

Minutes of the meeting of the **Housing Management Sub Committee** held on **Thursday 15 June 2000** when there were present:

Cllr R S Allen  
Cllr P A Capon  
Cllr T G Cutmore  
Cllr Mrs J Hall  
Cllr C C Langlands  
Cllr Mrs S J Lemon

Cllr T Livings  
Cllr C R Morgan  
Cllr R A Pearson  
Cllr Mrs L I V Phillips  
Cllr W M Stevenson  
Cllr Mrs M A Weir

Mr W Norfolk, the advisor from the Rayleigh and Rawreth Tenants Association, was also present.

**OFFICERS PRESENT**

S Clarkson – Head of Revenues and Housing Management  
C Burton – Housing Manager  
G Brazendale – Committee Administrator

Mr Burton and Mr Norfolk were welcomed to this, their first Meeting of the Sub-Committee.

**102 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN****Resolved**

That Councillor Mrs M A Weir be appointed as the Chairman of the Sub-Committee.

**103 MEMBERS INTERESTS**

Councillor C C Langlands declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being a leaseholder of a former Council property.

**104 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 February 2000 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**105 TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Sub-Committee's terms of reference, as agreed at Annual Council, were noted.

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**106 REVIEW OF ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

The Head of Service informed the Sub-Committee that, since preparation of the report, the Government had released details of the Housing Green Paper which set out revised criteria for allocations policies. In addition, a response from Shelter concerning the draft policy had been received recently, and new human rights legislation, which would be implemented in October 2000 would also have implications for allocations procedures.

Consequently, and in agreement with the Chairman, it had been agreed to withdraw this report from the Agenda.

**107 TENANT PARTICIPATION COMPACTS**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenues and Housing Management which sought approval of the current version of the Tenant Participation Compact and a District-Wide Action Plan, which had been agreed between the Council and Residents' Associations earlier in the year. A copy of the Compact and Plan was appended to the report.

The Head of Service informed the Sub-Committee that, at a Meeting that had taken place earlier in the day involving representatives of the Tenants Associations, it had been suggested that item 2(d) of the Action Plan – to introduce an appointment system for repairs and monitor effectiveness – should be deleted since its implementation could slow down the repairs mechanism. Whilst Members appreciated the reasoning behind this proposal, it was suggested that the intention behind the item's initial inclusion had been to strengthen the degree of consultation carried out with tenants where window refits were required. On a motion by Councillor Mrs W M Stevenson and seconded by Councillor C C Langlands it was therefore agreed to retain item 2(d) but to substitute the word "repairs" with "planned maintenance".

In response to Members' further questions on the Action Plan, the Head of Service advised as follows:

- A sum of £3,000 had been set aside within the Housing Revenue Account for tenant participation initiatives which could include, for instance, landscaping and planting. It was anticipated that additional government funding would be available in September to enable the establishment of new tenants' groups and in particular to provide them with "pump priming" finance or secretarial support.
- The Grounds Maintenance team could be asked to adjust the maintenance schedules to enable the landscaped areas within the

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Council's housing schemes to be maintained at an appropriate level to reflect weather/growing conditions.

- Transportation and Environmental Services Committee would be considering, at its forthcoming Meeting, action that the Council could take to address the problem of abandoned vehicles.

### **Resolved**

That ,subject to the amendment outlined above, the Action Plan be adopted as part of the Tenant Participation Compact. (HRHM)

## **108 REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE MONITORING REPORT**

The Sub-Committee noted the report of the Head of Revenues and Housing Management, which gave details of expenditure from the responsive elements of the Housing Revenue Account Repairs and Maintenance Budget between 1 January 2000 – 31 March 2000.

It was pointed out that the percentage of jobs completed on time had increased significantly since the previous quarter. Members agreed that the inclusion of the previous quarter's figures in future monitoring reports would be helpful for comparative purposes.

## **109 PRE-LETTING CLEANING SERVICE**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenues and Housing Management which outlined the current policy for cleaning Council properties prior to letting, and sought approval to the policy's continuation.

Members were informed that, since the policy's inception, there had been no further complaints relating to the cleanliness of properties and that all tenants had accepted the houses offered at their first viewing. Consequently, the length of void periods had been reduced, thereby accruing savings.

It was confirmed that, even where tenants had carried out their own decorating, properties could still be eligible for a decorating allowance. A report to the Sub-Committee's next Meeting would examine the Authority's existing policy for re-decoration to determine whether there was scope for achieving any budgetary savings. Exit visits were currently carried out upon properties being vacated to assess the extent of any necessary re-decoration, although in practice many tenants did not give the required four weeks' notice before quitting, thereby making such visits difficult to effect.

Members were supportive of the current cleaning service as an example of good housing management practice.

**Resolved**

That the policy for cleaning empty properties continues, as required, prior to letting. (HRHM)

**110 LAND AT SIR WALTER RALEIGH DRIVE, RAYLEIGH**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenues and Housing Management which sought agreement to the valuation and subsequent disposal of land in the Council's ownership in Sir Walter Raleigh Drive, Rayleigh. A plan showing the site's location was appended to the report.

The Head of Service informed Members that, since preparation of the report, a site visit had been carried out at which the strategic nature of the plot of land in the event of any future residential development of the surrounding area had become apparent. On a motion by Councillor Mrs S J Lemon and seconded by Councillor P A Pearson, it was therefore agreed to recommend that the site be retained in the Council's ownership.

**RECOMMENDED**

That the request by a resident in Pearson Avenue to purchase the plot of land in Sir Walter Raleigh Drive (the location of which was shown on the plan appended to the report) be refused, and that the area in question be retained in the Council's ownership.

The Meeting closed at 8.00 pm

Chairman

Dated