

MINUTES OF THE 26th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF DONCASTER FEDERATION OF TENANTS AND RESIDENTS
ASSOCIATIONS
HELD ON THE TENANTS AND RESIDENTS DAY
AT THE KEEPMOAT STADIUM
ON THE 10 MARCH 2007

PRESENT:

Lyn Ralph	Chair
Sue Wilkinson	Treasurer
Diane Ashmore	Secretary
Frank Knapton	Assistant Secretary
Mavis Williams	
Sid Hall	
Lin Myers	
Brian Naughton	
Linda Teasdale	
Andy Kerr	
Colin Leonard	
Martin Musgrave	Chief Executive, SLHD
Judith Jones	Director of Customer Services
Paul Hopkinson	Director of Property Services

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, Lyn Ralph opened the meeting by extending a warm welcome to everyone before going on to introduce Martin Musgrave, the Chief Executive of St Leger Homes of Doncaster.

2. APOLOGIES

Charlie Wyatt, Alan Fielding.

3. MINUTES OF THE 26TH AGM

The minutes were agreed as a true record passed by Colin Leonard and seconded by George Jackson.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Harold Trickett from Kirkstone Close TARA referred to page 3 when he had invited Martin Musgrave to see the 34 bungalows that have been done up, but as yet Martin had not been. Lyn Ralph said that Martin would arrange to see them.

5. SJC CONSTITUTION

The Chair asked that the Constitution be agreed. Mavis Williams agreed this and it was seconded by Jim Tierney.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

The Chair thanked the Treasurer, Sue Wilkinson, for all the work done for the SJC and asked that the report be accepted. Andy Kerr accepted the report as a true record.

7. MOTIONS

The Chair said that there were no motions.

8. INTRODUCTION OF NEW TENANTS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS AND TENANTS CLUBS

The Chair introduced each new Association and Club and asked them to stand to be welcomed by everyone. The new Associations and Clubs were:

BME Doncaster Settlers TARA
The Crescent TARA, Dunscroft
The Oval TARA, Conisbrough
Middlegate TARA, Scawsby
Clayton Tenants Club,
Trafalgar TC
Stanley Road TC
Denaby Central TC

The Chair added that they had done the best thing by forming a TARA to give them power to make their voice heard. They would now be affiliated to the Doncaster Federation of Tenants and Residents Association who would help to solve problems that they have difficulty solving.

9. ELECTION OF STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE

The Chair read out the nominations for the election:

Tenants:

George Hardy
Colin Leonard
Ali Melli
Lyn Ralph
David Evans
George Jackson

Residents:

Alan Hornsby
Frank Knapton

Housing Associations:

Eddie Orton

The Election voting slips were filled in and handed in for counting.

9 QUICK FIRE QUESTIONS WITH GUESTS

Martin Musgrave, Chief Executive of St Leger Homes of Doncaster

Judith Jones, Director of Customer Services

Paul Hopkinson, Director of Property Services

Q. Colin Leonard, The Oval TARA — I have heard that the inspection has been put back to September.

A. Martin Musgrave — It is still taking place in March for two weeks and we think Inspectors have already been out to offices to check them out.

Q. Keith Jobson, Middlegate TARA — When can we expect the Inspectors report being given to St Leger Homes and DMBC?

A. Martin Musgrave — The timetable is that the Inspectors leave us the Thursday before Easter and give us the results at the end of the first week in May. We may get an incremental telephone call to say how we are doing. An announcement will be made at the end of May.

Q. Beth Musgrave — How confident are you at getting two stars?

A. I have spoken to the other Directors, the SJC and staff and everyone is really, really confident. When we look back at the short time we have been together and the way we have turned things around, the service is beyond all recognition. We have still got a way to go, but the people out there do see the difference and appreciate it and the Inspectors will see the difference. Everything is not perfect, but the biggest thing I have seen since I have been here is staff's attitude and that it's **not** just about staff doing their job in a different way.

The Chair — The Federation and TARA's have worked very closely with all officers from St Leger Homes, we have been to meetings to improve services from our point of view and we feel very confident that we will get two Stars. There are fewer complaints in and people are getting more and more involved. We now have the House Proud newsletter that goes out to tenants and more people are becoming involved through the Menu of Involvement so we can get your views and your comments, you are the people that matter to St Leger Homes.

Q, Ann Coates from The Oval TARA — Why is it taking so long for The Oval to be repaired, nothing has been done in 30 years?

A. Paul Hopkinson — This comes back to the question of us getting two Stars at the Inspection. The Investment Plan will be agreed with the Council when all properties have improvements done over the next 4-5 years and this will say when you will be getting new windows, doors, fencing etc. A survey has already been done on properties. The Investment Programme will say when properties will be modernised street by street. There is a long backlog of repairs and maintenance to do to properties.

Q. Eddie Orton from Balby Littlemoor TARA — I have heard things about the Choice Based Lettings, can you tell us something about it?

A. Judith Jones — The Community Based Lettings scheme is a different way that homes will be allocated to tenants, which will fundamentally change the function of lettings. Allocations at the moment are based on the points system and sometimes people are offered a home not in their first area of choice. With Choice Based Lettings, people can look every week to see if there are empty properties where they want and they can then bid for them. It is a more open and transparent way of doing things. It enables a better choice as you can consider another area of Doncaster where you might stand a better chance of getting a home. In other authorities they have found it a lot easier.

Q. Colin Leonard — I didn't want to say about my own case, but I live in a one bedroomed disabled bungalow. I need a two bedroomed disabled bungalow and cannot get one. Because of my disabilities I have to sleep in a chair in the living room and I am probably breaking the terms of my tenancy. I have only been given 5 more points. When the Choice Based Lettings comes in I do not know when I will get one and I am disgusted that no-one will listen. I have now got 90 points and cannot see me ever getting one now.

A. Martin Musgrave — We have now got 11,000 people on the waiting list. We are desperately in need of more houses in Doncaster. I would like to move forward to a position where we can put extra houses into Doncaster. Once we get two Stars the next thing I want is to start planning to get three Stars and I then want a meeting to talk about building new properties. We have got to press the government to allow us to build in Doncaster.

Q. Ann Leonard - I would like to know who prioritises the decent homes works; do they listen to tenants on The Oval, as their homes have not been done for 30 years?

A. Paul Hopkinson — The decent homes works will be carried out in two ways. A Condition survey has been done and has looked at all properties. We will be talking with the Local Authority about their priorities and where they would like us to do work first, they decide the priority properties where they are in a worse condition. In the first instance the homes of the elderly will be looked at, then windows and doors in every home in the borough, which makes homes better insulated and also makes them more secure.

Q. John Hambrey, Craganour TARA — Improving properties doesn't improve the estate. In the first three years of our TARA forming we were getting rid of people with drug addictions. Within three months the Council started to put people with drug addiction back. Will there be any children's area built around our area?

A. Judith Jones — This is down to the allocations policy, we would not necessarily know if people have a drug problem when we house them. We have a legal responsibility to house people, but we do act with other agencies and with the Council to help people. If people cause antisocial behaviour we will take action to evict them as a last resource.

A. Linda Teasdale, SJC and Poets Corner TARA — I visit a number of TARA's and all areas have this problem.

A. Frank Knapton, SJC and Morton and Chaucer TARA — In Morton and Chaucer Roads we have had walls and fencing done. There are areas where fencing and outside maintenance is always raised. It would perhaps be a good idea to let people know what the present policy will be about renovation of outside of properties. I would like to thank Martin and the Directors and the Community Liaison Team for their support in improving customer care across the service and thanks to the staff for trying to get two Stars.

Paul Hopkinson - I am pleased to let you know as part of the decency works there is £11 m for environmental works including fencing and gates etc in the next 4-5 years. We will be looking at each estate when decency works are finished, each estate is different as there could also be parking problems. The Area Boards will decide what work is needed and where it is wanted.

Q. Harold Trickett, Kirkstone Close TARA — About two years ago we had meetings about the fencing. We talked through the plans but still there is no fencing. We have open plan fronts and we are sick of dog dirt on our gardens.

A. Martin Musgrave — Everyone says there is an issue in their area. We are trying to prioritise these issues and they will be put to the two Area Boards who will prioritise work. If anyone is not in a TARA I would urge you to join one and you need to be lobbying the Area Boards with what you want.

Q. George Jackson, Redhouse Tenants Club — We have been fighting for fencing for 8 years and been promised fencing every year and each year we are told that money is running out. Lack of fencing causes problems with youths setting fire to our sheds.

A. Martin Musgrave — All areas are looking for investment inside and outside and it's not necessarily been the Council's fault, it's the government starving the Local Authorities of money. There have some big improvements since St Leger Homes and things will further improve with the new windows and doors. You will appreciate that fencing is not always what people want, they have other issues for instance that their kitchen may not be satisfactory, they may have problems with the roof. We are trying to spread the money around. There will be a lot of money spent on your homes over the forthcoming year. St Leger Homes will have the biggest allocation to an ALMO in the country. We will be spending £400,000 every day. Next year everyone will not be happy. The area offices can deal with antisocial behaviour, fencing doesn't stop youths setting fire to the estates. We will take action against these people if we get the perpetrators.

INTERVAL

10. RAFFLE

The raffle raised £345.

11. ELECTION RESULTS

Tenant Representatives for three years:

Lyn Ralph

Mavis Williams

Ali Melli

Colin Leonard

Tenant Representatives for two years:

George Hardy

George Jackson

Tenant Representative for one year:

David Evans

Resident Representative:

Frank Knapton

Housing Association Representative:

Eddie Orton

12. OSCAR AWARDS

Good Neighbour Nominations Finalists:

Kath and Harold Trickett

Dallas Shephard

Carol from Bawtry

Yvonne Murphy

The winner was Yvonne Murphy who is seen as a highly respected pillar of strength in the community. Yvonne is always fighting to overcome local estate problems and has organised many activities for residents on the estate. Over the past 16 months a personal battle with cancer did not stop her enthusiasm and commitment to her TARA and estate.

The runners up were Carol from Bawtry, Dallas Shepard and Kath and Harold Trickett.

Best Achieving TARA Nominations:

Woodfield

Wheatley CAN

Craganour

Kirkstone Close

Balby Bridge

Polton Close

Mexborough Common

Middlegate

Balby Littlemoor

The winner was Polton Close for setting up the Soup Kitchen, which served not only their TARA boundary, but encompassed the whole community. Also for their sterling efforts to consistently support various charities by holding events throughout the year.

The Most Innovative TARA:

The winner was Craganour for the recycling cycles project.

Recognition for Community Houses

Woodfield, Craganour, Wheatley and Hyde Park were all presented with a plaque in recognition of the hard work by the volunteers.

Best Achieving Workforce (Depot)

Gas Section

Best Achieving Workforce (Office)

Council House

Approved Bids for the Estate Improvement Fund East

Mrs D Kitchen — fencing Oldfield Crescent
Mrs M Williams — gates in Fozzard Close
Mr I Donnachie — security fencing Skipwith Gardens
Mrs P Kennedy - seating area in Ragusa Drive
Mr W Brown — security fencing Sandringham Road

West

Mr T Hartley — security fencing and gates Windermere Close
Mr K Jobson — security lighting Middlegate flats
Mrs E Reed — security gates to bungalows Old Hexthorpe
Mrs K Machin — seating area bungalows Sheraton Avenue
Mrs M Stacey — toys and games for Woodfield Community House
Mr B Cliff - security shutters to Travis Gardens Communal Hall
Mrs K Hamilton - seating area to Sheridan Avenue bungalows
Mrs Robinson - parking bays at Wellingtonia Drive

Staff Recognition Awards:

Gail Harris, Public Relations Officer
Sue Bowie, Information and Involvement Manager
Naz Hussain, SJC Support Officer
The Community Liaison Team

Staff Who Care Award

Karl Chapman

A special award was given to Mrs Averill Redsull for her help in setting up the Conference and her continued support.

12. CLOSING ADDRESS BY THE CHAIR, LYN RALPH

I" think that everyone has had a fantastic day, it is the first time a Conference and the AGM has been done this way and we have been overrun all day with people coming. We have come a long way and want things to keep moving forward. I would like to thank everyone for all their time and effort in putting this together. We all want Doncaster to be a better place to live. I would like to encourage everyone to be involved with a TARA and fill in a Menu of Involvement as we want more people to get involved. If people say that things are not right, then we will listen and we will be able to do things better. We are two weeks away from the Inspection and we are almost there. We want to make things better and sort out antisocial behaviour. St Leger Homes is looking into an MOT scheme whereby houses will be looked at every year."

Peter Chapman, Chair of St Leger Homes of Doncaster Board, said that he had attended many Conferences and this had been the most successful one he had been to and thanked the staff and everyone for turning out. He added that we have come a long way. If we are not doing something well, then tell us so that we can do things better, the staff are willing and able to take on those things to bring them up to a better standard.

Mavis Williams expressed her thanks and the Standing Joint Committee's thanks to Naz Hussain for all his hard work getting the Conference together.

Lyn Ralph announced the winners of the Aurora raffle.

Lyn thanked everyone for coming and hoped everyone had enjoyed the day and drew the day to a close.

Jim Tierney thanked Lyn Ralph for her commitment.
