



**Sutton**

Leaseholders  
Association

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**13<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2010**

**7.30 PM**

Third floor, Sutton Gate, 1 Carshalton Road, Sutton

**SUTTON LEASEHOLDERS ASSOCIATION**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**13<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2010**

**AGENDA**

1. Introduction
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of Last Years Annual General Meeting
4. Annual Report
5. Accounts
6. Constitution
7. Election of Officers of the Committee - Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer
8. Election of the Committee - up to 12 nominations required

**----- 15 minute break for refreshments and draw of raffle -----**

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>9.</b> Day to Day Repair Contract   | 15 minutes |
| - Derek Vaughan, Head of Repairs and Allocations, Sutton Housing Partnership (SHP) |            |
| <b>10.</b> Leasehold Management Fee  | 20 minutes |
| - Richard Powell, Leasehold Manager, SHP   |            |
| <b>11.</b> External Decoration and CYNTRA  | 15 minutes |
| <b>12.</b> Change to Replacement Window Recharging Policy                          | 10 minutes |
| - Bev Brigden, Secretary, Sutton Leaseholders Association (SLA)                    |            |
| <b>13.</b> Panel Question and Answer Session                                       | 15 minutes |

Close of meeting at approximately 9:30 PM

## **Sutton Leaseholders Association**

### **AGM Minutes 7<sup>th</sup> July 2009**

#### **Part 1**

##### **1. Introduction**

Gwen Turner, the current SLA Chair, introduced the table and herself as Chair, Bev Brigden as Secretary, Barbara Harding as Treasurer and Linda Mackie the SFTRA worker taking the minutes.

Gwen also introduced speakers Andrew Taylor (Interim Chief Executive of SHP), Simon Latham (Executive Head of Community Living), Richard Powell (Leasehold Manager), Dawn Eustace (Quality and Performance Manger) & Andre Chalk (Head of Program Delivery)

##### **2. Apologies**

Doctor Illavia, Alexa Loukas (SHP), and Councillor Janet Lown.

##### **3. Minutes of the last AGM**

The last AGM minutes were offered by the Chair as a true and accurate record. Minutes proposed by John Turner and seconded by C Love.

**Agreed.**

##### **4. Annual Report**

Gwen advised that her annual report was attached to the agenda for attendees to read through.

##### **5. Accounts**

Barbara advised that a statement of expenditure was amongst attendees' paperwork. Barbara advised that the PA system was purchased that there had been a charity donation to St Raphael's Hospice for Shirley Dacombe on behalf of the SLA.

No questions were raised from the floor.

##### **6. Constitution**

Gwen asked if there were any questions or amendments.

**No questions raised.**

##### **7. Election of Officers**

All SLA officers stood down and Gwen handed over to Lynne Mitchell, SHP's Customer Involment Officer.

An attendee asked for more information and an explanation as to what was required of an SLA Chair. Bev said the main responsibility is to be nominated lead person and attendance to the ALMO monitoring group to discuss many issues relating to the ALMO.

Andrew Taylor said this is where SHP's performance can be scrutinised. Andrew said he likes to meet on a monthly basis with the Chair of the SLA.

Gwen commented that the role involves preparing for monthly SLA meetings.

**Chair** - No nominations, no one put forward.

**Vice Chair** – No nominations, no one put forward.

**Secretary** – Beverley proposed by Gwen Turner, seconded by Barbara Harding, show of hands from the floor – agreed.

**Treasurer** – Barbara Harding proposed by Margaret Phillips, seconded by Gwen Turner, show of hands from the floor – agreed.

With regards to the position of Chair and Vice Chair Bev suggested electing a committee then asked for the responsibility for nominating the position of Chair and Vice Chair be delegated by them at the next SLA meeting.

Andrew Taylor agreed to this, the floor voted and were in agreement too.

### **8. Election of SLA Committee**

Bev encouraged attendees to join the SLA Committee and that it would be beneficial to have a cross section of the borough.

Gwen Turner – re-elected  
John Turner – re-elected  
Margaret Phillips – re-elected  
Marion Ahrens – re-elected  
Pat Osborne – re-elected  
Jenifer Williams – re-elected  
Giana Shinozawa – re-elected

New Members  
Ali Hossain  
Ryan Drew  
Jenny Willes  
Selamawi Zere  
Annette Ridge  
Russell Gough

**A break was taken for refreshments**

### **Part 2**

#### **9. Draw of Raffle**

The raffle was drawn and all prizes distributed.

#### **10. Andrew Taylor – Working toward an Inspection**

Andrew introduced himself as Interim Chief Executive of Sutton Housing Partnership. Andrew gave a brief talk on what the inspection was for.

Why? The government allocates decent homes to the ALMO and the ALMO can only get release of that money if they reach 2 star status based on an inspection from the Audit Commission.

When? In October a team of 3 or 4 Inspectors will spend 2 weeks with SHP speaking to tenants and leaseholders and will be pre – mystery shopping too.

At last inspection (Nov '07) SHP were awarded 1 star with promising prospects.

Leasehold Services – Inspectors will come and look at Services and see how accessible they are. They will look at diversity, who are our leaseholders and is this reflected in the service.

How good are services that are paid for by leaseholders?

How accurate are bills that go out.

The Inspectors will be looking for a judgement where strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Finally, highlights from last year:

- Review of leasehold services – outcome is a list of things to be done, put into an action plan and being worked through.
- Wording with the Council to address some leasehold issues
- Issues specific to Sutton is improving gas mains
- Highlight increase in leasehold customer satisfaction

How can you help?

- What you said in you and your household survey will help
- Please complete a you and your household survey if you haven't already
- Reviewing internal service between SHP and the council (Andrew T gave out short survey for leaseholders that have had any legal dealings)

Bev thanked Andrew for his presentation

## **11. Dawn Eustace – Head of Quality and Performance**

Dawn introduced herself as head of Quality and Performance and gave a brief roundup so far.

Last year the Inspectors looked at the Customer Access Service Review. Views were sort and the improvements made are:

- Needed to be more Customer Focused so looked at SHP telephone service, website, house visits
- The You and Your Household survey gave good information for example highlighted people who are unable to get to the door quickly and this has been fed to our contractors who will use this info when attending residents houses
- Easy Read Options – An easy read document of complaints procedures going on SHP website
- Customer Focused Strategy – trying to make sure all staff provide accurate information to contractors
- Improved Website – There will be a leaseholder tab on website
- Electronic forms – Mystery shopping programme doing spot checks on estates and photographic evidence is being used

Customer Care Training – Staff committed to providing excellent service.

In 2007 – 50.6% customers made contact with SHP

In 2009 – 61% customers more able to access service

Complaints procedure being promoted more

Feedback from Leaseholders is they wanted to be involved more

Home Front – there is a leaseholders link in newsletter. All access arrangements in place.

Dawn asked for volunteers for the role of resident inspection or to become a mystery shopper.

Service Improvement Group is Kim Johnson – looking at issues raised on telephone or in reception. She is working with Richard Powell – Leasehold Manager.

Bev thanked Dawn for her presentation.

## **12. Richard Powell – Leasehold Services Manager**

Richard gave a brief update on leasehold services.

Richard said they were in a difficult position a year ago and that SHP had been working hard to rectify problems

Strategy was looked at:

- Protect councils income and minimise debt – looking at payment options
- Implement IT system to give proper leasehold statements
- Improved leasehold satisfaction

Richard said SHP were back on target with Income collection.

Richard urged attendees to fill in the “you and your household” survey.

Richard said a leasehold satisfaction survey was recently done in London Borough Sutton on SHP’s behalf. It showed:

Leasehold satisfaction increased from 36% to 45.4%

Dis-satisfaction decreased from 50% to 25%

In the year 2000 it was 29.5%

Bev thanked Richard for his presentation.

## **13. Simon Latham – Executive Head of Community Living**

A report was handed out to attendees – the Leasehold Services Review – Payment Options.

Simon talked briefly about investment and how it would be good for everyone.

He commented on how charges to leaseholders was a concern to MP’s and councillors. The council are looking at making payment options more flexible.

Simon talked about an interest free loan option. £1,500 to £3,000 you can get a loan for up to 3 years paying the council rate of interest. If you repay in 2 years you will attract no interest to the loan.

Simon spoke about extending payment options: £3,000 + over 10 years.

Simon stressed that the council is not in the business of making money from Leaseholders. The options are designed to assist leaseholders.

Simon talked about Gas Main renewals and the issues around charges has been a major concern. Collingwood and Shanklin - Replacement of Iron Pipe work – leaseholders will pay a portion of the cost of below ground pipe work. They will not pay for above ground work. Benhill - Tenders are still out for work at Benhill. Valuation will be underway very shortly. Below ground network was replaced in 90's and not so dodgy, Benhill will not be charged for below ground work but will be charged for above ground works.

#### **14. Andrew Chalk – Head of Programme Delivery**

Awaiting presentation from A.C.

#### **15. Questions:**

Q: How do you manage the timing of lighting in communal flats

A: Richard read a written response

Q: Condition of windows @ Torquay House.

A: Leaseholder advised no works needed taken place. Further assessment made windows not as bad. Someone from asset management will go and inspect. Appeals procedure available if disagreement on types of works taking place.

Q: Leaseholder has to replace double glazing why is the leaseholder. not entitled to have the work paid for.

A: More detailed answer.

Q: What is SHP doing about reducing the cost of Gas Meters.

A: Tenders for works for Benhill are still out so we don't know what cost of works will be. Simon referred then to gas main report he gave out. Andrew Chalk said cost estimates used are based on knowledge and understanding of what happened on Shanklin Estate. Anticipating keen prices for this work and good value for money.

Q: Re: windows on Hulverston – works due to windows. Now it's being done, told he has to be paid his percentage of others windows. Not going to replace but he got to pay for it. Why should he join SLA.

A: Simon said dissatisfaction is often a prompt to become involved but doesn't mean everything will be resolved. Interested in qualifying number of people who in similar position.

Another resident supported over windows issue.

Q: Windows not done, lack of flexibility on SHP side, why don't we get options of doing own windows? Find our own contractors?

A: Legally, windows are the responsibility of the Council.

Q: Question over tenanted flats and windows. Mixed block of tenure.

A: You will pay your fixed share according to your lease.

Q: How are costs calculated, 50% leasehold 50% tenant, and leaseholders pay their share and tenants their share.

A: i.e. Block of 10, you pay 10%. Fixed cost

Q: Whole of work has to be tendered for even yearly part required.

If she pays she would expect it to be replaced.

Is the purpose merely to meet the Governments Decent Homes standard or for Climate change?

A: Andrew said decent homes funding for elements of homes that fail decent homes standard. Doesn't cost anymore to put in double glazing for single glazing.

Bev said windows are an ongoing issue for the SLA. They will carry on fighting it. On back of questions, fill out survey form.

Q: Leases, anything on leaseholders is ?????? fast e.g., the council is flexible. Benhill went to tribunal and case based on historic neglect. Tribunal ruled that DG windows were an improvement.

Don't go to a tribunal.

Should we pay for modification.

Want a clear indication of what is needed to be paid.

Simon Latham – Insulation – entitled to same grants as private – means tested though.

Q: Resident wants to pay his bills but he doesn't want to:

- a) pay for what he doesn't need and frightened about the money he needs to pay. He would like a plan for his block about what is going to be done.
- b) Speak to Estate agents re selling flat. At the moment it is impossible especially with changes hanging over his head.
- c) Estate agent said 15% admin charge being added on top.

A: a) Costs are going out to leaseholders, budget figures

b) on costs, yes there is a management fee, 15% would not be excessive

c) 1<sup>st</sup> step was giving out programme (decent homes)

Q: Why can't you give figures?

A: Richard said level of detail leaseholder wants is not available.

Bev thanked everyone for coming.

Would attendees like a specific meeting on windows?

Attendees agreed.

## **Annual Report 2009/10**

Welcome to the annual report from the Sutton Leaseholders Association (SLA) for the year 2009/10. During this report please note that leaseholder is used to encompass both leaseholders and section 16 freeholders.

The AGM was held in July 2009 and an almost full committee (15 out of 16 places) was elected at that meeting with some members choosing to stand for re-election whilst other members were new to the SLA committee. The AGM unfortunately failed to elect a Chair or a Vice Chair and this was delegated to the SLA committee to arrange at their first meeting. Various presentations were made during the second part of the AGM including information being provided on the audit commission inspection, services at Sutton Housing Partnership (SHP) and major works. The main concern for those attending the AGM was replacement windows and the recharging for these, specifically where the leasehold property had had replacement window work carried out by the leaseholder. The outcome of these discussions at the AGM was the agreement to hold a separate meeting just on windows.

A windows meeting was held in November 2009 at which a representative of the Leasehold Advisory Service, officers of LBS and SHP and Councillor Stears, the Lead Councillor for Housing, attended to inform discussions of a possible way forward. At the meeting leaseholders put their names forward to join a working group to look at the issues in more detail. It was agreed by those present that the working group should consist of a mixture of SLA and non SLA committee members. The working group have met on a regular basis with LBS and SHP officers to work through the issues and to formulate a proposed way forward. The SLA would like to thank Trevor Hart, LBS, for leading on this for the council, Sara Tutton and Richard Powell, SHP, for their input in to the process and Lisa Goldstone for minuting the working group meetings.

The outcome from the working group was a report with four scenarios which was first considered by LBS Housing Advisory Group, they made a recommendation to the Executive who only last week agreed to this recommendation. Now it remains for LBS and SHP to consider the implementation of this agreed change in policy for the recharging of leaseholders who live in a property which has replacement windows and will not be included in the current programme of works.

At an SLA committee meetings Russell Gough agreed to be Chair and Ryan Drew agreed to be Vice Chair.

Unfortunately the SHP Board had been unsuccessful in finding a leaseholder to be part of the Board and LBS/SHP took the decision to relax the requirement that the leaseholder was not on the SLA committee although they maintained that the leasehold member of the Board should not be an officer of the committee. After consideration Ryan Drew decided to stand as the leasehold Board member and following an interview he joined the Board. This left the SLA without a Vice Chair although Ryan did remain as a committee member. Margaret Phillips was elected as Vice Chair for the remainder of the year. Due to other commitments Russell regrettably had to resign as Chair during the year and being unable to find a replacement the SLA has not had a Chair for the past few months. The SLA committee would like to thank Margaret for standing in as Vice Chair and chairing the monthly committee meetings.

Due to the lack of Chair it has not been possible for the SLA to be included in the ALMO Monitoring Group which meets quarterly to review the performance of SHP, as the ALMO. This has been unfortunate as it has meant that any leasehold issues and the leasehold point of view has not been able to be put across during these meetings.

The SLA has continued to meet monthly during the year discussing and considering issues related to the services provided by SHP and specifically being a leaseholder with the council as landlord. There have been many issues, apart from the windows, the one that has caused most problems for both leaseholders and SHP has been the IT system and the production of invoices and statements. The SLA has been involved in considering the information and layout included and although perhaps not quite there yet has made suggestions on how these two pieces of information could be improved. The monthly meetings have given committee members the opportunity to discuss in detail with Richard Powell, Leasehold Manager, what they find confusing about the statements and invoices and what they think should be included.

The committee have encouraged SHP to make the day to day repair printouts, which used to only be provided to committee members prior to the Actuals, more readily available to all leaseholders before the issuing of the actual accounts. Last year all leaseholders were able to request a copy of the breakdown and this year a further improvement has been made with access to this information being available via the SHP website. The SLA still has concerns about the speed and application of credits when there has been a mischarging as there are still some outstanding credits awaited from the previous year, the SLA continues to raise this matter with SHP.

The SLA in conjunction with SHP have held two leasehold surgeries, one was timed for after the Actuals whilst the most recent one was shortly after the estimated service charges were distributed. The leasehold surgeries allow leaseholders access to both SLA committee members and SHP leasehold officers outside of normal working hours. The SLA has also continued to publish regular newsletters to update all leaseholders on what the committee have been doing and to ensure they know of important meetings and opportunities for being involved.

Shortly after the AGM last year Linda Mackie, Federation Worker, left employment at SHP. There was a period of time before a new person was employed and the SLA committee would like to thank Jayne Meldon for her support during the time. Karen Price has subsequently been employed in to this post and has been working with the SLA and the Federation for the last few months. Karen has been supporting the SLA by taking the minutes, sending out paperwork to the committee and providing general assistance as required.

Major works and the cost of these continue to be a matter of concern for leaseholders. Using works and invoices relating to works at Benhill the SLA committee, with Richard Powell, has been looking at what information leaseholders would find useful to assist them ensuring that what they are being charged for is both correct and reasonable. Again many issues have been looked at and discussed and refinement of the information is ongoing.

Committee members have continued to be involved in wider issues by being involved:

- as resident repair inspectors,
- by attending training,

- by being on the Sutton Federation of Tenant & Resident Association Executive Committee and ensuring that tenants and leaseholders work together for the benefit of all residents regardless of tenure,
- by attending the SFTRA General Meetings
- by being on the Service Improvement Group (SIG)
- by being on the Repair Investment Group (RIG),
- by observing the SHP Board meetings
- by being included in the interviewing of prospective candidates for the SHP Board
- in attending the St. Helier Festival
- receiving a copy of each of the major works consultation notices issued by SHP and putting forward a response where appropriate

All these activities ensure that SLA committee members have many opportunities to ensure that the leasehold point of view is put across and the impact on leaseholders is recognised for any proposed change in service provision by SHP as well as the opportunity for committee members to meet with both tenants and other leaseholders.

The SLA has maintained contact with leaseholders through both the SLA e-mail address and the mobile phone number although it is recognised that the response to the latter still needs to be improved to provide the best service to leaseholders.

The current SLA committee would like to encourage as many leaseholders as possible to get involved. It may take a considerable amount of time to get a change in service or charging policy etc. but as has recently been seen with the window recharging policy perseverance and consideration of the impact on all involved can bring about a positive result.

We would like to thank all LBS and SHP officers who have been involved with the SLA during the past year. We would like to thank Councillor Stears for his past support on housing issues whilst welcoming Councillor McCoy as the new lead councillor for housing since the local elections in May 2010. Thank you also to all the leaseholders who have contacted the SLA during the past year with various issues or concerns. We hope that the coming year will enable further positive involvement of leaseholders with SHP and LBS through both the SLA as an association and individual leaseholders as appropriate.

SLA Committee 2009/10

Accounts

**SUTTON LEASEHOLDERS ASSOCIATION**  
**STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE FOR PERIOD APRIL 2009 TO MARCH 2010**

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>£</b>	<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>	<b>£</b>
GRANT	350.00	PARKING	5.50
RAFFLE	52.00	CHARITY DONATION	25.00
		GIFTS	34.47
		REFRESHMENTS	177.23
		P.P.S.	14.47
		RAFFLE PRIZES	15.00
		COMPUTER EQUIPMENT	11.96
	402.00		283.63

**OPENING BALANCE**

CURRENT ACCOUNT	519.74
PETTY CASH	45.93
	967.67

**CLOSING BALANCE**

BANK ACCOUNT	664.24
PETTY CASH	19.80
	967.67

I CONFIRM HAVING REVIEWED ALL RECEIPTS AND BANK STATEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS STATEMENT.  
 NO MATERIAL ERRORS HAVE OCCURRED.  
 THIS IS A TRUE REFLECTION OF ALL TRANSACTIONS

*S.M.I. Leitch*  
 SUTTON HOUSING PARTNERSHIP  
 9/7/2010

## **SUTTON LEASEHOLDERS ASSOCIATION**

### **CONSTITUTION**

ORIGINALLY APPROVED 17<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2006

- 1. NAME**

The name of the Association shall be: The Sutton Leaseholders Association (S.L.A.) which will be an affiliate of the Sutton Federation of Tenant & Resident Associations.

  - 1.1.** For the purpose of this constitution the term Leaseholder is to include Section 16 Freeholder.
- 2. OBJECTS**

The Object of the Association shall be:

  - 2.1.** Promote the interests of leaseholders of Sutton Council;
  - 2.2.** Co-ordinate activity and representation of leaseholders on Committees / Groups / Forums of Sutton Housing Partnership, Council Committees and within the Sutton Federation of Tenant & Resident Associations.
  - 2.3.** The Association shall be non-party in politics, non-sectarian in religion and practice equal opportunities in its activities.
- 3. ACTIVITIES**
  - 3.1.** To meet quarterly with officers of Sutton Housing Partnership to discuss and negotiate all aspects of mutual interest.
  - 3.2.** Annually nominate representatives to Committees / Groups / Forums of Sutton Housing Partnership.
  - 3.3.** To regularly report on its activities to the Sutton Federation of Tenants and Residents Association.
  - 3.4.** Contribute information and articles for distribution to Sutton leaseholders, tenants and residents. Help distribute relevant information.
  - 3.5.** Organise promotional and social events in support of the Association.
- 4. MEMBERSHIP**
  - 4.1.** Membership shall be open to all leaseholders (family) and s. 16 (family) of a Council owned property who is making a contribution to the Housing Revenue Account through service charges.
  - 4.2.** Voting rights will be limited to one vote per member household.
- 5. MANAGEMENT**
  - 5.1.** The Association shall be managed by a Management Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting.
  - 5.2.** The Management Committee shall meet a minimum four times per year.
  - 5.3.** The Committee shall consist of: - Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer plus a maximum of twelve members plus such other person or persons whose expertise may be considered valuable to the Association. Such persons to be elected only at the Annual General Meeting and only to serve on an ex-officio, non voting basis. Such nominees receive at least two-thirds approval from members attending the Annual General Meeting.

- 5.4. Committee members who do not attend three consecutive meetings without giving their apologies shall be deemed to have resigned from the committee.
- 5.5. If vacancies occur among the Committee, the Committee shall have the power to fill them from among their members until the next Annual General Meeting of the Association when elections take place.
- 5.6. The Chairperson shall have a casting vote in the event of a split decision.
- 5.7. All Committee Members stand down at the Annual General Meeting and may stand for re-election.
- 5.8. The quorum for meetings shall be five.
- 5.9. The Management Committee will be responsible for day-to-day decision-making and its members will represent the Association members in negotiation with Sutton Council, Sutton Housing Partnership and other representative bodies.

## 6. MEETINGS

### 6.1. Annual General Meeting

The Committee shall call an Annual General Meeting within fifteen months of the previous Annual General Meeting for the purpose of

- Receiving the annual report of the Committee;
- Receiving the audited statement of accounts;
- Accepting the resignations of the Committee and Officers;
- Election of a Committee and Officers for the coming year;
- Making recommendations to the committee,
- Voting, where necessary on proposals to amend the Constitution.

- 6.1.1 Not less than 28 days notice of the annual General Meeting shall be given to all those eligible for membership.
- 6.1.2 The quorum for the Annual General Meeting shall be twenty-five.
- 6.1.3 Decisions will be taken by simple majority except in the case of alterations to the Constitution which requires a two-thirds majority.
- 6.1.4 The annual General Meeting will set overall policy guidelines.

### 6.2. General Meeting

The Committee shall hold at least 2 surgeries a year which shall be open to all members. Not less than 14 days notice of surgeries shall be given to all members.

### 6.3. Special General Meeting

The Chairperson, at the request of a minimum of five members of the Management Committee, may at times call a Special General Meeting of the Association, either for the purpose of altering the constitution or for considering any matters which the committee decides should be referred to the members in general. A Special General Meeting shall also be called at the written request of not less than twenty-five members giving written reasons for the request.

## 7. FINANCES

- 7.1. The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the Association and open a bank account in the name of The Association.

- 7.2. The Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will be signatories to the Bank Account and two signatures will be required for signing cheques.
- 7.3. The accounts shall be audited once every year by an independent auditor.

## **8. DISSOLUTION**

If the General Committee by a simple majority decides at any time that on the grounds of expense or otherwise it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Association, a meeting of all members of the Association who have the power to vote with not less than 21 days notice (stating the terms of the resolution to be discussed at the meeting) shall be posted to all members. If such a decision shall be confirmed by a simple majority of those present and voting at such a meeting, the Council shall have power to dispose of any assets held by or in the name of the Association. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be applied towards such charitable purposes for the benefit of the inhabitants of the area of benefit as the General Committee may decide.

## **Recharging Window Replacement Costs to Council Leaseholders**

### **- Briefing Note to SLA**

1. At its meeting of 6 July, the Council's Executive was asked to consider a recommendation from the Housing Advisory Group that a change of policy should be made regarding how leaseholders are charged when window replacement programmes are carried out to blocks of flats.
2. The issue centres on the situation where a leaseholder has replaced his/her own windows in advance of a replacement programme but, under the terms of the Council's standard lease, he/she is nevertheless required to contribute to the cost of that programme even his/her own flat is excluded (due to the windows having previously been replaced and their being deemed to be in good condition).
3. The SLA has argued that the current policy is unfair since many leaseholders' windows were in need of replacement but programmes had been very slow in coming forward due to the Council's financial position and so many individual leaseholders had gone ahead and carried out their own window replacement at their own cost.
4. In view of this situation, a working group of leaseholder representatives and Council/SHP officers was set up in late 2009 to look at alternative policy options. The group met a number of times and from its deliberations, four alternative recharging policy options were developed. These were duly incorporated in a report submitted to the Housing Advisory Group in June 2010.
5. All of the options looked at ways of eliminating or reducing the recharge made to leaseholders who had replaced their windows (and whose flats were not included in the programme). Two of the options, however, involved leaseholders who were included in the programme paying more than required by their lease and so were ruled out as they would effectively require changes to individual lease agreements, which was regarded as both expensive and impractical.
6. Of the remaining two options, the one based on "scenario 3" in the report involved charging leaseholders who had replaced their windows only for their share of the on-costs of the project. The other, based on "scenario 4" in the report, required those leaseholders who had replaced their own windows to pay a contribution to the cost of the windows as well as their share of the on-costs, calculated so that the overall cost incurred by the HRA would be no more than it would have been had all the flats been included in the programme.
7. It was considered that the option based on scenario 4 represented the fairest approach given the need to balance the interest of the leaseholder and the potential loss of income to the HRA.
8. The Executive decided to support the proposed revision to the recharging policy and officers were asked to determine, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing, the timing of the implementation of the new policy.

**Trevor Hart**  
**Housing Strategy and Performance Manager**  
**020 8770 5844**

**9 July 2010**