

Committee: HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item

Date: October 27 2005

Title: TENANT FORUM MINUTES

6

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Item for decision

Summary

This report provides the Committee with the minutes of the last meeting of the Tenant Forum, which covers the District. There are no specific financial or risk assessments relating to this report.

Recommendations

That the Committee notes the draft minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Forum of 10 October 2005.

Background Papers

The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are included in an appendix to this report.

1. Tenant Forum Minutes File 2005/6

Impact

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	N/A
Finance	Tenant Forum is operated via existing Tenant Participation budget.
Human Rights	N/A
Legal Implications	Fulfils the Councils statutory duty
Ward-specific impacts	Covers the whole district
Workforce/Workplace	None specific

Situation

1. This report has been presented to members following the request made by the Committee in March 2005.
2. It needs to be considered now because the Tenant Forum met on the 10 October 2005 and by the time the draft minutes are approved by the Tenant Forum, they will be 3 months old before they can be noted by the appropriate Committee of the Council.

Targets

3. What I am doing is to keep Members of the Committee informed of the concerns and views of the Tenant Forum representatives.

Options

4. There are no specific options as this is a matter of report only.

Pay-Offs/Penalties

5. If the Committee do not note the business of the Forum it could give the impression that the Tenant Forum meetings and the work they do are not being taken seriously.

Risk Analysis

6. There is no specific risk analysis regarding this report.

**Draft minutes of a meeting of the Tenant Forum
held on Monday 10th October 2005 at
Saffron Walden Council Offices**

Present: Mrs Jill Bolvig-Hansen, Mrs Daphne Cornell, Mr Richard Livings, Mr George Chesham, Mr Ian Blows, Mr Trevor Offord, Mrs Annis Cove

Officers in Attendance: Mr Ron Pridham (Environmental Services), Mrs Helen Joy (Tenant Participation Officer), Mrs Rebecca Procter (Tenant Participation Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

Mr John Maddams and Mr Jim Grimshaw.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Mrs Cove was welcomed as an observer. It was noted that Miss Sara Molloy, a tenant who had previously expressed an interest in joining the Tenant Forum, has written stating that she does not feel she can make a worthwhile contribution due to the low number of tenants living in her immediate area. It was decided that a further approach should be made to Miss Molloy following close of receipt of nominations for the forthcoming Tenant Forum in the forthcoming election (should a vacancy still exist).

4. GUEST SPEAKER – MR RON PRIDHAM

Mr Pridham gave a presentation covering present and projected waste management at Uttlesford District Council (Mr Pridham agreed to forward to all members of the Forum a copy of the notes presented, a copy to be kept with the filed minutes).

In summary Mr Pridham emphasised the importance to all residents of increased recycling in order to meet targets imposed by Government. Legislation requires that by 2010 the Council must reduce landfill to 75% of that produced in 1995.

Questions and issues regarding recycling were raised by members of the Tenant Forum and answered as follows:

Mr Offord: How does UDC monitor what people recycle?

Reply: Analysis of data shows that for example 45% of waste is kitchen waste.

Mr Offord: Do some residents have brown bins for kitchen waste?

Reply: Trials were discontinued as at the time regulations regarding disease were introduced, making it necessary for the brown bins to be processed in Warwickshire.

- Mr Blows: Residents living further away from the main road have d by letter that their recycling bins will not be collected unless brought to the roadside, which can have health and safety implications for residents.
- Reply: If anyone has experienced this type of problem to contact Mr Pridham with details.
- Mrs Bolvig-Hansen: This same difficulty applies to her street, and also boxes blow into the road.
- Mr Chesham: The boxes provided are too small.
- Reply: UDC is considering an alternative, which would be more user friendly, effective and would comply with Health and Safety requirements for collectors.
- Mr Chesham: Was informed that it was not acceptable to put additional recycling material in black bags next to the green bins.
- Reply: This was due to the fact that this waste was being taken to a site which had a limited licence, and that anything in black bags was defined by the Environment Agency as household waste. It could not then be processed at that site. This resulted in the request that recycling could not be placed in black bags.
- Mrs Cornell: Suggest a rebate on Council tax if people recycle kitchen waste.
- Reply: Comments noted.
- Mrs Bolvig-Hansen The publicity for manned sites or changes to the recycling requirements should be via information delivered through the door rather than via the local press.
- Reply: The calendar with recycling dates is sent out to every household. It also contains information on the types of materials accepted.
- Mrs Bolvig-Hansen: Would new refuse vehicles be needed?
- Reply: Yes; the existing fleet would be sold. New vehicles would cost approximately £140,000 each.
- Mr Offord: Why do the collectors rush to complete the work? Can they be paid more?
- Reply: It is common practice for this type of work to be paid on a “do the job and go” basis, but the difficulties are recognised.
- Mrs Bolvig-Hansen: Particular Councillors will wish the recycling boxes to be marked with Braille.

Reply: Comments noted.

All members of the Forum recommended a trial of wheelie bins, although concern was expressed that they would be too heavy for the elderly.

Reply: There is an assistance scheme in place, which residents should request.

Tenants also noted that educating people to recycle would be a challenge. The tenants' newsletter should be used to include this type of information.

Mrs Bolvig-Hansen thanked Mr Pridham for his presentation and for answering questions, which had been very useful for the Tenant Forum.

5. NEWSLETTER/TENANT COMPACT UPDATE

Mrs Procter reported that the newsletter and compact have been printed and that copies will be posted to tenants by the end of the week. The election process will begin upon receipt by tenants of the nomination forms, which accompany the newsletter and compact. The new Forum will take over on 1st February.

6. TENANT PARTICIPATION UPDATE

Wagon Mead – Mrs Joy advised that following notification from a tenant that the block of flats was in poor condition, inspection revealed a number of problems including rubbish in the gardens, abandoned personal belongings on the stairways making it difficult for the cleaners to do their job and a paddling pool having been installed without permission. Consultation with residents (including leaseholders and Housing Association residents) has taken place, and various measures for cleaning and grounds maintenance work have been taken. Future measures are proposed and are currently being costed.

Mr Offord congratulated Mrs Joy's on her initiative and hard work in working towards regenerating this area. Mrs Bolvig-Hansen advised that she had been contacted by a resident who had a friend who lived in the block for a detailed discussion on what was being done. Mr Chesham suggested asking one of the residents to act as a future contact for tenants at Wagon Mead.

Stortford Road – parking problems due to the new school's lack of parking facilities have been affecting UDC tenants. Following consultation of tenants and owner-occupiers, a temporary barrier has been erected around the Green to stop parents parking their cars across it. There are a number of covenants over the Green relating to services, and the various agencies are being contacted prior to installing a permanent barrier.

Vicarage Mead – the residents at the sheltered housing scheme have had a coffee morning at which they met the contractors. Work has now commenced.

The Green, Stoneyfield Drive – Mrs Procter advised that an evening drop in event at the Green was held, further to a summer residents' meeting, to allow both those who work to have an opportunity to attend and also to enable users of the Green to be consulted in a less formal way. The area has suffered with litter problems, vandalism, speeding cars and nuisance issues. In order to improve the current

amenities the re-seeding or re-turfing of the grass is being considered. Existing equipment was installed by UDC but maintained by the Parish Council. There are costs questions to be investigated as regards replacement. Mrs Procter is liaising with UDC's Funding Advice Officer, Jane Elsom, to identify whether Stansted Youth 2000 could apply for a grant to install a "teen shelter".

Mrs Cornell noted that Stansted Airport gives funds to local youth projects, and that they are represented on the Community Safety Action Team.

Publication of Tenant Forum members' addresses - Mrs Bolvig-Hansen noted that the question of members of the Forum allowing their addresses to be publicised/made available between members of the Forum should be raised by the Forum next year.

7. LOCAL ISSUES

Mr Livings noted that the path at the end of his property has been cleaned, but the grounds maintenance team had not returned to spray the weeds, as they said they would. TPOs to follow up.

Mr Offord noted that he still observes council properties with gardens that need attention. It should be highlighted in the newsletter that people need to ring up and ask if they qualify for grounds maintenance assistance.

Mrs Cornell asked whether she could reassure tenants on Radwinter Road that they will be consulted before work is done to the garages at the back, even if they are not an owner.

Mr Blows pointed out that residents in his area still experience parking problems.

Mr Chesham would like new Forum to raise the question of Tenant Forum members being given ID badges, as the lack of them can be embarrassing.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The question was considered whether the Tenant Forum should generally invite Councillors to meetings. This was thought not to be appropriate at the current moment.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be at 7.30 pm on Monday 9 January 2006 at the Saffron Walden Council Offices.