



2003 – 2024
21 years of supporting tenants

MINUTE OF MEETING HELD ON TEAMS

ON 20th NOVEMBER 2024 AT 10.00am

Present:

William Derrick
Hugh McClung
Sarah-Jane Dunbar
Margaretanne Browne
Moira Robertson
Robert Cairney

Apologies:

Anna Johnston

Not present:

Duncan Faichney
Mags Hughes

In attendance:

Luke Scrivens (Independent Tenant Participation Officer)

Minute of last meeting:

Minute of meeting held on 16th October had been circulated and were approved by Margaretanne and seconded by Sarah-Jane.

Willie welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that it was being held on-line because of the very cold weather which prevented Moira and Margaretanne from travelling. Luke had kindly offered to manage Teams for us because Anna had given apologies. Early on Moira, Robert and Margaretanne had difficulty getting in, but this was sorted in about 6 minutes.

Dan Harttles, Community Safety Team Leader, gave his apologies – he had intended to give an update on the ASB policy, but this was now on hold because a new Ad-Hoc Scrutiny Group on ASB was being set up. Willie asked Luke to see if the STA would be involved in this, Luke will inquire. Dan hopes to be at the STA meeting in January 2025.

Business arising from October Minutes:

None.

Gillian Findlay offered to come to the meeting to answer any questions about the Rent Consultation, and this was accepted.

1. Hugh said that at the Special HAG meeting to discuss the Rent Consultation, he had asked why the interest rate for July was taken and not the lower one for September, as is usual. He has had no response.
2. In the Open Door it just says, “last year faced inflationary pressureswe have witnessed a continuation of these challenges”. Hugh said that the current inflation should have been mentioned.
3. Gillian will ask Stephen Clark or the accountant to respond to Hugh. Gillian will ask Stephen Clark or the accountant to respond to Hugh. Also, will note for next year regarding the wording.
4. The Scottish Housing Regulator [SHR] will be sending information to Gillian regarding all Local Authority [LH] and Housing Association [HA] proposed rent rises, and she will share this once received.
5. Willie asked if responses have been received. Luke said he was adding around 50 to Monkey Survey that were delivered on Monday. Post is only received on a Monday and a Thursday each week. The choices were varied with some going for the 2nd option.
6. Hugh said he was concerned about tenants who fall just short of receiving housing benefit, and asked if there would be a campaign to assist those tenants. Gillian said yes, they would be putting information about the Income Maximisation Team [IMT], and for tenants to find out if the rent rise puts them into being able to get help.
7. Luke said that the IMT were holding drop-in sessions on mobile libraries at present. Also, the meeting with the IMT being held on 29th November will be on Teams, so STA members will be able to join from home.

Gillian left the meeting.

Chair’s Report:

1. Willie asked for an update on the STA going into schools. This will be given in Luke’s report.

Secretary’s Report:

1. Nothing to report, as all correspondence is forwarded by Anna.

Treasurer’s Report:

1. The total money in the bank account is £7273.72. STA has paid by DD 2xKiswebs at £30, Crianlarich Hall £30 and withdrawn £200 cash since 1st October.

Tenant Participation Officer’s Report:

1. Luke and Callum Wynd [TPO for Clackmannan] visited St Modan’s school; they didn’t have time to arrange for Robert to be present.
The pupils were on study time, so several were able to attend and found the session very interesting. Different types of tenancies were explained, and they were asked what type of housing should be built in the future and said Council Housing.
The teacher said no-one had visited the school before to talk about council housing, and that she was very interested in taking this forward.

Questions and comments

Robert – He had brought this up at HAG on several occasions and been told that SC was visiting the schools; the last time the STA visited the schools was when Emma was the TPO. Robert and Willie tried to get into Bannockburn High before Covid, but due to a situation were unable to.

Luke - Pupils could be taken out of core lessons [Maths, English etc.] to hear from STA in the future; this already happens for subjects like sexual health.

Willie – said he would like Robert to take the lead in this.

Hugh – This is very interesting, but I’m disappointed that Robert wasn’t there. A tenant would be able to answer more of their questions.

Luke - Asked which High School should be targeted.

Robert – We should be giving information on homelessness and ensure it is not glamourized.

We need to have a package in place to walk in with, this needs to be hashed out first and then go into a school.

Bannockburn High is the highest catchment, with Stirling High second.

Willie -Maybe the Young Persons Group could get involved.

Hugh – suggested we use a blanket approach; it could go under Modern Studies. We must remember the other High Schools – Callander, Balfron, Dunblane and Wallace. Maybe also go to Primary 6-7.

Moir – When we are giving background information, we must stress that homelessness is not a bed of roses.

Robert – The rise in the cost of living affected everyone. Maybe someone in their mid-twenties who has been through the homeless route could come and talk about the process.

Sarah-Jane – thought we should bring in children as early as possible, maybe Primary 6-7, and tell them of all the options available. At the same time, we could maybe lessen the stigma that some children perceive of living in a council house and not a brought house.

Luke - we have to find out who is interested, and make them the main targets.

Sarah-Jane – If we involved School Councillors or Teachers, it could help being seen as a team not us and them.

Moir - We must not let them think that it is easy to get a Council House.

Robert – We could use visualization technique to show how few people would be lucky enough to get a council house. If we did want to go to Primary Schools, Robert has a good relationship with Braehead Primary.

- 2 Luke has received a document concerning the procurement strategy for Tenant Engagement to be signed off. It is hoped to have it in place by January 2025.

Tenants Together:

1. Sarah-Jane attended one meeting since we last met. It discussed the consultation on the Annual Return of the Charter [ARC] which was 80 pages long and had 8 indicator questions. I have put the relevant pages into a new document called Tenant Together Proposed Changes.
2. Hugh questioned question 7, which proposed changing the indicator for damp and mould from percentages to median, because he did not think that it gave an accurate figure. Sarah-Jane has emailed the document to Hugh and Moira. Hugh will come back to the STA in January 2025 with his thoughts.

Any other reports (Housing Advisory Group): Hugh reported on Special HAG meeting on 25th October.

1. This was held to look at the Rent Strategy and proposals. We didn’t have the opportunity to discuss this either before or during the meeting. Proposals were rent rises of 7.2%, 8% and 8.5%.
2. Hugh personally opposed this on-block. He could not give a STA opinion as we had not discussed it.
3. Hugh questioned whether affordability is taken into account and, if so, what method is used. Luke was asked to find out how it is calculated.
4. Moira pointed out that SC presently use the cost needed to carry out the work needed and not CPI or RPI.
5. Robert said that regarding the economic climate, Citizens Advice Bureau [CIB] and IMO come out to various areas quite regularly. It is now the time to apply for Warm Homes Discount.

6. Moira suggested that SC should be looking at the difference in rent for the number of bedrooms should be looked at, so see if it could be widened to bring in a higher rent for bigger properties and thereby get greater Housing Revenue.
7. Luke said that SC is aware of concerns, but it would maybe carry greater weight if it came from tenants.
8. The other item on the agenda was the SHIP Strategy. This was similar to last time.

Any Other Competent Business.

1. Anna suggested that we move the December meeting back to 11th December, and this was agreed. Willie was asked to see where we will hold our December meeting.

Date of next meeting:

11th December at 10am, venue to be decided.