

**Minutes of Meeting held on 1 March 2011 at 3.15 p.m.  
At Little Aynam House, Kendal**

Present: Sandy Ryder Finance Manager, SLH  
Suzy Duffy Community Participation Coordinator, SLH  
Tim Keegan 6 Applerigg, Kendal  
Alan Mark 6 Longlands View, Kendal  
Trevor Woodward Contract Partnership Manager, SLH  
Dorothy Dixon 44 Waterside, Kendal  
Ms A Dickinson 5 Jennings Terrace, Kendal  
Mrs D Thornton 7 Jennings Terrace, Kendal  
Cllr Phil Dixon SLH Board Director and SLDC Cllr (part)  
Tom Lynch Repairs Operations Manager, SLH

Apologies: Vince Carter, Housing Officer, SLH  
Pauline Keeley, Finance Assistant, SLH  
John Mansergh, Performance Manager  
John Atkinson, 20 Sedbergh Drive, Kendal  
Margaret Pritchard, Tenants' Committee representative  
Maureen Pearson, South Lakes Housing

Circulation: All

Copy to: Peter Thomas  
David Stubbs

**Subject**

**Action**

**1.0 Minutes of last meeting**

The minutes from the meeting of 23 November 2010 were declared a true record.

**2.0 Matters arising**

Item 4 – SD will contact Cllr Dixon re grounds maintenance service item if he cannot attend today.

Item 6 – Dorothy Dixon had been nominated to attend the review of the SLH anti-social behaviour policy. The review had been put back to the next financial year, (2011-12) and Simon Hughes would be keeping Dorothy informed.

DD/SH

**3.0 Update on invoicing**

Sandy Ryder said that a great deal of work had been put into updating the information for the invoicing process. The last of the 247 leases was scanned on to SLH computers this week, which is a major milestone in improving the quality of information we hold on leaseholders and their homes. This includes mapping of the dwelling footprint and associated common areas. Around 20% of the leases have been checked for legalities, and the information is being used to determine which properties attract which level of service charge costs.

Sandy circulated some papers to illustrate how charges were being assessed. The

first paper shows how charges for management, insurance, cleaning, grounds maintenance and communal electricity were being counted up to come up with a final service charge for a leasehold dwelling. The second paper shows how items such as stationery and staff time make up the management fee, and the third paper illustrates how blocks with a mix of tenants and leaseholders are charged a percentage of costs.

Sandy added that she had received an enormous spreadsheet from the Council showing details of the grounds maintenance contract, which she has yet to try to figure out.

There were then a number of questions for Sandy:

- DD – is the charge for cleaning mandatory or can one opt out if doing the cleaning oneself? SR – charge is compulsory as it has to be charged between all occupiers.
- DD – do upstairs dwellers have to pay for grounds maintenance SR – Yes, if the ground is shown on the deeds as part of the estate attaching to the dwelling.

Sandy then explained that it might be easier for SLH to explain the invoicing review if the management fee and grounds maintenance bills went out together, with just the one explanation having to be done. **The Group agreed to leave this matter to Sandy’s discretion.**

#### 4.0 Vacancy for Tenant Board Director

Dorothy Dixon explained that following Peter Bland’s resignation as a Tenant Board Director, there was a vacancy on the Board. Dorothy confirmed that any tenant or leaseholder could apply for the vacancy. Dorothy particularly urged Tim Keegan to consider applying for the vacancy. Tim said that at the present time, he was just too busy to help out.

**The Group asked if the Tenant Board Director vacancy could be advertised via the next round of invoices.**

SAB/SR/SD

#### 5.0 SLH Service Offer Two Leaseholders and Right to buy Monitoring the offers

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will issue leaseholders with an estimated invoice for ground rent and leasehold service charges in April each year and issue a final statement of account in March of the following year and advise of any additional charges or refund due.</li> </ul> | <p><b>How will we check this?</b></p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will provide more details about the cost of maintenance and how your service charge has been calculated.</li> </ul>   | <p>Reported annually</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will provide instalment facilities to allow payment of service charge invoices over 10 months.</li> </ul>   | <p>Reported annually</p> <p>Aim to provide on request if people are in financial difficulty. Will have a negative cash</p> |

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|   | flow impact. Can numbers of those taking advantage of instalments be provided?                            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will provide you with details of programmes of planned works and improvements to your estate and arrange for contractors to contact you to discuss carrying out works to your home at a reasonable cost.</li> </ul> | <p>We write to all leaseholders</p> <p>On newsletter and in website</p>                                   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will arrange for our gas contractor to provide gas servicing to you at a competitive price.</li> </ul>  | <p>Done</p> <p>Though not a term of the contract, contractors will usually offer services as goodwill</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will hold regular Leaseholder Service Improvement Group meetings to bring leaseholders together to agree priorities for improvement.</li> </ul>   | <p>Publish minutes and advertise membership</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will offer a responsive repairs service to leaseholders for all repairs. This will include a 24-hour, 365 day emergency call out service for emergency repairs.</li> </ul>  | <p>This is provided via call centres. How much are the rates?</p>   |

### Right to Buy

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will acknowledge receipt of your application within 20 working days and send a house/freehold offer letter within 12 weeks of receipt of an application.</li> </ul> | <p>Requested spreadsheet</p>           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will explain the implications of becoming a leaseholder to you in an induction Interview as soon as is practicable after your application is received.</li> </ul>   | <p>New role for Customer Services?</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will send a flat/lease-hold offer within 12 weeks of receipt of an application.</li> </ul>  | <p>Requested spreadsheet</p>           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will instruct the Councils' Legal Section within 10 working days of receipt of tenant's instruction to proceed with the sale.</li> </ul>                            | <p>Requested spreadsheet</p>           |

## 6.0 Leaseholder Open Event/Tenant Conference

The Group had previously been undecided about whether to hold a separate leaseholder event, or join in with the Tenant Conference. Tenants' Committee had

just agreed that another Tenant Conference should be held in 2011. Suzy went on to say that it would save money and staff time for the leaseholder event to be held as part of the Conference.

Resident Involvement Service Improvement Group (RISIG) would be sorting out the arrangements and making recommendations to Tenants' Committee. Leaseholders should contact Suzy if they want to be involved in this.

**The Group agreed to combine the leaseholder event with the Tenant Conference.**

**7.0 Any other business**

Cllr Dixon was then briefed about the LESIG's long held belief that leaseholders were being charged twice for the grounds maintenance service (as well as tenants). It was agreed that Cllr Dixon meet up with Sandy Ryder to see if any progress could be made with this.

Cllr Dixon

Trevor Woodward confirmed that Savilles had been engaged to do Fire Risk Assessments on blocks of flats. There were a number of emerging items to review, for example whether fire doors open outwards.

Cllr Dixon also confirmed that he had been trying to sort out refuse problems at Waterside and will report back to the next meeting.

Cllr Dixon

**8.0 Dates of next meetings**

24 May 2011 to be confirmed