



STIRLING TENANTS ASSEMBLY
MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 19th FEBRUARY 2013
IN BANNOCKBURN COMMUNITY CENTRE
AT 10.30AM

1. Present: Michael Griffiths, Moira Robertson, Hugh McClung, Dolly Gemmell, Alec Lamb, Philomena McClung, Cathy Traynor, Richard Waddell, Delia Waddell, Anna Johnston, Peter Pelgrave, Tony Kelly [TPAS] Alexa Scrivener [SC]

Apologies: Mary Rainey, Meg Amasi, George Keenan, Sarah Fraser, Margaret Campbell, Emma Meldrum STP

2. Chairperson Hugh's opening remarks.

Hugh introduced Alexa Scrivener, who was standing in as speaker for John MacMillan.

3. Approval of minutes [15.1.13] and matters arising.

Proposed Philomena McClung, Seconded Michael Griffiths

Matters arising:

MA4.3 Richard wrote on 29th January 2013 to Councillor Corrie McChord, Leader of Stirling Council, reference the Cost of Day Care report produced by the STA and the lack of response from the Council. He will let us know of any response received. Moira received an email from Margaret Robbie on behalf of Val de Souza, Interim Head of Social Services, on the 14th February. From the answers given it does not look as if the report has been read because it just re-iterated what the Social Work department does. Hugh has suggested that we arrange a meeting with Val de Souza. **Action Richard**

MA 5. Dolly has booked the Victoria Halls, Stirling Road Dunblane FK15 9EX for 19th March

3.3 Moira contacted Forth Valley College and the invoice has been found and the cheque returned.

4.5 Phil has contacted the Provost Mike Robbins and he has accepted the invitation to the 10-year Celebration and said he will be delighted to attend. It was agreed to invite Mrs. Robbins. Phil has sent out invitations to everyone.

4.6 It was agreed that we would take photos at the event and not have a video, mainly due to the cost.

4.7 Hugh has ordered 100 purses.

4.8 Several caterers were contacted re the buffet, but the only response was from the Raploch Campus, so this has been booked. The cost will be £8.50 a head.

5.5 Michael asked how Universal Credit will affect pensioners on housing benefit. Universal Credit is being phased in over 4 years from autumn 2013, and it is believed that pensioners will be in the latter phase. Michael will take this forward to clarify our assumptions are correct. **Action Michael**

4 Speaker Alexa Scrivener Update on Repairs and Clarification of Priorities

John MacMillan gave apologies; Alexa gave the presentation in his place.

The STA had previously raised concerns about the priorities for repairs, especially responses to heating for households with elderly, infirm or young children.

The Service Overview and Budget is expected to be approved by the Council.

Repairs and Priorities

- Budget
 - Revenue Repairs £5.134 Million
 - Capital Investment £17.044 Million
 - Total Spend Value **£22.178 Million**

Revenue Repairs spend

- Cyclical repairs £1100
- Gas Servicing £4460
- Voids to lettable standard £313
- Responsive Repairs approx. £305k

Capital Investment spend

- 300 kitchens
- 250 Bathrooms
- 400 heating
- 150 roofs
- 150 adaptations
- Doors where needed
- New build programme 3 bungalows Riverside and 6 in Killearn + 1 special adaptation

Funds transferred from Revenue £6049k

Transfer from Strategic Housing Account £1m

House Sales £700k

Prudential Borrowing £9169k

Insulation Grant £126k

- Employment
 - 127 Craft operatives
 - Variable agency employments
 - 38 Managerial / Clerical
 - Support
- Agency used for specialist activity, short term increases in demand or cover for absence
- Clerical
- Human Resources
- Chief Executives Service and Political Leadership

There are 127 craft operatives but the service also uses some agency workers for short time increases in specialist trade areas or to cover absences.

There are 38 managerial and clerical staff and the service pays for HR and political leadership workers.

Agencies have to go through a particular supplier who is chosen by corporate procurement.

- Strategic Aims
 - Provide a 24 hour, 7 day response repairs service
 - Achieve the SHQS across the Housing Stock by 2015
 - Build 28 new homes by March 2015

Support and manage the strategy function

Provide an emergency repairs service to other external and internal bodies

Support and manage the development of council houses by other bodies

- The 3 houses in Riverside are built to the standard for people with varying needs as are most new builds.
- 1 house in Drymen is a special adaptation
- 9 houses in Cornton are 2 and 1 bedroom for varying needs.
- Details of proposed development in Cowie are not finalised.
- Bannockburn development – the tender has gone to Marshalls.

Responsive Repairs

- Priorities
- 4 Hour Emergency – where there is an immediate danger to persons or property
- 24 Hour Emergency – where failure to repair will result in damage to property or severe detriment to persons
- Appointment – All other repairs
- 20 day and 90 day appointment, when have to order something in or owner /occupier have to part pay.

Our service response times averages

In January, of 2261 repairs 1234 were emergencies

Out of Working Hours [OoWH] emergencies cost an additional £20 per job.

Gas represents about 900 OoWH with most gas calls being made at 5pm or later – these are responded to the next day.

If there were 600 OoWH calls it would cost £12k per month to respond within 4 hours, which equates to £144k a year; this would mean a 50p increase on all rents on top of the 3.2% increase proposed.

Performance Measures

- Based on January 2013
 - Non-emergency repairs within target
 - Target 95% Actual 99.4%
 - Emergency repairs within target
 - Target 95% Actual 94.8%
 - Customer Satisfaction with the repairs service
 - Target 95% Actual 97.3%
 - Void properties allocated within 28 Days
 - Target 85% Actual 42.9%

In December the appointment performance measure was 81.1%

The poor result for voids is due to the 2 week shut down at Christmas.

Customer satisfaction is based on 73 surveys from 2261 repairs with 71 satisfied and 2 not satisfied.

Question and Answer session

4.1 Is the £5.1m budgeted for repairs an increase or decrease? It is the same amount but employee costs and other costs have risen so the service is more efficient.

4.2 What are special adaptations?

They can be anything that the Social Work or OT departments have requested for the tenant or family.

How much of HRA funds is spent on adaptations? Alexa didn't know, but most of the money comes from the SW dept.

When installing a new bathroom SC will ask if any adaptations are required before doing the work; Technical Services [TS] meet regularly with SW so know what is needed.

The Scottish Government allows LA to put aside money for adaptations, and even fund some in certain circumstances. Not all the money is always used.

4.3 The service no longer employs a dedicated glazier; he is now employed in the stock condition team. Joiners are now trained in glazing.

4.4 Your Strategic aim is to provide a 24hr service all year. The STA concerns about Responsive Repairs Priorities are that the 4 hour repairs are only for immediate danger to person or property, but we don't think it right to leave an elderly, infirm or family with young children without heat for up to 24 hour.

The 24hr response is **within 24 hours**, so most repairs are responded to much earlier than 24 hours.

Gas calls after 5pm are responded to within 24 hour. Most homes do have a focal fire place which can be used and the service gives out temporary heaters which are kept on property thereafter.

Alexa said that there is an element of discretions; for instance if the call was for 90-year old woman or family with a baby, it would normally be upgraded to a 4hr response.

If all gas calls were upgraded to 4hr it would cost just under £150,000 year extra and this would be taken from rents. As a % of proposed rent increase the service would need 0.8% to cover this extra cost, which works out at 50p week extra on all rents and this is across the board not just gas users.

The response for all non-gas heating is 24hr.

Alexa deals with complains for technical services and has not received many complaints on this subject.

4.5 Tenants with only electric heating face huge bills, but my bills have halved due to extra cladding and insulation being installed and next year I may get a new roof and solar panels. An ordinary pensioner could not afford the huge bills, so are these things being offered to all tenants who have no choice but to have electric heating?

SC takes this seriously and tries to make homes as energy efficient as possible, but the cost of electricity is up to the energy companies. Alexa works with the energy companies and visits tenants, who sometimes have to adjust their life-style in order to make savings; for instance stop leaving the boiler set at 25 degrees, when there would never be a cut off or replace halogen lights, which are very costly to run, with long-life bulbs.

4.6 Kelly Court pay extra for heating, so if something goes wrong they are looking for a quick response; would they get a 4 hour response? Yes, very likely because all the residents are elderly.

4.7 24 and 4 hour emergency is fine during the week but at weekends and evenings, surely the system could record details of elderly, disabled, etc.?

SC relies on people wanting SC to hold this information. We were going to do a tenant survey to gather this information at the last Open Day, but were told that the information had to be given on a voluntary basis, so we can only work with the information tenants have supplied.

The committee think that majority of tenants would give information if given the option. Maybe the telephonists could ask the questions routinely. Maybe some tenants would be reluctant to give the information to SC. It's a shame the information has not been collected because the new Northgate system is designed to hold the information and flag it up where necessary.

Some present could understand why SC didn't want the information collected in the way proposed, but SC need to find a good way to do it.

Also where practicable, ways on how to keep the data base updated must be found.

This type of information is gathered on new applicants and transferred from applicant to tenant status.

4.8 There were 30,000 responsive repairs last year, with £5m pounds spent on them. If we assume that tenants want all heating repairs to be 4 hour emergency repairs, then the 50p day could easily be accommodate if the Capital Programme was slowed down. The service continually changes the priorities as it reassesses, it has happened before, and new priorities were pushed through by SC.

It is up to tenants to decide what is important, but tenants who had been promised a new bathroom would object to having to wait longer.

It would be responsive repairs that would suffer, with longer waiting times for appointments, and this would reduce performance standards.

Of course it is not up to the officers, and if tenants said they thought this was a priority then SC would have to consult.

Remember that 24 hour means within 24 hours not after 24 hours. It is usually longer for people who are out working and come home after 5pm, but there are plans to alleviate this.

Tenants with solid fuel heating would need to wait until the fire cools before a tradesman could work on the problem, so they would be waiting 24 hours anyway.

4.9 What happens if the next job is far away from one plumber, but nearer to another who hasn't quite finished? The system works, by working out which tradesman is needed plus the distance from job. The skill necessary is more important than distance to tenant.

4.10 Planned maintenance would save money on responsive repairs; there is a dangerous area around Kelly Court.

External planned maintenance surveys are carried out every 5 years; time is needed to get the best possible price and efficiency for each area but the work is done within one 12 month period.

Alexa will send a list of work for next 12 months to Moira. **Action Alexa.**

Some of the work needed at Kelly Court could be done under responsive repairs, or could be tacked on to work being done; things such as moss on steps, handrail painting etc. especially if it would be some considerable time before next the planned maintenance.

4.11 What is lifespan for doors and windows, and are the old ones as efficient as the new ones?

The first ones to be installed are not as efficient as the new ones, but there is no replacement programme. Alexa will take this point back to those who do budgets.

4.12 Why is it that when someone gets Capital Programme work done, the tradesman needed to rectify any damage to the walls etc. is not scheduled to follow the installation?

4.13 Performance Measures and statistics don't mean much to the individual tenant who is having a problem. Alexa said that if the individual contacts her she will look at the circumstances and investigate them fully.

4.14 Eddie Flynn picks up everything that is needed under planned maintenance, but if the budget doesn't cover all the repairs reported, the work has to be prioritised. When officers go out and investigate for planned maintenance, all reported work will cause damage to the property, and the question of priorities should be agreed with tenants. When things cannot be done, for whatever reason, it has to be publicised. Communication needs to be better; changes need to be explained.

4.15 Still on communication; SC could say, if a repair is reported between 9 and 3 it will very likely be done that day. Alexa will do this, and also consult on priorities; maybe put a question in the tenant satisfaction and aspiration survey which hasn't started yet.

4.16 There was praise for the service from a committee member whose key broke in the lock on a snowy day; all involved were concerned that she had somewhere to wait until the repair was completed.

Hugh thanked Alexa for the presentation as asked that she come back at some point with an update.

5 AOCB

5.1 Margaret and Peter attended a meeting on Welfare Benefit changes in the Albert Hall where the issue was discussed very thoroughly.

5.2 Emma is still in a lot of pain after her operation; it was agreed to send a card, and for Phil to contact her for an update. **Action Phil**

Date, time and place of next meeting.

Victoria Halls, Stirling Road, Dunblane, FK15 9EX on 19th March at 10.30am

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
OoWH	Out of Working Hours
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