

TENANTS' FORUM

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 4 March 2020 at 9:30am in Committee Room 4, Town Hall

PRESENT:

Vice-Chair (SV for Raglan & Corporation Terr)
Mandy Anderson

Street Voices for Lord Street Area Dalton
Irene Asbury
Jackie Scott

Barrow Borough Council

Janice Sharp, Assistant Director - Housing
Caroline Kendall, Assistant Operations Manager

	<i>In the absence of the Chair, Mandy Anderson, Vice-Chair chaired the meeting.</i>	
		ACTION
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies for absence were received from Allan McIntosh (Chair), Jim Christie (SV for Grange & Cartmel Crescent); Cllrs Kevin Hamilton and Bill McEwan; Caroline Wagstaff (Operations Manager) and Amanda Morris (Benefits Liaison Officer).	
2.	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2020 The minutes were agreed as a true and correct record.	
3.	MATTERS ARISING	
3.1	Windows on Grange & Cartmel Crescent (8.2) <u>Post meeting update</u> Nigel Clarke met with Jim Christie on site on 21 st January to assess the issues, which appear to involve the failure or absence of external perimeter sealing around window frames. As the installing contractor (Top Notch) is no longer trading it won't be possible to get them to return to site to rectify these latent defects at their own expense under the contract. Consequently, funding will have to be allocated from the maintenance budget; tender documentation will have to be prepared. Realistically it will be the summertime before anything is likely to happen on site.	
3.2	Tenants' Newsletter / Rent Increase Mandy noted that the 'Record of Rent Payments' which used to be included in the spring edition of the newsletters, was included on the back of the rent increase letters which had recently been sent out – she thought this was a really good idea. Jan stressed the importance of those tenants on Universal Credit to advise DWP via their journals of their new rent charge on, or soon after, 6 th April.	
3.3	Meeting with Simon Fell MP Jan advised, in her absence, Caroline Wagstaff had recently met with our new MP, Simon Fell (the meeting had been requested by Cllr Kevin Hamilton) together with Cllr Ann Burns the Leader of the Council to voice our concerns on the implications to the Council the rollout of Universal Credit was having.	

<p>3.4</p> <p>Housing Management Forum Reports: 16 January 2020 (6)</p> <p>Jan confirmed all recommendations were agreed, including provision of top-up funding to Women’s Community Matters.</p> <p>3.5</p> <p>Staffing Update (9)</p> <p>Jan advised Barrie Coleman has been appointed as permanent Mobile Caretaker.</p> <p>3.6</p> <p>Large Trees on Raglan Court (10.1)</p> <p>Caroline K advised a referral has been sent to Probation to clear the moss/berries from this area. Caroline has arranged to visit the area with Marie Richards to look at the two large trees with a view to possibly cutting them back.</p> <p>3.7</p> <p>Cars on Pavement rear of Corporation Terrace (10.2)</p> <p>Caroline had visited the area – she saw no cars on the pavement. Mandy said the problems with vehicles mounting the pavement occur mainly in the evening. Caroline will mention this to PCSOs to see if they can possibly monitor the area.</p> <p>3.8</p> <p>Footpath Lighting (10.4)</p> <p>Jan will speak to Les about trying to streamlining the management and maintenance of Borough Council footpath lighting and CCC streetlighting.</p> <p>3.9</p> <p>Survey of Tenants & Residents (STAR) (10.5)</p> <p>Jan advised a company to carry out the survey will be appointed in the very near future. She asked tenant reps to please encourage those who receive a survey to complete and return it.</p>	<p>Caz K</p> <p>Caz K</p> <p>Jan/Les</p>																					
<p>4.</p> <p>UNIVERSAL CREDIT</p> <p>In Amanda Morris’ absence these figures are provided post meeting, and are as at 6 March:</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Total Number of Claimants</th> <th>Average Account Balance</th> <th>Total Balance</th> <th>APA Claimants</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>In arrears</td> <td>441</td> <td>£671.51</td> <td>£296,137.07</td> <td>92</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In credit</td> <td>29</td> <td>(£166.01)</td> <td>(£4,814.36)</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>470</td> <td>£619.84</td> <td>£291,322.71</td> <td>94</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Total Number of Claimants	Average Account Balance	Total Balance	APA Claimants	In arrears	441	£671.51	£296,137.07	92	In credit	29	(£166.01)	(£4,814.36)	2	Total	470	£619.84	£291,322.71	94	
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<p>5.</p> <p>HOUSING MANAGEMENT FORUM REPORTS</p> <p>Jan summarised the report which will be presented to next HMF on 9 March:</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>Review of Policy Statement: Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour in the Council Housing Stock</p> <p>Members will be asked to note the content of the report and to agree to adopt the reviewed Policy Statement.</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>Performance Information Report</p> <p>Jan ran through some of the key performance figures which are being taken to HMF for information only.</p>																						

6.	<p>TENANT PARTICIPATION COMPACT BUDGET <i>update</i></p> <p>The current budget was circulated; the only spend since the last meeting has been travel expenses to and from meetings. Jan advised Jackie to claim for petrol expenses. Cathy will obtain advice on how this can be facilitated.</p>	Cathy
7.	<p>ENVIRONMENT ENHANCEMENT BUDGET <i>update</i></p> <p>7.1 Environmental Enhancement £5k Budget 2019/20</p> <p>There has been zero spend on this budget so far this year.</p> <p>7.2 Proposed Scheme on Ormsgill</p> <p>Caroline K gave details of a proposed scheme on Ormsgill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pathway between Broad Close and Hazel Gill is attracting a lot of anti-social behaviour and is being used for drug dealing and drug paraphernalia is being left in the area. She is proposing locked gates be installed either end of the pathway to prevent access to the area. • She is also proposing clearing and tidying up the area at the junction of Middlefield and Hazel Gill; the Council's grounds maintenance team will tidy up the trees and cut back the shrubs and wooden raised beds will be provided and planted up. Caroline advised the police's 'mini-police' initiative, which involves of children selected from local primary schools, will look after and tend to the raised beds. <p>In view of the fact that year-end is fast approaching, it was agreed Caroline will obtain costings for the work as soon as possible and she will contact Sarah Mortimer (Housing's accountant) to establish the spending time frame.</p> <p><u>Post Meeting Update</u></p> <p>The cost to provide and fit two lockable gates either end of the pathway is £1,675 plus VAT. Caroline/Cathy contacted tenant reps (Allan, Mandy, Jim, Irene and Jackie) and advised of the cost involved and all gave their approval to this proposed scheme. Caroline will take this forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jan advised, estate officers and surveyors will be asked to keep an eye out for possible schemes. • Jackie advised there is fly-tipping on the area behind Lord Street. Caroline will ask Cheryl to visit the area to have a look. • Mandy mentioned a tour of estates. Jan said this will be organised for a little later in the year when the weather improves. • In the meantime, it was agreed Mandy and Caroline K/Debbie will have a look around the Vulcan Road area. <p>7.3 Area Improvement £10k Budget 2019/20 (officers' budget)</p> <p>Spend since last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two skips for Middle White Close – removal of bushes and trees: £470 • Provision of five 'no pedestrian' gates at Chester Place to try and reduce ASB in area: £2,274 	<p>Caz K</p> <p>Caz K</p> <p>Jan</p> <p>Caz K</p> <p>Caz K</p>

8.	<p>STAFFING UPDATE</p> <p>Jan advised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently advertising Contract Supervisor post. • Laura Heasley appointed as Triage/Administration Officer in Homeless Team. Laura's part-time position as Business Support Officer to be advertised. 	
9.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>9.1 Syrian Refugees</p> <p>Jan advised a new family has recently taken over 2B tenancy. We have now housed five Syrian families.</p> <p>9.2 External lighting at Ainslie Dale</p> <p>Irene reported the external lights are on all the time. Cathy will pass this on to Graham Harcourt to look into.</p> <p>9.3 Lighting at Lord Street</p> <p>Jackie advised there is a lack of lighting between 74 and 78 Lord Street and is pitch black at night. Cathy will request Graham Harcourt to look into this.</p> <p>9.4 Handrail required at Lord Street</p> <p>Officers from CCC visited the same area last year to look into possibility of providing a handrail next to the four steps. Agreed Cheryl will be asked to visit and chase this up.</p> <p>9.5 Communal Door at Raglan Court</p> <p>Mandy advised the communal entrance door to her block is constantly broken. The automatic mechanism which is needed because one of the tenants is in a wheelchair keeps breaking down and sometimes the door remains open all night. Cathy will forward to the Maintenance Team.</p> <p><u>Post meeting note</u> A repair has been issued.</p>	<p>Graham H</p> <p>Graham H</p> <p>Cheryl W</p> <p>Main.Team</p>
10.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next meeting will be the Annual General Meeting and will be held on <u>Monday, 8th June at 2pm in the Law Library, Town Hall.</u></p>	