

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WREXHAM
TENANT AND MEMBER PARTNERSHIP
HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, WREXHAM ON FRIDAY, 28 JULY 2006**

MEMBERS

Representing Wrexham County Borough Council

Councillor	A.C. Bailey	Councillor	*	R. Alun Jenkins
“	* Nick Colbourne	“		Mrs. Gwyneth Roberts
“	* Gerry M. Craddock	“	*	Philip Michael Shone
“	K.H. Hett	“	*	J.R. Skelland
“	P. Jeffares	“		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 – Charles Randle Lloyd, Barbara Roxburgh.

1 Thanks

The Chair thanked Members and Tenants for their flexibility regarding the changed time of today's meeting.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Gerry M. Craddock, R. Alun Jenkins and J.R. Skelland and Mrs. Chris Thomas.

3 Membership

Mr. Fred Czulowski, Landlord Services Manager, updated the Partnership on changes to membership relating to tenant representatives. Members noted that:-

- Charles Randle Lloyd, previously a substitute member, was now a full member of the Partnership.
- Wendy Loton was no longer a member.
- There was therefore a vacancy for a representative from the Tenants Federation, who were asked to nominate a representative.

4 Minutes

AGREED – That, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Wrexham Tenant and Member Partnership held on 9 June 2006 be received and confirmed as a correct record.

5 Overall Performance of the Housing Department

The Landlord Services Manager submitted a report (CHPPO/90/06) informing members of the Partnership about the overall performance of the services provided by Landlord Services as follows:-

- Revenue Collection - Rent arrears were considerably lower than last year. However, former tenant arrears were high and these were a priority area for 2006/07.
- Voids and Re-lets – the total number of properties empty was reducing and was expected to fall throughout the year. An improvement had also been seen in the turnaround time to re-let properties. Plans were now in place for all voids empty for more than 52 weeks.
- Housing Register and Lettings – At the end of June 2006 there were 3077 applicants on the Housing Register. During April – June 2006 246 allocations were made.
- Repairs – Information was now presented as the average number of calendar days to complete each priority, in line with national indicators. Figures indicated times were improving for each area and were likely to be on target throughout the year. It was reported 43 appointments on Priority 3 had been missed during the reporting period, an area which required improvement. Members requested a breakdown in future of the reasons behind missing appointments. Members congratulated Officers on improvements to time taken to complete priority tasks, in particular Priority 3 areas.
- Right to Buy/Sold Properties – 105 Right to Buy applications were submitted during the reporting period with 32 sales completed.
- Tenancy Enforcement Issues – Details of actions taken were provided. It was suggested that Tenancy Enforcement might be an area for closer examination in future.
- Sickness Information – During the reporting period the level of manual/craft sickness had increased to 9.13%. Further action was to be taken to address this issue. Members requested fuller graphs to be included in performance information reports in future.

AGREED - That the report be noted.

6 Progress Update for 2005 by Wrexham Tenants and Residents Federation

The Chair welcomed Barbara Roxburgh, Tenant Support Worker of the Wrexham Tenants and Residents Federation, to the meeting. She presented a report to update Members on the work of the Federation during 2005/06, highlighted the following:

- Interest in tenant issues had increased.
- Details of tenant group activities in Wrexham.
- A quarterly Federation newsletter was published. It was also proposed to use other community newsletters and websites in future.

Members expressed their support for the work of the Federation. Mr Fred Czulowski suggested that the Partnership might wish to receive regular updates on the work of the Federation and that details of future Partnership Meetings be provided to Mrs Roxburgh.

AGREED - That the report be noted.

7 Presentation on the Housing Repairs Scheme

Paul Allen, Property and Repairs Manager gave a presentation on the in-house repairs team which dealt with responsive repairs, void properties and planned works. The presentation highlighted:

- the operational structure
- housing repairs resources
- the planned workload for 2005/06 – Members requested further details regarding the completion of the replacement door programme.
- the repair process – ways in which a repair could be reported.
- the duties of each team
- areas for improvement, which included more effective customer service, improving practices and procedures, reducing the number of missed appointments, post inspections and the turnaround time for voids.

During debate Members and tenants asked questions of the Officer and highlighted the following issues:

- Pre inspections – previously there had been too many inspections.
- The benefits of improved technology such as a live radio link for tradesmen.
- Planned work – in response to a question regarding gable ends the Officer confirmed that a copy of the programme of work was displayed in estate offices and should have been sent to Members.
- The benefits of wrought iron fencing in open plan areas.

Additionally, although not part of the repairs service, Members commented on the excellent standard of work at Royal Court and the Moorlands was an example of what could be achieved.

AGREED – That the information contained in the presentation be noted and that the following information regarding the replacement door programme be submitted to the next Meeting of the Partnership:

- **total number of doors installed to date**
- **breakdown by area**
- **future programme of work**

8 Installation of PVCu Doors

The Landlord Services Manager submitted a report (CHPPO/91/06) presenting information to Wrexham Tenant and Member Partnership regarding door opening width and associated issues relating to PVCu doors.

The matter had previously been considered by the Social Affairs, Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee, following concerns raised regarding the narrowing of door opening size as a result of installing PVCu doors, thus restricting disabled access and access for large domestic appliances.

It was reported that it was intended in future to use narrower door frame profile which would limit the reduction in accessibility, but overall replacement PVCu doors would still result in a slightly reduced accessibility compared to timber doors.

With regard to disabled access, a rollover threshold would be fitted where possible, based upon the adaptation needs of the individual.

It was important for tenants to check accessibility when buying large items for the home. Where appropriate, the Council could remove a window if necessary, but this would be at a cost to the tenant. During debate Members and tenants stressed the need for officers to ensure that tenants were made aware of the reduced dimensions when PVCu doors were fitted.

9 Any Other Business

(i) Joint Meeting

Members were informed of an invitation from the Social Affairs, Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee to hold a joint meeting with the Partnership on Wednesday, 13 September 2006 at 3.00 pm in the Guildhall.

The dates of other planned Partnership meetings were confirmed as follows:-

Friday, 27 October 2006 at 10.00 am
Wednesday, 6 December 2006 at 2.00 pm
Friday, 26 January 2007 at 10.00 am

(ii) Council Smoke Free Policy

The Chair informed the partnership of the Council's Smoke Free Policy soon to be introduced throughout the County Borough, which would apply to all staff, Elected Members, public visiting Council premises and contractors employed by the Council.

Councillor A.C. Bailey
Chair