

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

31ST JANUARY 2020

FERNEHAM HALL

In attendance: Tracy Thomas (Chair); Cliff Murray (Vice Chair); Alice Anderson; Carla Banks; Liz Bartlett; Jo Cobb; Pam Corbin; Caroline Davies; Dorothy Dicks; John Elsey; Yvonne Goddard; David Hatfield; Jim Hennessy; R Johnston; Mary MacFarlane; Doreen Mallows; Adrian Martienssen; Alice Martienssen; E Mason; David Parkin; Barbara Perry; Sonyia Prescott; Phil Taylor; Ken Tomlinson; Mary Tree; Paula Weaver; Dorothy Weir; Andrea Kingston; Caroline Newman & Jennie Larkin.

1. Welcome & introduction:

Tracy Thomas introduced herself as the Chair of the Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum and Cliff Murray introduced himself as the Vice Chair. Tracy welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence:

Eileen Bailey; Mrs Bath; Mr & Mrs Buxey; Mr & Mrs Chandler; Joan Chapman; Marie Condon; Shawna Davenport; Glen Doubleday; Sally Eeles; Debbie Gibbs; Roy Gibbs; Sheila Hewes; Dave Hurden; Liz Leach; Phil Leach; Myra Lee; Maureen McIntosh; Ruth Payne; Jenny Ridgen-Murphy; Peter Robertson; Barbara Robertson; Barbara Steel; Maureen Tanner; Dave Town; Celia Walker; Derek Whitear.

3. Minutes of the last meeting:

The minutes were approved and proposed by Sonyia Prescott and Jo Cobb.

4. Matters Arising:

A camper van which is being parked at Downing Court is an issue for some residents. Andrea Kingston said that the tenant who owns the van has had a letter from the Council, but, the Sheltered Housing Officer has since given permission for the van to be parked there. If this continues to be a problem, tenants were advised to speak to Andrea Kingston.

5. Presentation by Caroline Newman (Head of Housing and Benefits):

Caroline Newman introduced herself and asked for tenants to tell Tenancy Services what they want from the service. This can be done at meetings or through the Chair Tracy.

Caroline's talk to the Forum covered the following;

Rent arrears have increased and part of this increase is due to the introduction of Universal Credit. The Council aims in the future to collect 98% or rent due. A lot of work goes towards keeping people in their homes.

There has been a large turnover of staff in Tenancy Services and there are lots of new staff. Douglas Nimmo who was the Sheltered Housing Officer at Sylvan Court passed away just before Christmas. Sam Sokhi is a new member of staff and is the Welfare Support Officer.

There is a good relationship between the Neighbourhood Officers and Community Safety Officers. They work together on anti-social behaviour issues. A professional mediation service is available to help with such issues.

Tenancy fraud is taken very seriously and there is an officer who deals with this and carries out investigations. Last year, 100 cases were investigated and fraud was found in 20 of these.

Fire safety is a big issue and regular risk assessments are carried out in communal areas. We work with Hampshire Fire and Rescue service and regular updates are put in notice boards and newsletters.

Monitoring of services and scrutiny – Caroline said that FBC's 31 Councillors monitor and scrutinise the performance of the Council. The Housing Scrutiny Panel monitors Tenancy Services and this meeting is attended by Tracy Thomas. Anyone can attend and meeting details are on the Council's website.

Priorities for the coming year were detailed in Caroline's presentation which is attached to the minutes.

Assheton Court in Portchester is to be redeveloped.

The Sheltered Housing service is to be reviewed and feedback will be given to the Forum.

Questions and comments:

Liz Bartlett asked if the statistical information in the slides could be provided for the Tenants' newsletter.

Tenants would like details of how they can escape a building during a fire. Fire information is put on notice boards where blocks have them.

To what level are tenants allowed to have a say? How can tenants have a say and take part. Liz Bartlett was concerned about this because tenants do not see performance information like they used to do in the past. Liz was also concerned that tenant involvement in the Tenants' Handbook has not resulted in tenants getting feedback on their comments.

There were concerns about parking in various areas. Parking is a problem everywhere and the Council has a limited ability to sort out the issue.

6. Presentation by Shaun Barnett:

Shaun is to be asked to attend the Annual General Meeting in April 2020.

7. Review of the last Tenants' Voice:(see attached report).

8. Feedback from meetings with contractors and South Coast Training:

Liberty Gas:

Any feedback about the service provided by Liberty Gas needs to be give to Jennie Larkin or Paula Weaver. Due to staff changes, there has not been a meeting for Paula to attend, but, a meeting is planned for May to which Paula will be invited.

Cleaning and caretaking:

Jennie Larkin said that windows in blocks were due to be cleaned in March 2020. . Any feedback would be welcome and should be given to Jennie.

South Coast Training:

The next event will be held on 25th April 2020. Workshops will include Housing Law; Motivational Thinking; Co-creation and revitalising tenant involvement and complaints.

Editorial Panel and newsletter:

The last newsletter was sent out in December 2019. Volunteers delivered many of the newsletters and this resulted in a postage saving of nearly £600, so, thank you to all those who helped. Staff costs of stamping the newsletters were also saved. The next newsletter is currently being prepared and will be ready for Spring 2020.

Grounds Maintenance:

There will be an Estate Monitors' meeting in May 2020 where issues about grounds maintenance can be raised with a representative from the grounds maintenance team.

Mountjoy:

Tracy Thomas attends meetings with Mountjoy, but, there has not been a meeting for a while. Feedback on this will be given at the next meeting in April.

9. Any other matters:

- There is a continuing problem with dog fouling at King George Road
- Cars are being parked on the entrance way leading to the nursery school at Frosthole Close
- Where will the awards ceremony for Fareham in Bloom be held this year?
- The Ashcroft was not seen by all as a particularly good venue. Other suggestions were Trinity Church Hall and Fareham College.
- Mrs Anderson reported that the 'Frosties' club at Frosthole Close recently raised £350 for an animal charity in Romania.

9. Date of next meeting:

The next meeting of the Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum will be held on Thursday 16th April 2020 at 1:30pm at The Ashcroft Centre, Fareham. This is a change to the publicised date and time. The speaker will be Steve Penfold who is the Neighbourhood Manager for Stubbington and South Fareham. Also, Zoey Hillary will talk about benefit changes and Shaun Barnett will give feedback about the stock condition survey.

Please note that meetings will no longer be held at Ferneham Hall.