

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WREXHAM  
TENANT AND MEMBER PARTNERSHIP  
HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, WREXHAM ON FRIDAY, 28 APRIL 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** – Mr. C.R. Lloyd

**1 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs. June Fearnall, R. Alun Jenkins, Philip Michael Shone and J.R. Skelland.

**2 Minutes**

**RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Wrexham Tenant and Member Partnership held on 24 March 2006 be received and confirmed as a correct record.**

**Matters Arising**

**Page 3 - Minute 7 - Right to Buy Valuations** - Mr. Dafydd Jones, Council's Valuer on Right to Buy Properties was present and answered queries raised by the Partnership in relation to:-

- comparative valuations to similar properties being sold via estate agents.
- consideration was taken of market prices in the same location but unrealistic asking prices were pushing the market up.
- difficulty in valuing non-traditional properties as they did not come back onto the market very often.
- resale of land attached to a property for development of an additional dwelling. The valuation of a property could reflect a large garden but the issue about resale was a matter to be addressed separately in the transfer documentation.

### **3 Overall Performance of the Housing Department**

The Landlord Services Manager submitted a report (CHPPO/58/06) updating the Partnership on the overall performance on the following:-

- Revenue Collection - Tenants congratulated officers that at the end of the financial year the rent arrears figure was £642,971, well below the all time high figure in May 2005. It was also noted that tackling former tenants arrears would be a priority in 2006/07.
- Voids and Re-lets - It was noted that at the end of the financial year the total number of properties which stood empty was 211. Tenants congratulated officers on their performance in relation to voids over 52 weeks and voids not available to allocate. It was anticipated these figures would also reduce in this financial year as plans came into fruition, for the Moorlands, Royal Court, Deva Way and Ffordd Llanerch. Although the department were in the process of setting targets for 2006/07 it was hoped this would reduce to 150 by the end of March 2007.
- Housing Register and Lettings.
- Homelessness.
- Repairs - it was noted that the introduction of the Opti time work scheduling/appointment system had greatly improved repairs performance. The Partnership were informed that a Team was being appointed to oversee the operation of the system and it was requested that the Partnership receive an update report evaluating the system.
- Right to Buy/Sold Properties - it was confirmed that the Council stock currently stood at 11,700.
- Complaints/Enquiries.
- Tenancy Enforcement Issues - Guidance relating to the re-housing of tenants who had been evicted.
- Sickness - that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Partnership providing the total cost of sickness over the previous 12 months.
- Carecall.
- Acknowledge and congratulate officers on the progress made since 2001/02 but the need to now identify new targets/priorities and communicate these in a newsletter to all tenants.

**RESOLVED - That the report be noted and the reports requested submitted to future meetings of the Partnership.**

### **4 Monitoring of Action Plan - Wales Audit Office**

The Landlord Services Manager submitted a report (CHPPO/59/06) updating the Partnership on progress made on the Action Plan prepared for the Wales Audit Office.

In considering the recommendations contained in the Action Plan particular reference was made to:-

R.3 - Housing Surgeries - A Member felt that there had been a lack of consultation with tenants regarding the closure of the Cefn Surgery. It was reported that there had been a report to the last Partnership regarding the review of Housing Surgeries.

R.13 - Tenants congratulated Officers on the work which had been done so far to improve the financial position following the transfer ballot but acknowledged there would still be a shortfall to achieve WHQS. It was noted that Richard Bromiley who had developed the

Community Mutual model would be attending a Joint Partnership/Social Affairs Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee in the near future.

It was queried whether any of the costs of sharing Wrexham's experiences of stock transfer with other local authorities could be recuperated. It was reported that other authorities were not charged for officer time etc when this authority hosted events.

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

## **5 Open Plan Areas of Land**

The Landlord Services Manager submitted a report (CHPPO/57/06) to enable the Partnership to agree a policy on the fencing in of open plan estates.

Tenants supported the disposal of open areas of land to form enclosed gardens as they felt it improved the environment and gave people a sense of ownership and security.

**RESOLVED -**

- (i) That the Executive Board be recommended to consider in principle the fencing of open plan areas, when requested to by tenants and residents.**
- (ii) That consideration would need to take into account all circumstances relating to an area, including:-**
  - **value of any land and development potential**
  - **management and maintenance issues**
  - **results of consultation**
  - **budgetary implications**
- (iii) That should Executive Board agree to the above it be recommended that in future the decision to fence off open plan areas be delegated to the Chief Housing and Public Protection Officer in consultation with Local Members and the Executive Board Lead Member for Housing.**

## **6 Repairs Recharge Policy**

The Landlord Services Manager submitted a report (CHPPO/60/06) setting out a Policy for recharging repairs.

It was noted that streamlining the process for recovery of this debt for tenanted and void properties would mean that inappropriate costs were not absorbed by the Repairs Budget. In considering the report particular reference was made to:-

- Need to include in the Policy a discretion element for the Chief Housing and Public Protection Officer to be able to waiver the charge in extenuating circumstances.
- Need to review how recharges are paid and be more proactive in their recovery.
- Problems associated with obtaining a crime number from the Police and whether this could not be the incident number. It was suggested that the discretion element needed to cover the crime issue.

**RESOLVED - That the report be noted and the policy for rechargeable repairs be agreed subject to the comments made at today's meeting.**

**7      Closure of Afon Estate Office**

It was noted that the Afon Estate Office, the first decentralised office, was to close today following 24 years operation. The Partnership expressed their thanks to all the staff who had worked there over the years.

**8      Any Other Business**

A member raised concerns regarding recent press reports relating to locks fitted on front doors which raised major security concerns.

**RESOVLED -That a report be submitted to a future meeting regarding action to be taken in relation to faulty front door locks.**

Councillor A.C. Bailey  
Chair