

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WREXHAM  
TENANT AND MEMBER PARTNERSHIP  
HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, WREXHAM ON FRIDAY, 24 MARCH 2006**

**MEMBERS**

**Representing Wrexham County Borough Council**

Councillor	A.C. Bailey	Councillor	P. Jeffares
“	Nick Colbourne	“	R. Alun Jenkins
“	* Gerry M. Craddock	“	* Philip Michael Shone
“	Mrs. June Fearnall	“	J.R. Skelland
“	K.H. Hett	“	* Malcolm Williams

**Representing the Wrexham Tenants**

Miss Natasha Hill	Mr. Graham Rowlands
Ms. Wendy Loton	*Mr. Joe Skerrith
Ms. Dorothy Mitchell	*Mr. Brian Stapley
Mr. Eric Moore	Mrs. Chris Thomas
Mr. Dave Rimmer	

\*Absent

**Also Present** – Councillor Mrs. J.M. Lowe and Mr. C.R. Lloyd

**1      Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Gerry M. Craddoc and Malcolm Williams, also Mr. Joe Skerrith.

**2      Welcome**

The Chair welcomed Miss Natasha Hill, newly appointed Tenant representative, to her first meeting of the Partnership.

**3      Minutes**

**RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Wrexham Tenant and Member Partnership held on 20 January 2006 be received and confirmed as a correct record.**

**Matters Arising**

**(i)      Insurances:** The Landlord Services Manager reported that there were currently only four properties empty due to fire damage and there was no insurance cover for the cost of providing homeless accommodation. The department was also changing its policy in relation to starting works on fire damaged properties whilst negotiations were ongoing with the loss adjusters in order to speed up the re-letting process.

**(ii) Proposed Disposal of Communal Gardens - Ruabon:** The Landlord Services Manager reported that the Executive Board had referred this matter to the Partnership to consider the formulation of a policy for dealing with disposals of this nature including a policy on the fencing in of open plan estates. It was noted that a report would be submitted to the April meeting.

#### **4 Review of Housing Surgeries**

The Landlord Services Manager submitted a report (CHPPO/36/06) to enable the Partnership to consider the findings of a review on the attendance and effectiveness of housing surgeries and determine whether they should continue.

The need for regular newsletters to keep tenants informed was highlighted.

**RESOLVED - That the report be noted and the following closures and amendments to existing opening times agreed:-**

- Cefn** - Surgeries ceased.
- Chirk** - Surgery to be held on a Wednesday 10.00am - 12 noon.
- Coedpoeth** - Surgeries ceased.
- Llay** - Surgery to be held on a Tuesday 10.00am - 11.00am.
- Hightown** - Surgery to be held on the first Friday of the month between 10.00am - 12 noon.

#### **5 Council Garage Stock**

The Landlord Services Manager submitted a report (CHPPO/34/06) informing the Partnership of the number of Council garages currently rented, expenditure on them and income generated from them. The views of the Partnership were also sought on further work programmes for the Council's garage stock.

It was agreed that there was a need for an urgent rent review of all garages but more particularly in relation to private or owner occupiers renting a garage. It was requested that a report be brought back to the Partnership identifying comparable rents with other local authorities; the condition of garages throughout the Borough Council area and a suggested improvement programme which could be fed into the budget process prior to September 2006. The possibility of introducing a mid-year rent increase was also queried.

**RESOLVED - That the report be noted and the report requested at today's meeting be submitted to an early meeting of the Partnership.**

#### **6 Revision of the Tenancy Agreement**

The Landlord Services Manager submitted a report (CHPPO/35/06) advising the Partnership of the framework for revising the current Tenancy Agreement.

The Partnership received a presentation highlighting changes within the new Agreement and a proposed timetable for consultation and implementation.

In considering the report particular reference was made to:-

- Translation of document into all relevant languages.
- A future review to assess whether the new agreement was of benefit to the Enforcement Team.
- Concern that Section 5 was being taken out. It was confirmed that this did not affect the Tenants' mandatory rights.
- New format for the tenancy agreement. It was suggested that it be produced in a loose leaf binder so only relevant pages needed to be circulated when amended and not the whole document.
- Details of the consultation and final draft of the Agreement be submitted to the Partnership prior to final approval by the Executive Board.

**RESOLVED - That the report be noted and the timetable for consultation and implementation agreed.**

## **7 Right to Buy Valuations**

The Landlord Services Manager submitted a report (CHPPO/37/06) informing the Partnership of the procedure for carrying out valuations of Council properties under the terms of Right to Buy legislation.

Members felt that the valuations on Right to Buy properties appeared to be low when compared to similar properties being sold via estate agents.

It was requested that the Council's in-house Valuer be invited to give a presentation to the Partnership and provide example valuations of properties together with a range of valuations for different properties.

The Landlord Services Manager mentioned that there would be a report on sales performance to the next meeting.

**RESOLVED - That the report be noted and the Council's in-house Valuer be invited to give a presentation at a future meeting.**

## **8 Rent Arrears and Court Costs Recovery**

The Landlord Services Manager submitted a report (CHPPO/39/06) advising the Partnership of the recovery process for rent arrears and the cost incurred in pursuing such cases. In considering the report particular reference was made to:-

- Level of weekly payments and Court costs being paid at the same time as arrears.
- Arrears build up because of the process involved before getting the case to Court.
- Support Officers work being extremely valuable in maximising individuals benefits.
- Biggest problem to overcome is the chasm between 'can't pay - won't pay'.
- Possible use of distraint in cases which had been considered by the County Court.

**RESOLVED - That the report be noted.**

**9      Housing Service Operational Plan**

The Landlord Services Manager submitted a report (CHPPO/40/06) seeking the comments of the Partnership on the Service Operational Plan for Landlord Services.

It was noted that a report regarding the review of departmental recharges was to be submitted to the next meeting of the Partnership.

**RESOLVED - That the report be noted and that the Service Operational Plan is to be used as a basis for service improvement over 2006/07.**

**10      Dates of Future Meetings**

**RESOLVED - That meetings of the Partnership be held in Committee Room 3 at 10.00 am on the following dates:-**

**Friday, 28 April 2006 - CHANGED from 21 April**

**Friday, 9 June 2006**

**Friday, 28 July 2006 - CHANGED from 21 July**

**Friday, 27 October 2006**

**Friday, 26 January 2007**

Councillor A.C. Bailey  
Chair