



Evaluation of the day

For the evaluation of the Derby Homes Board Away day the agreed aims and benefits of the training day have been translated into an evaluation sheet. This evaluation sheet was handed out at the end of the day. As one Councillor had to leave early, the sheet was filled in by only 19 of the 20 participants. In addition to this evaluation measure, during the day notes were taken of relevant observations and participants' comments and statements. These notes are used in support of the participants' evaluation responses.

These responses and supporting observations and comments/statements are synthesised subsequently based on the structure provided by the training day's agreed aims and benefits. An overview of the participants' responses to the individual questions and statements of the evaluation form - divided into the four participants groups Councillors, Independents, Tenants Representatives and Derby Homes staff members – can be found in Appendix 1.

Increased confidence and personal awareness

Overall, all participants believe that they possess valuable knowledge and experience for improving the strategies and methods of Derby Homes in order to improve tenants' satisfaction. However, it can be noted that Councillors rate themselves slightly lower on this dimension than the other participants. In line with this overall positive self rating, the vast majority of participants are motivated to share their knowledge and experience with the whole board in order to improve tenants' satisfaction in the above way. During the training day, this was reflected in the vivid participation in group discussions by most of the participants.

Although it is not clear whether the training day has increased this self-rating and motivation, the results show that the participating Derby Home members see great value in contributing to the development of strategies and methods that could increase tenants' satisfaction with Derby Homes.

Increased awareness of individual strengths and increased integration and equality

All the participants believe that all board members possess knowledge and experience that are valuable for the development of strategies and methods to improve the satisfaction of Derby Homes tenants with the organisation. The overall good participation in group discussions and the division of members into 'thinkers' and 'doers' stated by one group created for exercises of the first workshop might be regarded as reflections of this evaluation result.

Moreover, although it is unknown what the level of equality between board members was before the training, by the end of the training session board members gave a positive to neutral response to the question whether they feel as an equal member of the board. However, as most participants agree or even strongly agree that the day has increased the collaboration amongst all board members, the conclusion might be drawn that the training has increased the sense of integration and equality. This can be supported by the observation that the integration of all participants into group discussion increased during the day, with those individuals dominated by other group members in earlier discussion being more involved.

Developed awareness of the benefit of tenants' knowledge and experience for Derby Homes

The exercises and discussions on the day as well as the feedback provided by the respondents revealed that there are mixed feelings and thoughts about the current strategies and ways within Derby Homes which relate to the integration of tenants' knowledge and experience. The majority of the participants agree or strongly agree that the knowledge and experience of the tenants should be integrated into Derby Home's strategy, and they think that the training day has increased the awareness for the necessity of this integration. The overall perception is that at the moment there is a lack of such integration, and that this is caused by factors within Derby Homes as an organisation as well as by factors within the tenants themselves, such as a lack of openness to tenants' ideas as well as a lack of motivation among the tenants to get involved. Significant for possible changes within Derby Homes is the impression that tenants perceive that their contribution is not sufficiently valued and/or used by the board and the wider organisation, and that this might be true indeed. Supporting comments have been made during the training workshops, which addressed an insufficient empowerment of tenants to share their ideas combined with insufficient listening to them.

However, it has also become clear that a lot of positive strategies and methods for tenant involvement are already in place but that these are not sufficiently or effectively marketed among the whole group of tenants and/or not sufficiently acted upon. Therefore, participants feel the

need to develop a stronger focus on using and promoting exiting positive and high quality services and strategies for tenant involvement. Their feedback shows that this should be done along strategic developments for increasing communication and consultation with tenants. However, a strong need to change the way Derby Homes board operates is not perceived. Noteworthy to mention is that this need is perceived less by Tenant Representatives.

Although not agreed as an aim of the training day, the day had not been helpful in developing strategies to increase tenant satisfaction. However, as a need for strategic development for improving this satisfaction through increasing communication and consultation with tenants is perceived, Vision recommend to follow this theme up in further training sessions.

Having fun

All participants clearly enjoyed the day. The team working and group discussions were appreciated in particular. Since these learning methods were the main focus of the workshop facilitated by Brendan Blewett, his workshop has been mentioned as particularly enjoyable by a number of participants. Overall, the training was a good opportunity to learn more about other board members and Derby Home employees in an informal environment while developing new ways of thinking about Derby Homes as an organisation in a creative way.

Conclusion

The overall conclusion that can be drawn from this evaluation is that the Derby Homes Board Away Day was an enjoyable and fun training day that has been successful in increasing the awareness of the value of tenants' knowledge and experience for improving their satisfaction with Derby Homes as well as increasing the collaboration between all board members. The evaluation results suggest furthermore that the aims of improved awareness of personal as well as other board member or Derby Homes' employees' strengths have possibly been achieved for those participants with a lack of this awareness at the beginning of the training.