

Tenants Council Minutes

Lambeth Town Hall, room 8
 Thursday, 30 March 2006
 7:00 – 9:00PM

<p>Attendance Nominated Delegates and Deputies Rashmi Agrawal Hazel Barlow Cathy Butler Susan deSwarte Rita Fitzgerald, Vice Chair John Frankland Jean Haley Robert Hall David Hart Jean Kerrigan, Chair Ros Munday, Vice Chair Graham Nicholls, Ex-Chair Ray Puckey Beryl Saunders Pat Scahill Matt Toussaint Chris Vaughan Joyce Wilson</p>	<p>Brixton – Delegate Streatham Area Housing Forum Chair Norwood – Delegate Norwood – Delegate North Lambeth – Delegate TMO Liaison Committee Norwood – Delegate Brixton – Delegate Clapham and Stockwell – Deputy Brixton – Delegate Clapham and Stockwell – Delegate Streatham North Lambeth – Delegate TMO Liaison Committee Clapham and Stockwell – Delegate Brixton – Delegate Leaseholders Council Co-chair Brixton – Delegate</p>
<p>Elected Members Cllr John Kazantzis Cllr Bernard Gentry Cllr Robert McConnell Cllr Peter Truesdale</p>	<p>Labour Executive Deputy Member for Housing Liberal Democrat Leader of the Council</p>
<p>Officers Chris Adamson Kevin Creed Stuart Dixon / Marilyn Proctor Chris Lee Mary Lynch Jackie Thomas</p>	<p>Head of Housing Management Support Resident Participation Officer Resident Participation Team Manager Interim Executive Director of Housing Interim Deputy Executive Director of Housing Area Housing Office Manager, Norwood</p>
<p>Apologies Bill Alison Denise Anderson Nicholas Helleur Marjorie Landels Ella Lewis Joan Light Barry McCalla Mike Wacha</p>	<p>Clapham and Stockwell – Deputy Clapham and Stockwell – Delegate Brixton – Delegate North Lambeth – Delegate Clapham and Stockwell – Delegate TMO Liaison Committee Leaseholders Council Co-chair Area Housing Office Manager, Streatham</p>

	Action
<p>1.0 Welcome and introductions – Chair</p> <p>1.1 Chris Lee circulated a briefing note explaining that a computer programming error means many of the 2006/7 rent increase notification letters sent out are illegal. Corrected rent statements will now be sent to every resident by mid-April and the correct rent will then be collected four weeks from the notice. Until then the 2005/06 rent will be collected.</p> <p>1.2 Questions were raised about costs to residents and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) of double work by employees and a second mailing. Delegates pointed out the danger of confusion of elderly residents and asked that wardens in sheltered units be kept up to date. ACTION: Sheltered housing officers need to be briefed on this rent issue.</p> <p>1.3 Chris Lee requested details of any costs incurred by residents due to the mistake. He confirmed that costs incurred will be absorbed by the HRA. ACTION: It was agreed to inform TC how much this error cost. It was also stated that since this mistake is totally recoverable there will not be a loss of revenue.</p> <p>1.4 Any adjustments required due to the six weeks of carried over rent from 2005/06 will be taken as an account adjustment. This shouldn't be more than £10 for the entire six week period.</p> <p>1.5 Pat Scahill stated he noticed a discrepancy on 28 Feb on the rent notices between one and two-bed properties. He sent a letter to Tim Fairhurst who forwarded the letter to Les Warren for a response. He has had no answer. ACTION: Les Warren to respond.</p> <p>1.6 Careline service charge accounts are they affected? ACTION: Housing to liaise with Adult Services and report back at next TC meeting.</p> <p>1.7 ACTION: It was agreed to bring an estimate of the total cost and a report on who was responsible for this error to the 26 April meeting.</p>	<p></p> <p>ML</p> <p>PC</p> <p></p> <p>LW</p> <p>ML</p> <p>PC</p>
<p>2.0 Minutes from 24 November 2005</p> <p>2.1 Minutes agreed without change.</p>	
<p>3.0 Matters arising</p> <p>3.1 Point 2 of action sheet (savings made by the reframing exercise), delegates highlighted that any savings made may be reduced by costs of the rent increase error. At the recent Housing Service Improvement Forum it was reported that more jobs need to be done by handypersons for that service to make significant savings. ACTION: Details of the amount of work invoiced by caretakers / handypersons doing repairs to be provided at the April TC meeting.</p> <p>3.2 Point 3 of action sheet (Streatham contract meetings) the Chair informed TC that a letter responding would be sent from Tom Bremner by the end of next week. ACTION: TB to send response by 7 April 2006.</p> <p>3.3 Point 4 of action sheet (50p charge for installed fires) officers said that they had asked Finance about this and they aren't aware of any 50p surcharge. ACTION: Delegates agreed to provide officers with evidence.</p> <p>3.4 Point 9 of action sheet (tendering of estate deep-cleaning contract for North Lambeth) a discussion with officers has taken place and officers are re-examining the matter. ACTION: ML to respond by 26 April 2006.</p>	<p>CA</p> <p>TB</p> <p>CA & Ray Puckey</p> <p>ML</p>

<p>and be sufficiently trained; and if outsourced only to a reputable agency.</p> <p>6.2 Delegates voiced concern on points 3.5.3 and 3.5.4 (Financial costs and savings) about pooling rents and requested that there be a lot of consultation before there are any changes.</p> <p>6.3 ACTION: Officers agreed that training should be implemented and that uniforms should be worn across the borough.</p> <p>6.4 Delegates asked if tenants can be reimbursed for any service not provided like leaseholders are. Officers said that reimbursements are available if service is interrupted for an extended period.</p> <p>6.5 ACTION: Officers would like to bring the review to a conclusion by the end of June 2006.</p>	<p>AHMs & Mike Wach</p> <p>TC</p>
<p>7.0 Resident involvement in contract management – Chris Adamson</p> <p>7.1 Delegates from Clapham and Stockwell area reported that they always have contractors at their Area Housing Forums. They feel residents are doing all the monitoring and feel the use of default notices is inefficient.</p> <p>7.2 The Chair asked for uniformity across the borough. TC would like officers to do the monitoring and not residents.</p> <p>7.3 One delegate reported that Graffiti Solutions have changed their working hours (06.00 to 14.00) and asked if Lambeth is still paying them from 06.00 – 08.00 when no work is done on estates. ACTION: Officers to investigate and report back on 26 April.</p> <p>7.4 Officers stated the following points for attendance to contract meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If Area Housing Forums and registered TRAs are content for them to be present, then any resident can attend contract meetings • It isn't always best to 'have a go' at the contractors, residents should try and work with the contractors constructively • There is a need to standardise performance across the borough 	<p>Tim Fairhurst</p>
<p>8.0 Service standards and performance</p> <p>8.1 The rent collection report was presented by Jackie Thomas.</p> <p>8.2 The Chair thanked Jackie for all of her hard work then queried how home ownership services (HOS) covers their costs if they are failing to collect 100% of the service charges. Officers replied that these are accumulated arrears and that now they are collecting nearly 100% of the current year's service charges. The budget assumes bad debts will occur and there is some government subsidy and the fees for Section 20 which make up the budget.</p> <p>8.3 Chair stated that TC feels that leaseholders' services should not be subsidised by tenants' rent.</p> <p>8.4 Co-chair of Leaseholders Council stated that some leaseholders not paying their service charges are in dispute with the council over some charges.</p> <p>8.5 Officers stated that HOS is actively following up service charge arrears. It was explained that the new SX3 software coming online later this year will be able to differentiate between service charges in dispute and those that aren't. HICS can't do this. Officers stated that leaseholders' services must be self-financing.</p> <p>8.6 ACTION: AP to do presentation at future TC meeting</p>	<p>AP</p>

<p>9.0 Update on London Tenants Federation and Lambeth Strategic Partnership</p> <p>9.1 The Chair brought attention to the <i>London Council Tenant Manifesto 2006</i>, circulated by the LTF, at the end of the meeting's papers.</p> <p>9.2 The LSP is proposing that the number of theme partnerships be reduced to four and that Housing, along with Environment should join into the Stronger, Safer Communities Partnership. The last Housing Theme Partnership meeting agreed to lobby for Housing to be central to this new group (i.e. central not periphery to stronger, safer communities).</p>	
<p>10.0 Any other important business</p> <p>10.1 A delegate described a brief visit to her flat to verify work required to bring the property to Decent Homes Standard. She read the notification letter sent stating what would be done and that it would take about an hour. She told TC that her visit was approximately five minutes and that several things listed in the letter were not done. ACTION: DT to report back to TC on 26 April 2006.</p> <p>10.2 ACTION: An update on the Road Map is due at the next TC meeting on 26 April.</p> <p>10.3 ACTION: Paul Cook to provide a report on the savings made to-date from the reframing exercise when available.</p> <p>10.4 Delegates were reminded of a Housing and Adult Services scrutiny meeting on 6 April at 19.30.</p>	<p>DT</p> <p>PC</p>