

## Housing Engagement Board

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held on Wednesday, 23 June 2021 from 1pm to 4pm via Zoom

<b>Attendees:</b>	<p>Cllr John Batchelor – Chair</p> <p>Cllr Claire Daunton</p> <p>Peter Campbell (Head of Housing)</p> <p>Dave Kelleway</p> <p>John Taylor</p> <p>Les Rolfe</p> <p>Margaret Wilson</p> <p>Peter Tye</p> <p>Wendy Head</p> <p>Jennifer Perry (Resident Involvement Team Leader)</p> <p>Bronwen Taylor (Resident Involvement Officer) – Minute taker</p> <p>Tom Horseman (Resident Involvement Project Support Officer)</p>
<b>Apologies:</b>	<p>Cllr Mark Howell (did not attend)</p>

Item	Subject	Action
1.	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>Cllr Batchelor welcomed the members to the meeting, at 1pm.</p> <p>No apologies were received.</p>	-
2.	<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p>The members introduced themselves to each other.</p>	-
3.	<p><b>Quorum</b></p> <p>The meeting was quorate.</p>	-

Item	Subject	Action
4.	<p><b>Housekeeping</b></p> <p>Cllr Batchelor referred to the document included in the pack and reminded the panel to keep their microphones on mute and raise their hands or put a message in the chat box if they wished to ask a question or comment on an issue.</p>	-
5.	<p><b>Code of Conduct</b></p> <p>Cllr Batchelor referred to the document included in the pack and requested the following changes / amendments to be made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.h – need to expand on this point and explain further</li> <li>• 2. – the wording “we do not expect any members to” is to be changed to “members must not”</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Daunton referred to point 2.h and said that the board must all be aware that they were a part of one of SCDC’s involved resident groups.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway said that people must not feel that they cannot speak on behalf of tenants.</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor said these rules and regulations were required, however, discretion must be used. He referred to point 3, “Members must keep all information they obtain through their role confidential until it is in the public domain” and asked for clarity.</p> <p>Jennifer Perry said that minutes and reports were made available on our website, however, contracts remain confidential and were not available on our website.</p> <p>Margaret Wilson asked about safely disposing of documents as she does not have a shredder. She asked if she could bring them to the council’s offices, when safe to do so, for shredding. Jennifer Perry said she could.</p>	B Taylor

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	<p>Peter Campbell said that should any decisions need to be made, minutes would not be publicised until the decision was public knowledge.</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor asked for approval of the document, subject to the amendments.</p> <p>The approval was proposed by Peter Tye and seconded by Les Rolfe.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>Cllr Batchelor referred to the document included in the pack.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway referred to point 4, Membership, and said that the Head of Housing should not be allowed to vote or be a member.</p> <p>Jennifer Perry said that this board does not have any power to vote and provides recommendations only. She said that we were trying to create a partnership as everyone was equal.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway said that it was their constitution to vote and we should not have officers as members of the board.</p> <p>Peter Campbell said that the Head of Housing could be made a non-voting member.</p> <p>Peter Tye said that he was concerned that their recommendations would not be put forward if they had no voting rights.</p> <p>Jennifer Perry said that we cannot guarantee that all recommendations would be carried forward as some decisions go to Council, some were needed to adhere to regulations, and some cannot be fulfilled.</p> <p>Margaret Wilson referred to point 4.6, “The normal term of office for tenant representative will be 4 years; however, should turnover of membership during any given year be more than 30% of membership, that year to be discounted for the purpose of calculating term of office.”, and asked if this was across the board.</p>	

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	<p>Cllr Batchelor asked if 30% should drop out, then would the other terms be extended. He said it needed clarification.</p> <p>Jennifer Perry said that this clause had been taken from a standard recommendations paper and the wording would be amended.</p> <p>Margaret Wilson asked if another person was appointed in the place of a resignation, was the term continued or was a new term started?</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor said that the new member would continue in the existing term.</p> <p>Cllr Daunton said the work of the board needed to be meaningful.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway said there should be a separate seat for leaseholders.</p> <p>Les Rolfe asked why Cllr Mark Howell was on the board and that if he missed two meetings would he be removed from the board (item 4.9).</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor said that as Cllr Howell was a political appointee, he would contact his party leader over the issue.</p> <p>Cllr Daunton said that they needed to be provided with a choice of dates in advance as she had quite a few meeting date clashes.</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor said that a schedule of all future dates had been provided.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway referred to point 4.7, "If a tenant representative leaves before the end of term, then a new tenant representative will be seconded until the end of term" and asked for clarification.</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor agreed and said the new tenant representative should be from the same area and asked for this to be amended.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway referred to point 4.10, "HEB members agree to use digital communications including video conference, shared facilities which may include MS Teams or a central document library." and said</p>	<p>J Perry / B Taylor</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor</p> <p>B Taylor</p>

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	<p>that he found this discriminatory and that they would work with members in the best way that they could.</p> <p>Margaret Wilson said that she assumed that this was due to COVID-19 and that meetings would take place in person when safe to do so.</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor said that one of the Council’s ambitions was to go paperless.</p> <p>Margaret Wilson said that she did not have a problem with paperless but worried that there would be no further face to face meetings. She suggested adding “where possible meetings will be face to face”.</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor said that this group would make that decision as soon as meetings in person were allowed. Peter Campbell agreed.</p> <p>John Taylor agreed with Margaret Wilson and asked if meetings could take place out of office hours as he needed to take time off work.</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor said we could have hybrid meetings, that is, a combination of in person and via Zoom meetings.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway referred to point 4.12, “HEB members will attend training sessions where appropriate.” and asked that “and where possible” be added.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway said that Cllr Batchelor should be the Chair and a tenant member should be the Vice-chair.</p> <p>Cllr Daunton asked if the Cabinet Lead Member for Housing would always be a member of the board. Cllr Batchelor said that he would be, as he took issues to Council.</p> <p>Cllr Daunton requested clarification of point 6.2, “The chair does not have to be a member of the HEB, if they are an independent chair and not a member, they will not affect the quorum.”.</p>	<p>B Taylor</p> <p>B Taylor</p>

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	<p>Peter Campbell said that he thought it would only apply if there was a dispute and requested for it to be removed from the document.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway referred to item 6.7, “The Chair will liaise with officers and relevant others as necessary to plan for forthcoming meetings.” and said that they could request to add an item to the agenda.</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor said that item 6.7 could be expanded to include the request for additional items on the agenda, however, they need to be mindful of time. Margaret Wilson said that they were advised that they could add items to the agenda.</p> <p>Peter Campbell recommended that any items should be submitted at least 4 weeks before the meeting as further work may be needed.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway referred to point 7.4, “Board members must attend a minimum of three Board meetings per annum unless there are extenuating circumstances that have been agreed by the Chair.” and requested that it be changed to “agreed by the Board.”</p> <p>Cllr Daunton requested that points 7.3 and 7.4 be combined in one point.</p> <p>Margaret Wilson said she thought that a person would be removed from the Board only if they did not send an apology, however, if they had a good reason for not attending, they should not be removed.</p> <p>Les Rolfe said that point 4.9, “HEB tenant representative who fails to attend two consecutive meetings and fails to provide any apologies will forfeit their membership of the Board.” should apply to everyone on the Board, and not just the tenant representatives. Cllr Batchelor said this point would be reviewed.</p> <p>Margaret Wilson referred to the word “criterial” in point 9.3 and requested that it be amended to read “criteria”, and the word “and” in point 10.2 to be removed.</p>	<p>B Taylor</p> <p>B Taylor</p> <p>B Taylor</p> <p>B Taylor</p> <p>B Taylor</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor / J Perry</p> <p>B Taylor</p>

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	<p>Les Rolfe asked for clarification of the £400 allowance referred to in point 10.5, as it referred to “These can be claimed twice a year six months in arrears”.</p> <p>Margaret Wilson said that it was a total of £400 per annum. Dave Kelleway asked if expenses were in addition to the £400.</p> <p>Cllr Daunton asked Cllr Batchelor to check the minutes from the meeting held in December 2019 for confirmation.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway referred to point 10.4 and requested for the word “Capacity” be replaced with the word “Training”.</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor asked for approval of the document, subject to the amendments.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway requested that the document be circulated once the amendments had been made and be approved via email. He asked if the meetings could be open to the public.</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor and Peter Campbell both said that they were not aware of other meetings being open to the public.</p> <p>Cllr Batchelor said that a Vice Chair was going to be appointed at this meeting, however, they would first approve the Code of Conduct and the Terms of Reference. He said the Vice Chair would be appointed at the next meeting.</p>	<p>J Perry</p> <p>B Taylor</p> <p>B Taylor</p>
7.	<p><b>SCDC Business Plan</b></p> <p>Peter Campbell presented the document included in the pack.</p> <p>Margaret Wilson said that she understood the “Go green” initiative, however, public transport was not good. She said new research was that electric vehicles were not as “green” as they should be as there was a</p>	

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	<p>problem with the batteries, and she asked if the Council was aware of this.</p> <p>Peter Campbell said that the Council was about improving public transport, example cycle lanes, bus links, etcetera. He said he recognized that people would continue using cars. He added that the new batteries being developed for cars were “green friendly” and more focus was on hydrogen vehicles.</p> <p>Margaret Wilson said that she realized that planning requirements were imposed by National Government, however, there was no inclusion of wind turbines or solar panels.</p> <p>Peter Campbell said that government were aware and there had been consultation on this.</p> <p>John Taylor asked how many new council houses had been developed.</p> <p>Peter Campbell said that 75 had been built in 2020. John Taylor asked if 150 would be built in 2021.</p> <p>Peter Campbell said that the number would not be doubled each year, however the commitment was to double the number from the previous administration and that they were on track with the numbers. He said they were all affordable rent and shared ownership. He added that due to a shortage of land, the council were not building at the moment. He said he would send the figures to Bronwen Taylor who would email them to the Board.</p> <p>A discussion on affordable rents was held.</p> <p>Margaret Wilson referred to communal areas and said there should be more communication about what was happening in their areas. She suggested an agenda item on landscaping issues. Cllr Daunton suggested including an agenda of Estate Inspections.</p> <p>Les Rolfe said that estate inspections had started again in April 2021.</p>	<p>P Campbell / B Taylor</p>



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8.	<b>New Matters</b>	-
8.1	<p><b>Training Dates</b></p> <p>Cllr Batchelor referred to the training dates, which were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 July 2021</li> <li>• October 2021 – to be confirmed</li> </ul>	-
8.2	<p><b>Planning Away Day – 2 September 2021</b></p> <p>Cllr Batchelor said that an agenda would be sent out closer to the date.</p>	-
9.	<b>Any Other Business</b>	-
9.1	<p><b>Repairs Presentation</b></p> <p>Peter Campbell presented the Housing Repairs Update presentation.</p> <p>Margaret Wilson said that the running costs were similar and asked if the Council planned to have this service inhouse. She said they had 5 years to plan for this.</p> <p>Peter Tye said he did not like a 5-year contract and that it should be reviewed every 2 years. He added that he had problems with Mears and their work. He said that they did not have the ability to do the work and safeguards needed to be put in place.</p> <p>Dave Kelleway said that they were always told that it would be different but there was never a change. He said that they cut corners and that money should be spent on tenants houses. He added that he had not had sight of Richard Medley's slides.</p> <p>Peter Campbell said that he understood Margaret Wilson's point, however, the Council would need a shadow team in place and they</p>	-

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	<p>would need to build a back office, etcetera. He said they might consider it in future. He added that some elements of the Mears contract do not work and that both the Council and Mears were at fault. He said the contract had been managed poorly and a Project Manager was being employed to deal with all issues. He added that he would have to remove confidential information from Richard Medley's report before it could be shared.</p> <p>Peter Campbell advised that a working group had been set up.</p>	
9.2	<p><b>Sheltered Accommodation – Communal Halls</b></p> <p>Margaret Wilson said that items of food in a freezer in one of the communal halls had been thrown away without consulting the tenants. She said that it had been queried with Sheltered Housing.</p> <p>John Batchelor said that this issue was not for this forum and that she should escalate her query to Peter Campbell.</p>	-
10.	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>21 September 2021 at 1pm (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)</p>	-
11.	<p><b>Closing</b></p> <p>There being no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 4pm.</p>	-