



**MINUTES OF
SENTINEL TENANTS' & RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
MEETING HELD AT
SENTINEL'S FLEET OFFICE
ON TUESDAY 23 JUNE 2009**

Present:	Tony Mitchell Dawn Moors Helen Parry Marion Witts	Bill Hall Dick Wylie Isla Sutherland	Brian Sanders (Chair) George Herbert Molly Parrett
Absent:	Arthur Williams	Kathy Hine	
In Attendance:	Charles Kaye Kari Tourle	Martin Nurse Richard Pilbeam	Val Bagnall Sandra Crook (Minutes)
Distribution:	Those Present / In Attendance	Neighbourhood Managers	

		<u>Action</u>
1.	<u>Welcome to STARA's 3rd Open Meeting</u>	
1.1	Brian welcomed Charles, Martin, STARA members and Sentinel staff to the 3 rd Open Meeting.	Info
2.	<u>Apologies for Absence</u>	
2.1	Apologies were received from Arthur and Kathy.	Info
3.	<u>STARA's Progress to Date</u>	
3.1	Brian advised that the sub-group had made progress on the Welcome Letter to go into Sign-up Packs, that they were working on the Customer Information Sheet on How You Can Get Involved and were looking at introducing a post card for tenants to return indicating how they might like to get involved. Brian invited Charles and Martin to speak after which questions could be raised.	Info

Action

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| 3.2 | Charles started by thanking STARA for allowing them both to come along and speak this evening. Charles congratulated STARA on their progress to date and advised that he had had a preview of STARA's Board Report to go to the July Board highlighting what has been achieved to date and aspirations of what STARA were looking to achieve in the future. | Info |
| 3.3 | Charles wished STARA to think about the fact that a Short Notice Inspection (SNI) is quite likely to happen and a great deal of preparatory work has already been undertaken and it is important that STARA looks at the contribution they have already made and how they can get involved in projects such as looking at Complaints. Charles urged members of STARA to get to grips with the detail, to look at trends and feed it up to the Board. | STARA |
| 3.4 | Charles also hoped it would be possible for STARA to look at all surveys sent out, to get feedback from customers, to review it and to put it together with other intelligence and again to forward their findings up to the Board. | STARA |
| 3.5 | It was also hoped that STARA would look at the PI's, scrutinise them, give them more importance and again pass their findings up to the Board to help them get a better understanding. A PI about tenant involvement was suggested as something to think about. | STARA |
| 3.6 | Charles asked why the Consultative Group had not been disbanded. | Info |
| 3.7 | Martin talked about the Resident Involvement Action Plan tabled at the last Board meeting. It was good to see that a Plan had been mapped out which was not just an Action Plan for STARA but for involvement as a whole. | Info |
| 3.8 | Martin was pleased to see that STARA members were making a valuable contribution to void inspections by being involved on both pre and post inspections. | Info |
| 3.9 | Martin advised that Sentinel were most likely to be targeted for a SNI as both Kingfisher and Pavillion have been inspected and they do appear to be inspecting housing associations with a 1 star rating at their last inspection. | Info |
| 3.10 | To prepare Sentinel for a SNI, Damien has arranged an Inspection Health Check to simulate an inspection. Consultants would be coaching everyone to be more prepared for the real thing when it happens. Staff will be told on Thursday that a Health Check is to be carried out on 7 and 8 July 2009. | Info |
| 3.11 | In answer to Charles comment about the Consultative Group Dick responded that the Consultative Group meet during working hours and tenants outside of the Panels and STARA attend, that staff are able to attend to discuss Agenda items in their work hours and that the STARA Agenda is already taken up with sufficient items that most meetings go on for 2 hours so there is no capacity to add further items. Brian echoed what Dick had said and felt that it would be a backward step if the STARA Agenda had to include Consultative Group Agenda items. | Info |

Action

- 3.12 Dick advised that a meeting has been arranged for 26 June 2009 to discuss voids following the inspections STARA members have attended and in light of this Dick might add something to the Board report on this matter. Richard added that the meeting would be looking at what the expectations are of those involved, a reflection of how things have gone to date and how best to take forward in everyone's best interests. Martin asked the group to consider whether Sentinel are providing a good value service in this critically important area of the business. Info
- 3.13 Dick commented that the sub-group looking at complaints had already picked up on statistics that needed to be provided that currently were not which was to be addressed. The sub-group would be looking at 6 random complaints for the quarter, following them through to ensure the correct procedures were carried out and would be bringing their findings to the next meeting of STARA. Charles noted that this was excellent work and helpful to the Association. Charles went on to say that how STARA conducts its business is up to the members and that the setting up of sub-groups to look at particular topics seemed to be working well. Info
- 3.14 Martin suggested that perhaps the name of the Consultative Group was confusing and should possibly be changed. Info
- 3.15 Dawn commented that sometimes it felt like the Consultative Group was just a talking shop as the members do give their views on papers submitted but don't always get feedback coming back down to them. Val said that if Dawn feels this way then it is clearly not working and needs to be addressed. Dick reminded everyone that he had brought up the matter of mould kits being given to tenants to use themselves, which had been looked into by Sentinel's solicitors and a decision had been made to stop issuing them so clearly he had been listened to on this occasion. STARA do not always see positive end products of the things they have discussed. Val suggested that perhaps issues, documents, policies etc. influenced by STARA and/or the Consultative Group should be flagged in some way to reflect their involvement. Info
- 3.16 Charles commented that the Board promote an open-door policy to input from tenants and that there is a standard item on every Board Agenda for tenant issues. If members feel they are not getting the feedback they require they should ask the tenant Board members to raise it at the next Board meeting. The more formal business you transact does come up to the Board in one way or another. Info
- 3.17 Martin said that Panel/STARA members had had a very significant input into the new Maintenance Contract and that it was really appreciated. The contract will continue to evolve and a substantial amount of money has been saved. Info
- 3.18 STARA members were advised that the new Chair of Sentinel Housing Association, Mr John Barker, would be attending STARA's next meeting in July. Info
- 3.19 Brian thanked Charles and Martin for attending the meeting after which they left. Info
- 4. Minutes of Meeting held on 26.05.2009**
- 4.1 The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 May 2009 were agreed as a true and accurate copy. Info

Action

5. Matters Arising

- 5.1 SNI – Dick advised that the consultants undertaking the Health Check are only available to talk to STARA/Panel members on the evening of Tuesday 7 July 2009. This is also the evening of Hart & Districts Neighbourhood Panel meeting at Wickham Court. Therefore all STARA/Panel members, who are not Board members, are invited to attend between 6.00 – 7.00 p.m. Those members able to attend this session to let Richard know in preparation for selecting an involvement body for the real SNI when it occurs. Richard to invite STARA/Panel members not present tonight to this session. Brian to Chair this session prior to Dick arriving for the Panel meeting at 7.00 p.m. Richard / Brian
- 5.2 Val asked those members that attended the meeting with Paul Ryrie whether he asked a series of questions to get their feedback on Sentinel's services.
- Post Meeting Note:** The questions Paul asked the 5 STARA members that attended were
- How do you feel Sentinel focuses on its customers
 - Do Sentinel know what their customers want
 - Are services varied to meet needs
 - How easy is it for residents to access services
 - What do you think of the services offered
 - Can and do you influence the services offered
 - Do you feel Sentinel is a learning organisation
 - Are you kept aware of performance
- The notes taken at the meeting with Paul Ryrie were circulated following the meeting to all along with a copy of Paul's powerpoint presentation. Info
- 5.3 Richard asked all members that had attended Equality & Diversity training to provide feedback to him, if they had not already done so. All attendees
- 5.4 Dawn did not realise that she needed to put in writing a query she had with regard to the Constitution concerning expenditure. Dawn to follow up with Richard. Dawn / Richard
- 5.5 A copy of the Welcome Letter to be placed in Sign-up Packs was distributed. After a lively discussion it was agreed that tenant was the word to be used rather than customer. Info
- 5.6 Martin is to raise the issue of STARA members receiving interview training so that they can be involved in the interviews of front line staff, i.e. Neighbourhood Co-ordinators. Martin
- 5.7 Dick to provide a copy of the Board Report for inclusion on the Agenda of the Consultative Group, which is meeting on Friday 3 July 2009 at 10.00 a.m. Dick
- 5.8 The Hampshire and District Residents' Forum meeting to discuss Tenant Inspectors is scheduled for 9.00 a.m. on 17 July 2009 NOT 26 June 2009 as reported in the Minutes of the last STARA meeting. Info

Action

5.9 After discussion it was agreed not to send anyone to the TPAS Annual Conference this year. Next year a decision on who is able to attend needs to be made much sooner so that workshops, hotel accommodation can be sorted as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Info

6.2 Treasurer's Report

6.1 George reported that £800 had been provided by Sentinel for the STARA account. George requested that all large claims, i.e. over £100, be submitted to him in a timely manner.

All

6.2 Val asked whether STARA have a protocol for expenses in their Constitution.

Post Meeting Note: The protocol for reimbursing members is contained in para 15.6 of the STARA Constitution.

Treasurer

7. Budgets

7.1 A budget allocation sheet for 2009/2010 was handed out to all present. The budget headings had been grouped together to ensure it is easier to monitor. Kari would be bringing monthly spend to date figures to each meeting which would hopefully give members a better understanding and allow them to have input into the 2010/2011 budgets.

Info

7.2 STARA members were asked to consider how they might influence the Customer Aspiration Budget and the Environmental Planned Budget. Is it possible that the money might be used more cost effectively across the budgets where economies of scale can be gained. Val was happy to provide STARA with details of what the budgets had been spent on in previous years but Kari was keen for members to bring their ideas to the table rather than be stifled with what has been done in the past.

STARA

7.3 The budget of £10,000 set aside for Developing our involvement approach was a pot of money to support and develop ideas on involvement such as how to attract tenants from ethnic groups, young people etc.

Info

7.4 Tony asked for clarification on the sort of things the NCO's spend on their Environmental Improvements budget of £41,500. Kari was happy to bring this information to the next meeting but again asked for their ideas on what this sum of money should be spent on.

Info

7.5 Kari was unable to talk in more depth about the Training budget due to time constraints. Training would be added to the Agenda for the next meeting.

Sandra

8. STARA's Constitution & Code of Conduct

8.1 A small group of members had met to discuss the above and to consider the suggestions put forward. The revised documents, with the changes highlighted, had been distributed to all with the Agenda.

Info

9. Complaints Report

9.1 Tammy had produced a report, which was distributed at the meeting, to which a few changes were to be made. Richard to provide the changes to Tammy.

Richard

Action

9.2 The Focus Group are to look at 6 complaints, selected at random, and to follow them through the complaints procedure to conclusion. No names and addresses will be provided. The Focus Group will be providing feedback to the August meeting. In October 2009, the Focus Group would look at another 6 and feedback at the November meeting.

Info

10. STARA / Panel Publicity

10.1 The Welcome Letter had been discussed previously. Richard to meet with Kari/Val to discuss the idea of a post card providing details of the Panels and ways to get involved for freepost return by the tenants.

Richard / Val / Kari

10.2 Several changes were to be made to the Customer Information Sheet including the inclusion of the Panel's logos. Richard to discuss with Communications.

Richard

10.3 STARA is to play a part in Residents Week and Brian wished to arrange a meeting, with the Publicity Focus Group, plus one other STARA member to discuss how to take forward. Dawn was happy to join the Publicity Focus Group to help in this matter. Richard to arrange a meeting week commencing 13 July 2009.

Post Meeting Note: Publicity Focus Group members are Dick, Tony, Marion, Brian. Meeting has been arranged for 17 July 2009 at 4.00 p.m. in the Basingstoke office.

Dawn / Richard

10.4 Val enquired whether STARA had provided copy for the next edition of Community Spirit encouraging residents to attend Residents Week. Brian advised that STARA did have copy in the forthcoming edition but not specific to Residents Week. Val felt this was a lost opportunity. Brian to make contact with Kim Drewery to see whether it was still possible to include something.

Post Meeting Note: The next edition of Community Spirit has been 'put-to-bed' and cannot accept further copy.

Brian

11. Any Other Business

11.1 Dawn to discuss receipt of correspondence with Richard at the close of the meeting as she is experiencing problems with printing documents sent to her via e-mail.

Dawn / Richard

11.2 Dawn had researched the impact of receiving payment for being a Board member, if she decided to go ahead with her application, and was subsequently successful. The end result was that she would be approximately £5 better off and is therefore still considering her options.

Info

11.3 Val advised that he had received many useful comments on the 2008/2009 Impact Assessment which he would like to discuss and finalise at the next Consultative Group meeting in July.

Info

11.4 Val advised that he is working on the Customer Offer, which he hopes to bring to the next meeting of the Consultative Group, for consultation and it is hoped can be launched at Residents Week.

Info

Action

11.5 Helen would like to attend the evening Walkabout at Austen Court on Tuesday 28 July 2009 between 6.00 and 7.00 p.m., prior to the start of the STARA meeting.

Helen

12. Date of Next Meeting

12.1 The date of STARA's next monthly meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 28 July 2009 at 7.00 p.m. in Sentinel's Basingstoke Office.

Info

12.2 There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.

Info