

Northwards Housing – Resource & Audit Sub-Committee Meeting

Hexagon Tower
Tuesday 30th October 2007 at 5.30pm

Chair: Harvey Norton

Present: Harvey Norton (HN)
Mark Hackett (MH)
Martin McKeivitt (MM)

In Attendance: Steve Wood (SW) Director of Business Services
Alison Foster (AF) Head of Finance
Steve Aggett (SA) KPMG
Helen Knowles (HK) KPMG

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	Welcome and Introductions It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.	
2	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from Rachel Christie.	
3	Declaration of Interests / Confidential Matters / Equality & Diversity Matters Arising There were no matters for noting under this item. Equality and Diversity implications were noted on particular reports.	
4	Minutes of last meeting The Minutes of the last meeting held on 25 th September, including the confidential minutes, were approved and signed by the Chair.	
5	Matters Arising a) Kiosks and Multi Language SW reported on discussions with the Equality and Diversity Officer that had concluded that until the law changed, the facilities in multi-language would continue to be offered. b) IT Provision for Area Panels SW reported on what he knew about the discussions at Area Panels and whilst there were some who would still like computers, there did not appear to be a clear consensus or much evidence for the added value of provision.	

	<p>After some discussion, Sub-Committee agreed to recommend to the Board that no provision of IT equipment would be made to Area Panel Members although it had been previously agreed to offer IT equipment to Area Panel Chairs.</p> <p>c) Revised Budget Delegation Limits</p> <p>SW presented a revised report detailing proposed changes to the Scheme of Delegation, aligning a number of the Senior Managers and moving a couple of budget holders.</p> <p>After a few questions the revised proposals were agreed. The paper detailing the changes would be submitted to the Board for approval.</p> <p>In order to provide some additional assurance over the changes, HN asked the Internal Auditors to carry out a review of delegated authorities as part of their next visit.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Internal Audit Visit 1 2007-08</p> <p>SA from KPMG introduced the reports on the latest Internal Audit visit with an overview that was very pleasing. There were two Good reports and one Satisfactory with only seven recommendations. It was obvious therefore that Northwards was addressing these areas properly.</p> <p>The report on Partnering and Sub-Contractors had been evaluated as Good. The work had covered a review over the setting of budgets and value for money. There was only one low priority recommendation but there were also a number of examples of good practice.</p> <p>HN asked whether any work had been carried out to review the briefs against which Manchester Working Limited and Impact Manchester were working but KPMG confirmed that this had not been subject to a review to date.</p> <p>The second report was on the subject of Tenant Consultation covering policies and procedures and mechanisms for consulting and involving tenants. This report was also evaluated as Good and there were only two low priority recommendations. Sub-Committee agreed that it was a positive review but asked for the management response over the analysis of tenant representation to be reworded.</p> <p>The report on Tenancy and Estate Management had a Satisfactory rating with three medium priority and one low priority recommendations.</p> <p>Sub-Committee discussed the need for clarity over gardening services and the maintenance of open spaces together with a review of the concessionary gardening contract. MH expressed his view that Northwards was not currently receiving value for</p>	<p>SW</p>

	<p>money in respect of gardening services and the current arrangements were not satisfactory. It was not clear what the standards were and how contracts were procured or managed. SW responded with details of the review had already commenced.</p> <p>The other recommendation raised was linked to the shadow inspection of a multi story block where a high rise window had been found open. SW reported that a risk assessment was being carried out by the Retirement Housing team. HN asked for an independent review of this to be performed by Health and Safety or the Legal Surveyors.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the reports and thanked KPMG for their attendance.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Accounts</p> <p>AF presented the six month accounts to 30th September 2007 and drew Sub-Committee's attention to a number of the key issues. Costs were over budget but not materially so and there was a healthy cash position.</p> <p>A review was being carried out of the Management Fee linked to the forecast number of Right to Buy Sales. The main overspend was in relation to the Neighbour Nuisance SLA where there was discussion with MCC about costs in April.</p> <p>AF updated Sub-Committee on the position with repairs invoicing and also explained the potential voids expenditure recharge to the capital programme. She reported on the review of Environmental spend discussed at the previous meeting and outlined the review of costs between works and fencing.</p> <p>MH asked about the rechargeable repairs policy and AF gave an update on progress with reviewing this and implementing charges.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the accounts.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Resource Pool Panel Decisions</p> <p>The Resource Pool Panel had met in October to consider requests and were recommending to the Board that an additional £272,000 be spent in the year on a number of proposals to enhance tenant services or carry out new initiatives.</p> <p>SW explained some of the detail behind the process together with some additional information over some of the key proposals. The largest amount related to some additional funds for Environmental works which was felt to be appropriate based on tenant priorities.</p>	

	After some discussion and questions the decisions made by the Resource Pool Panel were approved for submission to the Board.	
9	<p>Service Level Agreement Review</p> <p>SW provided an update on progress with the Service Level Agreement reviews. In answer to a question SW explained the current position on the Homefinder CBL review and on-going discussions with Corporate IT. It was agreed that any proposed changes should come back to Sub-Committee.</p> <p>MH asked about the Environmental Maintenance SLA which was not properly in place and was more of an on-demand service. He asked for there to be a proper SLA or contract with set standards as presently this was not always the case. SW updated Sub-Committee on the current work by Mike Stevens and his team looking at this area and reported that proposals would be coming back through Sub-Committees in due course.</p>	
10	<p>Fraud Register</p> <p>The Fraud Register was received by Sub-Committee. No items had been added since the last report although SW briefly explained some issues around Petty Cash Imprests that were being looked at.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the report.</p>	
11	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no further business.</p>	
12	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next Sub-Committee Meeting will be on Tuesday 27th November at 5.30pm at Hexagon Tower.</p>	