



ASSET MANAGEMENT USER PANEL

Marlborough Court Communal Room

**Minutes of the Meeting held at 2.00pm
12th May 2010**

Present: Josh Jackson, Chris Willmott, Pete Ebsworthy, Ben Ashfold
Christine Scott (Chair), John Sherritt, Mary Rowe, Tony Walker, John Sanders,
Mick Bentley, Peter Thompkins
Ian Flatt (Regional Manager, Apollo), Purnell Vernon (Business Development
Manager, Apollo)

Minute Taker: Tricia Shaw

Item		Action By And Date
1.	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Paul Hester, Paul Wingard, Trevor Drury (Apollo)</p>	
2.	<p>Approving of the Previous Minutes & Matters Arising</p> <p>The minutes had been received well in advance, and they have been before the Tenant Panel.</p> <p>John Sanders mentioned that they seemed to be jumping around from full names to Christian names and it was not always clear who we were talking about. It was decided to stick with full names in future.</p> <p>Christine Scott expressed thanks to Tricia for getting the minutes out so quickly and enabling them to go the Tenant Panel.</p>	
3.	<p>Q and A with Trevor Drury, Apollo Housing</p> <p>Trevor Drury was unable to attend the meeting and so Purnell Vernon had attended in his absence.</p> <p>Purnell Vernon explained that Apollo now have two Resident Liaison Officers working purely with Tarka – Donna Horton and</p>	

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	<p>Becky Owen, plus Mark Testro. Apollo are using their own direct labour, recruited from the Barnstaple and Bideford areas.</p> <p>Apollo use their daughter company, Goldhall, to manage their staff effectively, and are actively trying to source more direct labour in the local area.</p> <p>All internal and external works will be completed by December 2010.</p> <p>It was recognised that there are some issues in certain areas, with Barton Tors being one. Purnell Vernon reported that this had been looked at on Tuesday 11 May and Wednesday 12 May and that Apollo were working with Paul Hester on these matters.</p> <p>There had been some really good improvements at Hartland. Mary Rowe asked what about the water supply, and Josh Jackson replied that this had all been dealt with.</p> <p>Copps Close is on target.</p> <p>Purnell Vernon reported that Apollo had recently done some roadshows, and that they were more than happy to participate with Tarka in this type of event.</p> <p>Peter Thompkins said that Chubb Churchill had been started in October. The hall was very nice but the rest had been left in limbo ever since. Garages are a disgrace, perimeter walls are half done, some bungalows have not been painted. Peter Ebsworthy reported that it was the construction detail that was giving rise to damp problems, and that we needed to give it a chance to dry off before proceeding.</p> <p>Chris Willmott reported that when time allows Tarka intend to walk the whole estate and pick up any issues that need attention and then go through the list with Apollo. Peter Thompkins expressed his concern that as the months go by we are heading into the bad weather. Purnell Vernon replied that Apollo would action the tasks quickly once they were identified.</p> <p>Mick Bentley asked would Tarka walk around the whole of Chubb Churchill or just the sheltered site? Chris Willmott replied that it would be the whole site.</p> <p>Mick Bentley said that it may be worthwhile getting a tenant's perspective on the inspection. Purnell Vernon said that he was confident Apollo now have the right people in place to carry out the work to the correct standard.</p> <p>John Sanders reported that Copps is marvellous, but on a visit to Barton Tors he felt the standard was atrocious. One house was</p>	

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	<p>being painted over loose render and the job was not up to scratch at all. Purnell Vernon said that he had spoken with Mark Testro and others to try and ascertain what has gone wrong. Apollo accept that mistakes have been made, notably ID cards. Regarding the painting it was clear that the preparation was not adequate. Regarding the issue with a chimney – there was a private property involved here and Apollo have spoken with the householder to resolve the issue.</p> <p>Ian Flatt reported that problems seem to have arisen due to site discipline issues. This will be tackled and addressed, and Apollo will be providing support to enable standards to be met.</p> <p>Chris Willmott mentioned that he has spoken to Mark Testro and expressed concerns that there are still issues going on.</p> <p>Josh Jackson asked how these issues had happened.</p> <p>Purnell Vernon replied that Apollo had acquired the company Goldhall and had been working with them for eight years. They still have part of their business with companies that Apollo do not use. Mark Testro had not been on site, and Goldhall had put someone in place who had slipped through the net and had not attended induction. Purnell Vernon would be speaking with the Director of Goldhall to find out how it happened.</p> <p>Chris Willmott said that when Trevor Drury came in January/February he said that January/February/March would be a learning curve and that from March/April these problems would not happen any more. The situation must be turned around very quickly. Purnell Vernon said that it is something very annoying that this person slipped through the net, and that the standard Tarka should be expecting is the standard of Copps Close.</p> <p>John Sanders had noticed that at Barton Tors there were repairs being done after the painting, and that it should be the other way around.</p> <p>Christine Scott asked that when taking on the other company did Apollo not explain that the standards are very crucial. Josh Jackson said it was extremely worrying that someone could just turn up for work not knowing what to do or who he was working for.</p> <p>Purnell Vernon replied that this has now been rectified and he could only apologise that it had happened. He had a meeting this week with Goldhall.</p> <p>Peter Thompkins asked for assurance that some work done at Chubb Churchill will be reassessed and put right. Chris Willmott</p>	

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	<p>and Purnell Vernon confirmed that it would.</p> <p>John Sherritt said it should be noted that every mistake made by Apollo reflects on Tarka. He asked for assurance from Tarka that if things do not improve then severe action must be taken. From what he has heard over the last ¼ hour he felt most disturbed.</p> <p>Chris Willmott replied that meetings had been held and measures put in place. If these measure do not work then Tarka will act again. Purnell Vernon added that it is how Apollo resolve the issues that will help us to move forward to ensure they do not happen again.</p> <p>Mick Bentley wished to raise the importance of the repairs being done prior to painting. Purnell Vernon repeated that they will walk and snag every property and take action to rectify any errors. The key is preparation and Mark Testro and the team will be told.</p> <p>Tony Walker asked what role does Paul Hester take – has he reported to Chris Willmott all the issues? We are being told it is being dealt with – are we happy with what we are being told? John Sanders added that we need to have a time when we do not have to keep raising issues.</p> <p>Josh Jackson replied that the surveying of work is all wrapped up in Apollos’ remit, and we have to be happy this is being carried out properly.</p> <p>John Sanders said that at Copps it was the level of work done with the tenants that was important. Tenants were over the moon with this level of service, and this is what we expect elsewhere.</p> <p>Following the conclusion of this agenda item, Purnell Vernon and Ian Flatt were thanked for their attendance, and they then left the meeting.</p>	
4.	<p>Review of Terms of Reference</p> <p>Josh Jackson said that there were some issues on clarity. The Terms of Reference were out of date as they refer to the Property Services User Panel instead of the Asset Management User Panel.</p> <p>Christine Scott asked what do people feel needs addressing?</p> <p>John Sanders said that regarding work done on refurbishments we should be consulted prior to jobs going out to tender. Josh Jackson said that information needs to be conveyed on major refurbishment projects. There was a slight difference in</p>	

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	<p>understanding of the first sentence: <i>‘The purpose of the Property Services User Panel will be to ensure that residents are involved in the repair, maintenance, improvement of existing properties and design and specification of new development projects.’</i> Development was decided at Group Level, where we do have representation. Projects which included conversions are covered in other areas – the Tarka Standard and the void process. Permission to proceed on these comes from the Board, the technical design element comes from the Surveyors.</p> <p>John Sanders said he felt aggrieved that we were being told after the event. Changes are being made to the Tarka Standard that are not being discussed here, ie flooring and kitchens. We object to not being informed.</p> <p>Chris Willmott replied that items have been discussed at the Improvements Core Group. It had been agreed to set up a working group from the Asset Management User Panel to look at the Tarka Standard, but unfortunately he had not had the time to arrange this. Some changes had come from this group. It had not been felt necessary to bring up other changes that had been agreed by the Improvement Core Group as Mick Bentley and John Sanders are members of that group.</p> <p>Josh Jackson added that the Chair should be asked to put items on the agenda if they wish them to be discussed.</p> <p>It was asked why not have an agenda item to give everyone an update on changes to the Tarka Standard? It was suggested that John Sanders takes responsibility for this.</p> <p>John Sanders said that tenants ask what is happening, and therefore we should send out an information sheet to keep tenants updated.</p> <p>Josh Jackson said that the review of the Tarka Standard is an annual event at the start of each financial year. Ben Ashfold suggested providing bullet points of the changes. This was seconded by Tony Walker.</p> <p>Mick Bentley asked why the wording was wrong – is it wrong to suit a purpose? How do we change the wording to make it clear and transparent?</p> <p>Josh Jackson said that the wording is ambiguous. The proposal is to change the wording and review as we see fit, bring it back to this panel and hand it to the Resident Liaison Officer, but we must remember that the Board makes the final decision. We need to make sure policies reflect the tenants’ wishes.</p>	<p>JS</p>
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	<p>Mick Bentley commented that it is ironic an article such as a light fitting can be brought to this panel for approval but when it comes to other matters that are far more important it is not brought to us until after it has been done. Various people on various panels have experience in various things – does Tarka now not take into account tenant’s views?</p> <p>Christine Scott said that the changes to the Terms of Reference will say items will be brought to the panel for input, but ultimately the final decision is with the Board.</p> <p>Josh Jackson replied that we do listen to tenants’ views, but we are governed by void turnarounds and the Tarka Standard – these are all policies which tenants have been involved with, but we are constrained by time and practicalities and the Board has the final decision as to which projects proceed. Also, it the surveyors who make decisions on technical matters.</p> <p>Christine Scott stated we will be informed and can have input, but accept that the Board have the final decision.</p> <p>Josh Jackson said that due to timescales and work loads we would not be able to look at this review of the terms of reference for a couple of months. Also this must be undertaken in line with a look at the tenant compact as a whole.</p> <p>John Sanders commented on item 2.1 of the Terms of Reference – subsequent to Sue Jones leaving this group we haven’t had a Board member representative on this panel and he felt that we shouldn’t have one. Josh Jackson said that he agrees, and there is a lot here that is out of date.</p>	
5.	<p>Tarka Improvements Progress Update</p> <p>A full update was provided in the ‘Report to Asset Management User Panel’.</p> <p>Chris Willmott reported that some improvement elements were over budget, but was made up by the shortfall in the heating budget. There were 271 properties non-decent at the end of March, plus 10 properties with no data. This data has now been input into Omega.</p> <p>The satisfaction figures are for all three contractors for the period April 2009 – March 2010.</p> <p>John Sanders mentioned, regarding the table for external works, it was discussed last month that it was unknown where the figure of 120 came from, yet it was there again this month.</p>	

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	<p>Josh Jackson replied that the original surveys flagged properties from the 2009/2010 Savills programme. The new IBS module will update all properties and new cyclical programme will be based on what needs to be done.</p>	
6.	<p>Advantage South West Update</p> <p>A full update was provided in the 'Report to Asset Management User Panel'.</p> <p>Chris Willmott reported that group membership was now 17.</p> <p>In 2010 contracts will be awarded for solar thermal roof panels, consumer units and extractor fans.</p>	
7.	<p>Responsive Repairs</p> <p>Postponed to next meeting.</p> <p>Josh Jackson discussed tenant participation in the current review of Tarka Works. He asked for volunteers for a focus group, explaining he was looking for two from the Asset Management User Panel and two from the Sheltered Panel. The focus group would be partly for information and partly for consultation on new business opportunities.</p> <p>It was decided that Mick Bentley and John Sanders would represent the Asset Management User Panel.</p> <p>Josh Jackson then mentioned the agenda item '<i>Agreement for proposed change to repairs survey question.....</i>'. John Sanders said that this had been agreed last month and should not have been on this month's agenda.</p>	
8.	<p>Voids</p> <p>A full update was provided in the 'Report to Asset Management User Panel'.</p> <p>Chris Willmott mentioned that he had not yet heard about the Key Performance Indicators being changed for re-let times. John Sanders said it would be either 17 or 20, but we were waiting for the Board to decide. Extra time is for the choice based letting process.</p> <p>Chris Willmott reported that we currently have 20 voids being worked on. This is more than Tarka Works can cope with so Pearce and WMS are covering some of them.</p> <p>Chris Willmott then explained about Scottish and Southern</p>	

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	<p>Energy and the service they offer for a void management scheme for gas and electrical supplies in properties, and asked what were the Panel's thoughts on this.</p> <p>John Sanders said he had had a similar discussion in Housing Management. The only issue is that we must be very careful to make it clear to the new tenant that they have the legal right to change supplier. The Housing Officer must explain this quite clearly to the tenant.</p> <p>Chris Willmott said that he had asked Scottish and Southern to come and speak to us, and would like a couple of nominees from the panel for involvement in the discussion. John Sanders suggested he speak to Paul Raeburn as Housing Management are not aware of this, but Chris Willmott said he spoke to Kirsty Mather about a month ago regarding the process.</p> <p>Josh Jackson suggested the group delegates authority to Chris Willmott to deal with this. All were in agreement.</p> <p>Bespoke refurbishments – Chris Willmott reported that we are looking to be on site in late June.</p> <p>Sandford Gardens - John Sanders said that planning would be a problem. We need to get on site – nothing has happened on it yet.</p>	
9.	<p>Discussion of Shadowing</p> <p>John Sanders reported that he had started doing externals as well as improvements.</p> <p>He had today been to look at WMS and Pearce – there was nothing much wrong with them, just minor issues. He had noticed an issue with gas cookers and electrical points – there should be a 13 amp socket behind the cooker but there are only cooker sockets behind which creates a safety issue with cables coming up across the cooker, also boxing in of wetrooms where ply should be waterproof but it would appear ordinary ply was being used.</p> <p>Ben Ashfold reported that, regarding water in radiators, we are asking contractors to power flush, but we felt this was an expensive exercise and did not do the radiators much good. We need to take this matter up with Worcester Bosch – why are we being asked to do such expensive work?</p>	BA
10.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Mick Bentley asked when a tenant requests an inspection or a</p>	

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	<p>repair what is an acceptable ratio of time for contact? Chris Willmott replied that it varies depending on workload and the type of repair.</p> <p>Mick Bentley said that the service standard states the timeframe for communication to take place – when a surveyor has acknowledged a repair is needed do we give a job number to the tenant? Josh Jackson replied that when a job is raised an acknowledgement is sent to the tenant with the job number on.</p> <p>Josh Jackson reported that he has no details as yet but the Tenant Services Authority have requested a visit of service groups. Are we happy with Tenant Services Authority representatives sitting in on the next Asset Management User Panel meeting? All were in agreement.</p> <p>Peter Thompkins asked what time is the answerphone switched off on Repairs? Josh Jackson replied that it is turned off at 9am and put back on at 5pm. Peter Thompkins said that one day last week he rang at 8.45am and then again at 9.10am and that on both occasions he still got the voice mail message. Josh Jackson replied that if all lines are busy then the answerphone will kick in and take the call.</p> <p>Ben Ashfold reported on shadowing and that there had been a lot recently. He had been accompanied by Sue Jones, Sue Mills and Caroline Church.</p>	
11.	<p>Feedback on How the Meeting Went</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting was on time. • Majority of input seems to have come from only two members – general discussion followed which included the comments that some members are not involved in many other meetings but are happy to have the opportunity to input if they wish to speak. • At last month’s meeting there was discussion of alterations to 3, 2 and 1 bed properties, with 1 beds being split into two – how can this be? – it was felt that this was a misunderstanding last month and the group was unsure where the information had come from. • The meeting went a lot better, although there was still some repetition. • One member felt that after listening to some things today the surveyors do not stick up for themselves enough. Some 	

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	<p>comments made suggest surveyors are standing back and tenants are doing all the fault finding. This member's opinion was that the surveyors are doing a full and professional job.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting went very well. • We could do with Officers arriving earlier to enable access to the building. • The meeting went well. When the terms of reference are altered it will make things clearer. • Information presented from Officers or tenants who are more involved must be listened to by others and evaluated as a fair representation. • Happy we have kept to the agenda and been able to address issues constructively as a team. People are able to express their views openly. 	
12.	<p>Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting will be held at Marlborough Court, on Wednesday 9th June 2010, commencing at 2pm.</p> <p>Griggs Close was suggested as a possible alternative venue. This will be looked into for possibilities for another time.</p>	