



Tenants Panel – Monthly Meeting

Thursday 26th March 2026

Location – Town Hall, Darlington

Minutes

Present: Sara Lunn (Tenancy Involvement Officer), Matthew Hufford (Tenancy Involvement Officer), Jemma Ransom (Food Waste Engagement Co Ordinator)

Tenants Panel Members: Don Aitchison (Branksome Hall Drive), Tanya Caenazzo (Heighington) Frank Hunter (Roxby Court), Hugh Mortimer (Park Place), Carol Taylor (Parkside), Karen Wright (Lancaster Close), Christine Fishwick (North Riverside) Jade (Park Place)

Apologies: Albert (High Coniscliffe), Albert (High Coniscliffe), Maureen (High Coniscliffe), Walter (Ted Fletcher Court) Linsay Sinclair, Carl Bennett (Branksome Hall Drive), Stephen Gordon (Branksome), Denise Parkin (Haughton), Ivan Sparks (Red Hall),

		ACTION
1.	<p>Introduction</p> <p>All panel members introduced themselves</p>	
2.	<p>Food Waste collection</p> <p>Jemma Ransome attended and went through why DBC are doing food waste collections. She also gave a guide on how the food waste should be used and what to expect with the waste.</p> <p>There was an explanation of why the collections have been moved until June from the original date in March. Collections will be weekly along with the other recycling which will also be weekly with refuse continuing to be fortnightly.</p> <p>There will also be a change to the separation of normal recycling with no need to separate cardboard and plastic.</p> <p>This scheme has been rolled out successfully in other areas of the UK</p> <p>Questions from the panel included risk of vermin, where the nearest plant for recycling is, space with the additional bins, and whether DBC will get statistics for the amount of people that are using the food waste service.</p>	

	<p>Jemma also confirmed that it is a centrally funded scheme and not something that the council has paid for by themselves.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Annual Report The Tenants Panel were asked to share their thoughts on the last annual report. Rather than go through the content which is timely, the TP were asked about the formatting and size. Comments included</p> <p>Index Page – although the content is vast the index page is important as Tenants can look at things that interest them the most (Tanya)</p> <p>Breakdown on spending – the breakdown of spending is vital as it gives tenants an idea of where their money is going, it is transparent and could stop many complaints (Hugh)</p> <p>Tenants reading the Annual Report – It was agreed that it was beneficial but unlikely that all tenants read all of the annual report. MH stated that the annual report is easily found on our webpages and was advertised when it was released.</p> <p>Feedback will be used when the Tenant Involvement Team writes the Annual Report in the next couple of months.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>TSM focus Group MH shared with the panel that the focus groups will be for the two highlighted areas chosen by the panel at the last meeting. Complaints and ASB</p> <p>Jacki from Civic Enforcement then was welcomed and went through her role and the general role of Civic Enforcement at DBC Civic Enforcement mainly deals with Anti-Social Behaviour and the prevention of ASB. This includes working with partners (housing team, police) and injunction to consistent offenders. Issues can be seasonal such as off-road biking in the warmer weather and fireworks in the winter There are also issues which are all year round such as fly tipping which is a common problem in Darlington.</p> <p>The panel then went through a general discussion about their experiences of ASB and how it could be dealt with. It was the general consensus that parents and teachers are responsible in teaching children what is right and wrong. Jacki advised that all cases are looked at on an individual basis.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Community Funding</p> <p>Sara went through both the Rockwell House and Linden Court Funding. This was agreed by the tenants panel with steps being made to send cheques to the individual applicants</p>	

	<p>Rockwell House has requested funding for a De Fib which has been part funded by fundraising from tenants and the scheme manager</p> <p>Linden Court has requested funding for accessible garden items to ensure that everyone can enjoy the garden in the summer.</p> <p>Don asked what the process is around applying for funding. MH and SL advised that it is a three tier systems and applications go through the Tenant Involvement Team and then senior managers before going to the Tenants Panel. It was also asked why it needs to go through the Tenants Panel with the answer being that the regulator likes to see the residents are involved with decision making</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>ID card Tanya still hasn't got her ID card, was due to get picture taken but Fire Alarm went off at the end of the session</p> <p>Terms of reference Terms of reference was due to be signed by Tanya but again was delayed due to Fire Alarm at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>Dawns Bench Matthew went through the plans for Dawn' memorial at Wesley Court. This will be within the next month, and the Tenants Panel will be invited.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Next Meeting – The next meeting will take place on the 23/04/2026 at 1.30pm</p>	