

**Meeting of the Tenant Forum  
Monday 10 January 2011  
2pm Committee Room  
Saffron Walden**

**Present:**

George Chesham, Daphne Cornell, Derek Green, Joan Hoadley, Angela Hutton, John Maddams, David Parish (Vice Chair), Bethany Purvis, Effie Rogers, Paul Simpson and Sam Sproul (Chair).

**Officers:**

Russell Goodey (Building Services Manager), Roz Millership (Divisional Head: Housing and Environmental Services), Elizabeth Petrie (Housing Management Manager), Judith Snares (Housing Options/Homelessness Manager)

**Apologies:**

Lorna Plant and David Rhodes

Minutes of the last meeting were signed following an amendment to paragraph 3 page 1. To add: The forum was unanimous in their motion.

**Matters arising:**

ER requested it be noted she was not critical of the Tenant Participation Action Plan that was discussed at the previous meeting of the Forum.

ER asked for clarification on the role of the handyman. RM replied that the job description given previously to the forum had not changed. She explained that the handyman would carry out general maintenance duties at all sheltered schemes and a timetable of visits would be put up in the schemes. EP stated that a list of the types of jobs the handyman would carry out would be given to the forum, together with details of when he would be at each scheme.

**Presentations:**

RG explained that now the council were now six months through the existing contract for Gas/oil servicing, installation of new boilers and electrical works.

He introduced Steve King from Advance Heating  
John Newstead from Ideal Boilers (Manufacturers)  
Chris Ward from Oakray

They all gave a short verbal presentation on their respective roles and how it fits into the bigger picture of working alongside tenants and the council, by trying to help reduce the carbon footprint and fuel poverty.

Colin Lippitt Census Area Manager for Braintree, Colchester, Maldon & Uttlesford gave a very detailed and interesting presentation on the next census due in March, including how/why it is done and the history of the census.

### **Tenant Participation Update:**

The latest edition of Housing News reached tenants before Christmas, and there has been a lot of feedback from tenants about a wide range of issues which is very encouraging. The Council were hoping to increase the number of issues to four however in view of the financial restraint publication will remain at three times a year. Uttlesford Life has also reduced its publication to three.

Partnership working is going well with Essex fire service providing home safety talks to various groups. Forum members were asked to provide details of any group who might like a talk.

Forum members were asked to decide what type of training they would like and the method they wished to adopt. i.e. a group session where the whole forum attends or whether just a couple of individuals attend a variety of different courses.

RG had a few dates for the sub group to meet and discuss which performance indicators the TF wish to adopt to scrutinize as part of the Local standard (Offer).

The tenant blog is now up and running and already has received one comment. If anybody wishes to comment <http://udctenants.blogspot.com/>

ER asked if people had collected their power down savers and were they still available at reception.

### **Chairman's responsibilities:**

SS reiterated that correspondence from the tenant forum must go through the chair and that the tenant forum member's views will be taken into account when finalising replies.

### **Cabinet Style Committee Decision:**

SS stated that the decision was made at Full Council on 14 December 2011 to go ahead with a cabinet style committee, despite tenant forum reservations. Also had been getting very positive feedback from other councils that had been contacted as to how TP fitted into a cabinet style council.

The forum remained to be convinced that the cabinet style will work and that it will not be detrimental to tenant participation.

RM assured the forum that it is the members' intention that the Tenant Forum would continue to have as high a profile under the new system.

### **Conditions of Tenancy:**

EP explained that AH and ER had helped to go through the draft COT and that there will be a delay in progressing this further, due to the exceptional high work load, together with being one housing officer short.

EP will get the document as soon as possible to legal services and in due course bring it back to the forum but the self imposed April dead line looks unlikely.

### **Update from other meetings:**

EF attended the Safer Healthier Community Working group on 2 December 2010 and found it very interesting about the work various agencies carry out. Only one member attended but the weather would have had an impact.

DP advised that he will be attending a meeting of the Hatfield Heath transport committee on the 11 January 2011 and will find out what cut backs may take place.

ER stated she had heard that Little Hallingbury bus passes were going to be withdrawn. RM was not aware of bus passes being withdrawn but explained that concessionary fares would no longer be administered by UDC.

### **Any Other Business:**

RM/JS Presented the draft reply to the Governments consultation (Local decisions: A fairer future for social housing) which had been discussed by the Housing Initiative Working Group, but there were some questions that needed a response from tenants. The group were asked to take the document away and any comments could be fed back after the rent setting meeting.

DP asked the chairman to write to the MP to find out where he stands on the HRA reform and will he continue to support the forum in this.

DP asked if the satisfaction survey sent to tenants following a repair could be followed by either a phone call or email, where a complaint has been logged, in order to find out what action was taken to resolve the issue.

AH requested that the issue of the outstanding repairs to the fencing at Barkers Mead be chased up.

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SS stated that the CAB were looking for additional funding, RM advised that UDC does give a grant each year.

**Next meeting:**

**Monday 7 March 2011 at 2pm in the Committee Room Saffron Walden Offices.**

The meeting closed at 4.45pm