

**Committee:** COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** September 6 2007

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**Title:** TENANT FORUM MINUTES

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Item for information

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### Summary

1. This report provides the Committee with the draft Minutes of the previous meeting of the Tenant Forum, which covers the district. There are no specific financial or risk assessments relating to this report.

### Recommendations

2. That the Committee note the draft minutes of the Tenant Forum of 9 July 2007.

### Background Papers

3. None

### Impact

- 4.

Communication/Consultation	Tenant Forum promotes consultation relating to a wide variety of issues that affect tenants and the wider community.
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	Tenant Participation must be applied without discrimination of any kind.
Finance	The Tenant Forum is operated via existing Tenant Participation budget
Human Rights	NONE
Legal implications	Fulfil the Council's statutory duty.
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	Covers the whole Uttlesford District
Workforce/Workplace	Statutory part of housing function

## Situation

5. This report has been presented to members following the request made by the former Health & Housing Committee in March 2005

## Risk Analysis

- 6.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Tenant Forum does not have a sufficiently high profile in helping shape/plan future Improvements to the services provided to tenants	Low	High	Ensure Tenant Participation is promoted by the Housing service, to ensure full take up of all positions on the forum.

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Tenant Forum  
held on Monday 09 July 2007 in the Committee Room  
at Saffron Walden Council Offices**

**Present:** Daphne Cornell (Acting Chairman), Barbara Armstrong, Dick Brown, Colin Gilbey, Joan Hoadley, John Maddams, Paul Simpson, Sam Sproul.

**Officers in attendance:** Helen Joy, Ian Brown (Tenant Participation Officers); Liz Petrie (Housing Management Manager); Fiona Gardiner (Anti-social Behaviour Case Officer)

**1. APOLOGIES**

George Chesham

A brief introduction followed of Ian Brown as the new Tenant Participation Officer, whilst Rebecca Procter is on secondment, and a welcome from the Forum members.

**2. GUEST SPEAKER – Mrs. Fiona Gardiner (Anti Social Behaviour Case Officer)**

Preliminary Housing Management Respect Agenda information packs were handed to the Forum.

Liz Petrie outlined the Housing Management Respect Agenda which is a multi agency initiative aimed at, in part, accelerating the process, whilst introducing a more positive impact when dealing with anti-social behaviour cases. Liz went on to compare and contrast the current procedures with those under the Respect Agenda, highlighting how the new process increases the speed and accuracy with which anti-social behaviour cases are dealt with.

Whilst this is optional The “Respect Agenda” is an initiative that Uttlesford District Council are keen to adopt and positively recommend it to the Forum.

Fiona Gardiner further explained how the work in dealing with anti-social behaviour will be better served through the use of the Respect Agenda, in that the clarity of which actions can and cannot be taken, and by whom, will help speed the process.

Daphne Cornell questioned what impact this initiative would have on the existing Tenant Compact and the relationship between the Tenant Forum and the Authority?

Liz and Fiona commented that the Compact is about to be reviewed and this would provide an opportunity to compare and contrast the Respect Agenda with the newly written Compact.

In light of the Forum's comments Fiona further clarified that the Respect Agenda is not an initiative to be foisted upon the new Tenant Compact. The review did, however, offer an opportunity to consider the potential benefits in adopting the Agenda into the new Compact. Fiona went on to expand upon the use of the method "gap analysis" and how it will ultimately enable early intervention in such behavioural cases.

Fiona added that this is a community-wide initiative, and not something solely aimed at local authority tenants, to engage entire communities in the challenges presented by anti-social behaviour.

A guide to the "Respect Agenda" is soon to be published for public consumption.

Liz requested the Forum consider the "Respect Agenda" information and comment at a later date. The Forum agreed to read, digest, consider and comment on this new initiative.

### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

These were accepted as a correct record and signed by Daphne Cornell.

### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

Sam Sproul questioned whether his credit card payment query had now been investigated and resolved, Helen Joy assured him it had indeed been resolved and that he had simply fell foul of teething problems in the new automated system.

Birdbush - Helen Joy reported that the Surveyor is to visit site to review the pointing needs.

11 Berners End – Helen reported that this remained outstanding, the contractor is yet to arrive on site and the type of work required the use of scaffolding, Helen is to raise this matter at her next meeting with Russell Goodey (Housing Repairs Manager).

Helen commented on the District wide problems with grass cutting caused by the recent chaotic weather, suffice to say that all backlogs will be cleared and brought up to date as soon as the weather allows.

8/9 Church Walk – Helen was aware of the window problem, the matter is in hand.

John Maddams questioned when work was going to commence as the scaffolding had been erected for some time and was thus concerned for the potential on-going hire costs. Helen assured him that he need not be overly concerned and that this work had likewise been hampered by the wet weather, but that she would raise the matter with Housing Repairs.

Helen noted that the fireplace at No.6 still required painting and that this would be brought to the attention of Housing Repairs.

## **5. TENANT PARTICIPATION & HARROGATE**

Chair reminded the assembled that elections were due in November and that thought had to be given as to how we achieve a broader involvement of the potential Tenant audience in the work of the Forum.

Helen gave a brief overview of the Harrogate conference, lighting on how conference covered increasing Tenant participation in Forum, in particular an organisation called InStep provided just such advice and assistance to help boost participation through various initiatives. One such was the use of Internet based BLOGS to enable a conduit for two way communication, input and contact with Tenants, such BLOGS (talking pages, chat room) have proven to be of particular success in rural districts.

Helen introduced the suggestion that the Forum rotate its meeting venues around the District as an incentive to attract better Tenant participation.

Sam Sproul suggested the Forum run open question and answer workshops around the District to likewise promote greater involvement and better awareness of the work done by the Forum. Sam also made the observation that alternate formal / informal Forum meetings may assist growth in interest and allow them to blow their own trumpet in recognition of the good work they do.

Helen recommended a door to door campaign prior to the next elections to stimulate larger attendance and provide a rich pool from which to seek support for the Forum.

Fiona stated that Area Panels could be used as yet another conduit for spreading the "Forum" word.

Mrs.Armstrong – Mentioned that her very elderly neighbour's garden was in urgent need of attention, evidently the pest control operative needs to gain access but that this work cannot be carried out until the garden had been cleared. Helen is to raise the issue with the appropriate department as a matter of some urgency.

Sam Sproul recommended the Forum proceed with its first public Forum in Dunmow, one evening in mid September and that targeted personal invitations should be sent to the Tenants in Dunmow, in addition it was muted that Leaseholders may likewise be included in that invitation.

Daphne, on behalf of the Forum, passed on their grateful thanks to Helen for her attending the Harrogate conference.

Ian Brown agreed to meet with the Forum to assist plan the forthcoming elections.

## **6. COMMUNITY ISSUES**

A general discussion ensued within which it was suggested that the involvement of other "Agencies" would help in the resolution of problematic issues, ones that positively need input from multi-agencies. Such action would help streamline and speed up the problem solving procedure.

Various parking issues were discussed and recognised as an on-going problem within the District. Daphne proposed two Forum members attend the Housing Initiative Task Group to get Housing issues firmly back into the spotlight, Sam and Daphne agreed to attend the next meeting.

Mr.Simpson - Recycling bin numbers need increasing at Wagon Mead, Hatfield Heath.

John requested Helen check the working of the UDC Hotline as it seems to be intermittent.

## **7. A.O.B.**

Helen is to circulate performance indicators for the current period at a later date.

Mr. Dick Brown brought to the Forum's attention that due to the recent heavy rainfall the gardens to the rear of the bungalows in Birchwood, Birchanger have flooded and there is a real risk to the actual properties, he requested the Authority look into this as a matter of some urgency.

## **8. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007 at 2.00 pm in the Committee Room  
Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2007 Christmas lunch

Meeting closed at 20:30

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