

**SOUTH LAKES HOUSING TENANTS' COMMITTEE MINUTES
THURSDAY 7 AUGUST 2008 AT 10.30 HRS
HELD AT
THE RESOURCE CENTRE, LITTLE AYNAM HOUSE, KENDAL**

Present:	Phyllis Tweedale	Ulverston
	Peter Bland	Kendal
	John Short	Lakes
	Robin Martakies	Lakes
	Don Brookes	Lakes
	Joan Chadwick	Kendal
	Su Marriott	Ulverston
	Margaret Akrigg	Kendal
	Ron Pritchard	Ulverston
	Win Sayers	Ulverston
	Margaret Pritchard	Ulverston Chairman
	Charles Howarth	
	Dorothy Dixon	Leaseholder
Guests:	Lisa Chant	Customer Development Manager – Bramall
	Construction	
Apologies:	Liz Easton	Kendal
	Sherralyn Clement	Kendal
	Suzy Duffy	Community Participation Co-ordinator – SLH
	Brenda Gray	Housing Portfolio Holder – SLDC
	Ian Elleray	Community and Housing Manager – SLDC
	Garry Ronson	Director of Finance – SLH
	Trevor Woodward	Partnerships Manager - SLH
Officers in attendance:	John Stirling	Tenant Participation Officer SLH
	Lucy Reynolds	Senior Strategy Officer SLDC
	David Stubbs (part)	Director of Operations SLH
	Chris Ferris (part)	IT Systems Administrator - SLH
Circulation:	As above	
Copy to:	P Thomas	

Subject

Action

401 Minutes of previous meeting (26 June 2008)

Minute 388. Joan Chadwick said that the previous amendment was incorrect. Both she and Phyllis Tweedale were on the Customer Focus task Team. J St

Minute 397. Joan Chadwick said that she too was a member of the Repairs and Maintenance Service Improvement Group. J St

Subject to these amendments the minutes were accepted as a true record.

402 Matters arising

- a) Decoration Vouchers (minute 389 a) John Stirling explained that both Trevor Woodward and Garry Ronson were both unable to attend due to annual leave. John Stirling then said that a scheme was in the final stages of negotiation with the Homebase chain of DIY stores that would tackle the issue of lack of local choice for Ulverston area tenants. The scheme would benefit all tenants by giving a more flexible approach to spending preferences, and eventually allowing the option of having decorating materials delivered to home addresses. It was felt that this development would be of great benefit to individuals with mobility problems or who resided in rural locations.

Robin Martakies said that although the new scheme was an improvement it did not address the situation elderly or frail tenants who were physically unable to decorate, and asked why it was not possible for SLH staff to undertake the necessary work. Dorothy Dixon said that elderly leaseholders would also be interested in such a scheme but acknowledged that they would have to pay for such a service. John Stirling to arrange for the attendance at the next meeting of suitable officers to discuss the matter further.

J St

TL

- b) Constitution

Lucy Reynolds said that SLDC officers under powers delegated to them were currently considering the new constitution for the Committee and she hoped to report the outcome of those discussions before the end of the meeting.

- c) Broadband at Sheltered Schemes (minute 389 b)

John Short said that any proposal to pay an allowance to Committee members would need careful consideration, as there may be taxation issues for individual members. John Stirling said that the review of the District Wide Tenant Participation Agreement was now scheduled for December 2008 when the issue could be looked at.

SD

403 Broadband at Sheltered Schemes

Chris Ferris joined the meeting and gave a verbal update on the installation of broadband at the 13 Sheltered Schemes. Some technical issues had delayed the installation programme, but it should be completed by the end of August 2008. When complete, it would allow more efficient working from the Schemes and produce cash savings. Subject to further research and consultation, it was a possibility that individual residents could benefit from wireless broadband connection.

404 SLH Board minutes (3 July 2008)

Noted.

405 SLH Board Agenda 14 August 2008

Don Brookes urged the Committee to back one of the options contained within item 11 (South Lakes Housing Tomorrow). John Short said that it was far too early to recommend any option at present, the Committee should wait for SLDC to formally publish their views and receive advice from their own independent advisors before coming to any conclusion. It was agreed not to make any recommendations at this time.

Win Sayers referred to item 7 (Anti-Social Behaviour policy) and said that she fully supported the policy but was concerned that the report indicated there were no financial implications, when upon reading the papers there were significant references to legal processes which were always expensive. John Short said that from his experience as a Board member the term no financial implications meant that a budget had been identified and allocated to fund a particular activity. John Stirling said that the revised policy had been drawn up using a service level agreement with an outside company that included training and advice sessions for Housing Officers and flat rate fees for the legal processes.

Don Brookes said that the Committee had not formally adopted either the proposed Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) policy, nor the revisions to the tenancy agreement which was currently out for consultation with all tenants. Robin Martakies felt at the Committee had been sidelined in these matters and wished his views to be formally recorded. John Stirling said that Tenants Committee was not the only component to the process of consulting with tenants. In his view the Committee were able to comment on any matter before the Board.

Resolved : The Committee supports the proposed ASB policy.

Resolved: The Committee supports the proposed changes to the tenancy agreement.

406 Tenant Board Director Nominations

John Stirling said that the date of the AGM had now been fixed for 18 September to take account of SLDC procedures, and results for the position of Tenant Board Directors had to be lodged with Garry Ronson prior to the AGM. The Tenant Board Directors due to retire were John Short and Joan Chadwick. A piece had appeared in the latest edition of South Lakes Housing News asking any tenant interested in becoming a Tenant Board Director to get in touch, so that they could be made aware of the selection process. The Committee should not make any nominations until they were satisfied that all tenants had received an adequate opportunity to put their name forward.

John Short and Joan Chadwick both said that they wished to seek re-election.

Ron Pritchard said he would stand down as a Tenant Board Director with effect from 18 September.

Charles Howarth said that he wished to be nominated as a Tenant Board Director.

Resolved: A cut off date of 28 August is placed on tenants to register their interest.

Resolved: If necessary an additional meeting be held on 4 September to allow interested tenants to address the Committee.

Resolved: The Committee meeting scheduled for 18 September is moved to 11 September when the Tenant Board Directors would be elected by secret ballot should the number of candidates exceed 3.

J St

407 Tenants Committee Finance

John Short circulated his written report which showed a higher than usual level of

expenditure. John said that this was due to the 6-week cycle of meetings that this time covered the whole or part of 3 months. Margaret Pritchard thanked John for his continued work as Treasurer of the Committee.

Action

408 Q1 Performance Figures

Peter Bland said it was good to see that nearly all tasks were on target. The report was noted.

409 Decent Homes reports

In presenting her report Lisa Chant said that the irregularities referred to at the time of her last visit in relation to the Ulverston South contract had not shown through in the final satisfaction surveys. The programme was progressing well but the process of continually market testing the prices submitted by sub contractors had resulted in a change of kitchen fitters, and there had been some early teething problems.

Robin Martakies referred to negative comments he had made at the last meeting but said that the standard of work done to date in his home was high.

John Short said that the finished work at Drummermire was also of a high standard despite early problems.

Margaret Pritchard thanked Lisa for her report.

David Stubbs presented proposals contained in the proposed DHP 'Mop up' programme (Board agenda item 9), to capture as many properties as possible where DHP work had not been completed at the time a particular contract was live. Until the level of acceptance of mop up work was known, it was impossible to put any proposals to Bramall Construction for their consideration. Many reasons for non-acceptance revolved around infirmity or frailty of individual tenants, and a further request for DHP work to be undertaken needed to be handled with sensitivity. The key to having work accepted in these sensitive circumstances was a personal visit from a Housing Officer who would offer as much support as was reasonably practicable. Once the Decency Standard had been achieved in, as many properties possible any unused funds would then be allocated to additional kitchen, bathroom or roofing works based on a remaining component life basis.

Resolved: The Committee supports the proposals.

410 Members Reports

Margaret Akrigg, Joan Chadwick and Robin Martakies tabled reports regarding the National Tenant Voice event in Lancaster on 4 July.

Margaret Akrigg and Joan Chadwick tabled a report about Art in Motion, a Swarthmoor Youth Group project supported by the Bramall Charitable Fund.

Robin Martakies gave a verbal report on the Cumbria and North Lancashire Tenants Forum event in Barrow on 23 July, where skills to help young people sustain a tenancy were demonstrated.

Robin Martakies reported on the Kirkfield Roadshow on 22 July and the issues

identified from an impromptu Walkabout.

Peter Bland said that the times the Roadshow would be visiting individual areas was not published on the website. John Stirling said that he would ensure that his observations were passed on.

J St

Margaret Pritchard said that the first meeting of the Board sub committee looking at alternative office accommodation at both Ulverston and Kendal had been held without any firm conclusion. She would report again in due course.

411 Any Other Business

Lucy Reynolds reported that Delegated Executive Decisions meeting had approved the new constitution for the Committee.

Don Brookes asked Lucy Reynolds what progress had been made on a site identified for affordable housing in Ambleside. Lucy said that SLDC were still in negotiations with a Housing Association.

412 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 4 September 2008 to interview Tenant Board Director candidates,
(provisional date, confirmation on 28 August)

Next full meeting Thursday 11 September 2008