

**TENANTS' AND LEASEHOLDERS'
CONSULTATIVE FORUM****1 JULY 2004**

Chair: * Councillor Currie

Councillors: * Billson * O'Dell (1)
* Knowles

* Denotes Member present
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

Tenant and Leaseholder Representatives

Representatives from the following Associations were in attendance:-

Antoneys Close Tenants' and Residents' Association
Brookside Close Tenants' and Residents' Association
Cottesmore Tenants' and Residents' Association
Eastcote Lane Tenants' and Residents' Association
Harrow Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations
Woodlands Community Association

(In total, 10 Tenants/Representatives attended).

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**144. **Appointment of Chair:**

RESOLVED: To note the appointment at the Cabinet meeting on 20 May 2004 of Councillor Currie as Chair of the Forum for the Municipal Year 2004/2005.

145. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Margaret Davine	Councillor O'Dell

146. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
Councillor Currie	Councillor Currie declared a personal interest in the Matters Raised by the Eastcote Lane Residents' and Tenants' Association by virtue of his role as Chair of the Association, and remained and took part in the discussions on the agenda item in question.
	Councillor Currie also declared a personal interest in the ALMO shadow board in his capacity as Council Representative, but in accordance with Paragraph 12.2 of the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors he remained and took part in discussions on the agenda item in question.
Councillor Knowles	Councillor Knowles declared a personal interest in the ALMO shadow board in his capacity as Council Representative, but in accordance with Paragraph 12.2 of the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors he remained and took part in discussions on the agenda item in question.

147. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.

148. **Appointment of Vice-Chair:**

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Knowles as Vice-Chair of the Forum for the 2004/2005 Municipal Year.

149. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Special meeting held on 21 January 2004, and of the Ordinary meeting held on 4 March 2004, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as correct records.

150. **Matters Arising from the Last Meeting:**

The Forum received a report of the ALMO Project Director which updated the meeting on issues raised at the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum on 3 March 2004.

In response to an update on the installation of windows in Brookside Close, a resident expressed surprise that the Design Department had opted to install two different types of windows in kitchens in Brookside Close. Officers stated that they were not aware that two different types of windows had been installed and undertook to investigate the issue. The resident suggested that more common sense should be used in designing solutions to problems such as these.

Officers informed the meeting that the problem of large vehicles parking on Antoneys Close had now been resolved. A resident noted that articulated lorries had started using the road again to turn round.

Officers informed the meeting that the revised external decoration programme would be delivered this year. However, delivery of the programme had been delayed by the investigation into the Housing Revenue Account and therefore implementation would exceed the normal cut off date. A Member noted that concerns had been raised previously that work was carried out in unsuitable weather and urged officers to ensure that it did not happen again. In response to comments from Members, officers confirmed that the contract for the work would cover quality of work and monitoring. In response to comments from tenants, officers confirmed that they planned to complete all external decoration work this year, weather permitting.

In discussion of door replacement in Brookside Close, officers undertook to ensure that the document referred to in the report and the fire officer's report was distributed to all Members. A resident commented that he had received a variety of contradictory information on this subject.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

151. **References from Other Committees:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no references from other Committees.

152. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

153. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were received at this meeting under the provisions of the Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 13 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

154. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

155. **ALMO Update - Verbal Report:**

The Forum received a verbal update from the Interim ALMO Managing Director on the progress of the ALMO.

Officers informed the meeting that it was still planned to launch the ALMO in September, although the ALMO required approval from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). A draft application had been submitted in April and a response from the ODPM was expected shortly. Also, the post of Managing Director had gone out to advert, although it was not expected that the appointee would take up their post until November.

Officers commented that the staff structure for the ALMO was close to being finalised. The structure had been reviewed to ensure that it was robust with proper monitoring arrangements. Negotiations for office premises on Lowlands Road had fallen through, so the ALMO offices would remain on the Civic Centre site. While there were still vacancies on the Shadow Board, officers were confident that these would be filled by the end of July.

In response to comments from a resident, officers confirmed that they had sent application forms to all tenants who had put themselves forward for the ALMO Shadow Board.

Following further questions from Members, officers informed the meeting that in the ballot of residents, the ALMO received 73% approval of the 31.5% of residents who voted. In accordance with rules laid down by the government, each tenant had a vote, meaning that in the case of a joint tenancy, both tenants could vote.

In response to a question from a Member, officers confirmed that a shortened version of the service delivery plan would be published and made available for tenants once Cabinet and the shadow ALMO board had agreed it. The ALMO would continue operating along the lines of the current Council objectives and plans and when the organisation had gone live, it would begin consulting on plans for the following April. Members and officers agreed that it would be appropriate for future plans to come to this Forum.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

156. **Tenants' Survey 2003/04:**

The Forum received the report of the Executive Director (Urban Living) which provided information on the findings from the Tenants' Survey conducted by MORI in 2003/04.

Officers informed the meeting that the survey had been sent to 1,600 tenants. In addition, a booster sample of 500 questionnaires had been sent out to areas with especially high proportions of black minority ethnic residents in order to ensure good representation among this group. The questionnaire had followed the ODPM template. The survey had had a 37% response rate, 8% above the recommended ODPM level.

In response to comments from a resident, officers informed the meeting that a survey of leaseholders was carried out annually.

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be noted.

(2) a report on the results of the Leaseholder survey be made to a future meeting.

157. **Minor Estate Improvement Budget:**

The Forum received a report of the ALMO Project Director which provided an update on expenditure from the Minor Estate Improvement Budget.

Officers informed the meeting that there had been a Minor Estate Improvement Budget for several years and from 2001/02, bids had been prioritised by the Harrow Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations (HFTRA). The Budget was intended to improve the environment on estates by providing a funding opportunity for small-scale environmental improvements. Examples of some of the projects included additional lighting, installation of brick built planters and bollards to protect grass areas.

Proposals could come from Tenants' and Residents' Associations, individual residents, Members or officers. Once the proposals had been costed, they were submitted to the HFTRA for prioritisation. Once schemes were approved, local residents were consulted. Proposals not granted were carried over to the next year.

The appendices to the officer report detailed schemes completed in 2003-2004,

schemes carried over from 2003-2004 and new proposals for 2004-2005.

The deliverability of the programme had been a concern over recent years. To ensure that expectations of improvements would be met, the budget this year had been reduced to £237,000, a level which officers felt was deliverable with no substantial carry over into 2005-2006.

In response to a question from a resident, officers informed the meeting that a community centre for Cottesmore Estate could not be funded from the Minor Estate Improvement Budget. However, officers were working with the Cottesmore TRA to renovate the flowerbeds on the estate.

Following comments from the Chair, officers confirmed that they would investigate alternative sources of funding, in particular for schemes aimed at young people.

A resident commented that the ornamental railings referred to in the appendices of the report were erected at the side of the estate on Brookside Close, not in front as stated in the report. He also noted that the condition of the perimeter wall on the estate had been an issue for several years. Officers informed the meeting that the wall had been constructed from an unusual material, resulting in a patchwork effect where repairs had been made to the wall. In response to further comments, officers confirmed they did try to claim insurance if possible when cars had damaged the wall.

In response to concerns raised by the Chair regarding residents without an effective TRA, officers confirmed that individuals, officers and elected Members as well as TRAs could put schemes forward. However, the decision on which schemes to implement was still made by HFTRA.

In discussion of the trees at the rear of Antoneys Close, the Chair proposed that a meeting be held on site to find a remedy to the situation.

Officers informed the meeting that the asbestos roofs would complicate the proposed demolition of the garages on Stuart Avenue. In response to comments from residents, officers confirmed that materials would be recycled or reused where possible.

During discussion of the proposals for 2004–2005, a Member who represented Marlborough ward proposed that an improvement to Churchill Place be added to the list.

RESOLVED: That (1) the improvement of the grassed square in the centre of the estate in Churchill Place be added to the list of proposed schemes for 2004-2005 for consideration by the HFTRA; and

(2) the report be noted.

158. **Matters Raised by Eastcote Lane Tenants' and Residents' Association:**

The Forum received a report of the ALMO Project Director which responded to issues raised by the Eastcote Lane Tenants' and Residents' Association.

In response to concerns from residents, officers explained that the sudden departure of a member of staff had caused difficulties in circulating the report prior to the meeting.

Following further comments from residents, officers confirmed that the outstanding jobs referred to by the residents were due to be completed by the specified deadline. The Chair noted was concerned that some jobs had been outstanding for over a year and that the monitoring of jobs was not appearing to be effective. Officers informed the meeting that there were two ways of monitoring jobs, the housing computer system and the five-member surveyor team.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

159. **Matters raised by the Alexandra Avenue Tenants' and Residents Association:**

The Forum received a report of the ALMO Project Director which responded to matters raised by Alexandra Avenue Tenants' and Residents' Association.

Officers explained that the Council had no jurisdiction over the telephone aerial/mast on the grass verge outside the 'Matrix' as it was not on Housing land.

The meeting was informed that the parking and traffic problems reported between Rayners Lane Station and Village Way would be considered in the review of the Rayners Lane CPZ in 2005/06.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

160. **Extension of the Meeting:**
In accordance with the Advisory and Consultative Procedure Rule 12 (Part 4E of the Constitution), it was

RESOLVED: At 9.55pm to continue until 10.10pm.

161. **Questions from Tenants/Leaseholders:**
In response to a question from a resident, officers informed the meeting that due to outstanding financial concerns, the pilot of the new partnering arrangements had been extended. Therefore, it was felt that it was not appropriate for the contractors to attend this meeting, and instead, they would attend a meeting once the contract had begun proper.

Brookside Close

A resident requested that officers investigate a property on Brookside Close as residents had information that the tenant was living elsewhere. Officers confirmed that they were aware of the case. They confirmed the current situation and that the matter would remain under review. They reiterated that before a tenant's home could be repossessed based on non-occupation it was necessary to construct a solid case that would stand up in court and that this could often be a difficult and time-consuming process. Residents also informed officers of another potentially vacant property on Brookside Close which officers undertook to investigate.

162. **Date of Next Meeting:**

RESOLVED: To note that the next meeting of the Forum will be held on Wednesday 13 October 2004.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.10 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR BOB CURRIE
Chair