**Approved Minutes of Meeting of Landlord Steering Group (LSG)**

**Wednesday 7 June 2023 from 2.15pm– 4.45pm**

**at Stratford District Council Offices**

**Minutes**

**Present**: Terry Samuel (TS) Chair, Balwant Rai (BR) Secretary, Runjit Bhopal (RB), Paul Chapman (PC), Gurdip Chatha (GC), Sarah Churchill (SC), André Davis (AD), Carol Duckfield (CD), Kam Gadhary (KG), Paul Hughes (PH), Shera Payne (SP), Don Robbie (DR), Parveen Rai (PR) and Richard Woodcock (RW).

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

TS welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced new LSG members GC, AD and PR.

Apologies: GS.

**2. Approval of Previous Minutes – Wednesday 25 January 2023**

After a minor amendment, these were approved unanimously.

**ACTION 1: BR to upload approved minutes onto website by Wednesday 21 June 2023.**

**3. Matters Arising**

None.

**4. Election of LSG Vice-Chair**

RW nominated for LSG Vice-Chair. Proposed by RT. Seconded by DR. Elected unanimously.

**5. Feedback on the New ‘123’ Refuse Collection Service and LSG Questions**

Zoe Court was unavailable to attend this meeting, so had previously answered questions about the new 123 service by email, but more clarification was needed.

There were many questions including:

a) Annual online refuse collection calendars.

b) Missing labels on wheelie bins.

c) Garden waste annual subscription cycle not suitable for student tenancy period.

d) Wheelie bins a hazard between collections on pavements, in alleyways and on roads.

A short PowerPoint presentation on issues raised by ‘permanent’ wheelie bin storage on pavements in Leamington was delivered by TS. Members expressed different views on how the LSG should approach the matter. There were no clear solutions.

**ACTION 2: BR to invite Zoe Court by Wednesday 21 June 2023 to the next LSG meeting on Wednesday 18 October 2023 at 2.30pm to feedback on new ‘123’ refuse collection service and answer LSG questions.**

**6. Updating Websites**

Warwick District Council (WDC) and Stratford District Council (SDC) ought to review their websites more frequently. For example, many WDC Landlord Newsletters are listed dating back to 2013. Recommend only the last two years are recorded. Update other agreed changes.

**ACTION 3: BR/PC to update websites by Wednesday 21 June 2023 using TS template. Include latest Landlord Forum details, member details, links to membership application, sign up for newsletter and other information. Review and edit archive newsletters.**

**7. LSG’s Response to ‘Public Consultation on the Additional Licensing of HMOs in Warwick District’**

TS reflected on the Task Group response to the public consultation and the importance of early preparation. DR suggested the ‘Decent Homes Standard’ proposed by the Renters (Reform) Bill may alter the landscape for future discretionary licensing schemes.

PH advised that the Cabinet meeting for a decision for ‘Additional Licensing’ has been pushed back to August and it is likely that full Council approval will be required in October 2023. If so, the earliest implementation date would be January 2024.

**8. Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme (MLAS)**

MLAS, managed by the ‘Home Stamp Consortium’, is defunct and no longer taking new members.

Members briefly discussed alternative schemes including National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA), Coventry City Council (on line training) and Decent and Safe Homes (DASH) Landlord Accreditation.

**TS proposal: ‘NRLA accreditation scheme is adopted by LSG to promote to landlords.’ Carried, with two abstentions.**

**ACTION 4: BR to update website by Wednesday 21 June 2023 to reflect this change.**

**9. Adoption of ‘Procedure for Organising a Landlord Forum’**

This document was prepared by TS to standardise tasks and timescales. It will be part of the LSG Terms of Reference (LSGTOR). Because it is a working document, it is for internal use and will not be published publicly with LSGTOR. It may be regularly reviewed and updated by LSG Chair.

**TS proposal: ‘Procedure for ‘Organising a Landlord Forum’ to be part of LSGTOR.’ Passed unanimously.**

**10. Review of Landlord Forum on Monday 15 May 2023 at Trident Centre**

A briefing note on this Landlord Forum was produced by BR, which included delegate feedback and attendance analysis. Of the 99 delegates listed on Eventbrite, only 43 attended. Unregistered people arrived on the day, so an estimate of 76 delegates present. DR advised a 55% attendance rate from those who had previously registered was typical.

**11. Speakers, Topics and Ideas for Next Landlord Forum on Wednesday 27 September 2023 from 1pm – 4pm at Stratford Racecourse**

Agreed to target 5 – 10 company stallholders in addition to NRLA, speaker and council stalls and

focus on recruiting new LSG members up to maximum of 24.

TS suggested a ‘Tenancy Agreement Clinic’ during networking sessions. A specialist solicitor to offer free advice regarding tenancy agreements and issues.

Topics and speakers to be:-

1. ‘Trends in the PRS.’ NRLA Policy Officer
2. ‘Landlord tips on self-managing properties – pre-tenancy helpful information for tenants.’ TS
3. WDC and SDC up-dates. PH/PC
4. NRLA legislation update including Renters (Reform) Bill. DR

Venue: Stratford Racecourse

Date: Wednesday 27 September 2023 from 1pm – 4pm

**ACTION 5: BR to follow updated, ‘Organising a Landlord Forum’, which starts on Monday 26 June 2023 for the next Landlord Forum on Wednesday 27 September 2023.**

**ACTION 6: DR to arrange NRLA Policy Officer speaker by Friday 30 June 2023 and inform BR for inclusion in the Landlord Forum programme.**

**ACTION 7: BR/PC/TS – Set up Eventbrite and link by Friday 30 June 2023.**

**ACTION 8: BR to research and arrange stalls and a specialist solicitor for ‘Tenancy Agreement Clinic’ by Monday 21 July 2023 at the latest.**

**ACTION 9: PC to arrange venue set up and refreshments.**

**ACTION 10: DR to co-ordinate presentations, laptop, projector, mike, roving mike and screen on the day of the Landlord Forum.**

**12. Suggested Updates for WDC Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Regulations**

**TS proposal: ‘Modify 1.3 to take account of joint and several tenancies.’**

TS asked if the standard HMO licence condition, ‘licence holders to provide details to local authority on request of occupiers and rooms they occupy’, could be re-worded to reflect joint and several tenancies where the tenants are responsible for selecting the rooms which they occupy.

PH acknowledged students selected their own rooms in shared houses but pointed out the basis for such requests only arose where there were grounds to suspect overcrowding of individual rooms. HMO licences specified room occupancy limits. The licence holder is ultimately responsible for identifying which rooms are occupied by which tenants if an overcrowding situation arose.

**TS proposal: ‘With modern fire extinguisher development, WDC to investigate whether Licence Holders can annually self-certify fire-fighting equipment, fire blankets and fire extinguishers, in domestic premises with a view to updating 1.4 and 4.6.’**

Further information was requested by PH, including technical information to enable this query to be further explored and discussed with Warwickshire Fire & Rescue.

**ACTION 11: TS to supply details by middle of July 2023 and PH to investigate and feedback to next LSG meeting on Wednesday 18 October 2023.**

**13. Renters (Reform) Bill**

TS wrote to his MP, who replied with regard to student tenancies becoming periodic. TS shared letters to and from his MP concerning student tenancies and the Renters (Reform) Bill.

DR advised his MP had agreed to meet with him over the details in the Bill.

LSG members were reminded by DR that Decent Home Standards and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System reforms are not mentioned in the Bill and he encouraged people to write to their MPs regarding any issues.

**14. Updates from WDC and SDC**

Nothing from PC and PH.

**15. TS Proposal: ‘Increase Landlord Newsletter to 3 issues a year and review format.’**

TS showed May 2013 Landlord Newsletter with a different style and format. Item deferred due to time constraints.

**16. CD Proposal:** **‘Invite Warwick and Stratford District Councillors to meet the LSG to improve the Councillors’ knowledge base and relationship with LSG PRS stake holders.’**

TS suggested setting up a Task Group to consider how this could be taken forward. Agreed it was useful for elected members to understand landlords’ perspective. CD agreed to lead the Task Group with other members being AD, PR and RW and to copy TS in.

DR announced that Eleanor Bateman an NRLA Policy Officer, will support the Task Group.

**ACTION 12: CD to report back to the LSG meeting on Wednesday 18 October 2023. Task Group to produce a paper by Wednesday 4 October 2023 for distribution with agenda.**

**17. TS proposal: ‘Provide Comprehensive Guidance Documents for Private Landlords**

1. **Warwick and Stratford District Council’s Landlord’s Checklist.**
2. **Warwick and Stratford District Council’s Private Landlords’ Handbook.’**

Attention was drawn by TS to landlord documents on the Exeter, Devon website. It was agreed these were useful and may be used as exemplar material for use on the local Council websites.

**ACTION 13: PH/PC to review and report** **back to next LSG meeting on Wednesday 18 October 2023.**

**18. AOB**

None.

**19. Thanks from the Chair**

Meeting closed at 4.47pm.

**Next Landlord Forum: Wednesday 27 September 2023 from 1pm – 4pm at Stratford-upon-Avon Racecourse, Luddington Road CV37 9SE.**

**Next LSG Meeting: Wednesday 18 October 2023 from 2.15pm – 4.45pm at Leamington or Warwick Offices. Venue to be confirmed.**

**LSG AGM and Meeting:** **Wednesday 24 January 2024 from 2.15pm – 4.45pm at Warwick Offices. Venue to be confirmed.**