

TENANT AND LEASEHOLDER CONSULTATION GROUP MEETING NOTES

Wednesday 14 September 2005

Present

Tony Bodgin	ECC
Neil Shire	Responsive Repairs Manager
Steve Deakin	ECC
Steve Warran	Head of Housing & Social Inclusion
John Street	Head of Corporate Customer Services
Doreen Tomkins	Credit Union
Ian Kennedy	Credit Union
Wendy Prince	Credit Union
Mrs M Browning	Carlyon Close
Mrs B Woodger	Hamlin Gdns
Mrs V Thompson	Hamlin Gardens
Miss J Martins	Hamlin Gardens
Joan Smith	Rennes House
Gladys Tyrrell	Globefield
Viv Phelps	Shilhay
Alison Moore	Beacon Heath
D J Harris	Whipton
Cec Murley	Prospect Place
Jim Swain	Shilhay
Margaret Swain	Shilhay
Betty Sluman	Stoke Hill
S Holcombe	Whipton Barton
Liz Belchamber	Countess Wear
Terry Anderson	Widgery Road
L Kaczanow	Widgery Road
Richard Ingram	Beacon Heath
Paul Taylor	Beacon Heath
Chris Symes	Beacon Heath

Introduction

Tony Bodgin opened the meeting with a general introduction

New Head of Housing

Tony Bodgin introduced Steve Warran to the group. Steve is the new Head of Housing and Social Inclusion. Steve Warran has joined Exeter City Council from Penwith Housing Association where he was Head of Housing. Prior to this he worked in Cornwall and Staffordshire.

John Street – New Reception

John Street, the Head of Corporate Customer Services, was introduced to the group. John is in charge of the new Customer First reception at the Civic Centre. Prior to the new reception opening, there were 8 different receptions scattered around the civic centre, which was an obvious security risk.

Work started 2 years ago in the planning stage and the physical work last October. Various agencies were consulted regarding the design including the police, fire brigade, customers and various ethnic groups. It was also decided to move the committee rooms from phase one to the ground floor of phase two for the same reason. The building work for the reception area has taken 8 months to complete. The Sheriffs coach has been put into storage temporarily and will be permanently housed at the Matford Centre when a suitable display cabinet is built.

The new extension to the reception area is only 150square metres but the design has allowed for the space to be used better. There are 16 staff who have been trained to answer the most common questions.

The next phase of the project will be to bring the Housing Benefit office over in the next 9 to 12 months.

The reception has 3 interview rooms plus 1 secure interview room, all are equipped with CCTV. The aim is for no one to wait more than 10 minutes. There are also 6 online computers in the reception which can link to partner organisations such as the police, Devon County Council etc.

The reception currently has between 400 to 600 visitors per day.

Credit Union

Dereen Tomkins gave an overview of the Credit Union and how it operates. The Credit Union exists solely for the benefit of its members. It is operated by volunteers with help from Exeter City Council and Devon County Council through not charging for premises etc.

Ian Kennedy furnished the group with some facts. All the profits go back in but some are used to pay the members a dividend. Before anyone can borrow money they must first demonstrate that they can save. The first time anyone borrows money it must not be more than twice the amount they have saved. When the first loan is paid off they will be allowed to borrow 3 times the saved amount.

There are currently 400 accounts with a total savings of £125,000 in the account. There is currently £50,000 out on loan.

The Credit Union is regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

Repairs performance

Neil Shire attended the meeting and, as requested at the previous meeting, displayed graphs showing a breakdown of the figures for the last 3 years. A copy of the table of reactive repairs for the last 3 years was circulated to the group for discussion (a copy of which is included with these notes).

Project Cosmic

The design of the website is now well underway and we are furnishing Project Cosmic with lots of useful information to include in the site.

We are now at the stage where we need the various Tenant and Resident Associations (T&RA's) to start putting together information that will be going into their own we-space.

When the Site is near completion we will be organising training for the people the T&RA's have selected to be their nominated site updaters, so thought needs to be given as to who will be nominated. Steve Deakin will discuss this with Project Cosmic.

Visit to Barton Hill – Community at Heart

Tenants who had attended the training day to Barton Hill – Bristol were asked to tell the group about the visit and give their impression of the scheme. There was surprise from those who had attended at how deprived the area was. One tenant said that she did not realise how lucky she is to live where she does.

The area is very run down and personal safety is a major concern, especially after dark.

The Community at Heart Project has received grant funding of £52m. One very striking part of the project focussing on domestic violence is the 'Clothes Line Project' – a long line of 'T' shirts suspended on poles through the sleeves. Each 'T' shirt has someone's graphic personal experiences of domestic violence written on it. Everyone found this particularly moving.

Meetings for 2005

Wednesday 7 December 7.00pm Buckerell Lodge Hotel

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.

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**