



Minutes of the meeting of the NETHERFIELD/NEWPORT PAGNELL AREA HOUSING BOARD held on THURSDAY 30 MARCH 2000 at 7.30 pm

**Present:** Councillor S Clark

**Tenants'**

**Representatives:** G Greaves - Hanslope Residents' Association  
B Moore - Hanslope Residents' Association  
P Prop - Tinkers Bridge Residents' Association

**Officers:** S Aslett (District Housing Manager), T Bevan (Senior Housing Manager), C Harris (Senior Housing Officer), M Harvey (Maintenance and Monitoring Officer), C Jones (Tenants' Participation Officer), M Flint (Housing Officer), B Bootle (Senior Benefits Officer), R Trealion (Engineer) and W Marsden (Senior Committee Manager)

**Also Present:** P Allen - Morgan and Fone  
C Allum - Central Area Housing Board  
J Blake - Central Area Housing Board  
J Weir - Jeakins Weir Ltd  
H Taylor - Bradville/Greenleys Area Housing Board  
J Crossan - Hanslope Residents' Association

**Apology:** R Walton - Netherfield Residents' Association

**29.0 QUORUM FOR MEETING**

The meeting was in quorate as there were insufficient Members of the Council present. Therefore while the meeting would be able to comment on the various items it would not be in a position to resolve any matters. Any matters of decision would therefore need to be referred to the Borough Wide Housing Board.

**30.0 PROCEDURE - MINUTES**

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the Area Housing Board held on 13 January 2000 be approved as a correct record.

**31.0 INTRODUCTION TO RESPONSIVE REPAIRS TERM CONTRACTOR**

The Board met with Mr Weir from Jeakins Weir, the contractor for the Repairs Contract for the Netherfield/Newport Pagnell area.

Mr Weir stated that he had not forwarded his contractor's information as this was not ready and mentioned that there had been a considerable increase in workload. Jeakins Weir were keen to maintain a high standard and Jeakins Weir operated a Quality Control system. Mr Weir said staffing levels had increased to deal with the additional workload.

Charles Allum asked whether voids would have a quicker turn around period. Mr Weir stated that there were currently 70 voids, 4 capable people had been recruited to deal with this.

The Chair asked why only small jobs were being completed by the firm before people moved into a property, and then a survey had to be called out regarding more sizeable works. Mr Weir could not think of any reason why work was being missed and asked the Chair to provide a list of addresses to him. The Chair to provide this via Tim Bevan the Senior Housing Officer.

### **32.0**

#### **HEATING CONTRACTOR**

The Board met with Mr P Allen from Morgan and Fone, the Heating, Maintenance and Repairs Contractor for the Netherfield/Newport Pagnell area. Mr Allen stated that the number of complaints had decreased and Morgan and Fone were showing an improvement in their performance.

The Chair stated that a tenant on her estate had tried to get on to the emergency list on a Sunday and the mobile phone had been turned off. An engineer should be available on a weekend. Charles Allum asked whether there was a reduced work force employed by Morgan and Fone on a weekend; Mr Allen stated there was one man and a back up; the majority of times there was not a problem and Morgan and Fone could cope.

Barbara Moore stated that a heating problem still existed at a tenant's address at 56 Williams Close, Hanslope. She said the carbon monoxide detector had actually gone off. R Trevalion said the gas fire had been checked but a fault could not be found. It was suggested that for the next visit, R Trevalion should contact Barbara Moore and together they would visit the tenant.

### **33.0**

#### **DISTRICT HOUSING MANAGER'S REPORT INCLUDING MINOR ESTATE IMPROVEMENT GRANTS**

The Board received a report from the District Housing Manager which outlined activities and performance in the Netherfield/Newport Pagnell area. The report confirms figures for rent arrears, housing benefit figures and repairs, and empty property information for February 2000. The Board were informed that with regard to the Benefits Service, the workload situation was currently at 3104 outstanding cases. Charles

Allum asked the Benefit Officer whether more staff had been employed to reduce the outstanding case workload, B Bootle replied that approximately 6 extra staff had been employed over the last few months.

The District Housing Manager said that the rent arrears figures were fairly stable. Charles Allum asked how much would tenants need to be in arrears before they were taken to court. S Aslett and the Senior Housing Officer said that it was £400 and tenants would have to pay approximately £175 for a court case.

The District Housing Manager presented a list of works under the Minor Estate Improvement Grants. He said that one item of work missing from the list was the provision of a notice board at Hanslope. Literature had been received from 3 firms regarding this, and the cost would be approximately £400

RECOMMENDED -

That a notice board be provided for Hanslope Residents' Association at an approximate cost of £400.

#### **34.0 ELIGIBILITY TO REGISTER ON THE HOUSING WAITING LIST**

The Board considered a report on eligibility to register on the Housing Waiting List which had been discussed at the Housing Committee on 1 February 2000 and the recommendations had been agreed subject to consultation with the Area Housing Boards and registered Social Landlords.

Simon Aslett asked if the Tenants' Representatives had any comments to make on the report, they should be fed back to him.

#### **35.0 COMMUNAL AREAS OF FLATS**

Barbara Moore sought clarification on the situation regarding items placed in the communal areas of flats. She said there was a problem with a tenant in Hanslope who continually left items and rubbish which caused obstruction on the top floor and back areas of flats. Barbara Moore asked that something be done about the situation.

Chris Harris said that she had looked at the communal areas and landings, and the tenant had taken some time to comply. The Housing Officer had taken photographs but rubbish etc was still lying there today. Chris Harris asked if Barbara Moore and Gillian Greaves could take photographs and keep a log of when rubbish and other items were actually dumped. Gillian and Barbara would try to do this.

#### **36.0 TENANTS COMPACT**

The Tenants Participation Officer provided a position statement on tenants participation, a copy of which is attached as **Annex A** to the Minutes.

The Tenants Participation Officer also handed out a Tenants Participation Compact Action Plan, a copy of which is attached as **Annex B** to the Minutes.

Clare Jones did say that there was approximately £7,000 left out of the original £10,000 to be spent on the Tenants Resource Centre. In addition the Tenants Participation Officer provided an outline of how the new Milton Keynes Residents' Council would operate, a copy of which is attached as **Annex C** to the Minutes. Clare stated that work was continuing with the provision of a new set of Standing Orders which would govern the way the Milton Keynes Residents' Council could operate.

### **37.0**

#### **NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Barbara Moore stated that satisfactory replies were still awaited to questions raised at previous Netherfield/Newport Pagnell Area Housing Board meetings. She mentioned 2 examples:

- (a) The meeting on 29 October 1998 when Councillor Coventry had advocated that a rota of walkabouts around all estates should take place and the meeting had resolved that a rota of estate visits be drawn up with a timescale and a progress monitoring and feedback mechanism. Barbara stated that this had never taken place.
- (b) The meeting on 14 January 1999 when it had been resolved that the position at Williams Close, Hanslope regarding lighting provision be clarified and further information be provided at the Board's next meeting. Barbara said that again nothing had been done on this matter.

Simon Aslett, the District Housing Manager, promised to follow up these 2 outstanding issues from Barbara Moore.

The Tenants Participation Officer outlined the potential dates for the next year for meetings of the Residents' Council. Firm dates could not yet be provided but it was anticipated that this would be held on a monthly basis.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 9.00 PM