

## **South Warwickshire Landlord Steering Group**

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2014**

**2.00 – 4.00pm**

**Room 3.05, Riverside House, Milverton Hill, Leamington Spa**

**In attendance: Richard Thomas (Chair), Paul Hughes (WDC), Mary Latham (NLA), Runjit Bhopal (Landlord), Hardeep Malle (Landlord), Alex Chard (Kingsford Lettings), Steve Woodley (Jeremy & Co, Agents), Alison Powers (SDC), Bob Berriman (Landlord).**

### **Minutes**

#### 1. Welcome and apologies

PH welcomed the group and handed to RT as newly elected Chair. Apologies were received from Hilary Kennelly, Matthew Scott & Cathy Catell, Dr Singh, Jinder Pal, Terry Samuel, William MacKinnon Little, Ken Bruno, John Whitwam, Martin Brooks.

#### 2. Minutes of last meeting/Matters arising

Item 5 – ML requested the Planning Department be asked to provide a more detailed response to questions arising at the previous meeting in regard to Article 4, and also questioned its effect on affordable homes - how is Article 4/Local Plan and the Housing Strategy working together?

ML advised that Peter Wright, Senior Planner at Birmingham CC had software which enabled them to respond to Article 4 density queries within 2 minutes.

RB suggested that we set up action logs for any issues which require actions so the group can clearly see that issues can be progressed to a conclusion.

**Action Point: Reps from Planning Policy & Housing Strategy be requested to attend the next Steering Group meeting to answer the group's specific queries.**

**Action Point: Planning be requested to provide a more detailed written response to questions raised at last meeting and PH to offer Birmingham CC contact to WDC Planning.**

**Action Point: PH to set up action logs for points that are on-going.**

Item 6 – ML suggested that in regard to HMO Licensing, WDC needs to review its criteria for determining the number of storey's in the light of recent case law. PH advised that the Bristol .v. Digs case was subject to an appeal hearing, which was due in the High Court last week and was waiting for the outcome before any decision could be made in regard to future interpretation.

### 3. Terms of reference

These were formally adopted with the amendments circulated to all members in December 2013.

### 4. Forum Meeting

It was agreed to trial a late afternoon meeting. It was felt that this would better suit landlords travelling from further afield. Time 3.30 for a 4.00 start, and meeting to finish approximately 6.00pm.

It was agreed that we would use Victoria House in Leamington Spa as this was a tried and tested venue which had proved popular in the past. It was a reasonable cost and car parking was not difficult. It was suggested that the subsequent Forum should be held in the Stratford area, so we alternate between the 2 districts.

The date for the Forum was set for 4th June (subject to confirmation with Victoria House), with a reserve date of 10th June.

It was agreed that this forum would be a joint venture with NLA

### 5. Forum Topics

1) Legal update to include recent case law in regard to Spencer Taylor and Superstrike cases (NLA)

2) HMO's – definitions and standards (WDC)

3) Landlord Insurance (RBS)

There was discussion about having a workshop at the end of the Forum. ML pointed to a previous Forum where this had proved successful and landlords had engaged well, but the key was selecting an appropriate topic.

AC raised the issue of Mortgages and finance. It was felt that this topic could be the subject of a workshop at this Forum or a presentation at a future Forum but it was important to source the right speaker to avoid a sales pitch.

Tax and Dealing with anti-social behaviour were also raised as a possible future Forum topics.

Exhibitors – it was agreed that those giving presentations should have first refusal. Members of the steering group should also be able to request a table to

display, provided that there was rotation. We are limited to a maximum of 5 exhibitors at Victoria House due to space. 4 speakers plus AC requested a pitch for his lettings business.

**Action Point: PH to obtain further details for possible RBS presentation**

**Action Point: AP to obtain further details in regard to Police presentation**

**Action Point: AC to investigate speaker for Mortgages & financing**

#### 6. Newsletter

No items had been submitted for inclusion in any newsletter. ML suggested that The Bugle compiled by Liz Mooney at Sandwell was a good example of a newsletter and we should not be afraid to 'borrow' articles' from a range of other sources.

It was agreed that a press release could be issued to confirm that Warwick and Stratford Councils and landlords were now working together to share information and improve the private rented sector.

**Action Point: RT to prepare a draft**

#### 7. Date/Venue of Next Steering Group Meeting

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2.00pm Council offices, Stratford on Avon

#### 8. AOB

ML advised 5 CPD points can be awarded for MLAS members who attend Landlord Forums.

Review of Property conditions in the PRS – TS has submitted comments. Due to the short timescale for responses, it was requested that anyone wishing to respond does so by e mail no later than 14<sup>th</sup> March to enable a response which was representative of members' views.