

# **Meeting of Landlord Steering Group (LSG)**

## **Wednesday 18 October 2023 from 2.15pm – 4.45pm**

### **at Warwick District Council Offices**

## **Minutes**

### **Present:**

Terry Samuel (TS) Chair, Balwant Rai (BR) Secretary, Runjit Bhopal (RB), Gurdip Chatha (GC), Zoe Court (ZC), Carol Duckfield (CD), Kam Gadhary (KG), Paul Hughes (PH), Shera Payne (SP), Don Robbie (DR), Gurmit Singh (GS), Stephanie Taylor (ST), Amie Widdows (AW), Richard Woodcock (RW).

### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

Everyone was welcomed by TS and he introduced Zoe Court, Stephanie Taylor and Amie Widdows. LSG member André Davis's resignation was noted.

**Apologies:** Parveen Rai, Kevin Tebbett, John Warburton.

### **2. Approval of Previous Minutes – Wednesday 7 June 2023**

After a minor correction, these were approved unanimously.

**ACTION 1: BR to upload approved minutes onto Council websites.**

### **3. Matters Arising**

None.

### **4. Feedback from Zoe Court on 123 Refuse Collection Service and LSG Questions**

ZC introduced ST, Waste Education and Enforcement Officer and gave a brief presentation and answered questions from LSG members on:

- Online refuse collection calendar to be adjusted so that an annual programme is displayed.
- Inconsistent use of permit labels on HMO wheelie bins
- Garden waste annual permits not aligned with student tenancy dates
- Use of grey wheelie bins for small quantities of garden waste
- Free replacement of damaged wheelie bins, regardless of who caused the damage
- Charge for disposing of fire extinguishers at household waste sites
- Further grace period to supply additional wheelie bins to HMOs, because of announcement of additional licencing scheme

LSG members were asked by ZC to email any further queries to her at [zoe.court@warwickdc.gov.uk](mailto:zoe.court@warwickdc.gov.uk).

**ACTION 2: ZC to send further responses to questions to BR to circulate to LSG members.**

ZC and ST left the meeting.

## 5. Updating Websites

TS requested BR, DR, PC and AW to update websites:

- WDC. Delete/add names of LSG members. The 'next page' link at the base of 'Landlord Steering Group and Landlord Forums' (LSGLF) page should link to, 'Landlords e-newsletter and landlord forum communications'. Link at base of Landlord Forum page to NRLA accreditation scheme. Could 'Landlord Steering Group minutes' be reversed, so latest minute is first in the list? BR
- SDC. Update with information on Landlord Forum and Steering Group. Delete defunct 'Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme': <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/homes-properties/landlords-and-letting-agents-information.cfm>. PC
- WDC and SDC. Remove Landlord Forum from websites within a week of event.
- NRLA. Delete details of previous DC Landlord Forum: <https://www.nrla.org.uk/events/previous-webinars/warwick-and-stratford-upon-avon-district-council-landlord-forum-april-21>. DR

**ACTION 3: BR, DR and AW to update Council websites.**

## 6. Proposal:

**'Ask NRLA to consider a reciprocal arrangement where WDC promotes their annual landlord conference in WDC newsletter and the NRLA publicises our landlord forums in their 'What's On' section. Our forums are in partnership with the NRLA and their accreditation scheme is listed on WDC website. WDC to register delegates'**

Motion proposed by TS.

The new Marketing Director would be consulted by DR, with regard to registration of delegates.

**ACTION 4: Report back to LSG meeting by DR on Wednesday 24 January 2024.**

## 7. Landlord Forum Review Wednesday 27 September 2023 at Stratford Racecourse

The attendance analysis and briefing note, prepared by BR, were discussed.

Points outlined should be considered in the preparation for the next Forum, TS noted.

DR mentioned feedback was excellent.

## 8. Proposal:

**'Guidance on Landlord Forum Venue Criteria, adopted as part of procedure for Organising a Landlord Forum'**

Motion proposed by TS. Approved unanimously.

## 9. Setting Dates and Venues for Future LSG/AGM Meetings and Landlord Forums

Dates agreed:-

LSG Landlord Forum:	Wednesday 15 May 2024	Leamington	Venue TBC
LSG Meeting:	Wednesday 5 June 2024	Stratford	Venue TBC
LSG Meeting:	Wednesday 16 October 2024	Leamington	Venue TBC
LSG Landlord Forum:	Wednesday 6 November 2024	Stratford	Venue TBC
LSG AGM/Meeting:	Wednesday 22 January 2025	Leamington	Venue TBC
LSG Landlord Forum:	Wednesday 14 May 2025	Leamington	Venue TBC

**ACTION 5: BR and PH to research and book Landlord Forum venues.**

## **10. Landlord Forum Timings**

TS asked for views on timings. It was agreed doors would open at 12.30pm for networking, stall visits and refreshments, with presentations 1.15pm - 4pm, to include a 20-minute break.

**ACTION 6: BR to check Trident Centre parking areas and send plan to LSG members.**

## **11. Sponsorship and Charging for Stalls at Landlord Forums**

Confirmed by TS, there are no legal issues with charging.

TS suggested LSG should have a stall at Landlord Forums to promote LSG membership.

After some discussion, it was agreed the first 25 stallholders would be free of charge at the next Forum. TS was delighted with number and variety of district council stalls. Need to increase number of company and other types of stalls.

## **12. WDC, SDC and Eventbrite Landlord Lists**

TS asked approximately how many landlords will be emailed the next newsletter and the next forum information and how does this compare with the number of landlords who were emailed the last newsletter and forum information?

The Media team, confirmed PH, has control of the list of persons signed up.

**ACTION 7: BR to contact Media about number on latest list, compared to previous list and report back to next LSG meeting.**

Attention drawn by TS to several documents members could read during the break. These included:

- a) New recommended clause in tenancy agreement about charging e-bike and e-scooter batteries
- b) Letter to MPs about, 'protecting the student market' in Renters (Reform) Bill
- c) Landlords warned of online letting scam
- d) Homes for Ukraine document from 'preventing homelessness improving lives'
- e) Publicity about Warwickshire additional licensing scheme

## **13. Programme for Next Landlord Forum in May 2024**

A suggested programme for the Forum was proposed by TS. DR requested a time slot for the Fire Service to update on legislative changes.

Decision on detail of programme to be discussed at next LSG meeting.

## **14. Proposal:**

### **'Increase Landlord Newsletter to 3 Annually. Review Format'**

TS suggested increasing to 3 editions. Publication dates: January (two weeks before LSG AGM), May (two weeks before Landlord Forum) and September (two weeks before Landlord Forum).

After some discussion, it was agreed to remain with 2 editions to be published in advance of the Landlord Forum dates.

Suggested by TS, there should be a contents list at start of newsletter with a hyperlink to access individual pages in the document.

A published article of interest to LSG members, was referred to by SP.

PH would like to see more articles on individual views.

**ACTION 8: BR to circulate SP's article to LSG members.**

## **15. Set up Task Group, 'Examine the LSG's current direction, identify areas for improvement and implementation and a strategy for evaluating impact'**

This new task group could report back to Wednesday 24 January 2024 LSG meeting, advised TS.

It was agreed to defer this item to the next LSG meeting, because there was already a task group looking into another issue.

## **16. Does the LSG need an AGM?**

TS asked if the AGM and ordinary meeting of the LSG could be combined as a single meeting? Agreed.

**ACTION 9: BR and TS to combine AGM and LSG and adjust LSGTOR.**

## **17. Volunteer LSG Roles to Assist with Workload**

Could volunteers, suggested TS, assist BR to contact organisations and companies for stalls?

To find stallholders for next Forum, AW will support BR. Information from GC may assist process.

**ACTION 10: GC to send information to BR.**

## **18. Proposal:**

**a) '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 (HMO) 1.4 and 4.6.'**

The Fire Service is being consulted, advised PH.

**ACTION 11: Report back by PH to next LSG meeting.**

## **Proposal:**

**b) 'With modern fire extinguisher development, WDC to investigate whether fire extinguisher recommendations should be updated to include the use of 'All Fires' extinguishers in HMOs to eliminate the risk of using the wrong type of extinguisher.'**

Whilst PH was supportive in principle, it required further consideration and discussion with Fire Service.

DR commented he was expecting an update on national fire safety guidance.

Item deferred to next LSG meeting.

## **19. Joined up Approach with Local Council**

TS suggested Councillors and Portfolio Holders be invited as guests to LSG meetings and Forums.

The Housing Portfolio Holder was invited to last Forum, indicated PH, but couldn't attend.

Item deferred to next LSG meeting.

## **20. Task Group, 'Invite Councillors to a meeting with LSG to improve the Councillors' knowledge base and their relationship with LSG PRS stake holders'**

Report from task group deferred to next LSG meeting.

**ACTION 12: Report back on task group's response by CD, at next LSG meeting.**

## **21. Student Market. Why is it Declining?**

Item briefly discussed. Members agreed it merited further discussion, so deferred to next LSG meeting.

## **22. Proposal: 'Provide Comprehensive Guidance Documents for Private Landlords**

**a) Warwick and Stratford District Council's Landlord's Checklist.**

**b) Warwick and Stratford District Council's Private Landlords' Handbook'**

There was agreement in principle to 'adopt' the handbook after a meeting between PH and PC.

Some concern expressed that the Renters (Reform) Bill would mean re-writing large sections.

**ACTION 13: Further update at next LSG meeting to be provided by PH and PC.**

## **23. Proposal: Adopt, 'Procedures for Organising a LSG Meeting'**

A draft is in progress, said TS, for approval at the next meeting.

## **24. NRLA Legislation Updates**

DR said no specific legal updates since the last Forum.

## **25. WDC and SDC Updates**

PH mentioned that WDC are preparing Additional Licensing Scheme list of landlords to receive letters and application packs and recruitment is in progress. Scheme will launch on Thursday 18 January 2024.

## **26. LSG Response to Additional Licensing WDC Council Decision**

The LSG response comprised a 20-page report, advised TS.

A copy of the Cabinet report decision and comments was requested by CD.

**ACTION 14: PH to provide copy of Cabinet report at next LSG meeting.**

## **27. Proposal:**

**'Warwick and Stratford Private Sector Housing Managers and others to include a link in external email footer to promote subscription to newsletter and forum'**

Whilst this interesting, PH said it would have to be weighed up against corporate demands for Officers to include other important messages.

**ACTION 15: PH to report back on proposal at next LSG meeting.**

## **28. AOB**

None.

Meeting closed at 4.44pm.

**Next LSG AGM and LSG Meeting: Wednesday 24 January 2024 from 2.15pm – 4.45pm at Warwick District Council Offices, Riverside House, Leamington Spa.**

**Dates and Venues for Future LSG Meetings and Landlord Forums**

- LSG Landlord Forum: Wednesday 15 May 2024. Leamington. 2.15pm – 4.45pm. Venue TBC
- LSG Meeting: Wednesday 5 June 2024. Stratford. 2.15pm – 4.45pm. Venue TBC
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