Minutes of Barking Housing Forum  
Wednesday 20th January 2016  
Town Hall, Barking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Welcome</td>
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<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising</td>
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</table>
| 03   | Dog Poo DNA Testing | Jonathon Toy  
Interim Manager- Environment  
The Interim Manager of the Environmental Services team gave a presentation which gave details of the new Dog Poo DNA testing scheme which is due to take place in the borough. |
**Questions & Answer’s**

**Q1:** How is this scheme being advertised?

**A1:** We have distributed letters in the 3 wards which are involved in the pilot scheme. We will also have the media at our pilot scheme launch which is taking place in Barking Park. The National press are also involved.

**Q2:** What is the cost?

**A2:** The first 1000 dog owners to register will not be charged however there may be a cost implemented to join the scheme in the future.

**Q3:** How many dog wardens are?

**A3:** Paige to chase exact answer and provide feedback

**Q4:** Are you going to “name and shame” the repeat offenders?

**A4:** I am interested in getting peoples views on this, it is a possibility. (A majority of the board were for the “naming and shaming” of the irresponsible dog owners).

**Q5:** What is the cost of this scheme and where is the funding coming from?

**A5:** There is no additional cost. We already have a £5000 budget for our campaign and for the web design. This scheme has been partly funded by a company called Poo Prints.

**Q6:** How much does it cost the Council and have you been employed by LBBD to deal predominately with this scheme?

**A6:** I have not been employed just for this. We have not employed any additional officers and there is no extra cost. We are using the resources and staff that we already have to support the programme.

**Q7:** Will people be fined?

**A7:** First we will send advisory/ warning letters and then enforce a fine

AP Paige Fowle
Hakeem the Divisional Director gave a presentation on the LBBD Repairs Service which he discussed any recent changes and

Questions and Answers

Q1: The Council carry out tenancy audits. So when it comes to the Repairs call centre staff not knowing who is in the property i.e An elderly or disabled resident why is this?

A1: This is merely down to staff not checking the systems properly. Information on who is in living in our properties is available and people need to ensure they check. I have had verbal discussion with the Repairs call centre staff about double checking people’s details. As we need to ensure we are carrying out jobs for people who actually need the help.

Q2: A local resident reported an issue with a damaged light in Colne House

A2: Paige Fowle will look into this issue and give feedback to the resident

Q3: A local resident raised an issue with the Kitchen and bathroom upgrades that are being carried out across the borough. He stated that people are being told they have to have things in certain ways or positions i.e. kitchen cabinet and when it comes to the resident buying a new fridge it won’t fit?

A3: When a property is identified for kitchen and bathroom works, there is a process. First a surveyor will attend and confirm what needs doing. Then further checks will be carried out such as Asbestos checks. Once the necessary checks are done a designer will attend draw up a plan of the tenants’ new kitchen and bathroom. During this appointment the resident can influence the design. The resident must inform the planner of any new appliances they intend on buying so the designer can consider the required space. We must also take into consideration Health & Safety regulations.

Q4: A local resident mentioned that he was aware of circumstances where certain elements of someone’s kitchens was adjusted so they could fit their kitchen appliances is into the tenants small Galley kitchen i.e. shortened the draws. Are the Council enforcing what the
contractors who carry out the work can and can't do?

**A4.** The contractors are obligated to follow strict Council specifications regarding kitchen designs. We do monitor circumstances if we are made aware.

**Q5.** A resident reported a personal issue with the repairs service. The resident stated that on a few occasions where she had reported a repair and no one had attended. The resident said she was then advised by repairs that someone had attended but there was no answer. The tenant said she had been at home all day and no card was posted through?

**A5.** Hakeem responded and said we now require our operatives to take photographic evidence when they attend a property and there is no answer.

**Q6:** A resident who lives in a block of flats asked what the Council do in circumstances when there is a leak from the above flat which is a leasehold property and It is causing issues in the below Council property?

**A6:** The Landlord in the leasehold property has an obligation to deal with repairs and damage in their property. Our Private Sector licensing team can enforce the rules and regulations of the Landlord Licensing Scheme. This scheme was targeted at Rogue Landlords who do not attend to issues properties that they rent out. My advice would be to sue the Landlord from the above property.

**Additional points made were:**

- LBBD will be making drastic changes within the next few years in line with the budget cuts. There will be cuts to services and a vast reduction in the LBBD work force. The Council could be possibly halving the amount of the Repairs vans owned to save money.

**LBBD Homelessness Strategy**

**Neil Pearce**

**Housing Strategy & Partnership Officer**

Neil gave a presentation on the LBBD homelessness strategy in which he highlighted the objectives of the strategy. The main points of the presentation were:
• That homelessness presentations at John Smith House had risen due to the impacts of welfare reform and loss of private rented sector accommodation
• Current consultation on the homelessness strategy which ends on February the 15th
• Although the Council has a notable record on preventing homelessness, the second phase of welfare reform is expected to make the problems worse
• The draft strategy looked at four objectives around reducing demand through prevention; enabling pathways away from homelessness; creating integrated services at the point of first contact and providing appropriate accommodation solutions

Questions and Answers

Q1: A resident of Barking asked why none of the new properties that have been built in Abbey Road are being used as social housing/ Council properties?

A1: A lot of regeneration works are being carried out In the Abbey Road area. The properties you have mentioned are not Council owned properties but we are building Council properties in that area. Due to housing economics we need to balance things out i.e social housing and privately rented accommodation.

Q2: I am aware that a large majority of the new homes that are being built across the borough are to accommodate families. Are there any affordable homes being built for single people?

A2: Yes there are affordable homes being built for single people

Any Other Business

An issue was raised regarding the Christmas period refuse collections and whether tenants would be refunded for the service that they did not receive. Hakeem confirmed no moneys would be refunded and we must take into consideration the days that Christmas fell on which was a Friday followed by a bank holiday Monday.

Confirmation was also given that the Housing Forums have not ended and there has been some confusion. LBBD are currently consulting on its engagement strategy and the board will be updated
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if there are any changes.

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<tr>
<th>07</th>
<th>Items For Future Meetings</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parking and Regeneration</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>08</th>
<th>Date Of Next Public Meeting</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The next meeting will be in April 2016 however the exact date will be confirmed in the near future.</td>
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Meeting Action points

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paige Fowle</td>
<td>This has been reported to the LBBD Repairs Service and they were waiting for the parts. PF will confirm when job is complete</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paige Fowle</td>
<td>How many dog wardens are there in the borough?</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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Items for Future Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Date discussed and added to list</th>
<th>Date of possible inclusion</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parking (Issues around the St.Anns area)</td>
<td>20.01.2016</td>
<td>At the next meeting</td>
<td>Sharon Harrington to be contacted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regeneration and decant allocation</td>
<td>09.02.2016</td>
<td>At the next meeting</td>
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