

STIRLING TENANTS ASSEMBLY

NOTES OF VIDEO MESSAGING MEETING FRIDAY 27TH MARCH

Hello, I hope you are well? As you were unable to attend the online meeting that the STA had today, I have taken some notes covering what was discussed. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 21st April in Bridge of Allan. If we are all still on lock down because of Covid-19 we may need to do the next meeting online again.

Here are the notes from today's meeting.

In attendance: William Derrick, Moira Robertson, Hugh McClung, Philomena McClung, Robert Cairney, and Leza Lafferty (Independent Tenant Participation Officer)

Michael Griffiths – Hugh told us that Michael had fallen in the town after another stroke. it was discussed that Michael has now retired from the group due to ill health and that a gift would be purchased, however due to self-isolation and lockdown Hugh has been unable to purchase a gift yet. Philomena stated she would make him a card and post it and we can sort out a gift once all this is over. Leza said she would also like to contribute towards the gift.

Willie then welcomed everyone to the first digital meeting and thanked all those who were able to join in. He stated he would like to thank everyone for the well wishes whilst he was in hospital and he is glad to be back. The group agreed it was good to have him back.

The minutes of 18th February 2020 was then discussed.

Moira read out the main items from the previous minutes as not everyone had a copy to hand.

Under matters arising regarding engagement with youth services, Moira confirmed that Youth Services had apologized to Leza for the delay but had now sent the STA's questions onto the young people and they will get in touch with us soon regarding setting up a meeting. It was acknowledged that this might be further delayed due to current circumstances.

Visit to Kelly Court – Leza confirmed the visit had taken place on 11th March and Leza, Ian Brown (Digital Inclusion Team at Stirling Council), Philomena McClung, William Derrick and Anna Johnston had all attended. A few residents had come down to talk to us and we thought the visit went well. A few ideas on creating more activities and maybe holding a future STA meeting there too. However, any future events/activities in Kelly Court needs to be authorized by Wendy/Roseann. Leza had already forwarded on the ideas to both Wendy and Roseann and was awaiting their responses. If negative, then Leza advised she will speak to Craig as this is something we really want to progress.

Leza also advised she had forwarded a few concerns to Social Services on behalf of a couple of residents and will also pass a couple of repair issues onto Alexa.

Moira confirmed that the hall at Crianlarich had been confirmed but given the current circumstances this may change again and need to be postponed.

Moira mentioned the matter that Hugh was writing to the Councillors with regards to affordability when setting the rents.

Discussed the session that Moira, Anna, Robert, Thomas and William had attended with regards to 2040.

The previous minutes and details regarding matters arising were moved by Hugh and seconded by Robert.

Chair's Report – Willie advised as he hadn't been at the last meeting, he had no report to do but again would like to thank everyone for the well wishes when he was in hospital.

TP Officer's report

Leza advised that Open-door had nearly been ready to be sent to the designer but then had been postponed due to Covid-19. Due to this Stirling Council would also like to add an article on Covid-19 and giving tenants advice on how to stay safe etc. Gillian will be talking to Management about this next week and will update us, then we can see about timescales. Leza advised she will keep Hugh informed as he is currently working on the STA newsletter.

TP Strategy obviously been delayed as HAG was cancelled again

TLI report at HAG also delayed due to Hag being cancelled

Leza mentioned the consultation that Gregor had sent round with regards to the sale of ground in Braehead. Hugh advised he had raised some issues about this as 3 years ago an application had been lodged to fence off the football field in this area – Leza said she had passed his concerns and comments onto Gregor. If he doesn't get back to her or Hugh with an answer, she will chase him up next week. Leza thanked everyone who took part in this consultation.

Leza stated at the last meeting they had discussed the STA creating a Twitter account and asked Robert if he would be happy to take the lead in this. Robert said he would be happy to do this and will arrange to set this up.

Leza advised she had attended a Scottish Housing Network meeting in Edinburgh a couple of weeks ago. This was a good opportunity to meet other landlords and to discuss important issues. The items on the agenda was to discuss the HRA budget and how this is communicated to tenants and the Assurance statements.

The HRA was dealt with differently by a lot of different landlords. Some had tenant groups solely to discuss HRA budgets, and others just discussed this with their existing groups. Some had an easy to read shortened version of the HRA budget and this was circulated round all tenants and staff. Leza thought this was a good idea.

With regards to the Assurance Statement there were 2 other landlords present who were also late in submitting their statements – their reasons were the same as Stirling Councils (the committee meeting dates). However, only about half of the Landlords present had involved tenants in writing their assurance statements – this is something all Landlords agree they want to improve on this year.

Anna Johnston and Leza attended the C.I.H Housing conference. On the workshops that Leza attended she thought they were good but not Housing related. She said she only attended as she was there on behalf of TPAS and had to man their exhibit. However, Anna did attend a couple of workshops and she will update us when we see her. Leza advised she said Anna enjoyed one but didn't enjoy the other.

Moir asked for an update on the TPAS Scrutiny event that STA were hosting. Leza advised this had been scheduled to take place on the 19th June at the Lesser Hall but due to Covid-19 again may need to be postponed. With regards to co-hosts, Rural Stirling have said their tenants are not confident enough to co-host such a big event but would like to attend. Forth Housing has expressed an interest

to co-host but this is still to be confirmed. Once back on track will arrange meeting with Tony and go over what the process will be for the day. Leza will keep the group updated.

Regional Networks

Hugh advised there was supposed to be a RN meeting the 12th March and then again on the 2nd April, but these have both been cancelled. So, nothing to report.

Looking to have the AGM on the 5th September but again will need to see how things go on whether this will still go-ahead.

Treasurers Report

Moira reported there was £4975 in the funds and she has sent around a copy of the workplan and budget for 20/21. She has asked Willie to contact Gillian regarding these but feels it might be inappropriate under the circumstances to ask for the money until full service is resumed. Leza said that Willie had asked her to speak to Gillian about it, and therefore she has sent on the information to Gillian and asked her to look over it just now and get back to the STA with any issues or queries she may have. Will update if she hears anything.

A cheque sent to Hugh last week was lost in the post. Moira put a stop on the cheque this morning. The phone call took 1 hour 30 minutes before it was answered. It was agreed that Hugh would get another cheque off Anna at some point for the purchasing of more ink, and any other stationery that anyone else required.

Moira also discussed registering for online banking as especially in these circumstances this would help.

Robert then advised he would like to highlight he had completed a DHP application and was told to take a photo of it and they would accept a photo via email. Said Gillian had helped him with this and that was an excellent service.

Under AOB

Leza advised the group that she had raised the Repairs group query about having someone present with regards to pre-void inspections and Anti-social behaviour at the next meeting. Craig Russell had advised that Steven McCabe was the line manager for the pre-void inspector so if I speak to him, he should sort something out for the next repair meeting. However, as the ASB is not currently under Housing he would like to get some more information on this and join the STA at their next meeting (online or in person if possible) to speak to tenants about this.

Hugh spoke about experience he has with a neighbour who he sat in as a witness during an interview with a member of staff. He says with regards to this case as there had been no complaints or issues within 6 months the case would then need to restart again from the beginning, and he thought this was unacceptable. The neighbour is an owner/occupier and the culprit a tenant. Leza mentioned that due to changes in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 landlords have more powers now to tackle ASB cases and these should be used. So, it is important that any new policy or procedure takes this into account. Tenants agreed that they would like a say in this as current system isn't working. Willie asked if we could not only get Craig Russell along to the next meeting but also the Mr McCafferty that was head of the ASB Team. Leza said she would ask Craig if this is possible.

Hugh also mentioned that they had previously discussed a paper that was written in October 2019 from the Finance & Environmental Committee that detailed the sale of land at Graystale Road. Hugh

had raised this with Lorna Cameron who then reported back in Dec 2019 that F & E Committee will always pick this up before it comes to Housing. Hugh had stated this wasn't right and was not what was agreed. It was agreed that any land up for sale that belongs to the HRA will be agreed with tenants first and should come to the Housing Committee first and not the F & E committee. As part of the land is contaminated, who pays for decontamination, and does money from the sale go to HRA. He has therefore raised this as a formal complaint with the Scottish Government and requested a response as a Freedom of Information request. He has not had a response yet. Will keep the group updated.

Leza also updated the group that an online meeting had taken place yesterday between Lesley Baird (TPAS), Stephen Clark (CHO), Craig Russell (HM) and Gillian Findlay (Team Leader) to discuss Leza's contract. The contract is up for renewal at the end of this year and Lesley wanted assurances that it would be continued. Lesley and Gillian both phoned Leza back yesterday to let her know this meeting had taken place and the contract had been extended for a further 12 months. Leza said she was delighted to still be part of the team.

Hugh explained that under European Legislation, the contract between SC and TPAS could only be for 5 years [3 years, then extended for a further 2 years]. Leza is at the end of the 5 years and then the contract will have to go out for tender, unless leaving the European Union alters the criteria. We will have to ensure that the STA is included in the negotiations.

The group then (very badly) sang Happy Birthday to Willie as it was his birthday today.

Leza Lafferty

27/3/20