



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council

Minutes of the TPG meeting at Denson Close, Waterbeach on 7th October 2019

Attendee's (Tenants/Leaseholders)

Name	Address	
Wendy Head (WH (Chair)	Balsham	TPG
Angela Lewell (AL (Secretary)	Impington	TPG
Patti Hall (PH (Vice Chair)	Cottenham	TPG
Joan Ball (JB)	Histon	TPG
Les Rolfe (LR)	Bourn	TPG
Adrian Prentis (AP)	Cottenham	TPG
Val Hickey VH)	Waterbeach	TPG
Howard Pheasant (HPh)	Cottenham	TPG
Nancy Chisholm(NC)	Gamlingay	TPG
Bob Petch(BP)	Gamlingay	TPG
Paul Bowman(PB)	Willingham	TPG
Jim Watson(JW)	Willingham	TPG
Edna Ingrey(EI)	Gt Wibraham	TPG
Carol Akربي (CA)	Impington	TPG
Dave (D)	Teversham	Observer

Attendees (South Cambridgeshire District Council Representatives)

Name	Position in Council
Geoff Clark (GC)	Acting Head of Housing Property Service
Julie Fletcher (JF)	Head of Housing Strategy & Housing
Helen Pagram (HP)	Resident Involvement Officer
Jennifer Perry (JP)	Resident Involvement Team Leader
Wayne Newman (WN)	Operations Manager
Alex Ellwood (AE)	Asset and Compliance Manager

No	Topic	Actions
1.	<p>Apologies - Dave Hammond - Winifred Wicks - Maureen Crabbe</p> <p>Please Ring Wendy on 01223 894394 or email: wendymhead@yahoo.co.uk if you are unable to attend the next meeting</p>	All
2.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read, agreed as a true record, and signed by the chair.</p>	
3.	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>None.</p>	

<p>4.</p>	<p>Wayne Newman/ Alex Ellwood - SCDC</p> <p>WN introduced himself as Operations Manager in Property Services. Has come along tonight to update on the restructure and what the teams are. David Purnell is Property Service Manager, Tony Kitchen, Business System Analyst and Alex Ellwood (here tonight) is Asset and Compliance Manager. AE said she deals with Housing & Safety, Fire Risk, Gas & Electric, makes sure Communal Areas are safe, working with SSE and day to day working with Mears, ensuring work is carried out correctly. WN said he has 3 surveyors dealing with repairs and voids, 3 planned and Land surveyors, 1 deals with doors and windows, another roads and parking and the 3rd one drainage and roofing. At the moment there is a vacancy for a special projects surveyor and an apprentice surveyor. Also have Sam Roebuck an OT who works closely with the NHS and does adaptations. Although 3 separate sections we do all work closely together.</p> <p>WN was asked about a path where a car is parked and when a fire engine came could not get in. Been going on for 5 years and no answer to date. WN replied that they are working with Highways every Wednesday to take these things up.</p> <p>JB said there is not enough parking at Kay Hitch Way (Histon), what with the Doctor's surgery, Brackenbury home and now the Dentist being rebuilt. Ambulance came for her recently and had to stop at end of road. There is a hedge which could be taken out and become car parking spaces. WN will go and have a look.</p> <p>JW said near 32 Haden Way, there is a green space, is this a parking place. WN said it is not a parking space. GC said we try to get them off because it churns up the grass. Will pass onto Housing Management Team.</p> <p>PB said surveyors (struggling), now finally reconciled re-wall at 65 and opposite. AE said going to Willingham for review and check out.</p> <p>LR said have complained to school previously re-cars parking in residents places. It's even on the schools web-site to park there. School just don't care. GC said this is County Council property, need to have an open conversation with the new head.</p> <p>Any problems give Alex or Wayne a call.</p>	<p>WN</p> <p>GC</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Geoff Clark - Acting Head of Housing Property Service</p> <p>GC said here to give some updates to where we are. Council had stopped senior posts but new CE started 2 weeks ago. Working with consultants on what the structure should be, conversations with different parties. As we stand no further news but on the move.</p> <p><u>New Housing Management System - Orchard.</u> Have stayed with Orchard which is now being implemented. Not easy to get all the data over to new system. H.M. data on Orchard, while the rent is on another system. Difficult to administrate 2 systems. New tenant goes on one then on the other. Double duplication every time. have to make sure it all matches. Will be better when 1 tenancy is on 1 system.</p>	

	<p><u>Repair and Maintenance Contract April 2022 (Mears.</u> Although this is 2 and a half years away, we have already started thinking about the new contract. Have consultants to tell us what the options are. Before Mears had our own repair and maintenance service which was the DLO, so had our own parts etc. Will have a working group for seeing what option to go forward with. Will consult with groups, have tenants on a working party. There will be lots of work over the next 2 years.</p> <p><u>Asset Management Strategy.</u> Our assets, what condition are our properties in? Kitchens, bathrooms roofs etc. The political administration want us to lower carbon conditions. Generally our properties are in quite good condition. We try to invest in our properties, loft installation new kitchens etc. Sometimes tenants have said no so have to invest heavily when empty.</p> <p><u>Service plan - Key Management.</u> This is an overall picture of the service, how we join it all together. Element of service and how we are performing. Current role is in the interim. Will keep you informed as it moves forward.</p> <p>WH asked what posts to fill. GC replied at moment 10/12 senior interim posts but do not know how many will be replaced. PH asked what about the lower level. GC said no it is just the top layers, tier 1 and 2.</p> <p>GC said Brexit, if it's deal or no deal, what will it mean to us? could be fuel shortage, also food shortage.</p> <p>PH asked what about our wardens, covering long term sickness. GC replied we get temporary staff in, can't cover immediately.</p> <p>JW said going back to properties you can't get into, isn't it in the tenancy agreement that you are allowed access? GC replied, yes you are right. Roof falling in, we would go in but if not in good health, can't have this work done at present, we walk away and go to do another property. We have been soft and should have gone back. JW said ill now but not in 2 months. GC said lots of things going on, not as simple as that.</p>	
6.	<p>Julie Fletcher and Jennifer Perry - SCDC</p> <p>JF said for those who do not know me I am Head of Housing Strategy and Housing. We now have JP in post(1 month now), who comes with a lot of knowledge. She has been talking to people including WH and Sam from TPAS. Will be looking at different forums as are aware you are disillusioned so need to find out what it's purpose, what do you want and what does the council want. Need to see how to engage with tenants.</p> <p>We will be setting up a working group, with 1 from TPG, 1 from leaseholders forum, 1 from sheltered forum as well as officers and Hazel Smith(Lead Cabinet member for Housing).Will review all residents involved and activities. Representatives will come back to group and tell what is going on and discuss what it's all about. Put your name forward if you'd like to join the working party. Will be looking at all forums and much wider. the key for me is housing. there used to be Portfolio meetings but these are</p>	

no longer done. Now done at cabinet level.

JP said we really need to look at the structure. Get the findings of the working group, have it signed off by cabinet next spring/summer time. Nothing at present is a done deal, to look at things, get back to you and form plans that work for everyone. The green paper said reviews should happen every 3 years (our last one was 2009). We need to provide better, ongoing information for our tenants. JF added need to look at the whole of our residents activities. JP has done a survey and there will be more of this.

AP said it's going to be heavy with top people, so anything suggested will be ignored. JF replied opposition and 4 officers. We are reviewing things, nothing done from this. JP said reviews, advocate for residents, going through proposals to get options, new framework, new recruits. need to go broader and get more information. JF said will be equal people to collaborate and discuss. AP said if it's set up properly, should it happen.

BP said most people do not know about TPG. How do they contact, do we need to knock on doors? JP replied some areas have no TPG members, we need to get them involved. Care in the community is just one project to do. PH asked do you talk to them, if there is a guy over the road do you go over and talk to him. Let people know what you are doing. JP said could be an on line surgery, or 10-0-clock on a Friday, so tenants can get answers. I'm going to re-vamp Facebook, hopefully by November so it's useful to our tenants. PB said there are 2 different angles here, social and scrutiny. In past South Cambs not taken much notice of, been no access to training. Now TPG to be listened to much more than in the past. Eyes opened greatly by how tenants are involved in their council's work. JP said how do we flex our plan, beyond repairs, get residents engaged. I agree with what you say.

EI said if someone from every village (102) came, we'd be overwhelmed. JP said we need to get the message out more on different forums, have training. I accept not working at present, that's why we are here. Hopefully this is a new beginning.

VH said older people, many of them are not on facebook, they are a big part of our community. JP replied there's the magazine, can access 70% information. VH said came from City Council, didn't register but housing officer suggested I come to the meetings. It's not expressed well enough. JP said more information. JB said don't change it, I read the magazine and came to meetings. PH said people have a fast way of living today. HPh said lots of people don't like going out of the front door. What happened to good old talking to people? GC said we need to tune into the media.

WH said JW and myself have been here the longest and never had anyone drop in. D said it's interesting to read minutes. TPG has got it's place, not a replacement for real tenant improvement. Tenants for first in making decisions, policies etc. Have a separate scrutiny team, talk to officers, properly elected tenants, set up a panel system, be open to all tenants. It is absolutely vital to have policies for rents, new builds, wardens etc. Strong input for residents. I was a councillor and led against

getting rid of housing. JP said are a forward looking council. WH replied many tenants have lost faith in South Cambs, asked what's the point, not a listening council. JP replied that's why this review is happening. GC said yes on hindsight, focused on sheltered housing too much. Agreed that ground maintenance was a success . Need to discuss and take forward. Want it to change.

D said no councillors are tenants, they must be willing to makes changes, so to improve things need to make the right arguments. GC replied half the councillors are new, a lot of new voices open to change. WH said need to get the faith back with the council. JF said all to find a new pathway. Them and us should be working together to improve services. Not quite working at present.

GC said working for council used to be a job for life, but not in that position anymore. JB said we need to know who we are dealing with, co-operation between the two and should be we. BP said the role for us is to bridge the rift and restore confidence. Lots of people don't want to pick up the phone. GC said we need to invest in our stock, intimidated, can't take that. Get tenants into that conversation might help us. PB asked has anyone in the room had a phone call from South Cambs, asking can you help us? No one had. GC said is this something you want to move forward with?

WH said other tenant groups don't do like we do, some a small band of 6/8 people, working group together. Did a lot more interesting subjects. Someone from panel should be on meeting for interview. Had 2 meetings with Cambridge City Council and both were disastrous. JP said Milton Keynes different again, rely on the Parish Council. LR said he goes to TPAS meetings (held quarterly), to find out what different areas do.

Grant JP said grants are available, could be for new curtains in communal room, flowers around the scheme etc. Feel free to give feedback. AP said grants not looked at by the TPG, in review say that grants should be looked at. JP said will do. Go through proposal next spring, carry on as till then.

JP continued by saying there are multiple ways for engagement. Have 6 on scrutiny committee, do workshop, get ideas from other councils what they do, how they get participation. Need to communicate much more. D said construct pages for TPG, get Parish Councils to put in their newsletters. JP responded, multiply, inform people what tenant involvement is, build on relationship. More opportunities for people, then talk about it.

JF said working with as at the moment, 1 from each group. Make TPG a bit more structured, send information out a week before meeting. TPG a role we can improve on, feed back to each other. Don't know what new structure will be until review done.

PH asked what about training? JF replied already done 1 round, let JP know what needed. JP added training that will benefit what we are doing. Help us do what we want to do better. Look at what we do and chat to people. Training before we do

	<p>work. JF said will be training our housing staff on what TPG do. JP added improve communication. Facebook re-vamped for November 5th, go off with a bang. Housing not resident involvement. LR said it's for tenants to put complaints in. JP replied, I have commandeered it , initially one way, help to moderate it. Group in there to get going, man power from day one. LR said won't know when it is. VH said man power won't do it. JP said done other groups 25/35 years old. HPh said large number of pensionable people. JP replied will do other things, e-mail, newsletter, Parish Council, press releases, monthly newsletter, electronically and put in communal rooms. Get out to people who need information. Discussions needed, JF said catering for elderly at forums, younger ones we need to engage with, newsletter still going, plus additional things. GC said want it to happen in an informal way. happens now text. Contact centre difficult, collecting data, get new tenants every year.</p> <p>PH said all need to apply for vacancies, get form from JP. JP said application, geographically. PH asked which 5 are you going to take. JP said don't want everyone to be from the east. Going to Leaseholders and Sheltered forums. Applications to be in week after sheltered forum.</p> <p>HPh said his warden (bless her), has a meeting at the communal hall on a Monday. PH said your warden Michelle is very efficient, will get answers for you. BP said Kathy at Gamlingay is there once a week and goes out if no one comes to her. GC said were told if no one comes to you, to go out and see them.</p> <p>To get form for going on work shop, e-mail Helen or Jennifer.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>BP said satellite don't get magazine.</p> <p>HP said don't forget there is an editorial meeting on Wednesday 9th October .</p> <p>LR said there is a TPAS quarterly meeting this Friday at Luton. Why can't he go? JP asked what is it about, do not know about it.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Date and Venue of next meeting</p> <p>Monday 4th November - 18:00 to 20:00 at Denson Close, Waterbeach</p>	