

**MINUTES OF FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCILS' TENANTS' &
LEASEHOLDERS' FORUM**

THURSDAY 27TH JULY 2017

6:30PM AT FERNEHAM HALL

In attendance: Tracy Thomas (Vice Chair); Eileen Bailey; Carla Banks; Terry Blackburn; Mrs Corbin; Dorothy Dicks; Sally Eeles; Debbie Gibbs; Yvonne Goddard; David Hatfield; Brian Lee; Myra Lee; Doreen Mallows; Christine McCort; Dorothy Mallows; Cliff Murray; Mollie Pearman; Philip Pearman; Mrs Perry; Phil Taylor; David Town; Paula Weaver; Dorothy Weir; Linda Wylie.

Officers & Councillors in attendance: Jon Shore (Tenancy Services Manager); Jennie Larkin (Tenant Involvement Officer).

1. Welcome and introductions

Tracy Thomas introduced herself and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Tracy was elected as Vice-Chair of the Forum at the Annual General

2. Chairman's announcements and apologies for absence:

There were no announcements.

Barbara LeSueur (Chair); Valerie Avery; Mr Baker; Liz Bartlett; Cllr Bayford; Jenny Brooks; Mr & Mrs Buxey; Margaret Chandler; Roy Chandler; Joan Chapman; Mr & Coad; Marie Condon; Mr Corbin; Allan & Diane Davies; Ann Fells; Roy Gibbs; Gloria Hallett; Jim Hennessy; Sheila Hewes; Liz Leach; Phil Leach; Dave Hurden; Mrs Hurst; Cllr Mandry; Maureen McIntosh; Joan Pascoe; Ruth Payne; Jenny Rigden-Murphy; Maureen Tanner; Mrs Rundle; Brian & Gina Shakespeare; Sandy Shearman; Maureen Tanner; Ken Tomlinson; Derek Whitear.

3. Minutes of the last meeting:

These were proposed as an accurate record by Cliff Murray and seconded by Terry Blackburn.

4. Matters arising - There were no matters arising.

5. Jon Shore, Tenancy Services Manager – changes to the way in which tenants can pay their rents:

Jon explained that there are many ways in which tenants can pay their rent. The cheapest method for the Council is by paperless direct debit. These direct debits are more flexible and can be paid monthly; four weekly; fortnightly and weekly and this of course benefits tenants. Tenants can still use other methods to pay their rent such as Pay Points; the Post Office; by phone; the cash office or by paying on-line.

This change follows on from a project last summer where tenants were asked about methods of paying their rent.

Why change from using standing orders? With a standing order, tenants have to notify their bank about any changes and if they forget, then, they can end up with arrears. Direct debits are automatically changed.

6. Update on Tenancy Services and performance reports (Jon Shore):

Jon Shore advised the Forum that they should all have now received a Fire Safety newsletter which has been sent out to all tenants and leaseholders. This follows the fire at Grenfell House in June. Following this, landlords are obliged to carry out safety check.

Paula Weaver said that at the TSG meeting that she attended, TSG said that they will test smoke alarms when they carry out boiler services in properties.

There has recently been a fire in a block at Kenwood Road and sadly two dogs were killed. It affected a block of four and one resident has had to be re-housed. The Council is waiting for the fire officers' report on the cause of the blaze.

The fire caused a great deal of distress to residents and involved four fire crews. People have concerns following Grenfell which the fire services are happy to answer, particularly the issue of whether or not to stay in your home if there is a fire.

Myra Lee said that she is concerned that her front door is not fire proof. This will be referred to maintenance to check. (Maintenance advised and will look into problem of the door).

Mr Pearman made a suggestion about fire proofing and Jon Shore said that fire risk assessments are carried out on approximately 98% of our blocks. Jon also said that the Kenwood flat had insulation which was fire tested and found to be fire proof.

Estate Improvements:

- Jon Shore confirmed that he has an estate improvement budget of £20,000 which is renewed each year. This is for small scale improvements such as signage; line marking; seating; garden sheds; bin store improvements and parking. The improvement has to be on housing land. So, if you have any suggestions, please pass them on to Jon, Jennie or your Area Housing Estates Officer.
- This year's budget is being used for line marking at Cains Close and Frosthole Close. Also, a shed at Northmore Close which is used communally has been replaced as the old one was falling apart. In addition to this, 'dragon's teeth' are being installed in Redlands Lane to stop people parking on the grass verges. There will be a cycle store and bench seating at Foy

Gardens and bin store improvements at Sicily House; Salerno House and Marne House.

- Paula Weaver asked if 'dragons' teeth' could be installed at the rear of her garden to stop people parking on the grassed area. Jon Shore said that he will check as this land may belong to Leisure.
- Paula Weaver said that she would like to see details of estate improvements and Jon confirmed that we need to report this sort of performance information. It is published in the newsletter, but, it needs to be reported on at Forum meetings too.

Car parking:

This is a problem in many places. A budget was set aside three years ago for £25,000. This has enabled the Council to carry out parking improvements at Spencer Court; Minden House; Nelson Close; Thorni Avenue; Simpson Close; Birchen Close; Nashe Way and Gaza House. Also, bays for the use of disabled users have been installed at Melvin Jones House and King George Road. There are further plans for improvements at Frosthole Close and Castle View Road this year.

Mrs Eeles raised an issue with bays for disabled users being used by all at Chapelside. Jon advised that a couple of the marked disabled bays are on the highway so do not come under the Borough Council's jurisdiction. There are also issues at Carberry Drive which could possibly be helped with a sign saying 'residents' parking only'. Signs and numbered bays at Western Court have helped with parking there.

Jon confirmed that there issues in regard to enforcement powers at housing blocks.

King George Road is to have a small shrub area removed from near the parking area.

Paula Weaver asked if people could be made to only use garages for vehicles. Jon confirmed that we do not have the resources to enforce this.

Performance reports:

Jon Shore confirmed that in future performance reports will come to Forum meetings. Those at the Forum were asked to let Jon or Jennie know what they wanted to hear about. This could include estate improvements; rent arrears; anti-social behaviour; empty properties and anything else that would be of interest to tenants and leaseholders. Tenants and leaseholders are invited to scrutinise these things and to help to improve the service.

Asbestos in the home:

The Council is working on information to be sent to all tenants about this. This will give information about who to contact about asbestos. The Council will also be carrying out some asbestos surveys.

There is an asbestos register and database which tells us where asbestos may be in people's homes. Current checks are made when jobs are carried out and we should be providing information to contractors such as TSG.

Mrs Corbin said that a small amount of asbestos was taken from her home, but, she has not heard any more since her windows were replaced. Jon to investigate.

Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard:

This has recently been reviewed by the Government. Originally, these standards were produced by the Tenant Services Authority, but, now the Homes & Communities Agency oversee standards for social housing. These standards encouraged landlords to produce their own local standards and our local standards now need to be reviewed. A group will be set up to review the standards.

Feedback from meetings with contractors & South Coast Training:**Housing Panel:**

The last meeting was a training meeting mainly, so, Barbara did not attend. Feedback will be given at the next Forum meeting.

TSG

Paula Weaver represents tenants at these meetings and she reported that there is still a problem gaining access for gas servicing in 5 properties.

Carla Banks gave Paula an issue to raise with Ian Cousins about TSG. The next TSG meeting will be held in October 2017 (the TSG contract with the Council ends in April 2018).

Any issues relating to TSG should be directed to Paula at Forum meetings or to Jennie Larkin.

Cleaning & caretaking:

Sally Eeles and Jon Shore attended the last meeting with Hi-Spec. There were a few issues with things not being done regularly, but, in spite of this, satisfaction levels had gone up.

Sally Eeles; Barbara LeSueur and Eileen Bailey are the cleaning representatives.

Grounds Maintenance:

The last two meetings have been cancelled, but, another meeting is planned.

Editorial Panel:

The next newsletter is due to be sent out in September 2017.

South Coast Training

The last event was held in April 2017 and the next event will be held at the end of October 2017. Workshops will include Welfare Reform; Mental Health & Well-Being; Confidence Building and analysing performance information.

Any other business:

There are problems with overhanging trees at King George Road. Tree works are planned, but, Jennie will confirm with Mrs Corbin about when this will happen. (This has now been done).

There are overhanging shrubs in the drying area at Spencer Court – to be reported to grounds maintenance. Also, there is a problem with dog fouling and contaminated recycling bins.

Fan heaters have been left at Mollie Pearman's home and Sally Eeles' home following work earlier this year.

There is an overgrown garden at Chapelside. This will be looked at when the next grounds maintenance meeting takes place.

Date of next meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 9th November 2017 at 1:30pm.