



**MINUTES OF  
SENTINEL TENANTS' & RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION  
MEETING HELD AT  
SENTINEL'S FLEET OFFICE  
ON TUESDAY 25 MAY 2010**

<b>Present:</b>	Tony Mitchell Helen Parry Isla Sutherland	Brian Sanders (Chair) Kathy Hine Arthur Williams	Bill Hall George Herbert Dick Wylie
<b>Absent:</b>	Molly Parrett Mr M Thomas	Dawn Moors	Marion Witts
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Val Bagnall Richard Pilbeam Eileen Davy (Minutes)	Kari Tourle Mike Owen	Simon Bridgen Alex Sciarretta
<b>Distribution:</b>	Those Present / Those Absent / Those In Attendance Neighbourhood Managers		

**Welcome**

Brian welcomed all to the meeting including Mike Owen, Simon Bridgen, Regeneration Manager and Alex Sciarretta, Business Development Manager.

Info

Brian advised the members that Molly Parrett had tendered her resignation from STARA and having stated her reasons, Brian felt they were well justified.

Info

Brian asked Dick to give a few words about Molly. Dick said Molly was going to be taking things easier, but will remain on the Hart & District's Neighbourhood Panel and continue with her work in a Basingstoke Charity Shop.

Info

**1. Resident Board Members**

**Action**

## Action

- 1.1 Referring to Dick having to retire as a Board member, now that he has served his maximum of 10 years on the Board, Brian said this creates an opportunity for STARA to propose 2 candidates for this vacant post. Brian asked for any nominations. Info
- 1.2 Brian said he would like to stand and was proposed by Helen and seconded by Tony. Info
- 1.3 Arthur said he would like to stand and was proposed by Helen and seconded by Dick. Info
- 1.4 Brian advised that both Bill (RBM) and Sheila Jenkins (IBM) were up for re-election. Info
- 1.5 Val advised that there had been 13 expressions of interest for the Independent member board position. Info
- 2. Basingstoke Reception Refurbishment**
- 2.1 Simon Bridgen introduced himself to the members as the Regeneration Manager and that he was responsible for looking at all options for the refurbishment. Info
- 2.2 Plans had been circulated to the meeting. It was generally recognised that the existing reception was not fit for the purpose, having only one interview room. Info
- 2.3 Meetings with the Receptionist and Customer Service Centre (CSC) took place, a steering group was created and a Focus Group set up. There has been a lot of consultations. A movement study undertaken and Customer questionnaires were completed. Info
- 2.4 Simon looked at the Rushmoor Borough Council ideas to see what they had done as it is considered to be a well planned area. Info
- 3.5 Ideas considered – areas around the reception desk, with the possibility of a 3<sup>rd</sup> work station, smaller meeting rooms and relationship between reception and the CSC. Info
- 2.6 Simon said further meetings were planned with consultants to agree on specification and then it would be sent out to tender, possibly in the next 10 days. Target date to start is anticipated as first week of August. Info
- Questions were invited from the members.
- 2.7 Brian thought it certainly looked better and was workable – Brian asked how the outside areas would be affected. Would disabled bays be located nearer to the front door. Val said they would like for this to happen. Info
- 2.8 Kathy would like to see a wider lift for disabled customers who have the larger chairs/hoists and would there be a flat threshold. Val said the existing lift is sufficient for the standard size of chair and because of the construction of the building it is not possible to change. Info
- 2.9 Kathy also asked if there could be a trophy case in the Reception area. Info
- 2.10 Bill raised concerns that the proposed 2 seater meeting room was blocking a fire door. Simon advised that it would cease to be a fire door. Info

## Action

2.11	Arthur asked how soon, staff could get to a meeting room, in the light of a security breach last year. Simon said, there would be panic alarms and staff would be able to see in to all rooms. Val did not want to see separation of staff and customers, stating "we are customer focused".	Info.
2.12	Dick did not like the plans but under the constraints said it could not be done better. He too, could see "traps" for staff given the proposed plans.	Info
2.13	Helen added her concerns over staff safety. Helen asked Val if the lift doors could be painted as they were in urgent need.	Info
2.14	Tony asked if the counters would be raised to the height they are in the Fleet reception.	Info
2.15	Kathy would like more ladies toilets asking if they could be swapped with the gents.	Info
2.16	Brian felt with the area available it was not a bad design and thanked Simon for his presentation. Simon left the meeting.	Info
	Brian explained that they would move to Item 7 of the Agenda and introduced Mike Owen to the meeting	Info
<b>7.</b>	<b><u>Tenancy Agreement</u></b>	
7.1	Mike said together with Kari, her Team and Val they had looked at the Tenancy Agreement to ensure good practices, making it better in the long term and gave a summary of the changes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More user friendly – change terminology wherever possible</li><li>• Added a clause – where tenants are responsible for former tenancy arrears</li><li>• Laminated flooring</li><li>• Rent increase provision</li><li>• Responsibility by tenants for Insurance</li><li>• Damage caused by tenants</li><li>• When tenants are away from the property for a long time</li><li>• Tightened up on the ASB clause</li><li>• Information on Domestic Violence</li><li>• Noise Nuisance claims</li><li>• Parking and dropped kerbs</li><li>• Bigger car repairs – not the personal car</li></ul>	Info

## Action

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Occupancy – overcrowding problems</li><li>• Termination provisions – making for easier re-lets</li><li>• Succession provisions</li></ul>	Info
7.2	Brian commented that there needed to be grammatical amendments and explanations. He stated that the Ground 7 Rule needs an explanation. Kari advised she would take Brian's amendment requests away with her.	Kari
7.3	Dick asked about the right to appeal on rent and service charges adding that this should be mentioned in the Agreement. Dick also said it did not state a tenant has the right to take in lodgers. Mike explained the members had only been given the changes and not the whole Tenancy Agreement. Dick still felt it was not clear and that it should be made clearer. Tony added in the case of rent rises, tenants should challenge them.	Info
7.4	Kathy said at the recent TPAS, the new Government were saying tenants could work from home. Kari explained, Sentinel are already allowing this, providing it does not cause any issues and that permission has been sought and granted.	Info
7.5	Bill said he felt the Pet clause related to those outside and asked what happens when staff go inside a property. What safeguards do they have against dangerous pets. Val referring to dogs, said the tenant must take responsible ownership and asked Mike to "beef up", this clause.	Info
7.6	Bill said of a service charge being undercharged in the current year, this would be added to the next year, but, when it is overcharged it would go into a sinking fund. Bill disagreed with this. Kari stated it is most unlikely for there to be an overcharge.	Info
7.7	Bill said of drugs and alcohol and when "reformed persons" are given a tenancy and then deteriorate. Bill felt there was not enough in the Tenancy Agreement to cover this and spoke of nuisance he and his neighbours were suffering because of a such a tenant. Mike added that the general nuisance clause would cover this.	Info
7.8	Mike in summing up said he would change what is possible but needs to give the legal side.	Mike
7.9	Bill asked how a Starter Tenancy would be changed. Kari explained that the Assured Tenancy is the main one. The principles of a Starter Tenancy are the same but will be looked at.	Info
7.10	Dick would like to see the pages of the tenancy numbered and Val asked for the main points to be made clear.	Info
7.11	Brian thanked Mike, who then left the meeting at 7.55 p.m.	Info
	The meeting then resumed with Agenda Item 3.	Info
<b>3.</b>	<b><u>Overview of Development</u></b>	
3.1	Alex introduced himself to the members as Business Development Manager before circulating a copy of his presentation to the meeting and giving an overview of the New Business Development.	Info

**Action**

3.2	Speaking of his colleagues from the Growth Team, James Pennington, Mike Shepherd, Lawrence Cook, Alex spoke of his and their mixed backgrounds and previous contract knowledge.	Info
3.3	Well on the way to achieve the Corporate Plan Target of 1500 new affordable homes over 3 years, having completed 434 in the previous financial year. Target Growth Areas - Now looking at neighbouring Authorities, new opportunities and location to offices in order that new developments are managed efficiently. Working closely with the Neighbourhood Housing Teams.	Info
3.4	Alex gave the names of preferred Affordable Housing Partners, both historic and new and where to go when looking for suitable sites. Establishing good relationships with Land Agents and Developers, both small and large. Authorities, currently still own quite a lot of land. Alex outlined the process from the first introduction to the exchange and completion.	Info
3.5	Speaking of the Range of Acquisitions Alex explained Unconditional Land Purchase carries a slight risk as although purchasing with a smaller price, planning permission may not be granted. By Option, you purchase at a discounted price, once planning permission has been granted.	Info
3.6	Alex then listed recent land acquisitions and proposed numbers and types of homes for each development before opening the meeting to any questions.	Info
3.7	Brian said how interesting he had found the presentation.	Info
3.8	Kathy asked for clarification of Greenfield and Brownfield sites. Alex explained Greenfield sites as open fields and Brownfield sites as having a former use. i.e. commercial premises.	Info
3.9	Referring to the proposal for the Notcutts Nursery site, Dick felt there was a very large provision for green land. Alex explained that it will have been over provided, for other sites obtaining planning permission.	Info
3.10	Kathy asked Alex how feedback surveys taken after the first year of a development would be treated, when developing the next site. Val explained these would go to Julie Porter and Mike Shepherd as lessons to be learned.	Info
3.11	Bill asked Alex for a difference in cost between Code 3 and 5. Alex advised – <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Code 3 10 – 12k</li><li>• Code 4 18 - 20k</li><li>• Code 5 in region of up to 25k</li><li>• Code 6 up to 35k</li><li>• With maintenance on top of.</li></ul>	Info
3.12	Alex said that by providing different sites and taking people off the waiting lists it would give a positive return in the future, putting money back in to the Company.	Info
3.13	Brian thanked Alex for an excellent presentation. Alex left the meeting at 8.35 p.m.	Info

**Action**

**4. Apologies for Absence**

4.1 Apologies received from Marion Witts.

Info

**5. Minutes of Meeting – 27.04.2010**

5.1 The Minutes of the STARA meeting held on 27 April 2010 were agreed as a true and accurate copy, with small amendments as 6.7 below.

Info

**6. Matters Arising**

2.8 Richard advised that a laminated copy of the STARA leaflet would be placed in a strategic position in the holders displayed in both Receptions, which will help gauge the interest in STARA.

Info

2.10 Richard said 142 Young People have shown an interest in a Forum and he is currently writing to them.

Info

2.14 Following the recent Kitchen and Bathroom event which was well received, Richard has the names of those who expressed an interest in forming an Involvement Panel.

Info

6.1 Val – Overview of Maintenance Contractor Performance – Meetings with Mitie were ongoing, to discuss concerns and issues. Mitie have advised they are to employ additional operatives and now focusing solely on the Sentinel contract. The same Management structure will remain but there is now a real commitment to improve. It was agreed that there were still too many complaints in April.

Info

6.7 Should read – “It had been noted by member (s) – “was due to taking (a) last minute holiday.

7.2 **Post Meeting Note:** Richard wished to remind STARA of the Workshop Wash-up Session to be held on Tuesday 29 June 2010 between 6.00 and 8.00 p.m. at Popley Fields Community Centre.

Info

8.5 The Consultative Group meeting which was to have been held on 6 May 2010 was cancelled, therefore, the Tenancy Agreement would be discussed at a future meeting.

Info

9.2 Richard advised that Bob Gath had said there were no great tax and insurance implications. Bob believed that STARA members attend meetings because they want to, therefore, it should be treated as a domestic journey. Val added that most insurance policies already cover domestic travel and travelling to and from work. Richard said he would speak to Carolyn Whistlecraft to put forward a Car Sharing Scheme draft proposal for members, same as being prepared for staff.

Info

9.3 Brian agreed the issue needs to be looked at again.

Info

10.1 Richard advised dates for the next meetings to discuss forming a Residents Association in Popley Poets as 2 and 16 June 2010 at Chineham Park School.

Info

11.2 3.1 Richard advised that Mitie now have a specific person who will attend the Disability Forum

Info

**Action**

**8. Customer Service Excellence Award**

8.1 Val circulated copies of the Government Standard to those present. Val said that it is to show how organisations are complying with, adding that, by and large Sentinel are already there or about. We have to scrutinise ourselves and by early Autumn see how we are performing and by 2011 show tenants how we scrutinise. We want to give a best all round service to customers. Info

8.2 Brian referred to Page 14 – “Customers also tell us that one of the most frustrating parts of public services, is not being kept informed about what is happening”. Re-iterating that this part of the communication policy is extremely important towards providing effective communication. Info

8.3 Val informed STARA that Mitie staff were now attending, along with Sentinel staff, Mary Gober Training. Info

8.4 Kathy asked who was responsible in Sentinel for looking at the Standard? Val advised it lies with Miriam and then as Assessor will review before it is taken back to the Board. Info

8.5 Dick said he was concerned about how it can be achieved in such a short time, adding that he was not convinced. Info

8.6 Brian thanked Val, who left the meeting. Info

**9. Treasurer’s Report**

9.1 George advised, that, although not retiring from STARA he wished to hand over the role of Treasurer, as soon as someone can take over. Info

**10. Customer & Community Involvement**

10.1 Richard advised of the publicity for SHARE, saying car stickers, banners and STARA leaflets would be used throughout the week. Although there had been no mail shot to residents this year, numbers wanting to attend the various events was going up as it got nearer to the date. Info

**11. Any Other Business**

11.1 Brian advised STARA of the free TPAS Training Course to be held on 15 June 2010 at Croydon, adding it would be very worthwhile and if sufficient people wanted to attend there would be funds available to provide a mini-bus. Info

11.2 Brian advised the next Corporate Induction Day would be held at Sentinel’s Basingstoke office on 8 June commencing at 9.15 a.m. and asked that any one who has not already attended and would like to attend, to let Cathryn Gee know. Info

11.3 Brian spoke of the Board Training Day for prospective candidates, adding that STARA should be in attendance, particularly if a tenant wanted to speak to another tenant already on the Board. Info

11.4 Kari said she would take Brian’s thoughts forward. Kari

		<u>Action</u>
11.5	Brian brought to the attention of STARA an email he had received from a gentleman by the name of Ian Miller asking if there were advertising opportunities on the website. Richard said he would look into the content of the email and Kari would speak to Steve Murphy.	Richard/ Kari
11.6	Dick asked about the Complaint Report which had been sent with the paperwork for the meeting, but did not appear on the Agenda. Brian said he would take forward to the next STARA meeting.	Brian
11.7	Richard expressed his thanks to Brian and Tony who had been involved in the work at the Schools, which had gone down very well.	Info
<b>12.</b>	<b><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></b>	
12.1	The date of STARA's next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 22 June 2010 at 7.00 p.m. in Sentinel's Basingstoke Office.	Info
12.2	There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.	Info