



**MINUTES OF
SENTINEL TENANTS' & RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
MEETING HELD AT
SENTINEL'S BASINGSTOKE OFFICE
ON TUESDAY 27 APRIL 2010**

Present:	Tony Mitchell Bill Hall Helen Parry Marion Witts	Brian Sanders (Chair) Dick Wylie Arthur Williams	Dawn Moors George Herbert Kathy Hine
Absent:	Molly Parratt Mr M Thomas	Isla Sutherland	Kari Tourle
In Attendance:	Martin Nurse Richard Pilbeam Sandra Crook (Minutes)	Val Bagall Stacey Stephens	Miriam Morris Eileen Davy
Distribution:	Those Present / Those Absent / Those In Attendance Neighbourhood Managers		

		<u>Action</u>
1.	<u>Welcome</u>	
1.1	Brian welcomed all to the meeting including Stacey Stephens, Neighbourhood Co-ordinator for Team 3 and Eileen Davy, Administrator for Team 4. Eileen will be taking the Minutes of the STARA meeting in May at the Fleet office.	Info
2.	<u>Resident Involvement – Recruitment</u>	
2.1	A timetable of the current Board membership and their re-election and election dates was handed round showing that Bill, Resident Board member (RBM) and Sheila Jenkins, Independent Board member (IBM) were up for re-election at the September 2010 AGM and that Dick has to retire as a Board member as he has served his maximum of 10 years on the Board. Dick's retirement creates an opportunity for STARA to propose 2 candidates for this vacant post.	Info

Action

2.2 Brian felt that STARA and the Neighbourhood Panels need a nucleus of people who would be willing and adequately trained to put their names forward for a Board member position. Brian noted that his involvement with the Hampshire and Districts Residents Forum had highlighted that other associations experience the same difficulty in getting residents involved and that this was an issue that needed a great deal of thought and action.

Info

2.3 Dick felt that asking Board members to retire after a term of 10 years was inappropriate as some of the younger Board members may wish to serve further after the 10 years. Martin responded that Sentinel have adopted the Code of Governance where the guidelines say that Board members should retire after 9 years.

Info

2.4 STARA can nominate 2 candidates for Bill's re-election and may only wish to nominate Bill. Dick felt that 2 candidates should be nominated as only putting Bill forward may set a precedent. An advert will be going out for the re-election of the IBM but Sheila is keen to be re-elected. The position of IBM will be advertised up to and including Residents Week and it is expected that a Workshop will follow to tell candidates what is involved in being a Board member. Interested STARA members can also attend the Workshop.

Post Meeting Note: Resident Board Member Workshop is to be held on Tuesday 8 June 2010 from 6.00 – 8.00 p.m. at the Basingstoke office

Info

2.5 Three Board member positions are becoming vacant imminently and it is important that considering new methods of getting people involved and familiarised i.e. adequately trained is a high priority.

Info

2.6 If a Board member position is not filled by a STARA or Panel member then it would remain vacant until such time as a candidate was proposed.

Info

2.7 The question was asked as to whether Sentinel provides any literature to let tenants know exactly what being involved entails in terms of how, time involved etc. The Customer Information Sheet (CIS) entitled Customer Involvement Statement details a menu of involvement and approximate time for each way of being involved.

Info

2.8 To help gauge interest in STARA it was felt we should be monitoring how quickly we need to replenish the 3-fold STARA leaflets held in both Receptions.

Richard

2.9 Currently at a new tenants 'Settling In Visit' or first 'Starter Tenancy Visit' they are given a 'How to Get Involved' form by the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator. This visit is usually carried out 4 – 6 weeks after taking up their tenancy and it was generally felt that this might be too soon to be capturing any meaningful data or commitment and that 6 – 9 months after signing-up might be more appropriate.

Info

2.10 Kathy advised that Winchester have 2 Neighbourhood Panels, one that meets in the afternoon and the other meets in the evenings. To meet our audiences needs we need to try different formats, times etc. A Young Persons Board was suggested to run along side the Board in order to encourage younger customers.

Info

Action

2.11 Fast tracking candidates in order that they gain the required knowledge to go onto the Board was discussed but it was felt that if they cannot give the time to attend Panel/STARA meetings then why should they be able to find the time to attend Board meetings. Dick advised to be cautious of fast tracking candidates as you know little about them as you have not had time to get to know them via the Panels/STARA and sometimes a wrong choice can be made. Bringing forward the start times of Panel/STARA meetings was suggested to fall in line with Board meetings.

Info

2.12 Involvement needs to be relevant and fun and geared to different levels of involvement. The least popular level of involvement is formal i.e. meetings and we need to confront this challenge to get people involved to suit their lifestyles. Dick said that providing a bad service would get people involved!

Info

2.13 Martin concluded that we put a lot of barriers in the way of people getting involved. In his experience as a Governor of Everest Community College, recently 3 young mothers were recruited as Governors and in 6 months they had picked up the knowledge they needed to perform their roles and have got involved at all levels.

Info

2.14 Val had attended the recent Kitchen and Bathroom event in Abbey Road and spoke to a number of residents who had expressed an interest in involvement activities. Richard has their contact details.

Info

2.15 Brian thanked Martin for attending after which he left the meeting at 7.50 p.m.

Info

3. Complaints Report

3.1 Miriam apologised for any grammatical errors that appeared in the STARA Report dated 27 April 2010. Miriam was asked to ensure all references to times in future reports stuck to one format, preferably a.m. / p.m. rather than the 24 hour clock.

Miriam

3.2 The Panel had chosen 6 complaints at random from a possible 71 and again, like last quarter, 2 of them were for Central Heating Services (CHS). Dick asked, overall, how many complaints were for CHS?

Post Meeting Note: Copy of STARA Complaint Report for April 2009 – March 2010 enclosed with these Minutes for your information.

Sandra

3.3 Val advised that CHS had received a flurry of complaints following the cold spell in January 2010 but they had responded positively and in a timely manner. Where their service has fallen short they have been quick to respond and give appropriate compensation. CHS are aware that they had problems with their new phone system and have also introduced a £25 pay out to tenants for missed appointments.

Info

3.4 Sentinel are aware that there are approximately 600 properties where obsolete boilers are in situ. which are causing problems as no replacement parts can be found.

Info

3.5 Brian thanked Miriam for attending after which she left the meeting at 8.05 p.m.

Info

3.6 The Panel chose 6 numbers at random from the 213 complaints received in Q4 (Jan – March 2010) in order for the next report to come to STARA. Numbers chosen were 3, 6, 25, 100, 180 and 210.

Info

Action

4. Apologies for Absence

4.1 Apologies for absence were received from those listed above. Richard advised that Mr Thomas from Sheffield-on-Loddon was unable to attend due to illness but that he hoped to be able to attend the SNAP Panel meeting on 5 May 2010. Info

5. Notes of Special Meeting held on 18 March 2010

5.1 STARA members were not happy with para 2.6 and it was agreed to delete this para from the Notes. Info

5.2 Apart from the amendment to the Notes detailed in 5.1 above, the Notes were agreed as a true and accurate copy. Info

6. Maintenance Contractor Performance

6.1 Val advised that a meeting had taken place internally on 21 April 2010 on the performance of the Maintenance Contract and that a further meeting was scheduled with Mitie on 4 May 2010 to discuss the performance and way forward. Did STARA members have any specific view on Mitie's performance that they wished to put forward for consideration at the meeting? Info

6.2 It was noted that Mitie's performance in the last quarter had fallen short and was unacceptable and they would be told this in no uncertain terms. However, in terms of meeting key performance indicators over the year, Mitie had met all of them and their performance against their peers was good. Info

6.3 Mitie have gone through a year of change and it is hoped they will come to the meeting with solutions to rectify the complaints Sentinel, staff, Board members and customers have experienced with their recent performance. Info

6.4 Kathy advised that she had tried ringing through to Mitie with a compliment but had been unable to get through to them. Info

6.5 Dawn was concerned that Mitie seem unable to cope with current work and have taken on more work i.e. rewiring, which had previously been done satisfactorily by another firm. Val pointed out that this arrangement for them to tender for further contracts was the basis of the Strategic Management Contract and Sentinel cannot go back on that. Info

6.6 Val was aware that local managerial staff changes within Mitie had affected the contract and also that some problems had been inherited by Mitie taking on staff from Brades. Info

6.7 It had been noted by member of the Basingstoke Panel that Toni Burrows, Customer Liaison Officer, had been unable to attend the last 2 Panel meetings despite being on the Agenda. However, her non-attendance was once due to sickness and the second time was due to taking last minute holiday. Any issues that attendees wished to raise had been forwarded to the appropriate people to follow up. Info

7. TSA Standards Progress

Action

7.1 Val reported that Sentinel were coming to the end of the Focus Group meetings on the TSA Standards and that a lot of good ideas had come out of the meetings. It had proved a good exercise and had highlighted some things that we should have seen for ourselves but were too close to to recognise.

Info

7.2 It was suggested that we pull together all the information gathered from the Focus Groups and hold a Workshop on Tuesday 29 June 2010 between 2.00 and 4.00 p.m. The Workshop would review information gathered from the Status Survey and the Focus Groups and decide how to prioritise, move forward and feed into the Customer Deal. Richard to invite 3 members from each of the Focus Groups to join the Workshop on the 29th. STARA members to attend the Workshop.

Post Meeting Note: The Workshop will be held on Tuesday 29 June 2010 between 6.00 and 8.00 p.m. at Popley Fields Community Centre.

Richard /
All

8. Tenancy Agreement

8.1 Val advised that a draft copy of the new Tenancy Agreement (TA) had been circulated at the Consultative Group (CG) for discussion and feedback. Members of the CG had been promised a copy of the old TA would be sent to them for comparison but to date nothing had been received.

Sandra

8.2 Brian noted that there were lots of grammatical errors in the new Agreement and in terms of content it bore no resemblance to his circa. 10 year old TA.

Info

8.3 The new Agreement had been written in plain English and Val advised it would have a maximum of 2 pages on the front detailing the tenants and the Association's responsibilities.

Info

8.4 Dawn asked whether the TA was read out to tenants at Sign-up, not only to help those tenants with reading difficulties, but to ensure all tenants were fully aware of the content. Stacey advised that on average a Sign-up takes 1 hour to complete and it was not possible therefore, nor maybe well received, to consider this option. When NCO's do viewings with prospective tenants they provide them with a copy of the relevant TA for them to take away and read at their leisure before signing up.

Info

8.5 This matter would be looked at again at the Consultative Group meeting to be held on 6 May 2010.

Info

8.6 Brian thanked Val for attending after which he left the meeting at 8.40 p.m.

Info

9. Treasurers Report

9.1 George reported that he had spoken to Lionel Haynes, Finance Director, with regard to the increasing price of petrol and whether Sentinel would consider resident representatives being able to claim for additional passengers in their cars. Lionel is to speak to Martin concerning this suggestion.

Info

9.2 Richard reminded those present that this issue had been raised at STARA's February meeting and Val had agreed to investigate the legalities of this in relation to car insurance and tax implications and feed back to the Group. Feed back awaited.

Val

10. Customer & Community Involvement

Action

10.1 Richard referred to para 8.1 of the 23 February 2010 STARA Minutes and reported that he is optimistic that a Residents Association will be formed in Popley Poets in partnership with Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council. The next meeting of all concerned is scheduled for Wednesday 19 May 2010 between 6.00 and 7.00 p.m. at Chineham Park School.

Info

10.2 Richard reported that the Austen Court Residents Association had seen a change of officers to their Committee and that it was hoped a future meeting of interested residents would be held on 18 May 2010.

Info

11. Any Other Business

11.1 The Minutes of the STARA meeting held on 23 February 2010 were distributed. The Minutes were agreed as a true and accurate copy.

Info

11.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes:

3.1 Richard advised that members of the Disability Forum will have another opportunity to have an input into the redesign of the Basingstoke Reception area. Simon Bridgen, Sentinel's Regeneration Manager who is leading on this project, had Arthur's name and contact details and would be getting in touch with him in due course regarding this.

Simon

3.2 Richard advised that the Minutes of STARA meetings are now on the web-site and that he had raised with Communications the need to ensure the 'Diary of Events' was more easily accessible.

Info

3.3 Kari to bring to a future meeting of STARA, attendance statistics from Everest Community College regarding 'Get With' 2009.

Kari

3.4 Brian advised that he would be attending his first Health and Safety meeting on 5 May 2010.

Info

3.5 Richard advised that the recent skills audits that had been undertaken had not been forgotten and that a plan of action was being drafted.

Info

6.5 Val to bring to STARA the findings of his investigations into the legalities of car insurance and tax implications following the discussion held at the February meeting on the Schedule of Allowances.

Val

8.2 Kathy had attended the InSTEP South East Regional Tenant Empowerment Conference on 11 March 2010 in Brighton.

Info

11.3 Richard asked STARA members to consider whether they would like to put their names forward for the position of Secretary following Dick's resignation. Whilst they would not be required to do the Minutes, having some basic keyboard skills would be an advantage. Anyone wishing to do so should contact Richard.

All

Action

11.4 In preparation for Sentinel Residents Week (SHARE), Richard advised that CRB checks had been carried out on Bill, Brian, Tony and Dick. The CRB check on George was in progress and Helen advised that she had given HR a copy of her CRB check. CRB checks outstanding for Kathy, Arthur, Marion, Dawn, Molly and Isla were recommended as Carolyn Whistlecraft, Sentinel's Climate Change Officer, is looking to do some work in probably 2 schools in the Basingstoke area and 2 in the Hart area and would like STARA members to get involved in this, if available, during Residents Week. Candidate Identity Forms (CIF) were handed out to those needing to be CRB checked for completion and return, along with the necessary Identity Documents, as soon as possible.

Kathy /
Arthur /
Marion /
Dawn /
Molly / Isla

Post Meeting Note: CIF posted to Molly and Isla for completion.

12. Date of Next Meeting

12.1 The date of STARA's next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 25 May 2010 at 7.00 p.m. in Sentinel's Fleet Office.

Info

12.2 There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.

Info