

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE TENANTS' & LEASEHOLDERS' FORUM

26TH APRIL 2018

FERNEHAM HALL

In attendance: Barbara LeSueur (Chair); Tracey Thomas (Vice Chair); Eileen Bailey; Liz Bartlett; Marie Condon; Pam Corbin; Allan Davies; Diane Davies; Dorothy Dicks; Sally Eeles; John Elsey; Ann Fells; Sharon Findlay; Yvonne Goddard; Anne Haddow; Mr Hatfield; Sheila Hewes; Mr Johnstone; Doreen Mallows; Sheila Maltby; Mr Martienssen; Mrs Martienssen; Cliff Murray; Sylvia Murray; Ruth Payne; Mollie Pearman; Mrs Perry; Mrs Robertson; Peter Robertson; Audrey Rundle; Marian Stevens; Maureen Tanner; Phil Taylor; David Town; Mary Tree; Paula Weaver; Dorothy Weir; Linda Wylie.

Apologies for absence: Carla Banks; Joan Chapman; Debbie Gibbs; Roy Gibbs; Jim Hennessy; Dave Hurden; Liz Leach; Phil Leach; Myra Lee; Maureen McIntosh; Colin Pontaux; Bill Prescott; Sonia Prescott; Jeanette Rigden-Murphy; Sandy Shearman; Derek Whitear.

1. Welcome & introduction:

Barbara introduced herself as the Chair of the Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Barbara then read out a letter from Jane Cresdee.

2. Presentation by Andrea Kingston (Neighbourhood Manager) – An Introduction to Fareham Housing:

Andrea Kingston (who is the new Neighbourhood Manager) introduced herself. Andrea said that the recent changes at the Council had included the formation of 'Fareham Housing' under Paul Doran as the new Housing Director. Fareham Housing is made up of Tenancy Services; Strategic Housing; Leasehold Services and Responsive Repairs. The Area Housing Estates Officers are now known as Neighbourhood Officers and a fifth one is about to be appointed.

Andrea said that she had worked at the Council since 1989 and has a background in benefits and fraud. As a result, the fraud investigations team will in future work closely with the Neighbourhood Officers.

A new Strategic Lead Officer has been appointed and a new Policy Officer.

There are no changes planned for sheltered housing.

Copies of Andrea's presentation are available on request.

3. Announcements & Election of Chair:

Janine Hensman has taken on the role of Leasehold Services Officer following the retirement of Hugh Saich.

Barbara LeSueur is standing down as Chair of the Forum. Both Mollie Pearman and Tracy Thomas have put their names forward as candidates for the position of Chair and both were asked to address the Forum saying why they would like to take on this role.

Ballot papers were distributed at the meeting and those present were asked to cast their vote and place it in the ballot box provided. The result will be announced at the next meeting of the Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum.

4. Presentation by Sally Chapman (Community Protection Officer):

Sally introduced herself and said that her role involves dealing with individuals causing problems in the Borough, both tenants and private individuals. Drugs; alcohol and mental health issues can all be the cause of problems such as homelessness and anti-social behaviour.

Sally asked the Forum how they felt if they saw homeless people on the street. She asked if it made them feel sad? Many said yes, so, Sally went on to explain that many of those who are street homeless refuse accommodation and can earn significant amounts of money begging. A number of those known to Fareham BC receive benefits (PIP). This is a nationwide problem and the money is being spent on drink and drugs.

Help for these people includes a hot meal every evening and facilities in the Two Saints Hostel in Gosport Road, and coffee and cake in Café Imbezo along with items of clothing and sleeping bags. Many like living in Fareham as it is viewed as a safe place and where people will give money easily. Most of them have bank accounts. Local agencies offer help to them, but, they don't want the support. The law makes it difficult to do anything about the problem, so, 'passive begging' continues amongst this group of people who are classed as 'vulnerable'. Sally advised that the people begging on the streets should not be given money as most just use it to fund their addictions. They won't pay for the services offered by Two Saints because this takes away funding for their addictions.

Sally acknowledged that there are less police around these days and that she herself works just with Narinder Bains. If anyone encounters a problem or issue with people on the streets, please contact Sally or Narinder or ring 999 for the police or 101. Sally's contact details are: 01329 824520 or e mail schapman@fareham.gov.uk.

For incidents of anti-social behaviour on estates or involving neighbours or their visitors, Neighbourhood Officers and Enforcement Officers will get involved. They will knock on doors to find out what is going on. Any nuisance behaviour should be reported. Noise monitoring equipment can be used, but, records must be kept by the person affected to back this up. Records including dates; times and how individuals are affected by anti-social behaviour must be kept in order to help resolve the problem. Any threats to a person must be reported to the police.

Where properties are sub-let, there can be problems, but, the Council can contact letting agents to ask them not to sub-let to certain individuals.

A question was asked about who to contact out of hours about anti-social behaviour and Sally advised to use the 101 number.

Finally, Sally said that soon, the Council are looking to remove the bedding and belongings of individuals left on the street.

Review of the present structure of tenant involvement:

Those attending split into groups to consider a number of questions about the focus of tenant involvement for the coming year.

Tenant/leaseholder representation at meetings with contractors:

There are a number of tenants who attend meetings with our gas; grounds maintenance and cleaning contractors. Other volunteers put their names forward.

The newsletter & annual report:

- Some want to see less about sheltered housing and more about other areas in articles
- One group wanted the newsletter to stay as it is
- Content to include First Aid advice; police matters; information about bus & rail passes; bus to Asda
- Photos and job titles of staff outlining what they do
- Information about Homeswapper
- More about sheltered housing
- How to resolve common problems such as blocked sinks
- Activities going on around the Borough
- Who to contact about different matters

What speakers would you like at future meetings?

- Use of defibrillators
- Bus company and Fareham Community Hospital
- An update from Roger Price about the precinct at Portchester
- Enforcement – what can and cannot be done (including car parking issues)
- New staff member in responsive repairs?
- Ambulance/fire service
- Community services (dial a ride etc)
- Neighbourhood Officers outlining their role

A review of Forum meetings (location; timings; frequency):

Keep the meetings as they are with four a year. Two in the afternoon and two in the evening (Spring & Summer). This was the consensus although one or two felt that meetings should all be in the afternoon.

What do you want to know about and have a say in?

- Updates on issues relevant to those in social housing (national and local events).

- More estate inspections
- Grounds maintenance presentation to the Estate Monitor's meeting.

Any other matters:

- Residents at King George Road would like an estate inspection. This has now taken place
- Some complained about the very high rents being charged for accommodation at Collingwood Court and Sylvan Court. This particularly affects those who may be on the borderline of receiving Housing Benefit
- Residents at Lincoln Close expressed their thanks for all the redecoration work in the communal lounge
- There is a problem with clinical waste being dumped in bins at Lincoln Close.
- Mr Johnstone complained about school staff parking in the extra bays at Spencer Court/Marks Road
- Parking is an issue at Sylvan Court

Date of next meeting:

The next meeting of the Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum will be held on Thursday 26th July 2018 at 6:30pm at Ferneham Hall.