

**Fourways Area Panel
(Moston and Charlestown)**

**Minutes of Meeting held at 1.30pm, 18 January 2007
White Moss Road Local Services**

Chair: John Ward

Present:	John Ward (JW)	Panel Member (Chair)
	Grace Choularton (GC)	Panel Member
	Pam Angelucci (PA)	Panel Member
	John Biggs (JB)	Panel Member
	Peggy Yuill (PY)	Panel Member
	Hazel Entwistle (HE)	Panel Member
	Joan Fitzgerald (JF)	(Board Member)
	Cllr Basil Curley (BC)	Councillor for Charlestown
	Larry Patrick (LP)	Director of Property Services
	Anne Duffield(AD)	Principal Local Services Manager
	Tony Budgett	Surveying Services Manager (part)
	Nicola Holmes(NH)	Resident Involvement Officer minutes

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1.	Welcome and Introductions Introductions were made. A full Quorum was in attendance.	
2.	Apologies for Absence Apologies given by: Frances Carroll, Mavis Harris, Dorothy LeMoignan, Rhonda Finlayson, Mike Stevens, Diane Roberts, Pauline Fenton	
3.	Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters No declaration of interests were declared.	
4.	Minutes of Last Meeting LP gave apologies for the last meeting but they were not recorded in the minutes. PY did not 'report people deliberately selling property and making themselves homeless' as stated in item 11. The minutes of Fourways Area Panel meeting on 25 October were approved as a correct record.	Approved
5	Matters Arising	

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5.1	<p><u>Item 8.</u> JF updated the group. She had received a letter from Matt Roberts regarding changing the design of the windows. It said that he would make sure that tenants would be notified and consulted over any changes in future.</p>	
5.2	<p>AD clarified point 7, 1. The cost is for removal of existing roundabout and for creating a new one.</p>	
5.3	<p>JF asked if the window replacement scheme would still be operating in this very windy weather. LP replied that it would depend on the individual circumstances. For instance operatives would not be going up scaffolding but a ground floor sheltered position might still have the windows replaced.</p>	
5.4	<p>CD highlighted that she knows of a few cases where new windows have proved to be draughty and leaky in this bad weather.</p>	
5.5	<p>LP explained that this should be reported. TB asked for the addresses after the meeting so he could check that they are being sorted. LP informed the panel that he has recently signed for the Charlestown South Kitchen modernisation. JB asked if tenants would be informed of the dates. LP explained that by the end of the month the search facility on the website will be up and running. It is very easy to use.</p>	
5.6	<p>HE asked if people who had exercised the right to buy have the option of tapping into the window replacement schemes for a fee. LP explained that Northwards will not of course pay for private owners. Any agreement with the contactors would be directly between the owner occupier and the contractor. JF asked if the owner occupiers could have the names and contact details of the contractors. LP explained that this would be difficult as Northwards are still in negotiations. It would also be very possible for Northwards promise to the tenants to be put being schedule if private owners are taken into account. PA commented that she had asked this question right at the beginning and she was told that owner's occupiers would have the option of tapping into schemes.</p>	
5.7	<p>TB clarified an item raised in <u>item 9.</u> The suppliers will open on a Saturday morning but it is not as a matter of course.</p>	
7.	<p>Repairs</p> <p>TB provided the panel with Northwards Local Performance</p>	

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<p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p>	<p>indicators and invited comments and questions. PY asked if we still recover the costs for rechargeable repairs if necessary.</p> <p>TB replied that yes and the procedure has also recently been strengthened.</p> <p>GC brought the Panels attention to a new tenant in her block of flats that is having problems with the standard of the property. The tenant has had to pay for his own plastering on the walls and one of the rooms has only got plasterboard on the floor. This tenant has been waiting a long time for the work to be done. She asked if it was possible for Northwards to pay for the decoration as a good will gesture. TB replied that he would speak to the surveyor regarding this case tomorrow. LP explained that surveyors have to sign a certificate for void properties to say that they meet a certain standard before they are let. The operatives also have to sign a certificate. Since the service standard has been published, complaints have gone down. However it may be possible to offer to pay for decorating as a good will gesture.</p> <p>JB commented that the work being done to bring down crime statistics is very important. This is a major concern to the tenants. He also highlighted a concern about his local clinic. They are expanding the building into their existing car parking space but are not replacing the car parking spaces.</p>	<p>TB</p>
<p>8</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p> <p>8.3</p> <p>8.4</p>	<p>PLSM update</p> <p>AD presented the January report.</p> <p>JF asked for an update on the lady due for eviction in Rusland court. AD said the bailiff date had been confirmed for a day at the beginning of February.</p> <p>JB asked for void figures for Clifford Lamb and Bradford Court</p> <p>PY asked why 8 Sandmere Walk has been void for so long. AD explained it was because of asbestos issues.</p> <p>AD explained that the long term void – 11 Langland Close should be ready for let on 02.02.07</p>	
<p>9.</p> <p>9.1</p>	<p>Customer Satisfaction Survey</p> <p>AD presented the Customer Satisfaction Survey report and Action Plan.</p> <p>JF explained that it was difficult for TA's to get people involved, especially young people.</p>	

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	<p>AD thought that this could be partly a reflection of society but that Northwards is also examining the way officers interact with residents.</p> <p>JB highlighted that a new youth forum is being set up.</p> <p>NH explained that the resident involvement team are currently looking at ways of involving young people. They intend to use the customer satisfaction survey to write to all young people who responded and invite them to a focus group. Also, a survey is currently being drawn up that will ask young people how they would like to get involved. It is not clear how this will be rolled out yet.</p> <p>9.2 JF asked if we record complaints about racial harassment from non BME residents.</p> <p>AD explained that yes we do record these complaints. She explained that Northwards staff do not judge whether a particular case of harassment is of a hate crime nature. It is down to how the individual feels about the incident.</p> <p>HE says it is really all about mutual respect.</p> <p>AD said this was true. She highlighted that there are areas that are unsafe for people of a BME background to be houses. This is unacceptable and we have to strive to turn this around.</p> <p>9.3 JF asked if Northwards have been successfully in involving new residents.</p> <p>NH explained that most of the Task Groups are now up and running and many new faces have been involved. It is just a start but it is promising.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p>Tenant Inspection Quarter 2 Report</p> <p>AD presented the report</p> <p>PY highlighted that she feels strongly that walk up flats should be on the work plan for the inspectors and that she had asked for this back in August.</p> <p>NH explained that as far as she was aware it would be on the next work plan starting in April.</p>	
<p>11</p> <p>5.1</p>	<p>Inspection Update</p> <p>LP delightfully informed the meeting that it is now official that Northwards have achieved a two star rating from the audit commission. This will release the £131m.</p> <p>NH gave the Panel members a letter from Robin Lawler explaining the stars.</p> <p>PY asked when it would be possible to apply for three stars?</p> <p>LP explained the board has discussed this issue and it will possibly be between January and June of 2008.</p> <p>JB asked if it would be in the tenant's newsletter.</p> <p>JF replied that yes, it would be in the next newsletter.</p>	

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12	<p>Constitution Review</p> <p>LP explained that there is a difference in the preferences between the area panels. The Board decided that they would invite two members of each panel to form a working group in order to look at the constitution. The group will report back to the Board and then the Board will consider the Constitution. John Biggs and Peggy Yuill volunteered to be on the working group.</p>	
13	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>13.1 JB brought the Panels attention to the deadline for a wellbeing grant of £250,000 being Friday this week. He also explained that Charlestown Tenant Association is having a public meeting on the 26th Feb.</p> <p>13.2 JF said that she would</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Like to see the people present doing a survey of their local roads. - Thought that the practice of using 3 bed parlour properties as 4 bed houses was downgrading the housing stock. - Thought it unfair that a single person was not entitled to a 2 bed property like a couple might be. She thought it was discriminating and was stopping single people from having family to stay. - Reminded the Chair that he did not raise the issue of chatting and paper shuffling - Said that the Christmas party at Hexagon Tower was excellent. <p>GC said that she knows of cases where single people have been given 2 bed flats and they abuse them by having lodgers illegally.</p> <p>13.3 BC spoke of how he found the reception staff at Hexagon Tower very rude. He thought that they devalued and interrogated tenants. He felt that it was worse than a poor service. Northwards should not be paying for this type of service. He said he knew of tenants that have left the building before getting their problem sorted because of the rude reception staff. LP explained that the amount of tenants visiting does not justify having a northwards staff member on reception. However, of course the staff on Hexagon tower reception should be welcoming. PA commented that she has never found the reception staff rude. GC thought the problem was the loneliness of the site. If someone is waiting for a taxi in an evening then it is very dark and it is not</p>	JW

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	possible to get back into the building without a fob once the reception staff have gone home at 5pm.	
5.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>The next meeting is at Simpson Memorial Hall on the 22nd February at 13:30.</p>	
6.	<p>End of Meeting</p> <p>The meeting closed at 3:50pm</p>	