

**SOUTH LAKES HOUSING TENANTS' COMMITTEE MINUTES
THURSDAY 3 JANUARY 2008 AT 10:30 AM
HELD AT
THE RESOURCE CENTRE, LITTLE AYNAM HOUSE, KENDAL**

MEMBERS OF THE TENANTS COMMITTEE PRESENT

Members

Margaret Pritchard	Chair Ulverston
Joan Chadwick	Kendal
John Short	Lakes
Margaret Akrigg	Kendal
Win Sayers	Ulverston
Don Brookes	Lakes
Sherralyn Clement	Kendal
Brian Lloyd	Ulverston
Ron Pritchard	Ulverston

Guests

Charles Howarth Prospective Tenant Committee member

Officers in attendance

Ian Elleray	Community and Housing Manager SLDC
Helen Smith	Head of Finance SLDC
Alison Kinnon	Housing Manager SLH
Suzy Duffy	Community Participation Co-ordinator SLH
John Stirling	Tenant Participation Officer SLH

No.	TITLE OF MINUTE	ACTION
338	<p>Welcome to visitors</p> <p>Margaret Pritchard welcomed Charles Howarth to his first meeting. Ian Elleray said that Lucy Reynolds, Senior Strategy Officer SLDC may be deputising for him at future meetings.</p>	
339	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Peter Bland Liz Easton Su Marriott Phyllis Tweedale Sue Mallinson Treasury Manager SLH Lisa Chant Bramall Construction Brenda Gray Housing Portfolio Holder SLDC</p>	
340	<p>Minutes of previous meeting (7 November 2007)</p>	

	<p>Multi Use Games Areas (minute 336) Don Brookes said that he wanted to know if there was an overall strategy to provide play MUGAs for the whole of South Lakeland. Suzy Duffy would prepare a response for the next meeting.</p> <p>Speed Dating (minute 336) Don Brookes said that he was referring to District not County councillors.</p> <p>Prize Draws (minute 333) John Short said that in interview Mike Scherwing had offered the view that one large prize was better than a number of smaller prizes. The matter to be discussed again under Any Other Business.</p> <p>Subject to the above amendments, the minutes were accepted as a true record.</p>	SD
341	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>a) <i>Editorial Team.</i> Suzy Duffy referred to both the briefing note from Marianne Hood and to informal discussions with the Committee. John Stirling had contacted all members of Reader Panel by letter and a total of 5 had responded confirming that they would be interested in joining the Editorial Team. It was agreed that the Editorial Team would consist of 6 people, 3 drawn from Tenants Committee and 3 from the remaining interested parties. John Short, Su Marriott and Peter Bland to be the members from the Committee.</p> <p>b) <i>Performance monitoring</i> John Stirling circulated a schedule listing the dates the quarterly figures would be discussed by the Committee and this would form part of the Tenants Committee annual work plan. Suzy Duffy drew attention to the local performance indicators contained within the Tenant Participation Agreement action plan. Alison Kinnon said that Tenants Committee should also be involved in the monitoring of the Grounds Maintenance contract together with SLDC, either as Estate Inspectors in their own right, or attending monitoring meetings as a representative of the Committee. A training session had been arranged for the morning of 22 February. John Short would attend the session. (Following the meeting John noted that he was unable to attend on that day. Peter Bland will attend in his place).</p> <p>c) <i>Speed dating</i> John Stirling had made enquiry with the County Council who had recently facilitated this event. The feedback showed that the event was best used to raise awareness in the short term. There was merit in a similar type of event to raise awareness of the roles performed by individuals within SLH/SLDC. Ian Elleray said that the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership was currently looking at a similar exercise. Schools could be encouraged to participate in events of this nature but it needed careful planning. John Stirling to put this on the training plan.</p>	SD
342	<p>Communal Cleaning to blocks of flats</p> <p>Due to Sue Mallinson being sick, Alison Kinnon presented the paper in her absence. The mock inspection had identified that only one block of non-sheltered flats received a cleaning service to their communal areas. The inspectors had recommended either withdrawing the service altogether or extending it to cover all non sheltered flats. The options were to either 1) to</p>	J St

	<p>service all non sheltered flats via the Housing Revenue Account, 2) to provide the service to all non sheltered flats and impose a service charge on tenants and leaseholders in the block, 3) to withdraw the service from non sheltered flats altogether. Following discussion it was agreed to recommend option 1.</p>	
343	<p>Rent Restructuring</p> <p>Helen Smith presented her paper outlining government wishes to align Council rents with Housing Association rents over a number of years. Although there was some flexibility within the rent setting formula for a variation of up to 5% to allow for local circumstances, SLDC had not yet used that option. The Council was again reviewing their decision and sought the views of the Committee in the first instance. Having learned of the potential benefits balanced against the work involved, Win Sayers proposed and John Short seconded, that the Committee do not recommend that SLDC implement the 5% flexibility available. The matter was put to the vote and carried.</p>	
344	<p>Unpooling of Service Charges</p> <p>Helen Smith presented her paper, outlining government wishes that service charges be identified separately for tenants who receive different types of service which reflected their housing circumstances, such as grounds maintenance or communal lighting. This will allow tenants to see more clearly what they are paying for. If the option to separate out service charges was adopted, there were both up front and ongoing costs to both initially identify and annually recalculate the appropriate charges. Having balanced the likely costs involved against the transparency of unpooling the charges, John Short proposed and Win Sayers seconded that the Committee do not recommend that SLDC unpool service charges. The matter was put to the vote and carried.</p> <p>Helen also said that she and Garry Ronson had recently met to discuss the first draft of the Housing Revenue Account budgets for discussion by Cabinet on 13 February. A separate meeting to brief the Committee would be held from 1430-1530 on Thursday 31 January 2008 in the Resource Centre at Little Aynam House.</p>	
345	<p>SLH Board minutes 15 November 2007</p> <p>Noted.</p>	
346	<p>SLH Board Agenda 17 January 2008</p> <p>Ron Pritchard said that he now sat on the Repairs and Maintenance Core Group that had now been established.</p> <p>Suzy Duffy drew attention to item 10 that contained the local performance figures for Tenant Involvement.</p>	
347	<p>Tenants' Committee Finance</p> <p>John Short presented his report, noting that since the last meeting he had paid over a total of £6545 for independent advice to the Committee. The report was noted, with thanks to John for his continued work on behalf of the Committee.</p>	

<p>348</p>	<p>Decent Homes Reports</p> <p>Lisa Chant was currently on sick leave and had sent her apologies. The report to be deferred to the next meeting.</p>	
<p>349</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>a. Prize Draws (minute 340) John Short recapped on the view of Mike Scherwing that a £250 prize would be better than 5 prizes of £50. Having been made aware of the view of our advisor, the Committee agreed to a single District Wide prize of £250.</p> <p>b. Clearing of paths within Sheltered Housing Schemes. On behalf of Peter Bland, John Short raised the issue of external footpaths within Sheltered Housing complexes not being cleared or salted during the recent spell of frost and snow at Cross Lane. Margaret Akrigg reported on a similar instance at Castle Walk. John Stirling to make further enquiries and report back</p> <p>c. Funding for community event. Sherralyn Clement sought agreement of the Committee for her to explore funding opportunities for a community event. This was agreed.</p> <p>d. Cumbria Forum. Ron Pritchard reminded members of the 'Money Matters' awareness day at Whitehaven on 23 January 2008.</p> <p>e Lunch arrangements. Arrangements for days when the meeting extended over lunchtime would be discussed at the next meeting.</p>	<p>J St</p> <p>SM</p> <p>J St</p>
<p>350</p>	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>Thursday 28 February 2008</p>	
<p>351</p>	<p>Closure</p> <p>The meeting closed at 12:45 pm</p>	