

# TENANTS' FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 14 February 2023 at 2pm  
in the Law Library, Town Hall

**TENANT REPS PRESENT:**

**Chair & SV for Raglan & Corporation Terrace**  
Mandy Anderson

**Street Voice for Roosegate**  
Nicola Bull

**Street Voice for Broughton Road, Dalton**  
Danny Green

**Barrow Borough Council:**

Cllr Kevin Hamilton (Chair HMF)  
Jan Sharp, Deputy Director People & Place  
Caroline Wagstaff, Head of People & Communities  
Cathy Kirk (minute taker)

		ACTION
1.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Bill McEwan; Caroline Kendall, Safe &amp; Strong Communities Manager; Jim Christie (SV Grange &amp; Cartmel Crescent); Irene Asbury (SV Lord St Dalton), David Pearson (SV Newton Rd Dalton) and Amanda Morris, Benefits Liaison Officer.</p>	
2.	<p><b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2022</b></p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true and correct record.</p>	
3.	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
4.	<p><b>TENANT PARTICIPATION COMPACT BUDGET <i>update</i></b></p> <p>As agreed at the last meeting, the budget sub headings have been reduced from eight to four: Cost of Living Assistance; Community Events; Hospitality and Travel with the vast majority of the £10k budget set aside for Cost of Living Assistance.</p> <p>Agreed that officers can purchase items as identified to assist tenants in need during the colder months.</p> <p>During October and December the following winter warmers were purchased:</p> <p>31 October: 75 sets of hooded blankets and thermal socks - £2,034.52 16 December: 75 hooded blankets and thermal socks - £1,746.53</p> <p>Total spend : £3,781.05</p> <p>Balance £5,251.95</p>	

<p><b>5.</b></p> <p><b>5.1</b></p> <p><b>5.2</b></p>	<p><b>ENVIRONMENT ENHANCEMENT BUDGET <i>update</i></b></p> <p><b>Environmental Enhancement £5k Budget 2022/2023</b></p> <p>No spend to report since the October meeting.</p> <p>Balance £1,005.</p> <p><b>Area Improvement £10k Budget 2022/23 (officers' budget)</b></p> <p>Spend since last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewal of fencing at rear of Wasdale Grove £1,463</li> <li>• Skip for clearance of bin store areas at Tay Court £280</li> <li>• Skip for garden clearance at Brook Street £280</li> <li>• Skip for garden clearance at Thornton Park £198</li> <li>• Purchase of three pairs HexArmor needle handling gloves for Mobile Operative Team £185</li> </ul> <p>Balance £1,906</p>	
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>UNIVERSAL CREDIT UPDATE</b></p> <p>Post meeting update from Amanda Morries:</p> <p><b>Water</b></p> <p>From 1 April 2022 to 09 February 2023</p> <p>Applied for 100 back on tracks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70 successful</li> <li>• 4 unsuccessful</li> <li>• 26 awaiting decision</li> </ul> <p>Total Back on track so far – 844</p> <p><b>Universal credit claimants</b></p> <p>Total no of UC claimants – 827</p> <p>Total no of APAs – 462</p> <p>Average arrears - £479.16</p>	
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>2023/24 RENTS</b></p> <p>Bex advised the proposed 2023/24 Housing Revenue Account Budget will be presented to Westmorland and Furness Council Shadow Authority Cabinet in March.</p> <p>With regard to dwelling rents, due to the current cost of living crisis, the Government has revised the policy of increasing social rents by up to Consumer Price Index plus one percentage point, and replaced with a 7% ceiling to protect tenants from large rent increases. The majority of councils are increasing rents by the full 7%, we have decided to propose a 3.5% increase which averages out at £3 per week increase.</p>	

	<p>Letters relating to the rent increase will be sent to all tenants at the beginning of March and advising them of the change of landlord – it will be for information only – they won't be required to do anything or change their direct debit details.</p> <p>A separate letter will also be sent to all tenants advising they will not be required to sign a new Tenancy Agreement – their tenancy will just transition automatically over to Westmorland and Furness Council on 1 April.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>BODY WORN CAMERAS</b></p> <p>Jan asked for an update on CCTV cameras. Caroline advised that moveable cameras will be used in Portland Walk initially. There is a delay in progressing this due to the issue of who will be the data controller, which the police are happy to do but this involves a lot of red tape.</p> <p>Caroline advised the Council has secured a grant agreement with the Police and Crime Commissioner through the Safer Street Funding. The Safer Streets Fund aims to reduce and prevent neighbourhood crime and ASB. The funding will support the Safe &amp; Strong Team by purchasing video and radio devices and body armour to keep officers safe and to capture evidence. The devices will ensure transparency in the event of complaints or challenges.</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION UPDATE</b></p> <p>Jan advised Steph Cordon has been appointed as Director of Thriving Communities. Steph is very socially minded and a big advocate for Housing.</p> <p>The recruitment process is ongoing in terms of the assistant director roles with interviews running up to 10 March.</p> <p>Caroline, Les and Bex continue to look at the legalities involves in transferring services over to W&amp;A and to ensure Housing functions and Housing Revenue Account is kept separate to other Council services.</p>	
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>None</p>	
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed.</p>	