



STIRLING TENANTS ASSEMBLY
MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 13TH MARCH 2012
IN BOY'S CLUB, STIRLING
AT 10.30AM

1. Present: Richard Waddell, Michael Griffiths, Mary Rainey, Moira Robertson, Alec Lamb, Cathy Traynor, Sarah Fraser, Duncan Faichney, Emma Meldrum STP

Apologies: Hugh McClung, Philomena McClung, Maria Balfour, MGM Alex Wallace, James Quinn,

2 Approval of minutes [14.2.12] and matters arising.

Proposed Michael Griffiths, Seconded Sarah Fraser

Matters arising:

2. Hugh suggested we invite Steven McCabe, Income Maximisation Officer to the STA meeting on April 11th; the discussion could have gone on a lot longer at the February meeting. **Action Emma**

6.2 Michael will attend the CIH Conference on Thursday in place of Hugh who will be attending a family funeral.

6.4 To hire the minibus from Dial-a-Journey the driver has now to pass a training course. Emma will enquire about the cost of the training with a view to herself and Hugh undertaking it; Emma for SC and Hugh for STA.

Emma will not be present at the Fallin meeting, so only Hugh's car will be available. Michael said that buses run to Fallin every 20 minutes or members could arrange to share taxis. **Action all those needing transport to Fallin.**

3 Reports

Chair Hugh's report

Nothing to report.

Treasurer Moira's report

3.1 Copies of the accounts were passed round. Moira explained the figures in red which were the result of the STA paying TLI invoices to Forth Valley College, which were subsequently paid by SC or TPAS to FVC instead of repaying the STA.

Sub Group; The Way Forward Proposals

3.2 Moira passed round copies of the notes taken at the sub-group meeting on 8th March when Hugh, Cathy Moira and Emma met to discuss how to implement the proposals made at the meeting on 24th January and accepted by the committee on 14th February.

Good communication will be the answer to getting information out to tenants in the Stirling district.

We need to expand our contacts to include Community Councils, Focus Groups, Tenant Voices, Tenant Forum, Housing Groups etc. This way we can be involved in more than housing. Emma can help with some of these by contacting SC officers, and tenants who responded to the Open Door request; [Emma will check if these tenants are happy to receive info from STA] Emma is trying to get more Tenant Voices and is putting an article in the Open Door.

Hugh will produce a newsletter for the SC Open Day.

We need a baseline communication strategy which we can build on.

Stirling Voluntary Enterprise has a bulletin every Friday which could have useful information on what people are wanting in their areas.

We can contact RSLs and also ask other contacts about environment issues, regeneration, etc.

Check websites to see what is going on in different areas.

Have a Facebook page which links to other relevant pages.

Barbara Allan could maybe be a link to what is going on in different areas.

Individual committee members could attend other meetings.

We need to decide what information needs to go out and when.

Do we put something out monthly or just when there is a relevant issue?

The Committee thought that we would only put something out when there was a relevant issue.

Do we have a stall at galas or other events and if so how do we decide where to go?

It is a good way of promoting ourselves and finding out local issues, so we would go to ones in the areas where there are a lot of tenants and not much interest,

COP has a newsletter and they are holding a barbecue on June 23rd. Do we have a stall at it?

It was agreed to have a stall. Emma will contact COP.

Sarah said we should put articles in the Cornton Comment newsletter. Emma says that she already does.

Both CAPP/July and the Raploch/August have gala days – do we attend with a stall?

Yes, just having a banner and newsletters will show a presence.

Michael proposed that the STA invest in an A board which is better than a banner when used outside. Action Hugh/Mary

Emma is having a table in the Raploch Campus every 2 months – do we sit alongside her and hold an open surgery?

Emma sees this as an opportunity to contact tenants and it was agreed that we would be there.

Target various groups directly with details of the AGM in August.

This was agreed.

At our April meeting we will need to think about the date, venue and speakers for the AGM. The group suggests having speakers from SC and CAB on Welfare Benefits, and maybe Homes for Older People. Also for stalls with income max officer and maybe others?

Directly after the AGM we do a workplan and detail for the year the speakers, the activities and who takes responsibility for each part of the tasks.

Hugh is happy to do flyers, posters, newsletters etc.

3.3 Other Comments

[a] Facebook page will be good; it is a very easy way to put events, information and links on.

It could link to the SC Open Day and to the Homeless Strategy. Many homeless applicants can get Facebook on their phones.

Facebook can be quickly updated for changes in any events.

Facebook is easy to administer and people can make comments.

There are no personal details because we are an organisation.

It counts how many people visited the site.

It would probably be best to have 4 administrators.

It was agreed to have a Facebook page. **Action Sarah and Emma.**

When the STA meets in Cornton on May 8th the venue will have internet access, so the group will be able to see how Facebook works.

[b] An explanation of ‘Individual committee members could attend other meetings’ was asked for and it was explained that committee members could attend meetings in their areas to promote the STA and find out what issues other groups are engaged with.

[c] The Communities newsheet, which is produced and circulated by SC, has items of local issues.

[d] A comment was made that the STA should not be involved in social issues [as per the constitution]. By spreading our net wider we will be aware of the issues that are relevant to tenants, but it is up to the committee which specific issues are taken up.

Richard said that such an issue was the cost of day care and the effects it has had on the service. Moira read out a letter from Councillor Paul Owens to her request for day care costs to be looked at. [Letter is attached].

HAG

3.4 Moira passed round notes on the HAG meeting held on February 24th

SHIP

3.19 Bearing this in mind, the following geographical programme split is proposed:

Area	Number of new starts	Total Scottish Government Funding Requirement (£M)	Total cost (£M)
Stirling Urban			
Raploch	20	£0.718m	£1.989m
Cultenhove	20	£0.843m	£2.010m
Cornton	20	£0.843m	£2.010m
Other Stirling Urban	77	£2.578m	£8.358m
Stirling Rural	72	£2.416m	£8.204m
National Park	17	£0.688m	£2.364m
Total	226	£8.086m	£24.935m

Excluding "Stage 3" Adaptation costs

3.20 The total new build programme outputs and Scottish Government Grant funding year on year is summarised in the table below.

Year	Number of new starts	Total Scottish Government Funding Requirement (£M)	Total cost (£M)
2012 - 2013	51	£1.654m	£5.232m
2013 - 2014	93	£3.149m	£10.155m
2014 - 2015	82	£3.283m	£9.548m
Totals	226	£8.086m	£24.935m

Excluding "Stage 3" Adaptation costs

Empty Homes – Steve Mason

SC is considering making a bid for a pilot study for an Empty Homes Officer.

A suggestion was made that a ‘claw-back’ could be made if Right to Buy [RtB] purchasers did not occupy the house. This would need a change in legislation and would be hard to enforce.

Loans could be made to owners to bring the properties up to standard, and the houses could be leased for the homeless.

Steve will look at what an empty homes officer can do and what economic benefit could it would bring, especially in the town centre.

Homeless Scrutiny Panel Update

There were only 18 Homeless people in B&B accommodation today.

Moira pointed out that there is a lot of hidden homelessness in rural areas; people perceive homeless facilities as being too far away from work and relationships. The 2:1 ratio of lets to homeless applicants in rural areas is preventing some local households in real housing need from being housed because they do not go down the homeless route. The Panel proposed that the 2:1 ratio should be reviewed.

Hugh was concerned about Looked After Young People and giving them support after they leave care – not just be giving them a house, but by teaching them how to sustain their tenancy.

The full cost recovery for temporary accommodation caused the Panel concern and felt that there should be some discretion around reducing the rental for the small group of clients who were in paid employment.

Hugh expressed concern about the new welfare legislation which reduces the number of rooms that housing benefit will pay for.

Review of Allocations Policy

Some of the data in the review was incorrect – it stated that RSHA had not built and let any new builds in the last year when in fact they had allocated 7 properties in Tyndrum, 18 in Kippen and 14 in Deanston.

Both Hugh and Moira expressed concern that if there were not enough transfer applicants willing to accept a new build tenancy, then the homes were allocated under the 2:1 homelessness/mainstream ratio. We thought that allocations should be equal for new build.

The review also considered what impact the new welfare legislation on size criteria would have and whether to take this into consideration when allocating a property. Hugh asked SC to cost the impact to the Council so that the figures could be used in lobbying MPs and MSPs.

Some applicants who are owners have been increasing their medical points by refusing an adaptation. Views on whether to remove any medical points on refusal of an adaptation were sought.

SC has agreed to adopt the Scottish Veterans Charter which states that publicly funded bodies can support veterans by providing housing advice and support, recognising particular circumstances where housing needs are unique.

Moira asked if SC were taking part in the Scottish Government consultation on allocations and they are.

TP Strategy 2012 – Final Draft

This was accepted and will go before Council at the next meeting.

Winter Shelter

75 Church volunteers took part; they were all trained in food hygiene and dealing with difficult people.

We were asked to consider if the service is needed more often and what the cost would be.

Most thought it would be a good idea to extend the service and planning should start now to extend it to over the winter months.

3.5 There were no comments on the report.

Emma left the meeting during the following discussion.

4 Funding/Budget 2012/13

4.1 Hugh's proposal to put to Carol Hamilton at meeting on 29th March.

Budget report 2012.

Confidential.

The budget proposal should be treated as confidential as this hasn't been presented to Council yet and I am asking STA members to await discussion with Council on 29th March 2012. However, I am hopeful that members will comment on budget proposals.

You will note that proposals contain items like Marketing etc. This is because of the findings that the current Sub Group may propose as a way of publicising our identity (again) and how best to target individual groups which may or may not be affected by work we do; also to spread our work to include environmental issues etc. I would like to think that we will create links with ethnic groups/young people etc. as well as those that we normally contact in this way.

Postages have been increased to reflect any costs on this. We will need to produce flashy adhoc newsheets to distribute, as and when required, and I have set aside money to do this which should include a service level agreement and an Annual Report. If we are to statistically prove our worth to the SHR/Council/TPAS then this will have to be done.

It is likely that the Council will want to limit the budget, in accordance with their budgetary constraints, and we have to recognise this. The group will need to suggest a figure that is acceptable as a grant for the year. E.g. Will it be proposal of £17300 less balances (ie £5000 currently) or would you wish to set a ball-park figure that we can negotiate with. I would like to suggest that we retain the same level as last year £12500. The decision is yours.

Please remember that the group will need to work hard this year at re-identifying and promoting itself if we are to continue as a group worth the public money invested in it.

Hugh McClung,

Chairperson

Please note: Hand this paper back to Mary when discussion is completed.

Budget 2012/13.

<u>Headings</u>	<u>Budget 2011</u>	<u>Actual spend</u>	<u>+/-</u>	<u>Budget 2012</u>
Meetings (Catering)	1500	955	(500)	1500
Room Hire	0	0	0	0
Cttee Expenses	3500	2785	(700)	3500
Stationery/Postage	2500	1570	(930)	3000
Website	300	55	(245)	200
STA Ann Conference	1800	1131	(669)	1500
TPAS Conference	4000	5112	1112	4000
Reports	1500	0	(1500)	1000
Mini-bus/Fuel	0	0	0	0
Marketing	0	0	0	2500
Miscellaneous	600	25	(575)	100
<u>Total</u>	15700	11600	(4100)	<u>17300</u>

NB. Budget proposal takes account of new STA proposals including marketing the organisation group and work they do.

We include producing an Annual Report/ Service Level Agreement.

It should also be sufficient for adhoc newsheets when/where required, and promotional material.

Postages have been increased to reflect mail shots.

I propose that we: Have training/discussion meetings every by-month

Business meetings each 2nd month starting May 2012.

Limit TPAS Conference to 4 delegates. If not enough places are taken from other groups then we can request further places.

TLI/STA Newsletter (2) may still continue to be financed by Stirling Council

4.2 Comments:

- [a] We'll have to work within the budget for marketing.
- [b] We should budget for 7 people for the TPAS Conference, not 4.
- [c] We would need a short committee meeting every month to discuss matters arising and aocb.
- [d] Apart from the above comments, the proposals were agreed with.

Emma returned to the meeting.

5. Open Day/Newsheet

5.1 The SC Open Day is being held on 14th April. Mary, Moira, Michael, Richard and Alec propose to attend.

5.2 Hugh will produce a newsheet for the day.

5.3 Hugh has purchased key rings and fridge magnets for marketing.

5.4 STA will publicise what it does and what has been planned.

6.AOCB

6.1 It was agreed that we would invite a SC officer to talk about the Change Fund and any impact this could make on the Day Care Service to the meeting in Crianlarich on June 12th. **Action Emma**

6.2 Our AGM must be in held in the town centre to attract tenants. It is proposed that we hold it in Old Viewforth. **Emma will book any Saturday in September.**

7. Date, time and place of next meeting.

Emma and Richard gave apologies for the next meeting on April 10th in Fallin.

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

Councillor Paul Owens

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2 March 2012

Mrs Moira Robertson
Secretary
Strathfillan Community Council
3 Glenfalloch Road
Criarlrich
FK20 8RJ

Dear Moira,

The following is what I received when I asked the Department for their response to your letter. My bit is at the end.

Thank you for your enquiry regarding the changes to day support services at Stirling Council. Social services carried out a review of the existing charging policy during 2010. This was the basis for the revised policy approved by Councillors in February 2011. The review identified that there were inconsistencies within the current policy – it was identified that service users, receiving similar services, were either charged or not charged, based on who their provider was or where their service was delivered.

There are a range of care and support services which are provided to help individuals to successfully remain at home for as long as possible. The banner of care and support services included what is traditionally known as Care at Home/Home Support and Day Support/Day Care. Council agreed that care at home and day support should be treated as equivalent services and charged likewise

Services provided vary significantly and are based on assessed need of each individual. Personal care is free to over 65's whether delivered in a home or day support setting. Charges vary significantly and are based on the ability to pay and the level of service received and in the case of over 65's there is no charge for personal care delivered at home or in a day support setting

The charge to all clients is on the basis of a financial assessment, which takes account of each individual financial circumstances and older people's day care charge is around the lowest. The charge to clients is a contribution towards the cost of their care, not the full cost and this is noted in all individual statements issued to clients.

A small number of clients (35 across the council area) have stopped attending the day care service following the introduction of the charging policy. As part of the implementation of the new policy the following approach was adopted to ensure that clients who still required a service were supported in the most appropriate way.

Sept 2011 Letter and leaflet issued to all Care and Support clients advising of charging implementation date of December 12 2011.

October 2011 - The first and original statement issued detailing care package, financial information and how charge was calculated

Between October and January 2012 – Helpline activity capturing queries and concerns from service users and carers and involved a range of services.

Clarifications of statements -dealt with via helpline

Referral for further financial assessment – Advice Services with new statement issued when this was completed

When there were requests for services to be cancelled the detail of the clients were referred to Assessment and Care Management for a review. Care was only cancelled where individuals who were reviewed by the service would not be at risk if they did not attend. For some people, their choice was to reduce the service rather than cancel. Where the review identified the need as essential the service continued.

The day support service for older people is currently being redesigned to better meet the needs of our growing older population and this is being reviewed in conjunction with our partners in health and the 3rd sector (volunteers). One of the early pieces of work already under way is the introduction of Therapeutic Day Support which aims to work with older people at times of need to support them to return to their local community and participate in community activities. We have support from the Scottish Government in the form of the Change Fund to accelerate ambitious projects for older people and this is being undertaken in Stirling hand in hand with our volunteer sector. Staff who currently work in traditional older people's day support services are being trained to be able to deliver this type of care to people to maximise independence and support people to stay at home and in touch with their local communities.

Furthermore in the coming year, the Change Fund will support a number of projects to build community capacity with a focus on older people, providing more choice and better outcomes. Social services and the change support team would be very happy to speak to the community council on this work and are keen to hear of areas where we can work together to develop approaches to support our growing older population.

“ My bit”:

At the Council meeting of February 2011, the Labour group requested a suspension of Standing Orders, inter alia, to allow discussion of a number matters, under the 6-month rule, whose implications were far reaching. When this proposal failed to get the required majority, the Labour Group walked out therefore refusing to participate in those decisions.

In the Labour budget that, with the help of the Tories, we managed to get accepted in the last Council meeting, we set aside a sum to allow the quantity, quality and cost of day care care to be reviewed .I can't make any promises as this will depend on who has the majority.

Kind regards

**COUNCILLOR PAUL OWENS
TROSSACHS AND TEITH – WARD 1**