present NRG could stay on for another year in order to preserve the knowledge of the group. At a show of hands, 9 of the 10 members present want to stay on in the group. Terry Curtis was thanked for his hard work since his membership in 2008. The group then worked out how many places were missing from the 16 total and what should happen;

- Was agreed Daniel would take the place of the 3<sup>rd</sup> MHT London member
- There is then one short from the Regen schemes, Spirita and CPH and two short from Independents and MST = 7

- The group agreed that 16 is too many and that 12 is more realistic, therefore:
- The independent members route will be changed to MHP-wide with a connection to a local involvement structure, and that
- The group will select 1 Support (MST) member and two MHP-wide

The group then discussed the process for doing this. Francis projected the copy of the 'Reps interview testing summary of ratings' which was used for the interviews for NRG in September. It is the same methodology used to select staff and has 7 questions relating to the NRG already prepared. The group went through these and agreed that this is suitable for the selection of these 3. Elspeth and Alan agreed to be on the interview panel and Francis will ask Claire Orange to also sit on it as an independent view. Francis will send the questions to the panel **Action Francis**

Interviews should take place in July.

**Action Elspeth/Alan**

All of the NRG need to report this back to their groups and a piece to be written for newsletters and the websites. All of the group will work on the single message to go out as part of the PP training on Sunday. Francis will inform staff groups so that they can start spreading the message. **Action ALL**

### ***Contacting each other outside meetings***

A member had raised concerns about the group not contacting each other to discuss issues outside of meetings. It had become increasingly evident that this was the case and that the group seemed sometimes disconnected when speaking with visitors in meetings. There is no reason that the group should not talk to each other about matters and what they would like to see raised at meetings. All members receive £20 toward phone and www costs so this is not a factor. Michael and Alan send good reports on events they attend and never receive any comments which seems a waste. Anne's e-mail is sometimes a problem and she has agreed to remove animation and colour from her template to see if this will help improve things. **Action Anne**

Terry Mc felt that it had just become custom not to and he will definitely start e-mailing the group in future. All agreed to do the same.

Francis set the group a task to improve on this:

Between now and the next NRG meeting on the 10 April, all members must send 1 e-mail to the group on a topic relevant to the group either asking a question or inviting comments. It can be related to the individual's theme, something internal to MHP or external such as the TSA. Everyone must then answer this e-mail cc'ing Francis. This will make 10 primary e-mails with 90 replies. Francis will then judge the best answer based on relevance, how well answered and any humour. The one picked will receive a £10 voucher. All are reminded that e-mails should be only a couple of lines long. **Action ALL**

Review of the business plan and the workplan were postponed to Sunday due to lack of time.

## **Saturday 20 March 2010 (09:30-17:00):**

### ***Attendance***

Elsbeth Anderson, Michael Barron, Mary Burt, Terry Curtis, Daniel Happi, Alan Jones, Terry McLoughlin, June Thompson, Stephanie Mathias and Anne Travis.

Jayne Boote and Tim Morton (Trainers, Engage Associates) and Francis Brazil

### ***Apologies***

None – full attendance.

## ***Year 2 of the NRG Development Training Programme – sess. 4***

Engage Associates joined the NRG for the day and delivered the following training (full programme can be supplied by the RISM).

- World view of tenants and housing
  - The International Union of tenants and their relationship with UK groups
  - What else is out there
- Housing in the UK as a comparison to 3 other countries
  - Compare three countries to UK housing and RI
- The NRG and governance, a comparison to all sections of year 2 learning.
- Exercises on the NRG's role in scrutiny and co-regulation

The group looked at the TSA 6 standards and Tenant Led Self regulation, in particular the new plan to have 'local offers' rather than local standards. The local offers have no time limit, if the landlord can show that tenants do not want them then they need not implement them. The landlord must produce an annual report by 01 October 2010 and this will include an annual report on complaints. There are 5 local offer themes with Governance and Financial viability excluded. These must be in place by 01 April 2011.

The TSA are reviewing the KLOE's with the Audit Commission. Governance must be consulted with tenants every 3 years to ensure that they agree with what is in place. Tenants scrutinise on the housing management function only. Overall there have only been subtle changes to the standards since consultation.

The group then looked at the TLSR document and examples of groups and where the NRG is in comparison. Everyone agreed that the NRG is a different

type of group and has a lot more contact with governance and management. They then discussed how they can use the tools to ensure tenants are getting the best deal.

- What could the NRG do differently?

It was agreed that the NRG has a different route to where services can go wrong. If something is poor on the bART's then the NRG can ask that the solution is in place and make a decision that this is adequate. However, they can hear at meetings etc that something is wrong and can use another route to correct. They can ask the Resident inspectors and Mystery shoppers to inspect a service in a way that will get to the bottom of it. They can then produce a report directly to board, management or CFC and ensure the problem is solved.

The group then discussed the setting of their agenda and the feeling that they cannot get relevant things on it. Jayne felt that the group gave mixed messages on this. A discussion ensued with most agreeing that they do put anything they want on the agenda. Francis pointed out that it was probably a case that everything is on the agenda, however, they do not prepare or communicate with each other and therefore miss opportunities to get answers at the meetings. All agreed that the need to communicate and prepare a lot better for meetings.

**Action ALL**

- Overview of what was learned in year 2

Summary, questions and evaluation

## **Sunday 21 March 2010 (09:30-13:00):**

### ***Attendance***

Elsbeth Anderson, Michael Barron, Mary Burt, Terry Curtis, Daniel Happi, Alan Jones, Terry McLoughlin, June Thompson, Stephanie Mathias and Anne Travis.

Francis Brazil (RISM, MHP)

### ***Apologies***

None, full attendance.

### ***Introductions***

### ***Workplan 2010-11***

Two groups were formed to look at the priorities for the NRG that will go into the NRG Business plan and what the outcomes would look like. The following 10 were agreed:

## Objectives 2010/11

Objective	Outcome
1. Implementation of the 6 Tenant Service Authority's service standards and their corresponding local offers	6 MHP standards in place with an oversight of local offers which will be overseen by local involvement structures
2. Prepare for the selection of 3 new members to the group by interview – 2 from MHP-wide and one from the care side October 2010	Three new members selected and integrated into the group by October 2010. A buddy system will be in place to help them settle in and any training needs identified and beginning
3. Improve the communications within the NRG	NRG members are better prepared for meetings and work better as a team
4. Work to improve communications within MHP for customers as a whole	Products will be far more customer focussed and get messages across from NRG, member organisations and MHP.
5. Hold an annual Meet and Greet with key members of staff	Objectives agreed between NRG and key staff to the benefit of customers
6. Continue our development as a group, training and attending conferences including a stall at the TPAS conference	Have attended 2 weekends at Trafford Hall similar to last year, developed contacts from TPAS and increased general knowledge. Visited organisations with similar groups to the NRG.
7. Overseeing the work of Resident Inspectors and Mystery shoppers and ensure that customer led scrutiny is robust in MHP	Based on customer feedback guide inspectors to check service delivery and receive reports back on how the member organisations are improving.
8. Strengthen our links to governance	Attend the MHP board regularly, board members visit NRG and meet chairs of the member organisations
9. Help build the capacity and knowledge of customer involvement structures throughout MHP	Increase in customer's involved and local activity. Have encouraged involvement staff to provide training and more guidance for customers. This to be achieved through RIWG, Meet and Greet etc.
10. Build understanding of the MHP structure and how the NRG fits into that	Better communication of the NRG at CFC, RIWG, ASP etc

Francis then drew up a 10 meeting (12 month) planning chart to set the workplan which will also be used by the group to set their agendas. The group then worked together to finalise this:

## Workplan 2010-11

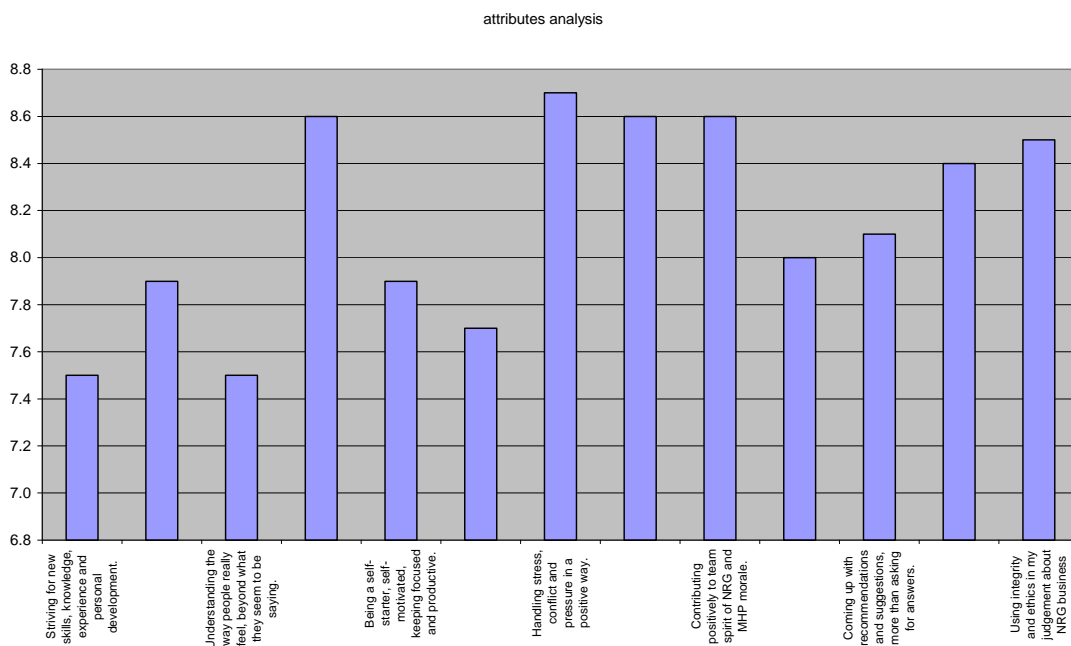
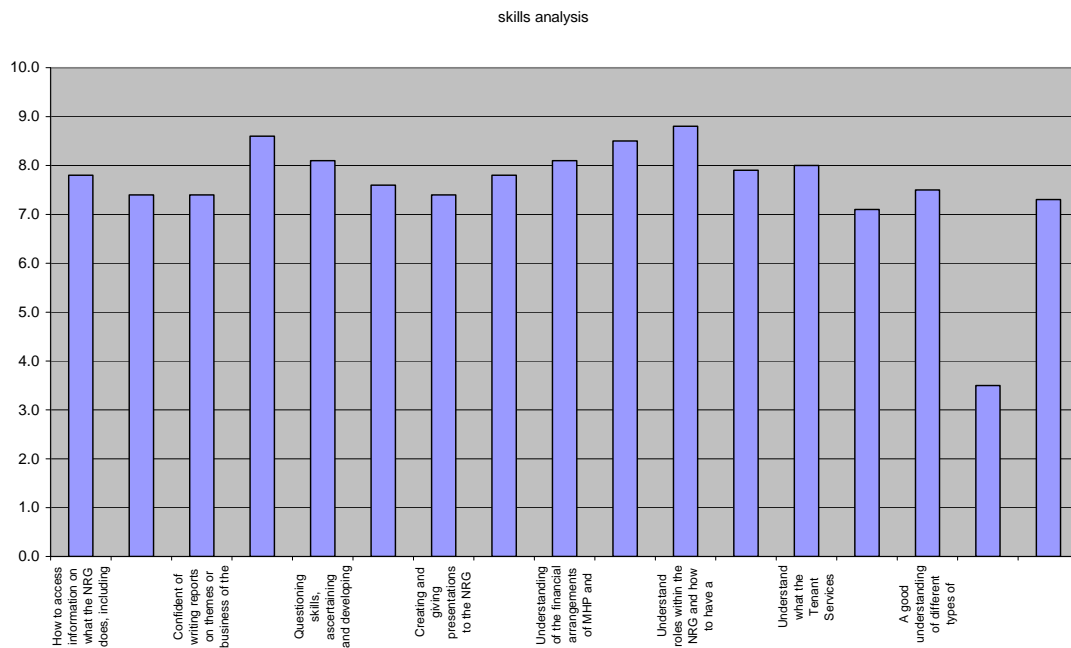
NRG Work-plan 2010-11 (and agenda setting)	
Date	Item
10 Apr 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement 6 TSA standards and overview local offers</li> <li>○ Selection of 3 NRG members</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improve internal NRG communications</li> <li>○ Resident Inspectors overview – Pat Goldfeather</li> <li>○ Invite Barbara Roche to 04 Sep meeting - objectives</li> <li>○ NRG roles in all committees</li> <li>○ MHP IA 2009/10</li> <li>○ Business Plan finalised</li> </ul>
22 May 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement 6 TSA standards and overview local offers</li> <li>○ Selection of 3 NRG members</li> <li>○ Improve internal NRG communications</li> <li>○ Improve communication from MHP to customers – Comms team member to attend</li> <li>○ Meet and Greet planning for Sept</li> <li>○ Organise attendance with stall at TPAS conference</li> <li>○ Kate Russell for follow up on NRG support</li> </ul>
10 Jul 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement 6 TSA standards and overview local offers</li> <li>○ Selection of 3 NRG members</li> <li>○ Meet and Greet planning for Sept</li> <li>○ Resident Inspectors overview</li> <li>○ Increase involvement capacity throughout MHP – plan invite of 2 RI managers</li> </ul>
04 Sep 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement 6 TSA standards and overview local offers</li> <li>○ Selection of 3 NRG members</li> <li>○ Meet and Greet planning for Sept</li> <li>○ Barbara Roche to attend – objectives</li> <li>○ Increase involvement capacity throughout MHP – what are objectives to get from 2 RI managers</li> </ul>
16 October 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement 6 TSA standards and overview local offers</li> <li>○ Resident Inspectors overview</li> <li>○ Increase involvement capacity throughout MHP – 2 RI managers to present</li> <li>○ Director of Customer Services to attend</li> <li>○ RI strategy 2011-14 – 1<sup>st</sup> draft from RISM</li> <li>○ Impact Assess 2008-11 strategy</li> </ul>
27 Nov 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement 6 TSA standards and overview local offers</li> </ul>
08 Jan 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement 6 TSA standards and overview local offers</li> <li>○ Strengthen links to governance – 1 Chair from member orgs to attend</li> <li>○ NRG Business Plan – 2011-12</li> <li>○ Chief Financial officer to attend</li> </ul>
26 Feb 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement 6 TSA standards and overview local offers</li> <li>○ Bill Payne to attend</li> <li>○ NRG Business Plan – 2011-12</li> </ul>
09 Apr 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement 6 TSA standards and overview local offers</li> <li>○ Strengthen links to governance – 1 Chair from member orgs to attend</li> <li>○ NRG Business Plan – 2011-12</li> </ul>
21 May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement 6 TSA standards and overview local offers</li> </ul>

The NRG agendas will be set from the above along with standing items such as the MHP Impact Assessment 2010/11, conferences, finance etc.

## Group skills analysis

Francis had put together the overall scoring of the group and this will be added at the end of the 1-2-1 report 2010. Overall the group has reasonable scores. The group looked at the skills chart and will be able to use this to plan for further development over the coming year. The group also looked at the attributes chart for personal development. (full report NRG 1-2-1's 2010 report)



## ***PowerPoint and the 'Single message' for NRG recruitment***

Francis then did a further session on using Powerpoint and the session was used to also come up with a single message for each member to take back to their group about the plan to select 3 new NRG members. The main message put across was that the new members should be:

- Team player and fit in to the group
- Relationship to an MHP involvement group
- Basic IT including e-mails and www
- Knowledge and interest in the MHP involvement structures
- Willingness to work with MHP and other stakeholders
- Work on the overall strategic MHP picture
- Able to attend at least 10 one day meetings (London) and 2 weekends (Chester) per year

The benefits to the new members will be:

- Working with like-minded customers on involvement issues and input to policies
- Gaining new transferrable skills
- Attendance at group development, training and conferences, as well as individual skills training
- All expenses reimbursed including childcare
- Loan of IT equipment and £20 broadband/telephone per month

Anne will write up an article by Tuesday to go on websites and any customers newsletters.

**Action Anne**

## ***Agree policy and appendixes to Service Agreement***

The group agreed the Childcare and Carer Expenses Policy along with the TRA model constitution, TRA Equality and Diversity statement, CoC for TRA's, TRA Disciplinary procedure and Recognised TRA funding, all appendixes to the Customer Involvement Service Agreement currently being agreed at RIWG.

Alan brought an issue about disruption at meetings, The group discussed the issue and concluded that there needed to be stronger chairing, that Alan writes to the MD as officers not dealing with it and that he suggests training on 'Dealing with difficult people' for all customers and staff who attend this particular meeting. The group also stipulated that customers should be chairing the meetings and not officers.

**Action Alan**

## ***Agenda for 10 April 2010***

All of the following were agreed:

- Implement 6 TSA standards and overview local offers
- Selection of 3 NRG members
- Improve internal NRG communications

- Resident Inspectors overview – Pat Goldfeather
  - Invite Barbara Roche to 04 Sep meeting - objectives
  - NRG roles in all committees
  - MHP IA 2009/10
  - Business Plan finalised
- Plus usual standing items.

### ***Outcomes for the weekend***

The NRG went over the outcomes that they had set for themselves on Friday. All agreed that they had mostly been achieved and where not, these will be addressed over the coming months i.e. communicating with each other. All agreed that the weekend had been a very good success.

The group then filled out the 'How was for you cards' and took a group picture.

**Meeting ended at 13:00 21 July 2010**

### **Event evaluation**

Please see the pdf report titled –  
'PP\_MHP\_EventReportNRGDevelopmentWeekend\_100319' and saved at  
N:BSU\policy and performance\resident involvement\how was it for you  
results\central services\Jan Mar 10: