

TENANT AND LEASEHOLDER CONSULTATION GROUP MEETING

Tuesday 21 September 2004

MEETING NOTES

Present

Tony Bodgin	Exeter City Council
Steve Deakin	Exeter City Council
Louise Barnden	DOME
Rachael Humphries	Devon Health Forum
Viv Phelps	Shilhay
BG Tucker	Newtown
Jim Swain	Shilhay
Margaret Swain	Shilhay
Cec Murley	St Thomas
Joan Smith	Rennes House
Mrs J Martins	Hamlin Gardens
Alison Moore	St Loyes

Apologies

Chris Symes, Gladys Tyrrell, Roger Greenaway

Introduction

Tony Bodgin opened the meeting with a general introduction.

Options Appraisal (OA)

At present we are still in the consultation process. The Insight Group along with the Independent Tenants Advisor (ITA), has to weigh up all the facts and reach a decision on the future of council housing in Exeter.

Should the decision at the end of this process be for a transfer of the housing stock to an existing or new housing association then a further consultation will take place next year.

The newsletter 'YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE YOUR FUTURE' and the Survey Questionnaire were sent to all Exeter City Council Tenants and Leaseholders. The response, however was very poor with only 400 replies. The people who did respond were invited to join the Insight Group. The Insight Group are given all the information they need in order to discuss the topic rationally and reach an informed decision.

The OA Roadshow was not a great success with quite a low turnout. Therefore more events are planned for the end of October. It is important to reach as many people as possible to ensure a balanced view from as large a cross section of the people as possible.

The Insight Group will be joined by representatives from the council, Steve Partridge (the council's Independent Financial Advisor) and Brenda Steer (Manager of Finance) at the next meeting. The topic for discussion will be how the council can or cannot meet the Decent Homes Standard.

Whichever decision the tenants reach, the Government insist that it should be well informed. The Insight Group have already been addressed by Phil Mills the Area Team Manager and Neil Shire the Housing Services Manager. At the next meeting Ron Mayers the Principal Housing Partnerships Manager will address the group to discuss the Housing Strategy. This will take a look at how Exeter plans to meet the housing needs for the future and the different aspects which need to be taken into account.

The Insight Group is open to everyone and the more people we can get involved in the consultation process the better. It is important that we reach the right decision for the future of the housing stock and for the right reasons. Mistakes will be expensive and waste time and valuable resources.

The Insight Group will look at the services we provide at present and what we will be able to afford in the future. The various options available will differ in the level of service each can support and our circumstances dictate that not all options are available to us.

Exeter City Council have to go through this process between now and next summer. At the end of this year the tenants, with the help of the ITA, will need to make an informed decision about which is their preferred option. A report on the consultation and decision will then be presented to the council and they will make the final decision, which will be presented to the Government.

Just to remind everyone that the TACT Freephone Advice Line is now in operation and can be reached on: -

0800 919994

Or email: admin@domeconsultants.co.uk

The ITA team working in Exeter is: -
Louise Barnden
Catherine Griffiths
Katherine Williams
Hayley Thomas

Choice Based Letting Scheme

Rachael Humphries of the Devon Health Forum addressed the group about the health implications of the new scheme. A Health Impact Assessment is being carried out to try to determine what impact the new scheme will have on the health of people who have to use it.

A copy of the handout 'What effects health?' was given to the group (a copy is included with these minutes).

An exercise then took place in which the group looked at the negative and positive health aspects of the scheme, who would be affected and what could be done to minimise the effects. A copy of the findings have been included with the minutes.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of this group will be held at: -

7pm on Tuesday 8 December at the Buckerell Lodge Hotel 7.00pm.

This will be the Christmas special with sandwiches, mince pies and wine and is our way of saying thank you for all your time and effort over the year.

We look forward to seeing you all there.

Any items for the agenda to Steve (265698) or Tony (265738).

IMPORTANT!

Anyone requiring a taxi to attend the meeting should ring Z CARS directly and not the council. They will collect all the names and addresses of people requiring transport and arrange to pick you up from home.

This arrangement is **only with Z CARS** and will of course continue to be paid for by the council.

The telephone number for Z CARS is 422888

Simply telephone Z CARS and inform them that you require a taxi to the venue. They will ask you where you want picking up from and what time you will be picked up.