

Kensington & Chelsea Advice Forum

Minutes of meeting held Thursday 22nd September 2011
Kensington Town Hall, 2.30pm – 4.30pm

Chair: Jane Gray; WENAC

1.	Welcome, Introduction and Apologies	ACTION
2.	<p>Update on changes to the Housing Allocation Policy; Robert Shaw & Amanda Gill; RBKC Chair of KCAF thanked Robert and Amanda for the responses to the questions submitted prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Presenters went on to say that RBKC has been working to identify high risk cases in order to identify and work with families who will be worse affected by the changes.</p> <p>A further question was asked whether Social Services have said that they would financially help families in terms of topping up for families that cannot meet the rent. The response was that Social Services have not said yes or no. However, the rent deposit scheme is available.</p> <p>Removal from homes is being looked at on a case by case borough basis. If the person/family is a priority need then RBKC may be able to help them. However, Discretionary Housing Payment which is managed by Housing benefit will be directed to them if there is a priority need.</p> <p>With regards to single person's room rate, currently 7 boroughs are looking at whether they are able to share a procured room rate for single people aged 18-25.</p> <p>In terms of bed and breakfast, numbers are going up across London of families moving in.</p> <p>There was a suggestion that someone from housing benefit be invited to the next KCAF to give an update.</p> <p>Housing will also help people complete the housing register form.</p> <p>An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out on the impact of changes on BME households and another assessment will be carried out next year. RBKC will come back and present the findings to KCAF when resource is available next year.</p> <p>The question was asked about the role of the Human Rights Act in challenging the changes under the right to family life. The response was that in the case of Human Rights it is not the same as the right to</p>	<p>AS/JG</p> <p>AS/JG</p>

	<p>a family home in social housing.</p> <p>Another question was asked about housing in bed and breakfast being more flexible. The response was that RBKC would like to free up more bed and breakfast spaces so that people can move in but unfortunately they are unable to move people out to free up the space (as soon as someone moves out someone moves in). RBKC is therefore unable to use it as an assessment space of their situation. RBKC could possibly look at some of the more expensive providers. Councils are in talks with providers.</p> <p>Under Tenancies for Life policy, this is still in its early stage of development but the tenancy strategy needs to be produced by next year.</p> <p>10% of all new properties are going to be wheelchair accessible but because of lack of properties there will be very little.</p> <p>People should be going to RSL's to sort out their disrepair issues but RBKC recognise the difficulties people face. RBKC's Environmental Health department will be monitoring RSL's on performance of disrepair.</p> <p>RBKC has produced fact sheets on their website at www.rbkc.housing for further information.</p>	
3.	<p>How are the changes taking place within housing affecting bme residents in Kensington and Chelsea?</p> <p>It was agreed that this item on the agenda be set for the next meeting. DG from Dahidiye agreed to present at the next meeting.</p>	AS/JG
4.	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting held 22nd September 2011</p> <p>Minutes agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 6 – Members update <i>CABKC update amended</i> <p>Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 3.1 <i>Some advice agencies agreed that they already collect statistics on people asking for advice since the housing changes but agreed that evidence needs to be collated and shared. AS to follow up.</i> 	AS
5.	<p>Members Update</p> <p>Members gave an update of work and news items.</p> <p>Staying Put Services</p> <p>Staying Put has produced new marketing materials but not sure when they will be available. They are moving to the new office which will open on 3rd October. Advice sessions now changing to two a week</p>	

	<p>Tues 5-7pm (Under the Westway) Thurs 3 – 5 (Brompton Library) They still have separate schemes with TMO and KHT offering advice on rent arrears, they can advise on domestic violence to any tenure.</p>	
	<p>Age Concern They are preparing for the health fair on Friday 7th October. They continue to see a few people with complex housing issues.</p>	
	<p>Rugby Portobello Trust They are working with young people who have currently successfully obtained homes. But now seeing young people coming through thinking how they can get a home. They are working with young people to realise that the culture needs to change and they understand social housing is not easily accessible.</p>	
	<p>RBKC RBKC will be releasing small grants fund on 17th October. On 15th October there will be a ‘tea in the park’ event.</p>	
	<p>Dadihye Many clients are coming through with problems. Nucleus sent trainer to help build skills and the organisation is part of the age concern health fair event on 7th October.</p>	
	<p>ADKC The organisation is dealing with more issues and dealing with people on long term disability. There are lots more anxiety around changes. They run a new drop in session on the last Wednesday of every month from 10am to 1pm at Chelsea theatre.</p>	
	<p>Advice Now The new triage system is up and running and the new telephone number is live now. It will be linked into the council’s housing advice service. Philomena reported that she has just completed training on triage service and will be working at ADKC. She is also waiting to work in Age Concern.</p>	
6.	<p>Feedback from Strategic Meetings and issues to take forward</p> <p>Borough Voluntary Organisations Advisory Group (BVOAG) Held 13th September Main agenda items included a review of the advisory group and terms of reference. It was agreed that it should remain one of the council’s constituted advisory groups.</p> <p>Charles (CABKC) and Sean (NKLC) gave a presentation on the impact of reforms to legal aid on communities and agencies.</p> <p>There was also an update on the first round of corporate service small grant and an update and discussion property services, with a view to</p>	

	<p>holding a further meeting with the property service manager who was unable to attend the meeting</p> <p>Kensington & Chelsea Partnership (KCP) held 7th September Main agenda items included a briefing from the borough's police commander on the recent riots and discussion. LINK presented on the Local Health Watch. There was a presentation on the 'Delivering for Our Community' Performance report (Local Area Agreement).</p> <p>Issues to take forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BVOAG What is happening to the money repatriated to councils from London council? 	
7.	<p>Report on shaping local health watch steering group meeting and nominations for membership AS reported on the first steering group meeting which she attended as a representative of KCAF until a member of KCAF elected to sit on the steering group. The first meeting was to agree terms and conditions and to look at the workplan.</p> <p>Harry Tedstone (Advice Now) was elected by KCAF members to represent KCAF on the Shaping Local Health Watch steering group</p>	
8.	<p>Proposed agenda items for future KCAF Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaker which attended the sexual health forum to talk about cuts to legal aid and impact on immigrants • Speaker from St Cuthbert's 	<p>AS</p> <p>BB</p>
7.	<p>AOB none</p>	
9.	<p>Dates of future meetings</p> <p>15th December, Committee Room 1, Kensington Town Hall</p>	

Attendance List

Voluntary Advice Agencies Forum Meeting
Thursday 14th July, Committee Room 1, Kensington Town Hall

1. Attendees

	Name	Organisation
1	Charles Barber	KCAB
2	Beth Crossland	MRCF
3	Kate Spicer	Staying Put (HASK)
4	Jane Gray	WENAC
5	Angela Spence	KCSC
6	Lucy Ashall	RBKC
7	Kirsty Palmer	VCKC
8	Simon Bisiker	Rugby Portobello
9	Mohammed Aran	ACKC
10	Nicola Hart	LINK
11		

2. Apologies

	Name	Organisation
1	Madi Gilkes	Carers KC
2		