



**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON ZOOM**  
**ON 15<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2023 AT 10.00am**

**Present:**

Anna Johnston  
Moir Robertson  
Margaretanne Browne  
Hugh McClung  
William Derrick joined later.

**Apologies:**

Robert Cairney  
Alexander Wallace

**Non-attendance:**

Duncan Faichney  
Mags Hughes

**In attendance:**

Tony Kelly (Independent Tenant Participation Officer)

Willie had a hospital appointment but hoped to join later, Anna took over the role of Chair and Moira took the minutes.

**Minutes of last meeting:**

Minutes of meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023 had been circulated and were approved by Margaretanne, seconded by Moira.

**Business arising:**

Secretary's report item [e] Anna contacted SC but didn't get any response so contacted bookings direct and was told it was a mistake and the invoices were cancelled.

**Chair's Report:**

a] Finance training will take place in Allan Water House from 12 to 2pm on 27<sup>th</sup> March. All members are going except Mags.

b] There are 4 members, Willie, Robert, Alex, and Anna going to the Scrutiny Network Event being held in Dunfermline on 24<sup>th</sup> March which Tony/TPAS has organized. It is for tenants involved in Scrutiny and Performance. The Housing Convener of Fife Council will give a presentation. Albion Housing will talk about How to Recruit Tenants.

c] Willie has been in touch with Simon Bain to see if he will be allowed to participate in the interviews for the new in-house TPO and the outside independent TP organization, and the reply was positive.

d] Jenny Evans contacted Willie, Anna, and Robert who all took part in the Allocations Review to invite them to a meeting to catch up on the new allocations policy. Willie and Anna attended. There were no changes and the layout was the same as last year.

### **Secretary's Report:**

- a) Anna continues to forward e-mails she receives from TPAS etc. to all STA members.
- b) She also maintains STA's Facebook page.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

- a) Moira reported a balance of £8,224.39.

### **Report from HAG**

- a] Hugh submitted the following report prior to the meeting.

### **REPORT OF HOUSING ADVISORY GROUP JANUARY AND MARCH 2023.**

#### **JANUARY 25, 2023.**

#### **Welfare Benefits report.**

- a] Spoke of numbers of tenants making a claim for Universal Credit now exceeded 2400. Also that proposed 10.1% benefits rise would not be enough to mitigate the cost of living rises.
- b] Noted that a number of claimants in Bannockburn and St. Ninians still hadn't received their £140 as they had been issued to the wrong accounts.
- c] Future Welfare report would be on a bi-annual basis.

#### **Cost of Living Payments (Tenant Protection) Scotland Act.**

- a] This was brought in by the Scottish Government to protect tenants from high rent increases. It ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

#### **Rent Consultation 2023/24.**

- a] Agreed to recommend a 2.9% increase.
- b] I lodged a dissention from that decision (personal).

#### **Streamlined Evictions.**

- a] Agreed a new policy should run alongside the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy which would make it easier to implement evictions (on a case by case basis and not a blanket coverage.).
- b] Housing Revenue Account Outturn and Arm's Length External Organisation.
- c] These two items were on the Agenda for the Community, Wellbeing and Housing Committee of 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023, but HAG members were not included in the discussions. I asked why. Only for info as Outturn would be discussed at working group (Finance) for STA Members and Arm's Length Organisation for info since HRA was no longer involved..

### **March 10, 2023.**

- a] The Minutes of previous meeting recorded stated, during the rent discussion that a TPO had been in place. This was not factual. TPO had yet to be interviewed for post.

### Dampness & Condensation.

a] Report presented to inform HAG of new SG guidelines on dealing with dampness, condensation and mould affecting properties.

b] Housing services are planning to improve the process of dealing with damp and rot processes to try to eliminate risk to tenants' health. There will be a "rot works" team overseen by an Operational Team Leader which will comprise of a small number of tradespersons.

c] This will include better notifications to tenants following Inspections process and timescales given for works to be carried out.

### Energy Performance Report.

a] This was a report on the Energy efficiency within the whole of the Councils Housing Stock and highlighted a number of deficiencies still to be dealt with which included cavity wall insulation checks and energy performance on Heating systems and water boilers etc. Further reports will be given.

### Tenant Garden Competition.

a] This was a proposal from the Provost of the Council to develop a pride in the Community by having a Garden Competition, since, it was felt that this might inspire some to maintain their garden. It would also involve a small working group of Housing Staff and/or the new TPO to oversee the scheme.

b] Tenant reps objected to this stating that it would only benefit those who were keen gardeners and for those who were not, it would make no difference. Also, there was a cost element in using Housing Service staff and it was felt that staff already had heavy workloads and considering budgets being cut was a waste of resources.

c] A show of hands from tenants was taken to ask if anyone disagreed with the idea. No tenant rep agreed to the idea, Moira abstained because she didn't think tenants should be asked to vote at a HAG meeting.

### Housing Void Performance.

a] There was a report on the number of voids, the time taken to re-let and the plans for improving. This included, the pre-end of tenancy Inspections, works reports and recruitment of a Voids Supervisor to "assist with day to day activities". Agency work is being utilised to cover for the shortfall in trades' operatives to try to establish a better return. Currently work is scheduled through a paper trail and is passed from trade to trade as progress is required. This is now outdated and will now operate viz a computer programme showing planned action and an Info Suite which will outline progress to Team Leaders/Supervisors on a daily basis.

b] Moira said that tenants on the Repairs Group had inspected some voids and prepared a report and recommended improvements to the current system. The report went to Stephen McCabe and HAG members would like to see this.

### **Independent TP Officer's Report:**

a] Tony had sent his report on the meeting to discuss how to increase participation in the STA, but it had not been received or circulated. It was agreed to discuss the report at the next STA meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> April.

b] Leza is leaving TPAS at the end of March; the advert for an altered but replacement post went out on the 14<sup>th</sup> March. Tony had been hoping to go part time at the end of March, but this will not now be happening.

c] TPAS has not heard anything about the in-house TPO and has not seen any public advert for the position.

**It was agreed that Willie would write to Simon Bain and ask specific questions.**

1. When did the advert go out?
2. Where has it been advertised?
3. When is the closing date?
4. When do you expect the interviews to take place?

**Any other business:**

a] Hugh asked how the workplan, budget and the TPAS Conference. The Office Bearers along with Tony will meet to discuss this because we first need to work out a workplan to increase participation in the STA before we can submit a budget to SC. **Anna will arrange a meeting.**

b] Moira said that she was having mobility problems and was trying to arrange to get grabrails by the bath. It is proving quite difficult to find out how to go about this.

Tony suggested that perhaps adaptations would be a good topic for the TLI to look at, and this was agreed.

**Date of next meeting:**

Meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023. Anna has provisionally booked Alan Centre, Bridge of Allan, but the only time available was 11.15am for 2 hours. It was agreed to accept this. **Anna will contact Alan Centre.**

There being no further business Anna closed the meeting and thanked everyone.