



Starley Housing Co-operative General Meeting

Minutes of Meeting held on 14th May 2013 at 7.00pm

Agenda Item 1	Present & Apologies
Members:	1. See attendance list
Also in attendance:	2. Geoff Birch (Accountant) and John MacSomhairle (Office)
Apologies:	3. See attendance list + Susie Marin Young and Elizabeth Bates
Chair and minutes:	4. Lee Brock chaired the meeting and John MacSomhairle took the minutes.
Agenda Item 2	Minutes of Previous Meeting
	1. The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record and signed by the chairperson.
Agenda Item 3	Matters Arising
	1. There were no matters arising
Agenda Item 4	Complaints
Complaints Policy and Procedures:	1. John MacSomhairle reminded the members present that the last General Meeting had endorsed changes to the ASB policy and procedures, which was changed to allow a two-tier appeal system, as recommended by the Office of the Housing Ombudsman. He said the co-operative now needed to do this with the non-ASB complaints policy and procedures and said he will take the opportunity to update it in line with the Localism Act 2011, which gives new rights to tenants and places new obligations on social landlords. John also said he would aim to consolidate all complaints procedures, except ASB, within the revised document. This will mean there are no separate procedures for allocations complaints, for example. The new policy and procedure will be more streamlined and open.
Skateboarders:	2. John reported that recent complaints have highlighted the fact that measures adopted after the meeting with Councillor O'Boyle and members of the Youth Service, held on 19th February 2013, have not produced results and skateboarders are still using the City Arcade at night and the early evening. He said he had recently meet with Brian Mason, Youth Service operational manager and Janine Doyle, youth worker, where they discussed the possibility of setting up a meeting with the skateboarders who actually use the City Arcade. It was suggested that some of them could practice with their skateboards whilst others attended the meeting so they could hear for themselves how annoying the noise they make is and understand why Starley residents are annoyed. The Youth Service team are continuing to do evening patrols on Thursday and Friday nights and visited the City Arcade and other parts of the City Centre last Friday (10th May) from 11:45 to 12:45 but did not see any skateboarders. The police are responding to calls but the skateboarders are often gone before they arrive and, in any case, they have said that unless they commit an arrestable offence they



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<p>Ikea noise nuisance:</p> <p>Thoughtless damage to crazy paving:</p> <p>Antisocial behaviour:</p>	<p>can only move them on.</p> <p>John suggested that the Co-operative should approach Councillor O'Boyle again to let him know that no progress has been made since the last meeting. At that meeting he had mentioned raising a petition, which he said was an important and useful way of highlighting this issue to the Council. He said he would be more than happy to sponsor it and would help with the wording of any petition. John will be suggesting to the MC that we take up Cllr Boyle's suggestion.</p> <p>3. Following a complaint made on 4th April 2013 about noise nuisance from Ikea John wrote to the manager to ask her to speak to the staff in her stores, who have been playing music loudly late and night and in the early hours. This was keeping members from sleeping. The manager hasn't responded but there have been no further complaints. The Ikea manager rarely responds to complaint letters but usually takes swift action. Unless there are further complaints John recommended monitoring the situation but said at this stage that no further action was necessary.</p> <p>4. John informed the meeting that a disabled member has complained that young girls have broken up pieces of rockery and started smashing up the cement on the crazy paving in Vicroft Court. Some of the crazy paving has disappeared. This was heartbreaking for this member and her mother as they had worked very hard to establish a nice garden area. John said we don't know who the girls are but proposed sending a letter to all members asking them to speak to their children about this thoughtless behaviour.</p> <p>5. John said that since his last report to the General Meeting there have been several complaints that were dealt with and are no longer on the books. He said there are currently only 6 open cases of anti-social behaviour. Two of the complaints are about noise nuisance (one from a dog which is also about fouling the garden), one is about fire damage to a home and the cost to the co-op, another is about the damage caused to the crazy paving in Vicroft Court mentioned above. The firth case is about removing dogs and other items from a member's home whilst she was in hospital and the last is about a security risk being caused by doors being left open in a block. All these cases are being dealt with under the complaints policy and procedures.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5</p> <p>Credit Unions and 'jam jar' accounts:</p>	<p>Co-operative Correspondence</p> <p>1. The chairperson, Lee Brock, explained to the meeting that the co-operative is asking all members, especially those on welfare benefits, to consider joining the local Credit Union. He explained that the 'New Central Credit Union' in Coventry is a bit like a bank but with better benefits for those who join and said that its offices at 33 City Arcade is just on the doorstep for Starley residents. Lee said that one of the major benefits of opening an account with the credit union is that they will set aside money paid into their "jam jar" accounts for important bills like rent and council tax and send it direct to the co-op. This will help members budget and</p>



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Britain in Bloom:	<p>assist the co-op, who otherwise might face difficulties with growing rental debts, especially after the introduction of Universal Credit, which is starting from October this year. Lee also pointed out that, as an incentive, the co-op is prepared to pay the credit union the set-up fee of £5 for all members who join and the initial £1 share money. In addition to this the co-op will pay the full cost of £6 for those who chose to opt for a card for buying goods and cash withdrawal. The Credit Union is looking at improvements to the card service, as they have been awarded some funding from the government, so they are looking at improving the service they offer.</p> <p>Lee went on to point out the many benefits of joining a credit union. They have affordable loans so members can avoid the high cost of pay day loan sharks and doorstep lenders, with their at huge and crippling interest rates. Credit unions also have flexible saving options, and offer free money guidance and support to all those who join. He urged all members to seriously consider them as an option and said that those who want to join to ensure their rent is always paid on time should contact the office or visit the 'New Credit Union' office in the City Arcade. Staff at the office will have the facility to sign people up in the near future but in the meantime can offer advice and explain why it is important to the co-op to have members sign up as soon as possible</p> <p>Lee stressed to members that it is of utmost importance to the survival of the Co-operative that we continue to collect rents on time. This is the only income the co-op receives and, without the rent coming in, Starley Housing Co-operative will not survive.</p> <p>There was a general discussion about the credit union and many members asked questions about how the accounts worked, which were answered by Lee.</p> <p>2. Lee reported that Coventry City Council's Gary Pittaway has informed the Co-op that hanging baskets will be available for all Starley residents this year.</p>
Agenda Item 6	Share Certificates <p>1. Share certificates were collected by the following tenants and prospective tenants, who paid their share fee of £1 amidst a round of applause for each new member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Azucena Marin-Young, prospective tenant;• Elizabeth Bates, prospective tenant;• Megan Bailey, 37B Starley Road;• Thomas Carroll, 43 Vicroft Court;• Julie Capell, 17 Vicroft Court.



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	<p>bank balances at 30th April 2013, as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>March</th> <th>April</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Current Account 1- Working account</td> <td>£ 1,322.90</td> <td>£ 1,687.42</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No Notice</td> <td>£ 80,570.69</td> <td>£ 63,248.87</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deposit account</td> <td>£ 100,901.11</td> <td>£ 100,956.12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Accessible</td> <td>£ 186,794.70</td> <td>£ 164,892.41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HSBC Business Cards- clears each month</td> <td>£ 407.99</td> <td>£ 333.63</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mortgages</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>17 Brightmere Road</td> <td>CLEARED</td> <td>£ -</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Loan For Outside Houses</td> <td>£ 1,778.68</td> <td>£ 1,067.48</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Housing Corporation</td> <td>£ 18,254.58</td> <td>£ 18,254.58</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		March	April	Current Account 1- Working account	£ 1,322.90	£ 1,687.42	No Notice	£ 80,570.69	£ 63,248.87	Deposit account	£ 100,901.11	£ 100,956.12	Total Accessible	£ 186,794.70	£ 164,892.41	HSBC Business Cards- clears each month	£ 407.99	£ 333.63	Mortgages			17 Brightmere Road	CLEARED	£ -	Loan For Outside Houses	£ 1,778.68	£ 1,067.48	Housing Corporation	£ 18,254.58	£ 18,254.58
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<p>Agenda Item 11</p> <p>Rent report:</p> <p>Amended Procedures for the Rent Arrears Policy:</p>	<p>Rent Report & Amended Procedures for the Rent Arrears Policy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Birch reported that the total rent arrears stood at £31,771.00, which is 6.08% of the rent roll. A lot of this was due to housing benefit delays. The award of Discretionary Housing Payments has helped the situation enormously but Mr Birch cautioned that these are likely to be curtailed in the future. He said that 25 members were affected by under-occupancy and the so-called 'bedroom tax' but most member are addressing the charge and have set up payments. There are some members who have still not paid the charge and some who have paid for part of the charges, but are falling behind. The office will monitor the situation carefully and report back on problem cases. Gross arrears have decreased, current rent arrears have increased slightly from last month. The figures for members in very high rent arrears (1000+) are 5 in total. The breakdown is 4 current and 1 former tenants. There is only 1 member in arrears in excess of £2000, and this is a former tenant. It was agreed to send out the amended procedures for the rent arrears policy to all members and these can also be downloaded from the website. This will be brought to the next meeting for a vote. 																														
<p>Agenda Item 12</p>	<p>Repair Report</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> On behalf of the repairs officer, Lee reported that the following repairs were carried out in April 2013: <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Repairs Reported</td> <td>126 (78 in March)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Repairs Ordered</td> <td>126</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Co-operative Attention</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Standard Category</td> <td>56</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Urgent Category</td> <td>23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Emergency Category</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Repairs Reported	126 (78 in March)	Repairs Ordered	126	Co-operative Attention		Standard Category	56	Urgent Category	23	Emergency Category	6																		
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	<p>Void category 15 Quoted 26</p> <p>Standard - Achieved in target category time 94% (98% last month) Urgent - Achieved in target category time 96% (100% last month) Emergency- Achieved in target category time 100%</p> <p>Lee advised that targets had reduced for April, with 4 jobs failing to meet the standard category target. One of these was due to it being external work affected by the weather and another was due to the fact that it was an office repair with other jobs taking priority. A third standard category job was delayed due to the fact that two contractors were involved and there were difficulties with them tying in with each other and the last one was due to a part being unavailable. Only one job failed in the urgent category due to the fact that a member did not allow access. In this case the gas supply was disconnected, which is a legal requirement when the gas safety certificate expires. Lee said that members must allow access to essential work and that failure to do so could have serious consequences. He pointed out that a tenant elsewhere in the country had been given a suspended prison sentence for not allowing access in these circumstances.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 13</p> <p>Drayton Manor Park Trip:</p> <p>Play area:</p>	<p>Social Report</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social Group member Susan Maguire announced that there was to be a trip to Drayton Manor Park and said that those interested should contact her through the office. Susan also said that new members should contact the office to let her know if they wished to go on the list of members who are notified directly about social group trips and events. 2. It was reported that the play area had been purchased and would be erected in the communal garden of 10/13 Starley Road, as soon as weather allowed
<p>Agenda Item 14</p> <p>Memorial plaques:</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. After a lot of discussion by the members, it was agreed that memorial plaques will be put up in the communal garden, as this will keep the safe from outside vandalism.



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There being no further business Chairperson Lee Brock closed the meeting at 8:35 pm.

Signed..... Lee Brock, Chairperson Starley Housing Co-operative.

Date.....