

**Wilton Area Panel  
(Cheetham Hill, Crumpsall, Higher Blackley)**

**Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 28th February 2006**

**The Community Room, Cheetham Hill Road Local Services Office  
Starting at 6.30pm**

**Chair: Sue Ratchford**

<b>Present:</b>	Anne Heywood	Panel Member
	Charles Taggart	Panel Member (Vice Chair)
	Sue Ratchford	Panel Member (Chair)
	Jim Burke	Panel Member
	Irene Madden	Panel Member
	Doris Leach	Panel Member
	Melanie Beckford	Panel Member
	Sue Pemberton	Panel Member
	Eileen Kelly	Panel Member
	Ken Barnes	Panel Member & Councillor (Hghr Blackley)
	Mike Stevens	Director of Neighbourhood Services
	Greig Lees	Investment Strategy Manager
	Steve Finegan	Business Support Manager
	Sue Sanderson	Principal Surveying Service Manager
	Laura Gormley	Deputy Local Services Manager
	Kevin Taggart	Tenant Liaison Officer
	Jayne Boote	PEP

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b></p> <p>Introductions were made by everyone. A full Quorate was in attendance.</p>	
2	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Apologies given by: Larry Patrick, Nicola Jones and Emma Foster.</p>	
3	<p><b>Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters</b></p> <p>None Declared.</p>	
4	<p><b>Minutes of Last Meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p>	

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
5	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>No Matters Arising.</p>	
6	<p><b>Board Meeting Minutes (for Noting)</b></p> <p>The panel noted the minutes held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2005 and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2006.</p>	
7	<p><b>Reports from Sub-Committees</b></p> <p>Four sub-committees were set up: Human Resources &amp; Equality, Procurement and Property, Resource &amp; Governance and Performance &amp; 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.</p>	
8	<p><b>Minutes of other Area Panel Meetings</b></p> <p>Minutes noted. Anne Heywood asked why we were not up to date in terms of receiving minutes. Kevin Taggart explained that due to the Christmas break we were behind but we are now up to date again. Jim Burke asked for a list of the other panels' rotation of service for the next meeting.</p>	<b>KT</b>
9	<p><b>Role of the Area Panels</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>9.2 GL explained the importance the Area Panels play in the decision making process.</p> <p>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.</p>	<b>GL</b>

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
10	<b>Local Area Performance Reports</b>	
10.1	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.	<b>NJ</b>
11	<b>Anti-Social Behaviour</b>	
11.1	Laura Gormley circulated enclosures to support the report presented by Mike Stevens. Due to individuals being named in the enclosures these were to be handed back at the end of the meeting so the names can be deleted. The enclosures will be re-circulated at the next meeting.	<b>LG</b>
11.2	Councillor Barnes raised a number of issues about the way ASB reports are initially dealt with. Mike Stevens said that overall our record in dealing with nuisance and ASB was excellent; but agreed that there were evidently some issues which we needed to review in terms of how initial reports are dealt with. He said that the current approach had been developed for a reason and had generally proved effective; but agreed that this would be a good time to review it and see if it could be improved. This would be looked at, with a further update to be provided at the next meeting.	<b>MS</b>
12	<b>Customer Service Standards</b>	
12.1	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 (Kevin Taggart).	<b>ALL</b>
13	<b>Tenant Inspectorate &amp; KLoE 5</b>	
13.1	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 office visits along with shadowing officers, e.g. to inspect voids.	
13.2	Several ALMOs operate a similar scheme and they are a popular way of improving services.	
13.3	An Open Day is planned for people interested in becoming a tenant inspector on 9 <sup>th</sup> March at the Cheetham Hill Road Office.	
13.4	Tenant Inspectorate feedback will be a standard item on future Area Panel agendas.	<b>SF</b>

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
<p><b>14</b></p> <p>14.1</p>	<p><b>Tenant Newsletter</b></p> <p>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 (Kevin Taggart).</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p>
<p><b>15</b></p> <p>15.1</p> <p>15.2</p>	<p><b>Preparation for Inspection</b></p> <p>Steve Finegan explained that Northwards need to achieve a minimum 2* (good) rating to access the additional £130 million for investment in homes.</p> <p>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></p> <p>16.1</p> <p>16.2</p>	<p><b>Delivery Plan</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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></p> <p>17.1</p> <p>17.2</p> <p>17.3</p>	<p><b>Empty Properties Standard and the Repairs Service</b></p> <p>Sue Sanderson talked through the three leaflets (Empty Homes, Repair Work &amp; Repair Deadlines). Sue explained that some amendments have already been made to the versions circulated and talked through these with the group.</p> <p>All three leaflets will be amended and a final version will be ready for the next meeting.</p> <p>The group welcomed the amendments but had particular comments on certain points:</p> <p>Homefinder – Mike Stevens agreed to cover this at the next meeting</p>	<p><b>SS</b></p> <p><b>MS</b></p>

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
	<p>House Clearances – Sue Sanderson 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 avoided in certain circumstances and it could lead to an increased incidence of fly-tipping. Sue agreed to review this proposal.</p> <p>Sue asked the group for suggestions how the current service can be improved. SS asked the group to feed any comments back to her directly or through the Tenant Liaison Officer (Kevin Taggart).</p>	<p><b>SS</b></p> <p><b>ALL</b></p>
<p><b>18</b></p> <p>18.1</p> <p>18.2</p> <p>18.3</p> <p>18.4</p> <p>18.5</p>	<p><b>Tenant Compact</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>Letters of invitation have been sent out to all Area Panel members, TAs and those who have attended previous task groups.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>JB</b></p>
<p><b>19</b></p> <p>19.1</p> <p>19.2</p>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>Melanie Beckford was formally voted onto the Area Panel. (Proposed by Anne Heywood &amp; Seconded by Sue Pemberton).</p> <p>Invitations 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 March from 5pm-7pm, Northwards would be present at the event.</p>	
	<p><b>Date of next Meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April (6.30pm) at The Local Services Office, Cheetham Hill Road.</p>	
	<p><b>End of Meeting</b></p> <p>Meeting closed at 8.45pm</p>	

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