

**Meeting of the Tenant Forum**  
**Wednesday 29 September 2010 at 2pm**  
**In the Committee Room, Council Offices,**  
**Saffron Walden**

Present: George Chesham, Daphne Cornell, Derek Green, Joan Hoadley, Angela Hutton, John Maddams, David Parish, Lorna Plant, Bethany Purvis, David Rhodes, Effie Rogers and Sam Sproul

Officers: Russell Goodey (Building Services Manager), Helen Harvey (Senior Sheltered Housing and Lifeline Officer), Lisa Higgon (Housing Officer), Roz Millership (Head of Housing Services), Liz Petrie (Housing Management Manager) and Nicole Shephard-Lewis (Tenant Participation Officer)

Apologies: Paul Simpson

Minutes from the last Meeting were signed as a true and correct record

Matters Arising:

David Parish was concerned over whether if adopted cabinet style committee would effect the tenants forum.

Effie Rogers was not happy with the loss of the Freesheet in its current format, however Sam Sproul said that the estimated saving of £15,000 coupled with the poor take up of the booklet at outlets made good value for money sense.

Anti-Social Behaviour – Fiona Gardner Community Safety Partnership Co-ordinator

Fiona Gardner gave a comprehensive definition of what and what did not constitute Anti-Social Behaviour and explained about the Community Safety Partnership and its hierarchy. Many areas were then discussed and questions raised by the forum.

It was asked where Community Safety Partnership had been advertised to tenants - it is on the website, latest edition of housing news, Uttlesford Life, leaflets, posters and the press.

Website Access Training – Richard Auty

James Burton was unwell so Richard Auty head of communications kindly took his place. He explained how the website had been re-designed in 2008 and this new more

effective and efficient set up had resulted in the recent compliment from the Audit Commission in their recent review of the strategic side of housing. If at anytime any item could not be found on the website there is a special service where you can email James Burton directly and ask. [Can't find what you are looking for?](#) Button. Richard Auty gave a comprehensive run down on how the site worked and how committee agendas and minutes can be reviewed. The forum then asked a series of questions. Roz Millership said housing are currently developing new housing application forms that can be completed online.

### Mobility Scooter Policy

The final draft was presented to the forum, Natalie Leatham told the forum that all the comments that had been made by all the concerned groups had been taken into consideration. Nicole Shephard-Lewis and Natalie had also presented the policy to the Disability forum and their comments had also been taken on board. Broadly speaking the policy was designed to prevent residents leaving scooters in communal areas where they cannot legally be stored, as they present a fire hazard. Information in the policy was added to help individuals understand how to safely charge and store their vehicles. Training needs to be undertaken to prevent accidents and any users can contact the Essex Road Safety officer for advice. David Parish said that when purchased from new; training was given, that the problem was with those individuals who made second hand purchases from private sellers.

The policy will be presented for approval to Community and housing at the next meeting 11 November 2010.

### Tenant Participation Update – Tenants service Authority Draft Annual Report

Nicole Shephard-Lewis presented the report that sets out the way in which the council is meeting and intends to meet the five key areas, defined as: involvement and empowerment; home; tenancy; neighbourhood and community; and value for money. Effie Rogers said she believed that the TSA was to be abolished. However despite the possibility that the TSA may not continue its ethos and concepts had been welcomed and embraced by government. So even if the TSA in its current guise does not remain it is highly likely its directives will continue. The report was to be amended as requested by the forum before being published on the web.

Bethany Purvis was introduced to the group, she has set up a residents association at Beech Close. The first meeting was attended by Nicole Shephard-Lewis and Natalie Leatham

together with 7 out of the 18 possible tenants, the leaseholders were also invited. The group was a positive start and will help to contribute to tenant involvement and the building of communities. Roz Millership complemented the group on getting the community involved.

John Maddams had involved the Four Acres Community in the Big Lunch which is a national community activity.

Helen Harvey had organised opens days to reduce the number of empty sheltered properties. A number of properties had been let however sadly a number of sheltered tenants had passed away and therefore the figures largely remained unchanged.

David Parish asked about the Close Hatfield Heath, it is hoped that the lifts will be fitted this financial year making the properties much more suitable for elderly tenants.

The council is no longer part of the procurement hub and the council has now employed its own procurement officer, Cristine Oakey. Nicole Shephard-Lewis will invite her to the next meeting to meet the forum. Sam Sproul was concerned that the council would be losing out on the value for money being found as part of the hub however Russell Goodey said that the Council could still use purchasing frameworks.

#### Conditions of Tenancy

Liz Petrie is reviewing the conditions of tenancy, all members have been given a copy of the current agreement and asked to feedback comments on what they feel needs amending.

#### Update from Other meetings

John Maddams reported on the Sheltered Housing task group including work on the mobility policy.

#### Performance Indicators

To coincide with the officers quarterly reports all PIs will be given quarterly.

#### Any Other Business

Effie Rogers requested a copy of the latest draft participation strategy. The document, which was compiled with Angela Hutton and Sam Sproul, will be distributed to all forum members for approval and comment. The action plan will be a continuously

Draft Minutes of Meeting of Tenant Forum on 29 September 2010  
Community and Housing Committee, 11 November 2010, item 11, appendix 1  
changing document that would evolve to adapt to the needs of  
tenants.

David Parish commented on the impending spending cuts, Roz Millership said various scenarios were being looked at to decide what measure would need to be taken depending on the size of the cuts.

Forum members were given feedback from the recent audit commission inspection.

The new accountant for the Housing Revenue Account is Toby Cowper.

Sam Sproul has written to the local paper in response to the comments made by Cllr Milovanovic of Dunmow Town council. John Mitchell has also responded to the article. The forum felt that Cllr Milovanovic's comments did not represent the views of the majority of tenants and were pleased that the Forum Chairman and Council's Chief Executive had set the matter straight.

The forum have been invited to attend the Eastern Region TPAS meeting on 27 October 2010.

#### Next meetings

Monday 8 November 2010 at 2pm, in the Council Chambers  
Saffron Walden Council Offices

The meeting closed at 5pm