

**SOUTH LAKES HOUSING TENANTS' COMMITTEE MINUTES
THURSDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2008 AT 10:30 AM
HELD AT
THE RESOURCE CENTRE, LITTLE AYNAM HOUSE, KENDAL**

MEMBERS OF THE TENANTS COMMITTEE PRESENT

Members

Margaret Pritchard Ulverston
 Ron Pritchard Ulverston
 Joan Chadwick Kendal
 John Short Lakes
 Liz Easton Kendal
 Phyllis Tweedale Ulverston
 Don Brookes Lakes
 Peter Bland Kendal
 Su Marriott Ulverston
 Margaret Akrigg Kendal
 Brian Lloyd Ulverston
 Sherralyn Clement Kendal
 Charles Howarth

Guests

Lucy Reynolds SLDC Senior Strategy Officer
 Paul Jones SLH Board Member
 Dorothy Dixon Leaseholder Observer
 Cllr Brenda Gray Housing Portfolio Holder

Officers

Suzy Duffy SLH Community Participation Co-ordinator
 John Stirling SLH Tenant Participation Officer

Part

Peter Thomas SLH Chief Executive
 Alison Kinnon SLH Housing Manager
 Garry Ronson SLH Director of Finance
 Trevor Woodward SLH Partnership manager
 Lisa Chant Bramall Construction Customer Development Manager

No.	TITLE OF MINUTE	ACTION
352	<p>Welcome to visitors</p> <p>Margaret Pritchard welcomed Dorothy Dixon an observer attending on behalf of</p>	

	<p>Leaseholder Service Improvement Group and Paul Jones the SLH Board Director recently Tenant and Participation Champion who were both attending their first meeting.</p>	ACTION
353	<p>Adoption of Charles Howarth onto Tenants Committee</p> <p>The Committee was reminded that Charles Howarth had responded to an article in the newsletter seeking Tenant Board Directors. It was proposed by Don Brookes and seconded by Peter Bland that Charles Howarth be formally co-opted onto the Committee.</p> <p>Resolved that Charles Howarth be co-opted onto the Committee.</p>	
354	<p>Minutes of previous meeting</p> <p>John Short pointed out that the date of the meeting was 10 January 2008 and not 3 January as shown on the minutes. Subject to that amendment the minutes were accepted as a true record.</p>	
355	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>(a) Editorial Team. Suzy Duffy reported on the names of others selected to form the Editorial Team.</p> <p>(b) Speed dating. John Stirling reported that the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership were to arrange an event in the future. Connexions would be leading on this event and they had noted the interest of the Committee.</p> <p>(c) Clearing of paths at Sheltered Schemes. John Stirling confirmed that clearing external pathways of frost and snow within the curtilage of Sheltered Housing Schemes was included in a contract with SLDC. The Scheme Manager was able to place a request by telephone to activate the service. On the day in question a request was placed from Castle Walk but nobody had attended. The records showed that no request had been made from Cross Lane.</p> <p>(d) Pooling of service charges. Joan Chadwick asked for the matter to be looked at again in the light of further information received since the original decision of the Committee. John Short said that he was unhappy with the document presented to the Committee and sought further information from Helen Smith of SLDC. It was agreed that a report would be sent to the Board covering this issue.</p> <p>(e) MUGAS. Suzy Duffy reported that the full strategy document was available upon request. Don Brookes suggested that seats should be provided at the Ambleside site. Margaret Akrigg agreed to feed this request back to the Community Investment Group. Ron Pritchard asked why a request for a financial contribution towards a skatepark at Ulverston had been turned down, Suzy Duffy said that the Group looking at the bids had given priority to initiatives located on SLDC housing land.</p> <p>(f) Lunch. In future a buffet lunch would be provided</p>	
356	<p>SLH Board Minutes 17 January 2008</p> <p>Noted</p>	

357	SLH Board Agenda 6 March 2008	ACTION
	<p>Item 4 ‘Report from Tenants Committee’ The Committee reaffirmed their concerns expressed in minute 355 (6).</p> <p>Item 5 ‘Residents Questions’ Any questions received and explanations given by the Board to be published in the Newsletter. This to be included in the report to the Board.</p>	
	<p>Peter Thomas covered two issues. He said that the planned upgrade to the Ulverston office had been delayed because SLDC who owned the building were still considering their plans for a one stop shop in Ulverston. Disabled access would go ahead as planned but internal improvements were still being negotiated. He went on to say that the Asset Management Plan would devolve some decisions to neighbourhoods.</p>	
358	Tenants Committee Finance	
	<p>John Short presented his report. The only item of note was the reimbursement of costs received from Bramall Construction. The Committee thanked John for his stewardship of the funds under his control.</p>	
359	Committee work programme 2008-09	
	<p>Don Brookes said that the review of the Constitution was a significant piece of work. Margaret Pritchard asked that all members were familiar with the current constitution and the proposed revisions prior to a meeting to be held from 11am until 1pm on Tuesday 18 March within the Resource Centre. The programme was noted.</p>	
360	Quarter 3 Performance figures	
	<p>Alison Kinnon took questions on this matter. John Short noted that ‘Complaints to the Ombudsman’ was a matter over which SLH had no control and should be removed from the matrix. Alison Kinnon agreed to recommend that the indicator be removed. The figures were noted.</p>	
361	SLDC Forward Plan	
	<p>The Asset Management Plan had been covered by Peter Thomas earlier.</p> <p>Lucy Reynolds explained that the Local Development Framework would explore use of land on SLDC estates to provide more affordable housing. Brenda Gray said that it would be about 1 year before the Framework would be finalised.</p> <p>Don Brookes noted the forthcoming decision regarding the Rent Free weeks policy and asked that papers be circulated in good time.</p>	
362	Decent Homes monitoring report	
	<p>Lisa Chant presented her report that showed a satisfaction rate of over 90%. Dissatisfaction continued to occur in properties where extensive electrical work had been undertaken as this work often resulted in unavoidable damage to decorative finishes. John Short said that he had been involved in Supply Chain meetings with the supervising architect, who was pleased with the comprehensive figures produced.</p> <p>Brian Lloyd asked if decoration vouchers issued in the Ulverston area could be</p>	

<p>363</p>	<p>used in outlets other than at Focus in Kendal. Trevor Woodward responded that negotiations with a large outlet in Barrow were nearing completion.</p> <p>Value for Money</p> <p>Garry Ronson asked to defer this item to the next meeting, and use the time at this meeting to talk about the Management Fee. The Committee agreed to his request and Garry went on to explain that at the close of the 2007-8 accounts there would be a small surplus to invest in services, and Tenants would be involved in making those choices. The Management Fee for 2008-9 has increased by £78k which he regarded as an adequate and timely settlement, bearing in mind that the SLDC Housing Revenue Account was still not fully restored. Not all inflationary items had been fully covered by the settlement, but savings generated by renegotiating the insurance contracts and the closure of the Ulverston stores had yielded significant savings. The Audit Commission was in favour of planned maintenance as opposed to response repairs, and SLH budgets would be weighted accordingly in the future.</p>	<p>ACTION TW</p>
<p>364</p>	<p>Members Reports</p> <p>(a) Ron Pritchard. He and others attended a Cumbria Tenants Forum awareness day on the subject of ‘Money Matters’ in Whitehaven on 23 January and feedback was positive. On behalf of South Lakes Housing the Forum was hosting an awareness day on 29 October in the Coronation Hall at Ulverston looking at issues surrounding the prevention of homelessness. Ron had also been appointed Board Equality and Diversity Champion.</p> <p>(b) Don Brookes. Had attended the SLDC Housing Provision Advisory Group and a progress sheet was now in place for all schemes across the District. The Lake District Planning Board had now relaxed their criteria and was now prepared to look at potential sites outside of town boundaries. The Committee thanked Don for his efforts in continuing to pursue these matters. John Stirling drew attention to the enquiry by Matthew Taylor MP into the rural economy and affordable housing and urged members to give their personal experiences.</p> <p>(c) Joan Chadwick. Had attended the Leaseholder Improvement Group and it was obvious that both tenants and leaseholders had some shared concerns. Dorothy Dixon echoed her comments.</p> <p>(d) Peter Bland. Had attended a Grounds Maintenance meeting on 22February 2008 and as a result he and a number of other tenants were now to actively comment on Grounds Maintenance standards.</p> <p>(e) Margaret Pritchard. Had attended a Decent Homes Task meeting with Bramall Construction</p>	
<p>365</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>(a) Inspection. Mike Schirwing, our critical friend, would be holding a number of briefing sessions from 17 March in preparation for the forthcoming inspection and Tenants Committee will be involved.</p> <p>(b) Area Discussion Groups. Suzy Duffy would circulate a letter shortly inviting individuals to an inaugural meeting.</p> <p>(c) Paul Jones. Thanked the Committee for his invitation and stressed that he was an independent member of the SLH Board and would make his decisions accordingly.</p>	<p>SAB</p>
<p>366</p>	<p>Date of next meeting Thursday 3 April in the Castle Street Centre. The meeting closed at 1pm.</p>	