

**Democratic Services**  
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# Minutes

**Meeting of** : Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel  
**Meeting held in** : The Alamain Suite, City Hall, Salisbury  
**Date** : Wednesday 21 January 2009  
**Commencing at** : 6.00 pm

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## District Councillors:

Councillor M A Hewitt (Chairman)  
Councillor B Rycroft (Vice Chairman)

## Present:

Councillors J Broom, J M English, M J Osment, C G Mills, I M Mitchell, R Britton, D J Luther and I Tomes (as the portfolio holder for housing)

## Tenants Panel:

Mr Watkins

## Present - Officers:

Derek Streek (Housing management) and Jade Hibberd (Democratic Services)

## Apologies:

Councillors C J Morrison, J A Green, Mrs Jewell and Mr Edwards.

## 102. Public Questions / Statement Time:

Tom Watkins of the tenants' panel informed the committee that Mr Edwards of the tenants' panel had announced his retirement due to ill health. The Committee expressed their regret at this news and commented that Mr Edwards had made major efforts in his role and will be an asset that is greatly missed. Members agreed to send a card to Mr Edward to express these sentiments.

## 103. Councillor Questions/Statement Time:

There were none.

## 104. Minutes:

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the last ordinary meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (previously circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 105. Declarations of Interest:

There were none.



Awarded in:  
Housing Services  
Waste and Recycling Services



#### **106. Chairman's Announcements:**

The Chairman informed the committee that a request had been received from the new countywide Housing department for members' comments on what questions relating to housing they are most frequently asked by the public. Councillor Mitchell commented that a common issue raised by housing association tenants is around dealing with problematic neighbors and the possibilities of relocation. Councillor Mills explained that the majority of questions are based around tenants' uncertainty and what will happen to them in the transition to unitary, there is a concern that even though everyone has different situations tenants will be forced into one solution.

#### **107. Update on Tenant's Panel:**

The committee received an update from Derek Streek, the Head of Housing Management, on the current situation of the tenants' panel. He explained that there had been no significant development in the status of tenant's panel, however at a recent area board meeting the suggestion of an arms length management system where the tenants' panel would have significant influence was well received, and there is a keenness for the tenants' panels to be involved. He informed members that a paper would be prepared to explore this arms length management system in due course. Members expressed concern that the involvement of the tenants' panel was being overlooked and this was a missed opportunity.

##### **Resolved – that**

- (1) The following statement be forwarded to the Implementation Executive:  
"The Salisbury District Council Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel is deeply unhappy that no firm decision appears to have been taken that guarantees for our tenants the continuation of their valued tenants panel. Neither is there information about a local governance board. These issues should be dealt with as a matter of urgency."
- (2) the update be noted.

#### **108. Housing Revenue Account:**

The Panel received an update on the state of the Housing Revenue Account in light of its discussion at the Implementation executive from the portfolio holder.

##### **Resolved – that**

- (1) The following statement be forwarded to the Implementation Executive:  
"The Salisbury District Council Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel is appalled at the decision taken against officer advice to reject the 30 year HRA Business Plan we ask that further negotiation be taken to reach a workable solution."  
NB - Councillor Britton requested that his dissent be recorded.
- (2) the update be noted.

#### **109. Housing Review Update:**

The Panel were unable to receive an update on housing issues in the district from Councillor Fowler who sits on the Housing Group for the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Transition Board, as he was not present. Instead Derek Streek, the Head of Housing Management, updated members on the Choice Based Lettings. It was explained that this was due to go live on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2009. The panel requested that they would like to consider this prior to its implementation.

##### **Resolved – that**

- (1) the final Community and Housing meeting be brought forward to the 18<sup>th</sup> February 2009 so that members may put their questions to officers regarding Choice Based Lettings.
- (2) that a WCC Officer is present to answer members questions at the next meeting.
- (3) the update be noted.

#### **110. Doctors Surgeries:**

The Panel received an overview on the situation of doctor's surgeries and relevant PCT papers from the Chairman and briefly discussed the current situation.

##### **Resolved – that the update be noted.**

*Meeting closed at: 19:10  
Members of the Public: 0*