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SOCIAL HOUSING ADVISORY GROUP MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting Date: Wednesday, October 23, 2019

Meeting Start Time and End Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: Region of Durham
605 Rossland Rd E, Whitby | Room 1-B

In Attendance (25)

Alyxandra Riddell	Region of Durham
Amona Bissoon	Inter-Organization
Arthur J. Smith	Durham Christian Homes
Beverly Kueper	Region of Durham
Dawn Richardson	CHF Canada
Eleanor MacDonald	Region of Durham
Erin O'Reilly	DAFRS
Frederick Wind	Durham Christian Homes
John Hill	Northview Meadow
Kathy Andreopoulos	Unity Village
Kelsey Houston	Maple Glen
Kevin Bradley	Ajax Municipal
Laura Lavoy	Region of Durham
Lori Barber	Region of Durham
Mike Grimsditch	CMHA Durham
Nancy Oortwyn	Durham Christian Homes
Nicole McClughan	Durham Non-Profit
Roberta Jagoe	Region of Durham
Sandra Thompson	Inter-Organization
Stacey Leadbetter	Otter Creek
Valerie Cook	Region of Durham
Vera Bala	YWCA

Regrets (3)

Shirley Rogers	Durham County Seniors
Jody Baker	Inter Faith Homes
Christine McGee	Cornerstone

Guests (3)

Howie Wong	Housing Services Corporation
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Sara Baker
Sam Stark

Housing Services Corporation
Housing Services Corporation

Discussion Items

1. Welcome and introductions

2. Business arising from previous minutes

- None.

3. Housing Services Corporation (HSC) Overview

- Housing Services Corporation presented an overview of programs available through HSC and Housing Investment Corporation (HIC) for social housing providers.
- HSC offers insurance programs for social housing providers to help maintain and keep their mortgages.
- Housing Investment Corporation (HIC) delivers long-term, low-cost financing to housing non-profits and cooperatives to help build more affordable housing.
- Please refer to the presentation for more detailed information.

4. Housing Services Act (HSA) Changes

- The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has recently introduced a number of changes to the HSA regulations. See the attached presentation for more details about these changes.
- Community safety
 - Effective immediately, housing providers can refuse to offer to a DASH applicant who was evicted for a serious illegal act within the last 5 years. The housing provider must have reasonable grounds to believe they pose a risk to someone in their housing project.
- Transfers
 - Effective January 1, 2020, DASH will no longer be required to place transfer applicants on the waiting list. Housing providers in Durham may transfer tenants to another housing provider outside of the waiting list with approval of Housing Services.
- Refusals of Offers

- Effective January 1, 2020, applicants will be ineligible for RGI and removed from the wait list after they refuse one offer of housing. This applies to all applicants, including special priority and overhoused tenants.
- The DASH website has been updated to notify applicants of this change when they log in to view vacancies.
- RGI Simplification
 - Effective July 2020, Durham will be implementing the new RGI simplification rules.
- The new simplified RGI will be based on the net income of the household per the most recent tax return. In-year changes will be limited. Alternate calculation may be permitted at the discretion of the service manager. Durham Social Housing Directives and the RGI Guide will be updated in advance of RGI Simplification changes, and new tools and templates will be provided to assist the transition.
- Half day training session will be scheduled for housing providers in May and June of 2020. If you have any questions prior to the training dates, please send them to:
 - Brynn Harlock, Housing Co-ordinator: Brynn.Harlock@durham.ca
 - Megan Hueser-Shields, Housing Co-ordinator: Megan.Hueser-Shields@durham.ca
 - Roberta Jagoe, Policy Analyst: Roberta.Jagoe@durham.ca
- Housing Services will be establishing a working group to determine best practices moving forward. If you would like to participate in the working group, please contact Roberta Jagoe, Policy Analyst: Roberta.Jagoe@durham.ca.

5. Mental Health Issues in Community Housing

- Alyxandra Riddell from the Housing Services Division provided an overview of community resources to help support tenants and members experiencing mental health issues.
- Alyx also spoke to the new RentSmart initiative in Durham. RentSmart provides education and supports to tenants, landlords and community agencies for successful tenancies. It can assist people who are looking for housing and help reduce conflict and evictions for current tenants.
- Open discussion regarding what types of supports housing providers would like to see.

- Housing providers would like to see more supports for tenants who suffer from mental illness and have no family support.
- Suggested that there are separate office spaces at buildings to allow mental health workers to be available for tenants

6. Standing Items

- Landlord and Tenant Board
 - Housing providers continue to experience long delays with the Landlord and Tenant Board. More serious cases that involve evictions for illegal acts are not being prioritized with the LTB.
 - Some housing providers have requested tribunal dates in the City of Toronto because they are experiencing faster response times.
 - Discussion to collect more data from housing providers based on their experiences with the LTB. This may be an opportunity to use strength in numbers to bring forward issues.
- Community Housing Renewal Strategy
 - Covered under HSA changes earlier in agenda.
- Affordable and Seniors' Housing Task Force update
 - No new updates to provide.
 - **Action Item:** The Affordable and Seniors' Housing Task Force standing item will be removed from the agenda moving forward.

7. New Business

- **Action Item:** Housing Services will send a survey requesting members availability and feedback for future SHAG meetings.

8. Next Meeting

- Wednesday, January 22, 2020 in Room 1-B at 605 Rossland Rd E, Whitby.