

Title of Meeting

Date: 9th January 2025

Time: 18:30pm – 20:00

Duration: 1:30

Venue/ Type: Dene Community Centre, 95b Meeting House Lane, SE15 2TU

Chair: Althea Smith (AS)

Minutes

Present:

Althea Smith (AS) Chair of Central East Local Housing Forum

Chris Meregini (CM) Chair of SGTO

Cathy Deplessis (CD)

Jennifer Quinton-Chelley (JQC) Member of Tenants' Forum

Cllr Esme Dodson (ED)

Nat Stevens (NS)

Sean Backhurst(SB) Service Development Manager

Robertson Egueye (RE) South Area Manager

George Changua (GC) Tenant & Homeowner Support Officer

Yemisi Adebayo (YA) Tenant & Homeowner Involvement Officer

Apologies:

George Coombes (GC)

IAN Young (IY)

Minute Taker: Yemisi Adebayo

Item	Topic	Action
1.	Chair opened the meeting and led the introductions.	
2.	Minutes of the last meeting agreed by all.	
3	<p>Rent settings</p> <p>AS: stated that she is unhappy about tonight's meeting, because Cabinet members had a meeting concerning the rent setting on 7 January 2025 without involving tenants. In addition, AS expressed her disappointment that Ian Young (IY) Assistant Director of Finance was not at the forum</p>	

	<p>meeting. AS stressed that they are volunteers and they have been taken for granted, because senior management are not present to discuss the rent increase.</p> <p>JQC: Agreed with the view of AS that they should have been consulted or involved to discuss the rent charges with Cabinet Members before it was agreed.</p> <p>CM Stated that the new approach on consultation and transparency should be to work in collaboration with the Council. CM unhappy that proper communication has not taken place before decision was made concerning the rent setting.</p> <p>NS: referred all present to the resident engagement rent setting report which showed that the report was put on the website, sent to all TRAs and sent to over 33,000 residents by email</p> <p>147 residents attended the rent setting resident engagement meeting on the 10th of December 2024 and gave their views</p> <p>AS: Acknowledged the report from the consultation on rent charges.</p> <p>CD: queried the effectiveness of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) consultation meeting in December 2024.</p> <p>ED: Asked if Southwark has all the email addresses for all residents.</p> <p>AS: further commented that tenants deserve an apology from the Cabinet and all tenants were requesting is respect from Southwark Council</p> <p>CM: Stated that residents should participate in policy making and acknowledgment & recognition should be given to residents by the Council. Things like this should be avoided moving forward.</p> <p>AS: Stated she will be taking action against Southwark on the rent setting for lack of communication.</p>	NS
3.1	<p>Regulators Findings</p> <p>SB: presented the report on the findings by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and the C3 grade that was awarded to Southwark Council.</p> <p>AS: acknowledged the contents of the presentation given by SB. AS stated that historically they use to have all these new improvement boards that is just been implemented. AS further stated, that the regulator did not look into all the departments of the council, and they can call them back in.</p> <p>CD: Housing management board have not made improvement, and it's stuck. She wanted to know who was involved in the consultation, there are lots of distrust and lots of work to be done.</p> <p>SB: acknowledge that the views of residents is paramount and there should be transparency. In addition, there is a specific failing and assured that he will take back and update.</p>	NS SB

	<p>JQC: Suggested that because of the electrical safety check the insurance company has changed. LBS should have info on the website about the new insurance.</p> <p>AS: Not all residents have access to internet. Suggested that all information should be made available at all HUB.</p> <p>ED: Wanted clarification about the consultation exercise and asked if letters were sent to all residents and how the number of representatives will be selected</p> <p>NS: Explained that it will be an independent body that will be interviewing residents that will be engaging.</p> <p>AS: Stated that LBS will be carrying out online survey.</p> <p>CM: Made reference to the regulator’s recommendations and suggested that residents have to be involve in finding solution to what the regulator have recommended. He was hoping that Southwark should have consulted with residents before sending out the report.</p> <p>SB: Stated that he will feed back all the comments from the group.</p> <p>CD: stated she runs the Southwark Pension Centre and austerity is a big issue and needs resource to be supported.</p>	
4.	<p>AOB</p> <p>AS: Stated that she will be contacting all the chairs across the borough for the rent action strike. Tenant’s movements are not happy, and they try to work collectively with cabinet members. Her legacy is to develop young people to carry on this work. She will be contacting the Chief executive the Tenant s conference.</p>	