



STIRLING TENANTS ASSEMBLY
MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 21ST OCTOBER 2014
IN MAYFIELD CENTRE
AT 10.30AM

1. Present: Michael Griffiths, Moira Robertson, Thomas Brown, Philomena McClung, Alec Lamb, Cathy Traynor, Dolly Gemmell, Anna Johnston, Meg Amasi, Delia Waddell, Cathy Brown, Brian Telfer, Hugh McClung, Elizabeth Atkinson, tenant

Apologies: Richard Waddell, Emma Meldrum STP

2. Approval of minutes [16.9.14] and matters arising.

Amendments:

Date to be amended to September

In the Q&A section '*AJ-mentioned that communities do not understand the importance of community policing*' should read 'the community is not happy because there is virtually no community policing.'

With the above amendments the minutes were approved.

Proposed Michael Griffiths, Seconded Anna Johnston

Matters arising:

4. Dolly will check if the second instalment of the annual grant has been paid. **Action Dolly**

AOCB Philomena expressed gratitude that everyone had confirmed their attendance or given apologies.

3. Reports

Chair Hugh's Report

3.1 Hugh said that there are 2 national items which you may think do not affect you, but they do. The first is the Smith Commission which is investigating new powers for Scotland as promised just prior to the Referendum by the 3 main political parties. The public are being asked to comment; the closing date is 31st October. You can send comments to The Smith Commission, 7th Floor, 144 Morrison Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8E, email to haveyoursay@smith-commission.scot, or use the website form at <https://www.smith-commission.scot/have-your-say/> It was agreed that a group response could not be sent as there are so many disparaging views; members are encouraged to send individual responses.

The second is a Scottish Government Consultation on a new tenancy for private tenants and can be found at www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/10/3067 . Currently the private sector tenancy agreement doesn't give them many rights. The closing date is 28th December. It was agreed that Hugh would go through it and comes back to the meeting in November with a draft. In

the meantime members will look at the website in order to give informed comments. **Action Hugh and all members**

Secretary Philomena's Report [including Correspondence]

3.2 A letter received from the Scottish Housing Regulator [SHR] Michael Cameron CEO was passed round for comments. They are researching into how they communicate and want to know if they are effective. SHR looks over the Charter and worked with tenants to implement it. Phil will respond. **Action Phil.**

3.3 It was agreed that the meeting on the 16th December will be held in the Mayfield Centre at the usual time.

3.4 Phil will email round an updated list of contact information on members. **Action Phil**

Treasurer Dolly's Report

3.5 The balance to date is £2223.38.

3.6 Dolly has sorted out expenses for the TPAS Conference which will be given out at the HAG meeting next Friday.

3.7 Diaries were purchased for all members.

4. Business Reports

Website meeting 7th October

4.1 Hugh, Brian, Moira and Phil met with Emma who showed the work she had done on the Wix website so far. Several suggestions were made and implemented. There will be a further meeting after Emma returns to work following holiday leave. Brian agreed to be involved.

Hugh had trouble with IE after going onto the site; both Moira and Emma use Firefox and did not encounter any problems. **Action Group**

Housing Advisory Group

4.2 Hugh has been corresponding with Tony Cain regarding a scheme to use HRA money to buy the Old Argyll Centre, Princes Street, Stirling, renovate the building and sell it to Steadfast Homes with all profits going into the General Fund [GF]. This does not follow the Guidance for the HRA on 2 counts [1] HRA money cannot be used without tenant consultation and [2] if HRA money is used, then any profits should go into the HRA. Tony says that there will be no cost to the HRA because the GF is only borrowing the money and returning it. Also because the building has been empty for a long time, SC wanted the deal to go through quickly.

Hugh has asked for this to be put on the agenda for the HAG meeting on 31st October because the Guidance must be adhered to in order to show clarity on all transactions with HRA money.

4.3 The group agreed to all personally contributing to purchase a gift for Tony Cain to be presented at the HAG meeting to show our appreciation of his time with the Housing Service. When Tony first came back to SC he said that he would be building council houses within 5 years which was greeted with utter disbelief, but has now been achieved.

Anna will purchase the item and Dolly will collect the money at the next meeting. **Action Anna and Dolly.**

4.4 At the HAG meeting on 5th September the following items were discussed:-

Welfare Reform Update

Arrears & Legal Action Report

Housing Charter Performance Report –Consultation

Performance Report April 2013 to March 2014
Housing Void Property Management
Housing Options Thematic Inspection
The Housing [Scotland] Act 2014
Housing Allocations: Registered Foster Carers Update
Scottish Housing Regulator Scrutiny: Rent arrears.

Central Regional Network

4.5 The CRN is meeting on 23rd October.

4.6 The Regional Networks Event is being held in Edinburgh on 28th October; committee members from all the regions meet for a Conference. The Speaker will be the Minister for Housing and Welfare, Margaret Burgess MSP. This will be followed by a panel session on Charter Implementation and Tenant Scrutiny and workshops on Housing [Scotland] Act 2014, Universal Credit/Credit Unions and Housing Benefit - Calling for devolution of additional powers. Alec, Phil, Hugh and Moira are attending.

TPAS Conference [final arrangements]

4.7 Hugh will take Michael and Cathy; Moira will take Anna and Brian. Expenses are for travel and overnight out of pocket at £25 per night.

Scrutiny Panel Group

4.8 The group received and commented on a draft of the Housing and Customer Charter Report before it is included as a flyer in the Open Door.

The Scottish Social Housing Charter, Where are we now? Conference

4.9 Anna, Meg and Moira attended a TIS Conference in Glasgow Teachers Building on 14th October; the subject was The Scottish Social Housing Charter, Where are we now? It began with the background to the Charter and brought us up to date. There were 2 workshops: - How have you been involved in the Charter Implementation and Forward Planning. It was a very useful day.

Delegates gave verbal reports on the day.

Repairs Sub-Group meeting 7th October

4.10 Copies of the draft leaflets on policies discussed at the Repairs meeting were passed round for comments on the layout or wording. They are set out in a way that makes them easier to read than a policy document, and each one relates to different aspects of the Repairs Service. We were also asked to comment on the wording of Replacements of fixtures and fitting in your home.

Dolly was pleased that the landline number for SC was publicised on the front of the leaflets, but it also needs to be on the back page. A couple of other typos were highlighted.

4.11 Proposals to alter Disturbance Payments [DP] for when tenants are decanted from their property were discussed and recommendations made. John MacMillan will take these forward.

4.12 The next Repairs meeting is on Tuesday 13th January 2015 in Allan Waters House at 10.30am

5. AOCB

5.1 In today's Daily Record there is a report on a proposal that 18 to 21 year olds will not get housing benefit. Also what is the current situation for 16 year olds who at the moment can hold a tenancy? Hugh will raise this at HAG. **Action Hugh**

5.2 The Open Door has not gone out yet, but is due out this week.

The dates for the PBB meetings have been changed and we were not informed; so our Newsletter shows incorrect dates, which makes us look like amateurs. Moira will raise this at HAG. **Action Moira**

6. Date, time and place of next meeting.

Tuesday 18th November in the Hillview Centre, Culterhove, at 10.30am. This is a Speaker meeting on Priority Based Budgeting [PBB]

Abbreviations

AGM	Annual General Meeting
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
CC	Community Council
CRN	Central Regional Network
FV	Forth Valley
HAG	Housing Advisory Group
HRA	Housing Revenue Account
LA	Local authority
LAs	Local authorities
LG	Local Government
RN	Regional Networks
RTO	Registered Tenants Organisation
SC	Stirling Council
SHG	Strathfillan Housing Group
SHQS	Scottish Housing Quality Standard
SG	Scottish Government
STA	Stirling Tenants Assembly
TLI	Tenant Led Inspection
TP	Tenant Participation
TPAS	Tenant Participation Advisory Service