



**STIRLING TENANTS ASSEMBLY
MEETING HELD IN COWIE COMMUNITY CENTRE
ON 18th OCTOBER 2016 AT 10.30am**

1. Present:

Dolly Gemmell, Anna Johnston, Hugh McClung, Philomena McClung, Thomas (Allan) Brown, Kathy Brown, Alex Lamb, Willie Derrick, Richard Waddell, Delia Waddell, Michael Griffiths, Kenneth McKenna.

Kirsty Hill (TP Officer)

Jacqueline Gibbs (Team Leader, Safer Communities Team)

Tony Stickings (Supervisor, Safer Communities Team)

Alison McMaster (Stirling Council)

John McCallum (Stirling Council)

P C McCafferty (Police Scotland)

P C Elder (Police Scotland)

Apologies:

Moira Robertson, Duncan Faichney.

Philomena has been advised by Cathy Traynor that she has resigned from the STA. A letter will be sent to Cathy thanking her for her input throughout her time as a member.

Hugh welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Jacqueline Gibbs and Tony Stickings, Team Leader and Supervisor respectively of Safer Communities Team)

2. Safer Communities Team/Police:

Jacqueline explained that the Safer Communities Team will be working to prevent anti-social behaviour – working within the National Strategic Outcomes and Objectives.

Along with Police Scotland and communities they will be implementing strategies through “Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement and Rehabilitation”.

The team will bring together personal safety, homes safety, travel safety, environment safety, public space safety, safety of the vulnerable, offender management.

Enforcement Officers will deal with dog fouling and dog control, litter, fly-tipping and waste, noise nuisance, parking and decriminalisation of parking, abandoned vehicles, estate management, and monitoring of CCTVs.

P C McCafferty said that he and P C Elder cover the Eastern Villages. They speak to local communities, schools, Community Councils, etc. One of their aims is to teach children that Police are there to help.

Police go out with Enforcement Officers and hear from Community Councils what is going on in their area. Police also liaise with Stirling Council re. housing etc.

Police need to know of any issues and can be contacted by phone or by e-mail.

There followed a brief “question and answer” session.

Q. Philomena – felt that noise patrols should go on through the night.

- A. Jacqueline replied that this will be reviewed. People must phone in and, if they do so, this will be part of the review.
- Q. Hugh – At the early stages the Noise Abatement Act could be invoked.
- A. Jacqueline said Enforcement Officers would go out with a machine and if noise is above acceptable level a warning will be issued in the hope that it would stop. If not, further action will be taken.
- Q. Willie – Enforcement Officer and Police had been in attendance at the last meeting of Cowie Community Council. Willie asked for a direct ‘phone number to contact Enforcement Officers rather than a Call Centre.
- A. Monday to Friday 01786 233533, e-mail safercommunities@stirling.gov.uk, mobile ‘phone number 07717 544926. Contact can also be made through Stirling Council 01786 404040.
- Q. Kathy asked if Enforcement Officers would monitor state of gardens.
- A. Jacqueline said team will respond to complaints, although hands are tied with private lets, owner/occupiers, etc.
- Q. Richard did not believe in the team and felt that anti-social behaviour etc. should be left to Police to deal with.
- A. Jacqueline and Tony disputed this.
- Q. Dolly – when warning letters are issued are they sent by recorded delivery?
- A. They are delivered by hand. Prior to warning letters being issued they are scanned and entered on the database.
- Q. Hugh – When we raised the issue of anti-social behaviour we had discussions with Stirling Council and thrashed out a strategy for tackling anti-social behaviour. There was a proposal that we should have total community involvement, but this appears to be sadly lacking in drawing up the present strategy. He felt that when meetings are held there should be some community presence. We are not seeing initiatives coming from the community.
- A. Partners have been consulted. Community involvement is those making complaints. Both parties in a problem situation have to agree to mediation.
- Q. Willie would like to see Enforcement Officers making themselves known in all communities.
- A. This will be happening.

Hugh thanked Jacqueline and Tony, and P C McCafferty and P C Elder, for their input to today’s meeting and said that Stirling Tenants Assembly will help in any way it can.

3. Rent Consultation:

John McCallum presented figures published by the Scottish Government from the 2015/2016 Annual Return of the Charter.

He said that in the past rent increases have been based on a formula using inflation as a guide. Now Council are working out proposed rent increase based on expected costs. Proposal for April 2017 is an increase of 0.3% - this proposal and a questionnaire will be included in the Open Door. Results of questionnaire will be reported back to full Council.

Proposed 0.3% is because in setting the budget the Finance Department have to calculate the proposed budget. Anticipated costs are £56,000.

Comments:

- Anna felt the proposed increase was reasonable.
- Richard also felt the proposed increase was reasonable, but objected to the money which Council squandered – e.g. new bins. However, Hugh pointed out that the Environmental Service who handle bins etc. is not funded from rent income, but from council tax income. Income from rents is only used to cover housing costs – repairs, maintenance, etc.
- Hugh felt the proposed increase was unreasonable as other savings could have been identified. He had asked Housing Advisory Group if other cost savings could have been identified, but HAG had not accepted this. When the overall budget is looked at there are other ways Council could have identified measures which would have resulted in a nil rent increase. Tenants are seeing a continual trend of rent increases which Hugh felt was unfair.

A vote was taken and the majority agreed to accept the proposed rent increase.

4. **T P Budget:**

Alison advised that Council need to re-tender the T P Budget. TPAS is due to finish on 1st December 2016. Procurement process is lengthy and has been extended for 3 months. Alison distributed questionnaires for completion.

Hugh thanked John and Alison for their input to today's meeting.

5. **Disposal of Assets – HRA Properties:**

As Gregor Wightman had not attended today's meeting, Hugh explained that the HRA holds land and properties. Proposal from Scottish Government is that anything under market value has to be discussed with tenants, anything over market value does not require discussion with tenants. This had been discussed at the last Housing Advisory Group meeting and proposals were agreed. Council have been informed that their method of calculating and reporting is not easy for tenants to understand, and needs to be simplified.

Hugh added that tenants had not received information about the proposed rent increase, but Kirsty said that details of the proposed rent increase and a questionnaire are included in the Open Door which goes to all tenants.

Hugh added that prices for new bathrooms, kitchens, etc. should be published in the Open Door.

6. **Minutes of Meeting held on 20th September 2016:**

Acceptance of minutes was proposed by Philomena, seconded by Willie.

7. **Business arising from Minutes:**

- None.

8. **Reports:**

Secretary

- Yesterday Hugh and Philomena had been at Allan Water House speaking to tenants on the 'phone about repairs. More volunteers are needed.

7th November – Michael and Allan

9th November – Dolly and Willie

23rd November – Anna and Willie

This will be stopping at end of December when a summary of results will be prepared and presented to Housing Advisory Group,

- Table has been booked for lunch at Hollybank for 20th December following the meeting at Mayfield Centre. Philomena invited Kirsty to attend.

Treasurer

- Balance on statement £14,508.84. Cheques have been issued for £5,844.60, not yet cleared, which will leave a balance of £8,664.24.
- Kirsty reported that the second grant instalment is due to be paid and asked whether we normally meet with Carol Hamilton to discuss this. Hugh advised that this does not normally happen – second instalment is paid automatically.
- Dolly reported that Kiswebs are continuing to be problematic. Invoice comes in from Kiswebs, Dolly pays this, but keeps getting reminders from Kiswebs. Hugh advised Dolly to ignore these in the meantime.

9. **Date of next meeting:**

- Next meeting will be held on 15th November 2016 at 10.30am in the Allan Centre, Bridge of Allan. Anyone requiring transport please contact Philomena. Hugh submitted his apologies in advance for non-attendance at that meeting.

Hugh closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.