

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

TENANT AND LEASEHOLDER COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 OCTOBER 2007 AT 7PM

Present:

Terry Anderson	David Payce
Stephen Collier	Viv Phelps
Bob Halpin	Marion Watkins
George Hood	Cllr Dilys Baldwin
Sally Lancaster	Steve Warran (ECC)
Gemma Lissaman	Tony Bodgin (ECC)
Alison Moore	Jenny Berry (ECC)

1. Apologies

Alison Baxter, Liz Belchamber, Gina Goodfellow, Bob Jones, Anne Parchot, Armani Shepherd, Rod Simons, Joan Smith, Moira Barker

The meeting was told of the resignation of Anthony Powell.

2. Proposal to co-opt Moira Barker (South area)

No election was necessary in the South area as there were only four candidates. However, Moira's application was submitted after election arrangements were commenced for other areas. One of the original candidates for the area has not attended any meetings. The Committee agreed to co-opt Moira Barker.

3. Accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2007

The accuracy of the minutes was agreed.

4. Matters arising from meeting of 4 July 2007

Upgrading of flat door locks

Neil Shire's costings were presented for replacing front door locks within blocks of flats. Tenant feedback at the time of the Options Appraisal placed no priority on replacing door locks and there have been no specific requests from Police to upgrade locks. Most blocks of flats have door entry systems. The Committee agreed not to proceed with this proposal at present, but re-consider at a later date together with other asset management priorities.

Aerials

Neil Shire's report regarding upgrading of communal TV aerials to receive digital signals was presented and the Committee agreed to accept the recommendations: Continue upgrading aerials for communal sheltered properties, at no cost to tenants. Leaseholders to voluntarily pay a contribution towards cost of upgrading aerials, but no addition to service charge. No charge to tenants but they will need to provide their own freeview boxes.

It was noted that people with disabilities are eligible to receive a free digibox when their aerial is upgraded and those on benefits are also allowed a free box. The Chair offered to ascertain the computer link providing this information and it was suggested that full information should be included in an issue of Insight.

5. Frequency of meetings

The Committee was invited to review frequency of meetings or possibility of forming sub-groups for specific tasks because of lack of opportunity for TALC members to become involved, and the Council's wishes for greater TALC participation. The Committee agreed that meetings should be held monthly on a trial basis (3 – 6 months) and that days, times and venues should be varied to fit in with the different time commitments of representatives.

6. Resident Involvement Strategy

This item was deferred to the next meeting, pending distribution of an updated version of the document.

7. Resident Auditor Project Team – Impact Assessment Report

Exeter City Council's initial response to the report is positive, but further response will be made. Members of the RAT Team were impressed that the Council is actively responding regarding issues raised by the report. More volunteers for the RAT Team are required and Marion Watkins and Viv Phelps expressed interest in joining.

The following issues arising from the report were highlighted:

Page 15 – Present seating in the Customer Service Centre is too low and too soft for the elderly and disabled

Page 19 – Uncertainty over response of 40% of repairs with KS Engineering needing to be chased as this bears no correlation to complaints received by ECC. The figures were obtained from a sample of 100 tenants who had a service booked in the month prior to survey

Page 20 – Confirmation that this refers to official complaints but that low-level complaints about staff/contractors' attitude are logged and dealt with. Official complaints are monitored by the Performance Review Committee and the new complaints leaflet shows that minor complaints can be formalised without necessarily being followed by serious consequences. Low level complaints will not be brought to TALC because this would be too much information, some of which is personal.

Page 22 – Oak doors replaced by Amwell beech some time ago on the kitchen programme

8. Training Programme

A suggested Training Programme supplied by Jenny Vernon was distributed to the Committee. Tony Bodgin also distributed a spreadsheet collating training needs identified by members of the TALC Committee, but not all questionnaires have been returned. These responses could form the basis of a training programme, or this could be developed from other ideas from the Committee. Possibility of using other trainers was suggested. Training on Team Building was considered to be

fundamental. Other training being arranged by ECC will include TALC members:
14 November – Respect (Anti-Social Behaviour) Training Day at Jethro's
23 November – TPAS 'Involving Young People' training for tenants and staff at Civic Centre, 9.30am – 3.30pm
During the next few months ECC will develop three to four 2 hour evening training sessions based on Jenny Vernon's brief.

9. HQN 'mock' inspection

The mock inspection was carried out at the beginning of October to gain information about what ECC Housing is doing well and what the weaknesses are so that resources can be focused on these. Staff were disappointed to only gain the 'one star with uncertain prospects' rating, but Service Improvement Plans are being based on the information gained and it was best to compile these after the inspection. These will now be developed using the weaknesses and recommendations highlighted by the inspection report. TALC and other customers will be involved in implementing the recommendations and TALC need to be involved earlier in planning processes than they are currently. Action plans should be available for distribution to TALC members in January. The full report is too lengthy for hard copies to be provided.

10. Performance Review sub committee minutes

The meeting with ECC officers was held on 31st July 2007 with seven TALC representatives and Councillors Dilys Baldwin and Margaret Baldwin. Minutes were not presented to the meeting as they could be altered by the Performance Review sub committee when it next meets on 23 November 2007. Increased frequency of TALC meetings will make early feedback of the agreed minutes possible. The sub-committee is required to report back to TALC and can nominate a spokesperson from amongst themselves if they wish. It was suggested this item should be added to the Performance Review sub committee agenda.

11. Any other relevant business

None.

Dates of future meetings:

Monthly meeting dates for the next 6 months to be advised.

Signed

(Chairperson)