

Tenants' Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 28 February 2025 at 10am in Law library, Town Hall & on Teams

Tenant Reps Present:

Street Voice for Roosegate
Nicola Bull

Street Voice for Newton Road Area, Dalton
David Pearson

Street Voice for Broughton Rd, Dalton
Danny Green

Westmorland and Furness Council:

Caroline Wagstaff, Assistant Director of Housing
Rebecca (Bex) Halton, Interim Senior Manager – Housing
Landlord & Homelessness Services
Caroline Kendall, Interim Operational Lead Safer
Communities
Cllr Judith Derbyshire, Cabinet Member for Housing &
Homelessness
Cllr Anne Burns
Cllr Anita Husband
Observer: Scott Jackson (potential new street voice)

Introductions were made around the table.

	Agenda Item	Action
1.	Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence were received from Chair, Mandy Anderson, Caroline Wagstaff, Assistant Director of Housing and Debbie Cubiss, Senior Neighbourhood Team Leader.	
2.	Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 29 November 2024 The minutes were agreed as a true and correct record.	
3.	Matters Arising	
3.1	Roosegate Community Centre (3.1) Bex assured the group that this issue is still being looked into and have linked in with the Community Development Team . Renewal of the lease is also on hold. She will keep the group updated on any developments.	Bex
3.2	Right to Buy (10.2) Bex advised a response to the consultation was submitted and shared with Judith. No feedback as such from the consultation.	
3.3	Potential Street Voice for Eden area The group was happy to welcome Scott Jackson as an obsevor. Scott lives on Carleton Meadows, a mixed tenure housing development that includes 81 affordable properties which were transferred over to the new Westmorland and Furness Council. Scott is interested in becoming a street voice for the area, so has come along to the meeting to get a an idea of what's involved.	

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3.4	<p>Cabinet tour of Estates</p> <p>The tour of estates took place on 11 December (was well attended by ward councillors, officers and members of Corporate Management Team). Judith said she was be happy to join any planned estate walkabouts/street safes as did tenant reps.</p> <p>Bex said she would ask the Safe & Strong Communities Team to let the Tenants' Forum know of any future walkabouts/streetsafes so they had an opportunity to attend.</p>	Bex
4.	<p>Tenant Participation Compact Budget Update</p> <p>The current Tenants' Compact budget was circulated for information.</p> <p>Spend since last meeting:</p> <p>Cost of Living Assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £1,559 Purchase of bed frames/mattresses/bedding to assist vulnerable residents. <p>Community Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £10 Ormsgill Stronger Together (refreshments for site visits) ££67.20 Ormsgill Stronger Together – Easter eggs for youth club <p>It has been agreed the budget Compact Budget will increase by £5k to £15k for 2025/26.</p> <p>The £15k will be split as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of living assistance increased from £8,700 to £13,600 Hospitality increased from £200 - £300 Community events – remains at £1000 Travel – remains at £100 <p>The increase in the cost of living assistance budget will mean even more tenants who are struggling will be helped by way of practical items they would otherwise not be able to afford to buy themselves.</p>	
5.	<p>Environment Enhancement Budget Update</p>	
5.1	<p>Environmental Enhancement £5k Budget 2024/2025</p> <p>A proposed scheme to install a tanalised timber bin store at Greenhill Close car park was highlighted. Currently, the bins are left strewn around the area including near to communal doors. The bin store would at least provide an allocated space for the bins and secure them, preventing their tipping over in poor weather and helping to reduce the wider spreading of litter. The waste collection service would also be required to replace the bins to the store which will also lend to improvements. The cost to supply and fit the new bin store is £2,048.</p> <p>Balance: £2,952</p>	

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5.2	<p>Area Improvement £10k Budget 2024/25 (officers' budget)</p> <p>Numerous skip days have been held since the last meeting.</p> <p>Balance: c.£6k</p>	
6 & 7	<p>Service Update/Tenant Satisfaction Measures</p> <p>Tenant Perception Survey</p> <p>Bex advised the response rate to the survey had improved from last year's response. So far, 498 tenants have completed the survey (compared with 350 last year), which meets the sample size required.</p> <p>Tenants had been offered a variety of different ways to complete the survey, from completing a copy which was inside the tenants' newsletter (using pre-paid envelope to return), to using a QR code, by telephone and six half day drop-in sessions were also held in different locations across the borough.</p> <p>Results of the survey will be known by the end of March and will be published online and in the next edition of Housing Matters.</p>	Cathy Kirk
8.	<p>Asset Management Strategy</p> <p>Following on from the stock condition survey of all properties, an Asset Management Strategy (and associated Asset Management Plans) has now been produced which sets out our investment priorities over the next five years across Westmorland and Furness.</p> <p>Bex is happy to provide a separate session to cover this in more detail if needed.</p> <p>Judith passed her compliments on for the way in which the Housing Service is successfully managing and maintaining its housing stock.</p>	
9.	<p>Budget and Rent Setting</p> <p>Letters will be sent out shortly to tenants notifying them of the rent increase.</p> <p>Bex confirmed, but she will double check, that useful contact numbers are published on the back of every rent letter that is sent out.</p>	Bex
10.	<p>Complaints</p> <p>Figures for quarter 3 September – December:</p> <p>5 x Total number of complaints received (one was subsequently withdrawn).</p> <p>Of those 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x Repairs related • 1 x Anti-social behaviour • 1 x Rubbish/fly-tipping 	

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	<p>Three out of the four complaints were resolved at Stage 1.</p> <p>The ASB complaint went to Stage 2, but it was a difficult case; a complex person.</p>	
11.	Any Other Business	
11.1	<p>Complaint from Danny</p> <p>In response to a complaint Danny wished to raise, Bex asked him to provide Cathy with the details in order that it can be looked into.</p>	Danny
11.2	<p>Publicising recruitment of Street Voices</p> <p>In an attempt to recruit more street voices, Cathy will look to display posters in different venues around the area as well as continuing to publicise on social media.</p>	Cathy
11.3	<p>Potential Environmental Enhancement Schemes</p> <p>Tenant reps are asked to send details of any proposed schemes to Cathy who will take it forward with the Estates Team.</p>	Cathy
12.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The date of the next meeting is Thursday, 29 May 2025 at 10am in the Law Library & via Teams.</p>	