

**SOUTH LAKES HOUSING TENANTS' COMMITTEE MINUTES  
THURSDAY 2 JULY 2009 AT 10.30 HRS  
HELD AT  
THE RESOURCE CENTRE, LITTLE AYNAM HOUSE, KENDAL**

Present: Win Sayers (Chairman)  
Sherralyn Clement  
John Short  
Charles Howarth  
Margaret Akrigg  
Robin Martakies

Officers in attendance: Ian Elleray- Community and Housing Manager, SLDC (part)  
Suzy Duffy- Community Participation Coordinator, SLH  
John Stirling- Tenant Participation Officer, SLH

Guests Brenda Gray- Portfolio Holder, SLDC  
Lisa Chant- Customer Services Manager, Bramall Construction (part)

Apologies: Ron Pritchard  
Margaret Pritchard  
Phyllis Tweedale  
Joan Chadwick  
Peter Bland  
Dorothy Dixon

Circulation: As above

Copy to:

**Action**

**520 Minutes of previous meeting (21 May 2009)**

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

**521 Matters arising**

Minute 506. John Short said that the Board Remuneration Committee was involved in setting the remuneration of the Chief Executive and two Directors.

Minute 516. Robin Martakies said that the Grant Approval Panel (GAP) had approved estate improvement works last year, but not all work had been carried out before the year end and a seat approved for the Kirkfield area had not been fitted. The funding for this and other projects had therefore been lost. On behalf of Peter Bland who is Chairman of the GAP, John Short said that the application for the seat had been approved at the GAP meeting at the end of January, and the order for the seat was placed with Continental Landscapes at the beginning of March. Regrettably the work had not been completed when the list was checked in April. As the work had not been completed by the end of the financial year, accounting rules dictated that the money could not be carried over to this next financial year.

John added that, at the most recent meeting of the GAP, it had been agreed that in future, all orders for work would be placed before the end of December, allowing a period of 3 months in 2010 to ensure that works were completed on time and before the end of the financial year. Suzy Duffy said that the closing date for receipt of applications was September 2009, and this would be published in the newsletter. This would allow projects to be evaluated, orders placed and if possible works completed before the December deadline.

Action

#### **522 SLH Board Minutes 28 May 2009**

Minutes 743 and 750- Robin Martakies was pleased to note that the Board had agreed to retain 'Residents Questions' as a standing item, and that the recommendation from Tenants Committee regarding changes to the Aids and Adaptations policy had been partly accepted.

Minute 748- Sherralyn Clement and Robin Martakies asked to be supplied with more information about the nature of complaints made to SLH. John Short said that it was pleasing to note that most complaints were made directly to SLH and not received by SLDC or other parties. Suzy Duffy would ask the Business Support Manager to provide more detail to Committee members

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#### **523 SLH Board Agenda 9 July 2009**

Item 4.1 Stock Condition Survey- Win Sayers noted the complexity of the information provided and reassured members that should they need further explanation or an officer to attend a future meeting to give a more detailed account of the process then this could be arranged.

#### **524 Treasurers Report**

John Short had prepared a written report which had been circulated with the agenda. He gave a verbal update saying that over the period covered by the report there was little activity, however the presentation of a birthday gift to Don Brookes, a previous Chairman of Tenants Committee, had taken place. John also sought approval from the Committee to purchase a gratuity to the value of £15 for the auditor. Approval was given.

#### **525 Strategic Housing Options Update**

Ian Elleray said that following Cabinet agreement on 27 May 2009 to the principle of a strategic review of housing options, further work had been done on the two issues identified by Cabinet as requiring clarification before they could take a substantial decision. That work had now been concluded and a subsequent report would be considered by Cabinet on 8 July 2009. Ian circulated the report round the table and drew attention to the following significant points. Firstly consultants had advised that should an option to transfer be considered, current economic climate presented relatively low risk to SLDC, and secondly that the revised budgeted costs of undertaking the project should be met from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The appointment of an Independent Tenant Advisor (ITA) was an important stage in the process, and SLDC was committed to fully involving Tenants' Committee in the formal procedure for appointment of their advisor. It was envisaged that there would be an update report made at each meeting of Tenants' Committee to maintain the full involvement of all members, also there may be isolated occasions when to maintain progress. It might be necessary to convene a special meeting at short notice or to use email to secure necessary decisions from the Committee.

Ian went on to say that the report to Cabinet was drafted, the Minister for Housing had released a written statement to Parliament on 29 June. The statement was particularly complimentary to the Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) model of delivering council housing services. There were some points which needed

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further clarification in order to best advise cabinet on 8 July. The statement together with covering correspondence from the National Federation of ALMOS would be circulated to all members of Tenants Committee

**Action**

## **526 Area Discussion Groups**

Robin Martakies said that the Resident Involvement SIG (RISIG) meeting of 16 June had considered the replacement of Area Discussion Groups (ADGs) by Family Fun Days (FFDs) and asked if they had replaced ADGs and was that change permanent? Suzy Duffy said that she understood that the poor attendance by tenants at ADGs had been brought up at the Board, and the FFDs had later been identified as an alternative method of consulting with tenants, particularly younger tenants who were not attending more formal occasions. FFDs had replaced ADGs for this year, however attendance numbers would be monitored and reported and the situation kept under review. Robin Martakies said that he supported FFDs but they should be additional to ADGs and Tenants' Committee had not been consulted about the change.

John Short asked who had taken the decision to move away from ADGs to FFDs.

Margaret Akrigg suggested that FFDs could be combined with the various events organised by Residents Associations around the district.

Brenda Gray asked about the relationship between Tenant Involvement Club (TIC) members and FFDs. Suzy Duffy said that the current TIC database was being updated to include more details about the age, gender or disability etc of TIC members, which would facilitate better identification of hard to reach groups and easier targetting.

## **527 Members Reports**

Margaret Akrigg- Had attended the final meeting of the Bramall Community Fund Group, and a schedule of all successful bids was circulated to members. Equipment to a total value in excess of £21,000 had been donated to various voluntary groups around the district. £400 remained, and the Group wished to donate it to Tenants Committee to create a community fund. Brenda Gray said that the fund should have specific terms of reference. It was agreed that pending agreement on appropriate terms of reference, the cheque would be banked by John Short but no grants would be paid from it until agreement had been reached on the terms of reference.

Charles Howarth- Had attended a Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting when it was decided that co-opted members as well as elected members would have the power to vote.

Robin Martakies- Had attended a joint Home Housing and SLH tenants and residents meeting about playground facilities in his neighbourhood. The meeting had drawn upon the results of the Kirkfield Streetsafe on 18 March, and Robin offered to share the results of 18 March with the Committee.

## **528 Decent Homes Reports**

Lisa Chant had previously circulated the Committee with figures showing satisfaction up to the end of May 2009, and verbally reported that the June 2009 figure was 100%. She had continued to report back to SLH details of tenants believed to be in need of additional support as a result of works within their homes. Lisa went on to say that as she was leaving Bramall Construction in the near future, this would be her last meeting presenting satisfaction figures to the Committee. As the Decent Homes Programme was nearing completion, it was suggested that the Committee continue to

receive written reports for their consideration, but nobody from Bramall Construction would attend as a routine. The Committee would retain the right to ask for a representative of the Bramall Construction to attend their meetings and give a verbal account should their performance fall.

**Action**

On behalf of the Committee, Win Sayers thanked Lisa for attending upon the Committee and giving clear and comprehensive explanations. The Committee agreed to retain the right to ask a member of Bramall Construction to attend as necessary, but not as a matter of routine. Lisa was wished well in her future employment.

#### **529 Any Other Business**

- a. Win Sayers presented Smarter Driving certificates to Margaret Akrigg and Charles Howarth.
- b. Immediately upon rising, members judged the colouring competition entries received from the summer edition of the newsletter.

#### **530 Date of next meeting**

16 July- AGM followed by a session looking at standards for social landlords as proposed by the Tenant Services Authority.

17 September- ordinary meeting.