

## **Draft Minutes of Southwold Town Council Landlords Committee meeting held 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024 at 9.00am Town Hall Southwold. Rep LL 03.24**

**Present** – Cllrs Flunder, Gladwell, Redington, Wells. And the Town Clerk

1. **Apologies:** To receive apologies for absence. Apologies from Cllr Sutton and Cllr Goldsmith – Noted.
2. **Declarations of interest:**
  - a. To receive any declarations of Non registerable Interest regarding the agenda. Nil
  - b. To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest/ Other Registrable Interests regarding the agenda. Nil
  - c. To receive any request for dispensations regarding the agenda. Nil
3. **To receive comments from public.** Nil
4. **Minutes/ notes of the previous meeting** – noted and agreed for signature.
5. **Grant availability for insulation/ property repairs etc. Hurren Terrace – action required.**  
Information held re various grant funders including Suffolk Climate Action Community Match Funder.

Town Clerk noted that there are some grant funders offering funding for insulation, solar panels etc. Cttee to consider these opportunities when reviewing/ undertaking the maintenance programme.

Cllr Gladwell had attended a 'Mould and Damp' course in Ipswich for landlords and briefed the cttee on the information provided at the course. There are advisers operating under the Healthy Homes initiative who will look at properties for tenants and then signpost tenant/ landlord to grant bodies etc after ascertaining which works might create some improvement.

It had previously been agreed that Flat 1 Hurren terrace would be used as a pilot for the town council. An extraction fan needs to be provided and Cllr Gladwell will liase with tenant and make contact with some of the advisers to start the process and then come back to the town Council. If this becomes an appropriate way of reviewing the let property, then the same process will be applied to the other accommodation on Hurren Terrace / Station Road. The gable end at the rear of H T is being considered for renovation – any external wall insulation required in this area will be considered at the same time.

### **6. Update on repairs 2023.2024 and planned works 2024.2025.**

Spreadsheet of work in progress and those requiring works shown on screen to all including.

- The gable end at the rear of H T is being considered for renovation – any external wall insulation required in this area will be considered at the same time. There will be a decision to make as to whether the project involves a) an external wall insulated option or b) additional brick outer skin. The Architect has confirmed that both pf these would help to improve the EPC rating at the property and that loft insulation would provide the roof insulation.
- EPC requirements to be checked at Flat 21a Market Place which has just become empty to ensure that additional works are considered before reletting.
- 4 Strickland Place to be asked for update about the grant application for improvements to property.
- Flat 3 Hurren Terrace – clothes dryer required once Hub works completed – appropriate place to be ascertained.
- Town Hall works – Museum will assist with the sorting of the cellar – other council volunteers required.

Once Phase 1 of Town Hall works start the kitchen will be knocked through – so consideration to be given for temporary arrangements for a kitchen.

- 2 Strickland Place – works should commence by end April 2024. Revised scope means costs are now £52,765 plus Vat as indicated.
- Casino new windows – planning application being prepared.
- Water Tower – dehumidifiers to be commissioned for each floor for a short period of time to refresh property after wet winter. Priority of works required to be ascertained with potential tenant.  
(Large water tower – upgrade works re mobile network being carried out 27<sup>th</sup> March)

## 7. Empty Properties

Number of options for council to consider for appropriate residential properties include;

- a) Rent – advertised locally and nationally to include the opportunity for any Ukrainian refugees seeking independent living.
- b) HMO – with advisory assistance from East Suffolk Council
- c) Sizewell C Accommodation pool – There is an e mail address to register any available property for workers who are not living on site.
- d) East Suffolk Lettings - who have been asked to do presentation to landlords cttee about their offer.

Discussion about the appropriateness of each for the properties which STC owns.

The available properties from STC presently are;

- Flat 21a Market Place – one bedroom – improvements on EPC being considered and could then be let under a) or c) above.
- Flat above shop Station Rd – one bedroom flat - being advertised at present.
- Shop Station Rd – commercial - being advertised for rent at present.
- Flat 7 Hurren Terrace – Fire Requirements for an HMO are considerable, and a second quote is being obtained. Whilst this might be a longer-term ambition for the property it will take some time to take forward should council wish to. It is recommended therefore that in the short term the property be let under Option a) above – rent to be ascertained and agreed by council and property then to be advertised for short term let both locally and through SCC Ukrainian refugees’ team who might have a family who would be interested.  
At the same time a business case for an HMO to be worked through for the longer term.

*Red Cross Hut* – non-residential - pre planning application being taken forward as previously agreed at costs of £13,500 plus Vat. Estimated fees to take it through to full planning is £13,500 plus Vat additional sum. No recommendation at present time. Await result of pre planning and then consider whether the council takes to full planning or not. Option would be for a purchaser to take through full planning.

*1 Strickland Place* - indication of market price received. Council to consider basis of sale and timescales.

## 8. Grant availability for insulation/ property repairs etc.

Town Clerk noted that there are some grant funders offering funding for insulation, solar panels etc. Cttee to consider these opportunities when reviewing/ undertaking the maintenance programme.

9. **Date of next landlords cttee meeting.** 11<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 9.00 am.

**\*\*Note: Discussions above may need to be considered as confidential as appropriate and dealt with in the agenda item below.**

9. **Exclusion of Public and Press:** Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodied (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it is proposed that, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following.

*Legal Advice                  Tender for works                  Rent/lease reviews.*

Discussion and updates on various legal matters re leases. No recommendations.

### ***Recommendations***

- Flat 7 Hurren Terrace – Fire upgrade requirements for an HMO are considerable - a second quote is being obtained. Whilst this might be a longer-term ambition for the property it will take some time to take forward should council wish to.  
It is recommended therefore that in the short term the property be let under Option a )above – rent to be ascertained from NPS and agreed, and property then to be advertised for short term let both locally and through SCC Ukrainian refugees team who might have a family who would be interested.  
At the same time a business case for an HMO to be worked through for the longer term.