



Report to Customers and Communities Committee

6 May 2015

Title: Moving Forward Customer Training Programme - Annual Review

Report of: Involvement and Diversity Manager

Purpose of Report

1. To report progress of the Moving Forward Customer Training Programme 2014/15 and inform committee of the programme for 2015/16.

Background

2. The Moving Forward Training Programme is an annual programme with a range of free customer training sessions. These have been delivered by: -
 - Tenant Participatory Advisory Service (TPAS) – capacity building training
 - HealthWORKS and Gateshead Council – health and wellbeing
 - B&Q – practical skills based training
 - National Health Service (NHS) – advice around drug and alcohol awareness
 - The Gateshead Housing Company – raising awareness of our services, digital inclusion and money management.
3. The programme has been running since 2004, offering customers an opportunity to develop their skills and capacity, ultimately aiming to get tenants and leaseholders more involved in shaping services delivered by the company.
4. The Involvement and Empowerment Standard of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)'s Regulatory Framework places a requirement on landlords to provide support to tenants to build their capacity to be more effectively involved. In previous years, customers who have attended training through the Moving Forward programme have gone on to join Service Improvement Groups and become members of TALISMAN and the Board.
5. Providing an annual training programme for customers is one of the involvement service standards set out in The Guide to Services.

Summary

6. The 2014/15 programme offered 8 scheduled and 13 demand led courses. In addition to this a 'Let's get digital, digital' drop in was also offered to people who wanted to increase their skills around accessing the internet and other basic IT

skills. We also continued to deliver Energy Best Deal sessions during this period.

7. At 31 March 2015, 22 courses had taken place, including 15 demand led and all 7 scheduled sessions, with a total of 115 people attending.
8. There have been an additional six courses delivered this year compared to 2013/14, due to a number of digital and Energy Best Deal drop-ins taking place. These sessions largely have tended to be delivered on a one-to-one basis, so the number of attendees does not proportionately reflect the increase in courses.
9. Moving Forward courses are promoted via a range of methods including our company newspaper, the website, social media, at events and through press releases. We also have an agreement with Gateshead Council to promote the programme in their Adult learning and skills brochure which goes to all Gateshead households throughout the year.
10. A summary of course attendance is attached at appendix 1 to this report.
11. In addition we have also supported tenants and leaseholders to attend a number of national seminars and conferences to build their wider knowledge and provide networking opportunities. This includes conferences delivered by Tenant Central at TPAS.

Moving Forward analysis 2014/15

12. Overall attendance figures of courses delivered up to 31 March 2013 show the most popular courses are delivered by B&Q (45) and TPAS (29). See appendix 2 for a full breakdown of courses and training providers.
13. Evaluation forms are distributed at the end of each course to enable us to monitor satisfaction. Responses show that satisfaction with the training is high with 95.70% stating overall they were either very or fairly satisfied with the course(s) they attended.
14. Figures show that 70.83% attendees are female, and the 60-74 age group continues to have the highest number of attendees (41.94%). There has been an increase in the number of people attending who are aged 25-39 (19.35%) which is joint with the 50-59 age group this year. 47.92% of attendees have told us they have a disability.
15. There have been a number of positive outcomes for attendees on the training ranging from increased confidence, attending further training with the company, improved health and wellbeing, and increased digital skills in preparation for Universal Credit.
16. We continue to monitor how people find out about our training to help us see which methods are more effective. The most popular methods are through the Moving Forward programme and TGHC news, followed by Adult Learning and Skills programme.

17. Appendix 3 details information about the profile of course attendees and responses to evaluation forms. Examples of feedback from attendees is provided below;
- Plumbing; 'Very good course, I have learnt a lot today'
 - Decorating; 'I think the course was very good, don't feel like it could be improved'
 - Managing a project; 'I thought the course was excellent'
 - Basic DIY; 'I am very pleased thanks'
 - Health Awareness; 'Really informative, very relaxed good participation from the group'
 - Confidence building; 'Enjoyed course, positive experience and hope to attend future ones'
 - Managing your stress; 'Made me want to be more involved with people and get a better quality of life. Thank you.'
 - Digital drop in; 'I found today's course very interesting'
 - Understanding differences in people; 'Excellent course and excellent trainer'.

Training and development of residents

18. We continue to look for learning and development opportunities for our involved customers. TALISMAN members have attended various training sessions during the year to support them in their role.
19. Two new members were recruited during 2014/15 and attended an induction training session to help them gain an understanding of how the company operates, its structure, what scrutiny means and how to undertake effective exercises.
20. Some of the external training attended by members includes;
- **'Scrutiny Skills'** – one customer attended a conference at Trafford Hall to develop their skills and understanding around scrutiny
 - **'TPAS Annual Conference'** – two customers attended the annual conference to hear about what's taken place in the past year and what TPAS plans are for the coming year
 - **'Scrutiny Skills'** – four TALISMAN members were given the opportunity to learn further scrutiny skills by undertaking an online course
 - **'Scrutiny Lounge'** – six scrutiny panel members attended free training held by Tenant Central where they had the opportunity to network with scrutiny panel members from other housing organisations.
21. A full list of external leaning attended by tenants and leaseholders can be found in Appendix 4.
22. A commitment to the continued training and development of members helps to ensure that the panels are effective and achieve positive outcomes for tenants, leaseholders and the company.

Young people

23. Consett YMCA is delivering the 'Team' programme on behalf of the Prince's Trust in Gateshead. 'Team' is a 12 week personal development course, offering work experience, qualifications, practical skills, community projects and a residential week.
24. The programme is aimed at young people aged between 16-25 who are unemployed, with the aim of developing their skills and confidence, and increase opportunities for them to gain employment or go into further education.
25. As part of this programme the housing company were invited to host a session around independent living. We delivered a two hour session which covered basic information and advice around budgeting, the impacts and consequences of anti-social behaviour and your rights and responsibilities as a tenant of the housing company.
26. To date two sessions have been delivered to different groups of young people, one in December 2014 and another in March 2015. Feedback from the sessions was positive with some attendees reporting they would reconsider their decision to try and move out in the near future as a result of the income and expenditure session.
27. We will continue to deliver these sessions when there is demand, to help educate young people about independent living and the factors that need to be considered before taking on the responsibility of a tenancy with us.
28. Ultimately, we anticipate that the delivery of these sessions will increase sustained tenancies among young people and reduce potential cases of anti-social behaviour and other breaches of our tenancy agreement.

Digital inclusion

29. The housing company is committed to increasing the digital skills of tenants and leaseholders, particularly in the approach to preparing for Universal Credit.
30. We have held a number of digital drop-ins with tenants and leaseholders to build upon their existing knowledge, and increase their confidence in accessing services online.
31. Due to the varying levels of knowledge and confidence of customers, most of these sessions were delivered on a one to one basis, thus being able to focus on specific areas they wanted to learn about.
32. As a result of this, attendees have been able to leave with an increased understanding and confidence of how to access particular online services, and get the most out of the session.
33. We will continue to deliver digital drop ins throughout 2015/16 to develop the online skills of our tenants and leaseholders and aim to increase the number of people who can access services online, particularly those who need to apply for Universal Credit.

34. We have also, where possible signposted people to further training through other organisations such as adult learning or libraries.

Moving Forward Programme 2015/16

35. The Moving Forward training programme for 2015/16 was launched in April 2015.
36. Based on feedback from customers, we continue to offer a range of scheduled and demand led courses to provide greater flexibility and accessibility to them.
37. The programme is available on our website, at numerous community organisations and has been sent to all tenants and leaseholders. This was developed following discussions with existing providers, service managers and customers to ensure that it meets the current needs of our tenants and leaseholders.
38. Involved customers have developed the new programme including content and design. The design is based on the Opportunity Knocks theme again this year, continuing to provide a clear link between the training and other opportunities to be involved in shaping services.
39. The programme offers 10 scheduled and 14 demand led courses ranging from Gardening to Managing your stress.
40. As B&Q were no longer able to commit to deliver courses in the 2015/16 training programme. Gardening courses will now be delivered by the 4C's Community Project. This is a charitable organisation that is committed to local sustainable development and climate change community champions.
41. Attendees will each take home a pack made up of relevant materials from the course in order to encourage them to continue the skills they have learnt at home.
42. The health sessions will also be delivered by a new trainer in 2015/16 with a focus around a healthy body and mind. This will incorporate a range of techniques including mindfulness, Thai-chi and breathing exercises. The new title of this course is, 'How to lead a healthy lifestyle' and will be a lower cost to previous health awareness courses.
43. We will continue to deliver the 'How to manage your money' course in-house as a short overview of money management. In addition to this we will also offer a course called 'Made of money', which is a more in-depth course made up of six two-hour sessions over a six week period. There is the option to run this as a seven week course if participants have children aged between 4-11 years old, to bring them into the final session for a 'family learning' module.
44. This course goes into more detail about various aspects of money management including debt, credit, communication around money and children and money. This will be delivered by housing company employees who have received training to deliver these sessions.
45. Delivering courses in-house allows us to demonstrate value for money by being more efficient in service delivery by utilising skills of employees and saving

money where we would have paid an external provider. It also allows us to tailor the courses specifically to our needs and those of attendees. Other courses that will be delivered in-house are 'Social media made simple' and 'Let's get digital, digital' drop-ins.

46. As part of our repairs and maintenance contract, Mears committed to provide trade based skills training for tenants and leaseholders. We will work with them in 2015/16 to deliver community based decorating sessions. These sessions will also provide attendees with a pack at the end of the session to help them continue to use the skills they have learnt in their home.

Link to values

47. This report relates to the following Company values: -

- Customer focused
- Inclusive, valuing diversity
- Innovative
- Passionate about what we do

Impact on tenants

48. By offering courses in a variety of ways, it allows customers greater accessibility and increased potential in building their capacity. Courses will continue to be offered on both a demand led and scheduled basis in 2015/16.
49. The courses have a range of positive impacts on tenants including increasing their skills and knowledge, increased social interaction and improved wellbeing.

Risk Management Implications

50. The HCA's Involvement and Empowerment standard places a requirement on landlords to offer customers the opportunity to develop their skills to actively influence the management of their housing. Specifically, the demand led training provides these opportunities to our customers to help them gain skills to scrutinise our services more effectively, ensuring we are meeting this standard.

Financial Implications

51. The Head of Corporate Services confirms there is a budget for the 2015/16 Moving Forward programme. Discount is accessed for the training provided by TPAS as the company currently holds membership for the organisation.
52. External funding is accessed via our Service Level Agreement with Adult Learning and Skills, where we were set a target to achieve £624 during the 2014/15 programme. We reached this target based on the number of customers attending demand led training.
53. The 'How to lead a healthy lifestyle' courses will be offered at a lower cost compared to those provided last year.

Equality and Diversity Implications

54. An equality impact assessment has been carried out on the training programme to ensure that it does not indirectly impact on any vulnerable tenants or leaseholders.
55. Customers are made aware of the support available to assist them to access Moving Forward courses. Support is also heavily promoted to other organisations that work within communities, to encourage customers to attend our courses. People attending training during this financial year have benefitted from this support including the provision of transport and information provided in a different format, in particular to help customers with Dyslexia.

Value for Money implications

56. 'How to manage your money', 'Made of money', 'Social media made simple' and 'Let's get digital, digital' will be delivered by housing company staff and therefore present cost savings to the company not appointing an external trainer.
57. As courses will no longer be delivered by B&Q this year, which were held at the Scotswood store, it is anticipated that there will be savings made on transport costs.
58. The gardening courses being delivered in the 2015/16 programme have a focus around sustaining the local community. Here customers will learn how to save money by utilising existing unwanted materials in the home to grow plants and vegetables in, rather than making unnecessary purchases for such items.

Consultation carried out

59. Feedback on the programme has been gathered through a wide range of sources to ensure that the programme delivered in 2015/16 meets the needs of our tenants and leaseholders. This includes evaluations distributed at the end of each course and discussions held with the Involvement SIG, BME and Disabled Persons' housing forums.
60. Customers were satisfied with the draft 2015/16 programme and are excited about the new courses available this year.

Health Implications

61. The training courses have a direct impact on the health and wellbeing of tenants. In particular, the 'Health awareness', 'Managing your stress' and 'How to manage your money' courses can make a significant impact.
62. The courses delivered by Gateshead Council and HealthWORKS focus on the importance of general health awareness and stress management, which can positively impact the individual's mental health and reduce potential stress.
63. Customers who have attended B&Q courses learn skills on improving and maintaining their homes. This helps to empower customers and give them the confidence to undertake minor improvements and take pride in their home, potentially avoiding unnecessary jobs for our Home**Repairs** service.

Recommendation

64. The views are sought on whether the committee is satisfied with the impact on customers to date and of the proposed 2015/16 programme.

Appendix 1: Summary of course attendance

Course	Provider	Attendance figures
Gardening	B&Q	cancelled
Plumbing	B&Q	8
Meeting skills and being Chair	TPAS	9
Decorating (x2)	B&Q	17
Managing a project	TPAS	7
Digital drop in (x7)	TGHC	20
Basic DIY	B&Q	6
Health Awareness (x2)	Gateshead Council	13
Confidence building	TPAS	8
Managing your stress	HealthWORKS	9
Energy Best Deal (x2)	TGHC	3
Understanding differences in people	TPAS	5
Summer gardening	B&Q	6
How to manage your money	TGHC	4
Total	22	115

Appendix 2: Course providers and attendance figures

Date	Course provider	Number of courses held	Attendance figures
2014/15 (to 31 March 2015)	B&Q	5	37
	TPAS	4	29
	Gateshead Council	2	13
	The Gateshead Housing Company	10	27
	HealthWORKS	1	9
Total		22	115

Appendix 3: Profile of attendees and evaluation form responses and comments

There is a difference in course attendance and evaluation form responses as some customers had to leave courses early and didn't complete an evaluation form before they left.

Gender		
Male	28	29.17%
Female	68	70.83%
Total	96	100%
Disability		
Disabled	46	47.92%
Non-disabled	50	52.08%
Total (not including blanks)	96	100%
Ethnic origin		
Asian Pakistan	2	2.15%
Asian Indian	1	1.08%
Asian Other	1	1.08%
Black African	6	6.45%
Mixed Other	8	8.60%
White British	70	75.27%
White Other	5	5.37%
Total (not including blanks)	93	100%
Unknown/blank	3	-
Age		
Under 25	6	6.45%
25-39	18	19.35%
40-49	5	5.38%
50-59	18	19.35%
60-74	39	41.94%
75 and over	7	7.53%
Total (not including blanks)	93	100%
Unknown/blank	3	-

Question 1: How satisfied are you with the course organisation?		
Very satisfied	73	76.04%
Fairly satisfied	23	23.96%
Fairly dissatisfied	-	-
Very dissatisfied	-	-
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	-	-
Total	96	100%

Question 2: How satisfied are you with the facilities?		
Very satisfied	60	62.50%
Fairly satisfied	34	35.42%
Fairly dissatisfied	1	1.04%
Very dissatisfied	1	1.04%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	-	-
Total (not including blanks)	96	100%
Blank	-	-

Question 3: How satisfied are you with the length of the course?		
Very satisfied	70	72.92%
Fairly satisfied	23	23.96%
Fairly dissatisfied	2	2.08%
Very dissatisfied	1	1.04%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	-	-
Total	96	100%

Question 4: How satisfied are you with the trainer?		
Very satisfied	79	83.16%
Fairly satisfied	14	14.74%
Fairly dissatisfied	2	2.10%
Very dissatisfied	-	-
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	-	-
Total	95	100%
Blank	1	-

Question 5: How satisfied are you with the course content?		
Very satisfied	66	70.22%
Fairly satisfied	24	25.53%
Fairly dissatisfied	3	3.19%
Very dissatisfied	1	1.06%
Total (not including blanks)	94	100%
Blank	2	-

Question 6: Did you find the course racist, sexist or offensive in any way?		
Yes	-	-
No	95	100%
Total (not including blanks)	95	100%
Blank	1	-

Question 7: From the skills and knowledge you've gained in this course could you apply them in your day to day life?		
Yes	89	93.68%
No	6	6.32%
Total (not including blanks)	95	100%
Blank	1	-

Question 8: Did the course meet your expectations?		
Yes	86	93.48%
No	6	6.52%
Total (not including blanks)	92	100%
Blank	4	-

Question 9: How satisfied are you with the opportunities to get involved today?		
Very satisfied	66	70.97%
Fairly satisfied	20	21.51%
Fairly dissatisfied	5	5.38%
Very dissatisfied	2	2.14%
Total (not including blanks)	93	100%
Blank	3	-

Question 10: Overall, how satisfied are you with the course today?		
Very satisfied	74	79.57%
Fairly satisfied	15	16.13%
Fairly dissatisfied	3	3.23%
Very dissatisfied	1	1.07%
Total (not including blanks)	93	100%
Blank	3	-

Appendix 4: Tenant and leaseholders' external learning

Course title	Number attending
Scrutiny skills, Trafford Hall	1
TPAS Annual conference	2
Scrutiny skills, TPAS E-learning	4
Scrutiny lounge	3
Scrutiny lounge, Gosforth	3
Get on board, Trafford Hall	2
Community engagement, Trafford Hall	2
NHC National Tenants Panel Conference	4
Scrutiny a deeper involvement, Trafford Hall	4
Tenant advisor, unconference	2
Understanding performance, TPAS E-learning	2