



Minutes of the Housing Tenancy Board

*Minutes of a meeting held on 24 November 2011
at the Civic Offices, Fareham*

PRESENT:

Councillor P J Davies
(Chairman)

Mrs R Nadolski
(Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: Miss S M Bell (deputising for D L Steadman), T J Howard and Mrs K K Trott.

Co-opted members: Mr M Busby, Alderman E Crouch, Mr B Lee, Mrs P Weaver and Mr G Wood.

Also Present: Councillor B Bayford, Executive Member for Housing (for Minute 8 and Minute 14).

1. APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D L Steadman.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Tenancy Board held on held on 19 September 2011, be confirmed and signed as a correct record ([ht-110919-m](#)).

3. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reminded members of the arrangements that had been made for a visit to the newly completed sheltered housing facility at Juniper Court, Gosport on Tuesday, 29 November 2011. One group visit would take place at 9.30am and one at 10.30am. Members were requested to contact the Housing Research and Development Officer, Department of Strategic Housing if they had not already indicated that they wished to take part in this visit.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was AGREED that it was in the public interest to exclude the public and representatives of the press for Item 7 below, in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, on the grounds that the matter to be dealt with involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act.

Private Session

7. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED AND DEPUTY CO-OPTED REPRESENTATIVES TO THE HOUSING TENANCY BOARD

The Board considered a report by the Director of Community and Streetscene regarding the appointment of co-opted representatives. The report provided details of the representative nominated by the Leaseholders Forum to be co-opted to the Board and the representative nominated by the General Tenants' Forum to be co-opted as a deputy (copy of confidential report ht-111124-rx01-jsh, which contains exempt information, circulated to members of the Board only with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

It was AGREED that:-

- (i) Mr B Lee be appointed onto the Housing Tenancy Board as the co-opted representative for the Leaseholder Forum; and
- (ii) Mr S Lovelock be appointed onto the Housing Tenancy Board as the deputy co-opted representative for the General Tenants' Forum.

Following his appointment onto the Board, the Chairman invited Mr Lee to join in the meeting.

Public Session

8. HOUSING TENANCY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12

The Board considered a report by the Director of Community and Streetscene which reviewed the Board's Work Programme for 2011/12 (copy of report [ht-111124-r01-jsh](#) circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Bayford addressed the Board on this matter in response to an enquiry concerning the item on the February work programme relating to the Tenancy Strategy.

It was AGREED that:-

- (a) the revisions to the 2011/12 Work Programme, as set out in paragraph 2 of the report, be endorsed;
- (b) that a report on the Block Captain Regime be added to the 2011/12 Work Programme (suggested date being 29 March 2012); and
- (c) the Work Programme for 2011/12, attached as Appendix A to these minutes (including the item mentioned in (b) above), be submitted to the Executive for information.

9. SHELTERED HOUSING REVIEW UPDATE (INCLUDING COLLINGWOOD HOUSE FEASIBILITY STUDY)

The Board considered a report by the Director of Community and Streetscene which outlined the next stage for the Collingwood House redevelopment and set out the key stages in the proposed Project Plan for the scheme which also included tenant consultation (copy of report - [ht-111124-r06-afi](#) circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

The Head of Strategic Housing informed members that local architects, PDP architecture, had been appointed to undertake the feasibility study for the redevelopment. Members received a presentation which outlined various aspects of the design proposals.

The Board was referred to Appendix A, which gave a breakdown of the likely capital cost of the scheme (around £4 million). It was noted that the bid to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for funding had been successful and an allocation of £625,000 had been made. The Board was informed however that the final contract with the HCA would not be issued until after the Localism Bill was on the statute book as the Bill would contain the final details of the reforms to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). (Members were informed that the Localism Bill was enacted on 15 November 2011). One of the key issues linked to the HCA funding was that the scheme would have to be completed by March 2015 at the latest.

Following a recent meeting with tenants and the architects it was reported that the anticipated Decanting Strategy would be a "one phase" approach whereby all residents would be moved off the site whilst the building works were undertaken. It was emphasised that a key part of the consultation strategy would be to keep tenants fully informed of progress at all stages.

Members were referred to paragraph 13 of the report which provided a summary of the key milestone dates over the next eighteen months and the timetable for future reports to both the Housing Tenancy Board and the Executive on this matter.

It was AGREED that:-

- (a) the progress with the Collingwood House scheme be noted;
- (b) no new nominations be made to Collingwood House from 1 December 2011 onwards;
- (c) officers progress the appointment of Development Agents, funded from the capital on-costs of the scheme; and
- (d) a part time post of Tenant Liaison Officer be investigated to work closely with the tenants to progress a Decanting Strategy.

(With the Panel's approval the Chairman agreed to bring forward Item 14 on the agenda).

10. PERFORMANCE MONITORING - BUILDING SERVICES 2011/12

The Board considered a report by the Director of Finance and Resources that set out Performance Monitoring data for Building Services covering all aspects of the service delivered to residents (copy of report - [ht-111124-r02-cne](#) circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

During the course of discussion, reference was made to the Performance Indicator Statistics in Appendix A, relating to overall satisfaction with the responsive repairs service. Concern was expressed about the low level of return of job satisfaction cards. Only 156 cards had been returned during the period 1 April to 30 September 2011, although approximately 4,500 jobs had been undertaken. It was confirmed that the 98% satisfaction rate shown related to the number of cards returned. The Head of Building Services advised that all contractors are required to leave a card for customers to complete as the information provided important feedback in helping to develop and improve the service.

The Director of Community and Streetscene informed the Board that the Head of Building Services was already carrying out an investigation to ensure that job satisfaction cards were being left by all contractors. It was anticipated that over the next few months the number of response cards received would improve considerably. However if there was no significant improvement by the end of the financial year it was suggested that the current card system be subject to review.

It was proposed that an article be placed in the tenant's magazine, "Tenant's Voice" to explain the purpose of the reply cards and how important it was that they be returned. Also, the tenant representatives present at the meeting were requested to encourage people to return the response cards in order that a more complete evaluation of customer satisfaction with the service could be made.

It was AGREED that the information contained in the report be noted.

11. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT REFORM - UPDATE

The Board considered a report by the Director of Finance and Resources which provided an update on the Housing Revenue Account reforms and the implications for Fareham Borough Council (copy of report - [ht-111124-r04-cha](#) circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

The Finance Strategy and Development Manager informed the Board that the debt settlement figure for Fareham was confirmed as £49,555,000. Further, the Government's Housing Strategy, published on 21 November, had now provided more detail on the proposals relating to the Right to Buy scheme. The proposals included the offer of large discounts and the requirement that a new affordable house be built for every house sold under the scheme. In response to concerns as to whether the offer of a large discount would encourage more house sales, the Director of Community and Streetscene stated that house sells were already very low and it was not anticipated that they would increase significantly.

Whilst members' concerns over the change in Government policy were acknowledged, the Director of Finance and Resources and Director of Community and Streetscene reassured the Board that, in their opinion, the introduction of self-financing and the end of the subsidy system in April 2012 would on the whole be a positive step for Fareham. It was their view that it would assist possible long term planning decisions about investment in homes and services and give the Council the freedom to manage homes according to local needs.

It was AGREED that the information contained in the report be noted.

12. FORMER TENANT DEBT RECOVERY

The Board considered a report by the Director of Finance and Resources which reviewed the current position in relation to Former Tenant Debt Recovery (copy of report - [ht-111124-r05-nwo](#) circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

It was AGREED that the information contained in the report be noted.

13. UPDATE ON ESTATES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

The Board considered a report by the Director of Community and Streetscene which provided members with an update on the schemes approved for 2010-11 and 2011-12 (copy of report [ht-111124-r08-jsh](#) circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

Members noted the information regarding completed work prior to 2010/11/ and the schemes identified to be undertaken in the current financial year. It was anticipated that the identification of possible schemes for inclusion in the estates improvement work programme for 2012/13 would come about following consultation with Tenant and Leaseholder Forums and from issues arising from

Estate Inspections. Members noted that any identified schemes for the Estates Improvement Programme for 2012/13 would be considered by the Board at its meeting on 29 March 2012.

The Board were referred to paragraphs 7 and 8 of the report which indicated that a budget of £18,000 had been set aside for the approved schemes, with a further possible funding of £20,000 to help fund off road parking improvements at problem sites. It was proposed that tenants could assist in suggesting areas where such parking improvements might be needed through discussion at Tenant Forum meetings. If there were a large number of requests for such funding, a prioritised programme of improvements could then be prepared.

It was suggested that at future Tenants, Sheltered Tenants and Leaseholder Forum meetings, the tenant representatives identify possible schemes for inclusion in the estates improvement work programme. This information, together with feedback from Estate Inspections, could then help to inform the formulation of the estates improvement work programme for 2012/13.

It was AGREED that the information contained in the report be noted.

14. MOBILITY SCOOTER STORAGE POLICY

The Board considered a report by the Director of Community and Streetscene which provided a slightly revised copy of a draft policy in respect of mobility scooter storage, following consultation and feedback from the Tenant Forums and sheltered housing tenants who own a mobility scooter. In addition, the report also provided an update on current mobility scooter storage demand and usage, with a recommendation to improve existing facilities at a number of identified sites (copy of report- [ht-111124-r09-jsh](#) circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Bayford addressed members during consideration of this item.

Members were reminded that a draft policy had been considered by the Board at its meeting on 11 July 2011 and that further consideration had been given to the draft policy by both the General Tenants Forum and Sheltered Tenants Forum in September 2011. The Tenancy Services Manager reported that the only significant change to the Policy related to the charge to residents which was now proposed to increase from 50p per week to £1.00 per week.

The Board noted the recommendation in the report that the funding of £30,000 approved by the Council to either enhance or provide additional storage facilities should be used at the specific sites shown in paragraph 9, in order to help meet demand.

It was AGREED that:-

- (a) the contents of the report be noted;

- (b) the draft Mobility Scooter Storage Policy, attached as Appendix A to the report, be recommended to the Executive for approval; and
- (c) the proposed improvements to scooter storage facilities at Barnfield Court; Crofton Court; Downing Court; Foy Gardens, Frosthole Close; Northmore Close; Redoubt Court and Trafalgar Court be endorsed.

15. PERFORMANCE MONITORING - TENANCY SERVICES 2011/12

The Board considered a report by the Director of Community and Streetscene which set out Performance Monitoring data for Tenant Services covering Rent Arrears and Repossessions, Void Property Management including Void Rent Loss, Estate Inspections and Satisfaction levels for Estate Services, Anti-Social Behaviour, Tenant Consultation and Involvement (copy of report - [ht-111124-r03-jcr](#) circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

The Senior Housing Management Officer referred members to paragraph 8 of the report and advised that the number of tenants subject to possession proceedings had recently increased from 1 to 2 tenants. She also reported that details of the Estate Inspections programme for the next 5 months would appear in the next tenant's newsletter, 'Tenants' Voice'. This is due to be sent out to all tenants before Christmas.

Concern was expressed about the standard of window cleaning. The Tenancy Services Manager stated that housing officers are aware of resident's concerns about this issue and the matter is currently being investigated.

It was AGREED that the information contained in the report be noted.

(The meeting started at 6:00pm
and ended at 8.40pm).

APPENDIX A

HOUSING TENANCY BOARD – WORK PROGRAMME 2011/2012

Date	Subject	Training Session/ Workshop
6 June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme 2011/12 • Appointment of Co-opted Tenant Representative • Performance Monitoring (2010-2011) • Housing Stock Condition Survey • Housing Capital Programme 2011/12 • Review of Housing Allocations Policy - Frosthole Close • Supporting People - Strategic Review of Older Persons Services • Council's Approach to the Digital Switchover - Options Appraisal 	
11 July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme 2011/12 • Collingwood House - Progress with Redevelopment Plans • Housing Grounds Maintenance • Mobility Scooter Storage Policy (draft) 	
19 Sept 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme 2011/12 • Annual Report to Tenants • Performance Monitoring (Apr-Jun 2011) • Implementing Social Housing Reform: Directions to the Social Housing Regulator - Consultation • A New Mandatory Power of Possession for Anti-Social Behaviour - Draft Response to Consultation. • Review of Housing Allocations Policy - Frosthole Close • Welfare Reforms - Update on Government Proposals • Review of Sheltered Housing Service at Lincoln Close 	

Date	Subject	Training Session/ Workshop
24 November 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme 2011/12 • Performance Monitoring (Period Jul-Sep 2011) • Housing Revenue Account reform - Update • Former Tenant Debt Recovery • Update on Estates Improvement Programme 2011/12 • Sheltered Housing Review - An Update (including Collingwood House Feasibility Study) • Mobility Scooter Storage Policy • Appointment of Co-opted and Deputy Co-opted Representatives 	
2 February 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary Review of the Work Programme for 2011/12 and preliminary draft work programme for 2012/13 • Performance Monitoring (Period Oct-Dec 2011) • Housing Revenue Account including the Housing Capital Programme for 2012/13 • Supporting People - Outcome of Strategic Review of Older Persons Services • Extra Care Provision at Downing Court • Tenancy Strategy 	
29 March 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the Annual Work Programme for 2011/12 and Final Consideration of Draft Work Programme for 2012/13 • Estate Improvements Programme 2012/13 • Review and Update of Local Standards • Block Captain Regime 	