

**Riverways Area Panel meeting  
(Harpurhey, Miles Platting & Newton Heath and Ancoats & Clayton)**

**Minutes of meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2006  
At the Harpurhey Neighbourhood Project  
Starting at 6.30pm  
Vice Chair: Sue Abbott**

**Present:**

Sue Abbott	Panel Member (Vice-chair)
Marlene Garnett	Panel Member
Raymond Eaton	Panel Member
Barbara Grey	Panel Member
Pat Glazebrook	Panel Member
Alice Needham	Panel Member
Mick Loughman	Panel Member & Councillor (Ancoats & Clayton)
Michelle Blakeley	Northwards Board Member
Jan Liddle	Jolly Miller TA (Observer)
Sheila Elliot	SHOUT TMO (Observer)
Brian Eadsforth	SHOUT TMO (Observer)
Danny Whitelock	Property & Surveying Services
Mike Lee (ML)	Principal Local Services Manager
Steve Finegan	Business Support Manager
Greig Lees	Investment Strategy Manager
Rhonda Finlayson	Tenant Liaison Officer
Jayne Boote	PEP

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and introductions. Confirm Quorate.</b>	
1.1	Sue Abbott welcomed everyone to the meeting & introductions were then made by everyone present. The meeting was quorate.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Apologies for Absences</b>	
2.1	Vera Salvatore, Ivy Graham, Suzanne Rogers, Larry Patrick, Cllr June Hitchen and Cllr Paul Fairweather.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Declaration of Interests / Confidential Matters</b>	
3.1	None Declared	
<b>4</b>	<b>Minutes of Last Meeting</b>	
4.1	Item 8 – Reference to Cllr Ken Barnes to be removed	
4.2	Item 11 - Rotation of Members: Alice Needham was listed as a leaseholder but she is a tenant. Pat Glazebrook is the leaseholder representative.	

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	After these amendments the minutes were agreed.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
5.1	Under Item 5.3. in response to a query about the Victoria Square Work Programme Larry Patrick was to bring answers to this meeting. These will be brought to the next meeting.	<b>LP</b>
5.2	Mick Loughman asked for updates on the windows programme for Victoria Square. It was confirmed that Victoria Square is a listed building and as such can't have uPVC windows.	<b>LP</b>
5.3	Having investigated alternative venues in Newton Heath and Ancoats, Rhonda Finlayson confirmed that the Stirling Centre in Newton Heath will be available for bookings from end of May, 2006.	
<b>6</b>	<b>Board Meeting Minutes (for Noting)</b>	
6.1	The panel noted the minutes held on 13 <sup>th</sup> December 2005 and 17 <sup>th</sup> January 2006.	
<b>7</b>	<b>Reports from Sub-Committees</b>	
7.1	Four sub-committees were set up: Human Resources & Equality, Procurement and Property, Resource & Governance and Performance & Quality Services. The first meetings of these sub-committees will be taking place on 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> March. Updates from the sub-committees will be reported back to future Area Panel meetings.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Minutes of Other Panel Meetings</b>	
	Minutes noted.	
<b>9</b>	<b>Role of the Area Panels</b>	
9.1	Greig Lees explained that the support that the panels receive would be changing. The Tenant Liaison Officers would support the group but the Principal Local Services Manager will now become the lead officer for the Area Panel and would work closely with the Chair. This is because the area panel covers the same area as the local services team and the managers will bring regular reports back to Area Panel regarding the performance of the teams.	
9.2	GL explained the importance the Area Panels play the decision making process.	
9.3	GL also explained that a plan is being drafted to help develop the Area Panels and that external consultants would be engaged to aid their development. A copy of this will be brought to the next meeting.	<b>GL</b>

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<p><b>10</b></p> <p>10.1</p> <p>10.2</p>	<p><b>Local Area Performance Reports</b></p> <p>Steve Finegan explained that the Area Panel will receive a Local Area Performance Report from the Local Services Manager covering such things as lettings, voids and rent collection for their Area. These reports will form part of the performance report which will go to the City Council.</p> <p>Mike Lee updated the group about the empty properties in the Riverways Area along with the status of Voids. Mike also gave the group an update on the number of nuisance cases in the Area.</p>	<p><b>ML</b></p>
<p><b>11</b></p> <p>11.1</p> <p>11.2</p> <p>11.3</p>	<p><b>Membership &amp; Rotation of Members</b></p> <p>Rhonda advised the group that Frank Birchall was stepping down from his position of Area Panel Member for personal reasons.</p> <p>Raymond Eaton who was previously voted on to the Area Panel selected his length of term – 3 years.</p> <p>Kath Hope who had previously been elected to the Area Panel but had stepped down now wishes to rejoin the Area Panel. Rhonda is to look into the current Membership to see how long Kath can stand for.</p>	<p><b>RF</b></p>
<p><b>12</b></p> <p>12.1</p>	<p><b>Customer Service Standards</b></p> <p>Steve Finegan circulated the existing City Council customer service standards and asked for comments from the group as these will be updated for Northwards. Steve Finegan asked the group to consider any improvements and feed back any comments through the Tenant Liaison Officer (Rhonda Finlayson).</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p>
<p><b>13</b></p> <p>13.1</p> <p>13.2</p> <p>13.3</p> <p>13.4</p>	<p><b>Tenant Inspectorate &amp; KLoE 5</b></p> <p>A report has gone to the Board for approval to recruit a team of Tenant Inspectors. It is envisaged that there will be around 12 who will check the service provided by Northwards and will include estate and offices visits along with shadowing officers to inspect voids etc.</p> <p>Several ALMOs operate a similar scheme and they are a popular way of improving services.</p> <p>An Open Day is planned for people interested in becoming a tenant inspector on 9<sup>th</sup> March at Cheetham Local Service Office.</p> <p>Tenant Inspectorate Updates will be a standard item on future Area Panel agenda's.</p>	

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<p><b>14</b> 14.1</p>	<p><b>Tenant Newsletter – Steve Finegan</b> Steve Finegan circulated examples of newsletters from other organisations to highlight the range of approaches. The group was asked for comments and proposals about the name of the Northwards quarterly newsletter along with comments on what they thought should be included. Steve Finegan asked the group to feed any comments through the Tenant Liaison Officer (Rhonda Finlayson).</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p>
<p><b>15</b> 15.1 15.2</p>	<p><b>Preparation for Inspection – Steve Finegan</b> Steve Finegan explained that Northwards need to achieve a minimum 2* (good) rating to access the additional £130 million for investment in homes. Northwards will be completing a Self Assessment of services that will be submitted to the Audit Commission by Easter. An Action Plan will be needed about how we can improve services.</p>	
<p><b>16</b> 16.1 16.2</p>	<p><b>Delivery Plan</b> Greig Lees explained that we have 3 months from signing the Management Agreement (12<sup>th</sup> December 05) to agree the Delivery Plan (for 2006/07) with the City Council. The Delivery Plan sets out what Northwards Housing will deliver for this period and has been commented on and approved by the Board. Any additional comments from the City Council will be considered by the chair and vice-chair of the Board. It is anticipated that the Plan will be finally agreed by March Board. Once agreed, a copy of the Delivery Plan will be published on the website.</p>	
<p><b>17</b> 17.1 17.2 17.3 17.4</p>	<p><b>Empty Properties Standard and the Repair Service</b> Danny Whitelock talked through the three leaflets (Empty Homes, Repair Work &amp; Repair Deadlines). Danny explained that some amendments have already been made to the versions circulated and talked through these with the group. All three leaflets will be amended and a final version will be ready for the next meeting. The group welcomed the amendments but had particular comments on certain points: House Clearances – Danny explained that Northwards were looking at the possibility of introducing a £200 charge to tenants who leave properties full of bulky items which we then have to clear out. The group expressed some concern about this as it couldn't be</p>	<p><b>DW</b>    <b>DW</b></p>

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17.5	<p>avoided in certain circumstances and it could lead to an increased incidence of fly-tipping. Danny agreed to review this proposal.</p> <p>Danny asked the group for suggestions how the current service can be improved. Danny asked the group to feed any comments back to him directly or through the Tenant Liaison Officer (Rhonda Finlayson).</p>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Tenant Compact</b>	
18.1	Jayne Boote from PEP explained that a task group is being set up to look in detail at the Tenant Participation Compact – the first meeting of which was planned for 8 <sup>th</sup> March.	
18.2	Letters of invitation have been sent out to all Area Panel members, TAs and those who have attended previous task groups.	
18.3	Jayne Boote asked the group if they have seen the existing MCC Compact and if so what they thought of it. The group said they had not really looked at it due to its size.	
18.4	Jayne explained that they were looking to develop a new Compact for Northwards that is much more user friendly and that would include a menu of ways that tenants can become involved.	
18.5	The Area Panel would have the opportunity to comment on any changes to the Compact before it went to the Board for approval. Jayne will update the Area Panel at the next meeting.	
<b>19</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
19.1	Invites were circulated to the group for the Sense of Place – Refugee Integration festival that was taking place at North Manchester High School for Boys on Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> March from 5pm-7pm, Northwards would be present at the event.	
	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March at 6.30pm at the Monsall Street Housing Office.</p>	
	<p><b>Meeting Closed</b></p> <p>Meeting closed 8.40pm</p>	