

**TACT (Tenants and Council Together)**  
**Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021, 2pm**  
**MS Teams**

**Attendance;**

Monica Gill	Central
David Chafe	Stanmore
Sandra Salter	Winnall
David Light	Stanmore
Lin Mellish	Kings Worthy
Gillian Gutteridge	Winchester
June Glass	Winchester
Lizzie Christian	Stanmore
Joshua Christian	Stanmore

**Guests;**

Cllr Kelsey Learney	
Cllr Caroline Horrill	
Michelle Smith	WCC
Lucy Spence	WCC
Janette Palmer	WCC
Martin Taylor	WCC

		<b>Actions</b>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</b></p> <p>The chair welcomed all to the meeting and introduced the guests. She explained that to ensure everyone who is speaking can be heard all microphones and cameras will be switched off while there is a speaker, and we will turn them on again when we have a question.</p> <p>New faces were welcomed who hadn't tried a virtual meeting before, and also the Chair welcomed the return of Michelle Smith (TI Officer).</p> <p>Apologies have been received and accepted from;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Joan Stevens</li> <li>○ Chris Bone</li> <li>○ Ann Noble</li> <li>○ Ted Shepherd</li> <li>○ Denne Adams</li> <li>○ Sue Green</li> </ul>	
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2021.</b></p>	
<b>2.1</b>	<p><b>Corrections</b></p> <p>None</p>	
<b>2.2</b>	<p><b>True Record</b></p>	



<p><i>The meeting took a short break to allow tenants to discuss questions on the presentation. Questions raised on return to the general session;</i></p> <p><b>Q.</b> The White Paper specifies that Landlords with a housing stock of over 1000 homes will be inspected. How will this be done? In person, or will this be a ‘paper’ exercise?</p> <p><b>A.</b> Janette stated that we do not yet how this will be done. The White Paper has specified what is needed, but not how it is to be done, and there will be further consultation with tenants, and refining as time goes on. All Landlords will be required to submit performance data.</p> <p><b>Q.</b> A TACT member referenced Section 6 of the White Paper, which seeks to provide a ‘good quality neighbourhood to live in’ for all tenants. They referred to green spaces in this context and commented that people often park illegally on these areas due to the lack of domestic parking spaces in the Winchester district. This leaves the grass turfed up and encourages litter dropping etc. They asked if some areas of green space could be converted into official parking spaces, to ensure that the areas are kept clean and tidy and if parking could be looked at as a priority. It was also raised that the cost of resident parking permits is also too high and keeps increasing, which other TACT members agreed with.</p> <p><b>A.</b> Janette was sympathetic and acknowledged that parking is a known issue in Winchester, but that she was not familiar with the current scope planned for Estate Improvements in 2021/2. Janette took an action to pass on this question to the team.</p> <p>UPDATE 11/3/21: Response from Amber Russell - We are still considering parking improvement schemes through the Estate Improvement programme. However, we are conscious of the importance of useable green open space on our estates due to the pandemic and the importance the white paper places on this. Therefore where possible we are keen to enable open spaces to be useable areas for recreation purposes. The Neighbourhood Services team will be looking to produce a digital survey next year for residents living in flats and one of the areas they will be seeking to get feedback on is how we can improve green open spaces for recreational use.</p> <p><b>Q.</b> One TACT member stated that continuing to build positive relationships between tenants and officers is essential. They asked if Housing Officers could return to having their own ‘patch’, (as used to happen), as many tenants prefer to know their Housing Officer, as it builds trust. A reference was made to the Communications Scrutiny report (Nov 2019), where tenant feedback had supported this approach as a preference.</p> <p><b>A.</b> Janette acknowledged that the patch model has some benefits, but that there are many considerations to take into account when deciding on the</p>	<p>Action JP</p> <p>Action JP</p>
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<p>approach to area management. She agreed to pass on the question and feedback to the Service Lead.</p> <p>UPDATE 11/03/21: Response from Amber Russell - Officers in the income team have moved to patch based rent arrears management way of working and this is something the tenancy team broadly do as well (so when work comes into the team it will normally be allocated to the officer who looks after this area). However, there are no plans to return to generic Housing Officers who are patch based.</p> <p><b>Q.</b> A TACT member asked if there are any buildings over 6 floors – with cladding – that need to be looked at in the district under the new regulations.</p> <p><b>A.</b> Janette confirmed that no WCC housing stock has cladding (<i>of the type used on Grenfell</i>). However, specific safety regulations have been outlined for housing over 6 floors, which would apply to the flats in Winnall. A project group of key officers has been formed called ‘Building a Safer Future Group’, which will be looking at meeting the new safety requirements which include, safety certificates, premises information boxes on site with building floor plans. A ‘Fire Safety Information letter’ has already been sent out to all residents living in flats.</p> <p>Cllr Horrill commented that legislation can be surpassed, and not just complied with. Where resources and funds enable us to aim for excellence, this should be encouraged. Listening to tenant views will be key to achieving this.</p>	
<p><b>Cllr Kelsie Learney – Portfolio Holder for Housing</b>        HRA Additional Funds for Vulnerable tenants</p> <p>Cllr Learney informed TACT about a virtual tenant consultation meeting to be held on 17th March, to which all members are invited (and all ‘Involved Tenants’ too).</p> <p>The meeting will be a ‘Welfare Workshop’, to discuss specific funds of £0.5 million which have been ring fenced from the HRA, to support tenants who are struggling as a consequence of the pandemic.</p> <p>In particular, the funding will support those with mental health issues, and also those encountering financial hardship. Tenant input is requested, to find useful and practical ways to spend the money to ensure those most in need will benefit.</p> <p>Tenant Involvement will be sending out invitations to attend the virtual session, which will include some background supporting information. UPDATE: Invites sent out to all involved tenants 10th March.</p> <p>The Chair added that this session will be specific to this subject, and not a forum for raising general issues.</p>	<p>All Tenants</p> <p>Action MS</p>

4	<p><b>Janette Palmer – Housing Policy and Projects</b>          Tenant Involvement Delivery Program 2021/22</p> <p>Janette presented an overview of the Tenant Involvement work plan for 2021/22. The full presentation was sent to all TACT members prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Key elements of note for the Team includes:</p> <p><b>Projects for 2021/22:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White Paper Charter for Social Housing           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Interpreting the charter, and adapting the service to meet its requirements</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Promote wider engagement           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Promote existing opportunities, and develop new ones, seeking ideas within the sector.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tenant Information           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tenant Involvement Newsletter to be developed, increased communication.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Digital Transformation           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Expand virtual options and functionality/expertise. Encourage ‘Digital Champions’.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tenant Training Opportunities           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Explore virtual training options and new themes e.g. life skills, in response to tenant training survey conducted in 2019.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Celebrate Commitment and Success           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Christmas thank you event for tenant volunteers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Business as Usual:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TACT</li> <li>• Service Delivery Groups</li> <li>• Digital Surveys</li> <li>• Ad Hoc Consultation events</li> <li>• Scrutiny (towards the end of financial year)</li> <li>• Continually assessing current impact of Covid19, in response to the changing national situation.</li> </ul> <p>Janette explained that consultation with tenants continues to be the overarching aim of the Tenant Involvement Team, to shape service priorities and improvements informed by tenant views. Janette continued that finding out what is important to tenants is at the core of the activities listed.</p> <p>TACT had no specific questions following the presentation, but agreed they were happy with the plan for the coming year.</p>	
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5	<p><b>Martin Taylor - Contracts Manager WCC</b>          Issues with bin collections in the area</p> <p>Martin attended the meeting to respond to various issues which had been reported to the TACT Chair, (and passed to him), regarding refuse collections. He introduced himself and explained that he is the WCC Contracts Manger for the Biffa, Ide Verde and Public Toilet contracts, with a team of 4 officers supporting him.</p> <p>The Chair explained she had received a number of complaints from tenants—namely, incidences of bins being left in the wrong place (obstructing pavements, or a long distance from the collection point) and of waste being decanted into other bins prior to emptying, leaving detritus on the ground. In particular, Tenants in Bishops Waltham were reporting problems. Issues were also raised regarding the new glass collection service. TACT members stated that bins being left in random locations cause dangerous obstructions, and are a safety hazard. Martin agreed this should not be happening, and acknowledged that there are issues with the service from Biffa. He explained that he relies on the public reporting these issues accurately and quickly to help him monitor and enforce the contract. However, Martin and his team cover the services for 54,000 homes and have limited resources to do this.</p> <p>Martin confirmed that Biffa employees should not be decanting waste from one bin to another, and that every bin has an agreed collection point, where they should be returned to once empty. He explained that WCC dictate where these collections points are – not Biffa – and Martin’s team are confirming visually on maps where these collection points are.</p> <p>His key message was that photographic evidence is essential when reporting a complaint, with a date and time so that the Biffa crew can be identified. Photographs provide legitimate evidence to raise a complaint with Biffa, and prove that they are falling short of the agreed contract.</p> <p>TACT asked if alternative routes of reporting complaints were available, as the phone lines are incredibly busy and it is difficult to get through to the customer centre. Martin explained that the new green waste service launched 1st Feb, has caused a surge in calls with people trying to register. Hence this has impacted the telephone wait times. This should begin to die down now, and normal call levels should begin to resume. Janette noted this and agreed to discuss the busy lines with the Head of Service. One TACT member did comment that the WCC call back service does work, and is worth trying if there is a long phone queue.</p> <p>UPDATE 25/02/21: Feedback sent to Gilly Knight and Liz Moore for comment.</p>	Action JP
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<p>Cllr Horrill commented that reporting issues by phone is not always easy for tenants, and some are unable to do so through the internet either. Martin asked if tenants to report bin issues to the housing officers when they visit. The information could then be emailed to Martin. Janette agreed to send this idea through to the relevant Service Lead.        UPDATE 25/02/21: Suggestion sent to Amber Russell for comment.</p> <p>Martin did offer his contact email to TACT, in order that any complaints can be sent directly to him so he can monitor them. He did stress however, that this is just for the group and not the wider public, as he will not be able to manage a large influx of additional correspondence: <a href="mailto:mtaylor@winchester.gov.uk">mtaylor@winchester.gov.uk</a>. Issues can also be raised online at <a href="https://www.winchester.gov.uk/waste-recycling">https://www.winchester.gov.uk/waste-recycling</a></p> <p>The Chair raised an issue regarding the new glass recycling bins – Godson House have 2 which were delivered in November 2020, but neither have been emptied and have been overflowing for months, in spite of being reported several times to the Sheltered Housing Team. Martin agreed to look into this immediately and have the bins emptied.        UPDATE 25/03/21 TACT Chair confirmed that the bin was emptied the day after TACT.</p> <p>TACT members living in The Valley, (1-37) Stanmore mentioned several issues with their collections; including some bins not being emptied and returning them the wrong way round. In particular, one grey communal bin is clearly labelled ‘recycling’, but is never emptied. The tenants agreed to send a photograph to Martin, who will have it replaced with a green bin.        UPDATE 11/03/21: Contact details for Martin emailed to tenants.</p> <p>TACT asked if details of the reporting process for bin complaints could be added to the new rent letter when it goes out. Janette agreed to look into this.        UPDATE 26/02/21: Unfortunately, it was confirmed that it was too late to add anything to the rent letters, as they were in the process of being printed.</p> <p>In conclusion, Martin offered to return to TACT at the next meeting (March) to follow up on these discussions with any updates. TACT were pleased to accept his return next month.</p>	<p>Action JP</p> <p>Action MT</p> <p>Action MT</p> <p>Action JP</p>
<p><b>SDG Updates from Meetings Held</b>        Lucy Spence – Tenant Involvement Officer</p> <p><b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance SDG</b></p> <p>Carbon Housing        Report for 10<sup>th</sup> March cabinet. The key drivers to this change is the council statement of being carbon neutral by 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fabric First – If everyone has a well-insulated property there is a saving of money immediately as well as in the future.</li> </ul>	<p>All Tenants</p>

- Heating systems – Previously there has only ever been two options; natural gas and quantum heating. Gas has always been relatively cheap to run, reliable and responsive. 90% of WCC housing stock is gas. We are now looking at taking all the stock off of gas.
- Most options available at the moment run on electricity which is reliant on the grid.

#### Roofing paper

- Keith Miles explained that this paper outlines a 'framework agreement' which is a contract that will be let for a 4 year period with a minimum of 3 and maximum of 6 different contractors. An overview of the paper was distributed prior to the meeting.
- In procuring a framework agreement WCC are aiming to minimise officer time spent on gaining quotations, which at the moment takes a disproportionate amount of officer time, and establish a close working relationship with the different contractors who will be delivering the works. It is hoped this in turn will raise consistency and quality of work on site.

#### Repairs Feedback Form / Customer Care Cards

- Interim measure due to Orchard system being sold, delaying planned text message feedback and Covid (staff not being in the office to administer green cards), letters with pre-paid envelopes will be sent.

#### PH Jones / Osbornes performance / re-procurement – update on discussion at TACT 13.01.21

- Members of R&M SDG agreed with the view of TACT and were in agreement with suggestions made in briefing paper

### **Housing Management SDG**

#### Support for tenants during the pandemic

- Financial support provided, arrears have started to stabilise. WCC we have changed our approach – we are now asking how people are if it is noticed their arrears are rising rather than chasing them or serving arrears letters.
- Daily and weekly calls have continued to the most vulnerable sheltered tenants.
- WCC continues to help facilitate the Local Resilience Centre.

#### Digital Services – tenants thoughts on digital options for interactions with customers, e.g. My Winchester Tenancy

- Tenants are able to report all non-urgent repairs via the app and check appointments, payments etc. You are also able to update your personal information, which helps WCC to prioritise services to those tenants with needs.
- Group members tasked with registering and using My Winchester Tenancy.



8	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>TACT Recruitment</b> – the Chair asked TACT members to consider friends/family who may like to try a virtual TACT meeting. TACT attendance has reduced due to some not wishing to try online engagement, and others sadly resigning due to illness. If you know a tenant or leaseholder who would be interested in attending a meeting, the Tenant Involvement Team would be happy to try a virtual test with them. Face to face meetings are anticipated to return when it is safe. However, TACT commented that maintaining both options in the future would be ideal. They confirmed that face to face is popular as people value the social aspect, but there are some who benefit from the virtual option too, including those who have health issues. Tenant Involvement agreed that it would be ideal to make face to face meetings ‘virtual’ as well, and the aim is to find a way to be as inclusive as possible, for all.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>WCC Emails</b> – The Chair explained that some emails sent from WCC accounts, are going straight to people’s spam or junk folders. Unfortunately, the IT Dept. cannot do anything about this, as it is dependent on the email provider used by the recipient. Most should have an option to let you add WCC as a ‘trusted’ contact, which should prevent this happening. Please be mindful to check your junk folder so you do not miss important emails.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Support for Mental Health</b> – one attendee asked who to contact if you are concerned about the welfare of another tenant.            UPDATE 25/02/21: Janette has confirmed that you can contact the Resource Centre on 0333 370 4000. It is open 9am-5pm Mon to Fri and from 10am-3pm on Sat and Sun. (Details emailed to TACT)</p> </li> <li> <p><b>New Builds Contact</b> – an attendee wanted to contact the New Builds Team regarding plans for the development in Winnall but didn’t know who to email.            UPDATE 25/02/21: Debbie Rhodes happy to be contacted on <a href="mailto:drhodes@winchester.gov.uk">drhodes@winchester.gov.uk</a> but please specify full details of question and related addresses in your email (details emailed to questioner on 25/02/21).</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Telephone Waiting Times</b> – one attendee raised that the wait times to pay your rent over the phone, are very long. In their experience, one hour has been the shortest time to be answered. It was mentioned that you can use an automated phone number to make this payment, but in this instance, the tenant needs to make two transactions each time, one on behalf of a family member. Therefore, they need to speak to an officer to do this. Janette agreed to pass this feedback on.            UPDATE 25/02/21: Issue passed to Liz Moore and Gilly Knight.</p> </li> </ul>	<p>All Tenants</p> <p>All Tenants</p> <p>Action JP</p> <p>Action JP</p> <p>Action JP</p>



Chair: Monica Gill  
Vice Chair: Sue Down  
Communications: David Light

9	<p><b>Forthcoming Meetings</b></p> <p>All forthcoming meetings will be virtual via MS Teams until Government advises it is safe to resume face to face meetings.</p> <p>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021 – Special Consultation Meeting (HRA Funding for tenant welfare support)</p> <p>Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021 – TACT AGM Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021 Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept 2021 Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> Nov 2021</p>	
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