

**Northwards Housing
Neighbourhood and Quality Services Sub-Committee Meeting**

**Board Room, 6th Floor Hexagon Tower
Friday 30 March 2007 at 2.30 pm**

Chair: Michelle Blakeley

Present	Michelle Blakeley (MB)	Board Member (Chair)
	Joan FitzGerald (JF)	Board Member
	Anna Trotman (AT)	Board Member
	Fatima Adamjee (FA)	Board Member
In Attendance	Mike Stevens (MS)	Director of Neighbourhood Services
	Anne Duffield (AD)	Head of Rehousing
	Steve Amos (SA)	Rehousing Manager

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	<p>Training - Rehousing and Allocations</p> <p>AD and SA gave a presentation about rehousing and allocations. This included: a recap on recent history, particularly in relation to the establishment of the Northwards Rehousing Team; an update on current activity and performance; projections in relation to future activity and supply and demand trends; statistics relating to people being rehoused; plans to improve the service; and issues and challenges ahead.</p> <p>The presentation also made reference to the review of allocations and choice-based lettings currently being carried out by MCC with input from Northwards.</p> <p>Sub Committee asked questions and discussed the presentation.</p> <p>Members noted that recent rehousing audits have been extremely positive and remark on significant improvements since the Rehousing Team was established.</p> <p>SA explained the priority categories and how offers are made between the different categories. The proportion of offers made to different categories is influenced by a number of factors, including how many offers go to Top 10 applicants who have specified particular streets or blocks in their application. The number of Group 1 offers has increased significantly, due to the scale of regeneration work and an increase in the number of applicants being awarded Star Medical priority. The proportion of offers made to different groups will continue to be monitored closely, and will be included in future updates to Sub Committee.</p> <p>Members also noted the work being done in conjunction with Job Centre Plus to increase access to job seeking advice and assistance: it is too early to say what take up there will be for this, but it is seen as a positive step.</p>	

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	<p>Work is also being done across a number of areas to prevent people needing to apply for rehousing in the first place: this includes making better use of family mediation; new measures to address domestic abuse; and action to deal with private sector disrepair.</p> <p>Members also noted the work of the Resettlement Workers; and figures in relation to how many properties are let on the first offer (now included in the Performance Management Framework).</p> <p>There was also a discussion about the number of applicants receiving an appointment within 10 days, and the factors influencing performance on this indicator as well as the relative significance of the indicator itself. It was noted that there is a sensible balance to be struck in terms of the level of resources applied to increasing performance in relation to this indicator; bearing in mind in particular the length of time people wait to be rehoused once they are registered, and also the fact that applications are in any event backdated to the date of the initial contact. A balance has to be struck between the resources applied to this and this and other, arguably more important areas of activity, such as awarding priority; updating applications; making offers; giving prospects advice; and dealing with enquiries. With all this in mind, we are currently looking at what constitutes a sensible target for this particular area of activity.</p> <p>Sub Committee noted the content of the presentation and thanked AD and SA for their input.</p>	
2	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>MB welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was agreed to be quorate.</p> <p>Members noted with sadness the untimely death of Councillor Eric Hobin. MS reported that no details were yet known as to the funeral arrangements for Eric. His suggestion that Board Members would no doubt wish to consider in due course an appropriate way of paying tribute to Eric and recognising his commitment and achievements on behalf of local people was unanimously endorsed.</p>	
3	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Sue Ratchford</p>	
4	<p>Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters/ Equality & Diversity Matters Arising</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or confidential matters. Equality and Diversity issues will be covered under agenda items.</p>	
5	<p>Minutes of Last Meeting – 2 March 2007</p> <p>These were agreed as a correct record.</p>	

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	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Item 4 (4(6)) Racial Incident - now resolved.</p> <p>Item 7 Performance Monitoring - additional information (re SAP ratings and racial incidents) has been sent out.</p> <p>Item 8 ASB and Respect – Role of PCSOs has been added to the list of issues. Recommendations to the Board were accepted. The Respect Standard has now been signed and action is being taken to publicise.</p>	<p>MS</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Support for Vulnerable Tenants</p> <p>The report was presented by MS, with contributions from SA and AD. Members discussed the report and the various actions being taken to ensure appropriate support is made available for tenants who need it. Members noted the particular challenges faced in relation to mental health; and also the range of measures in place to work with vulnerable families. Members noted that initiatives such as Foundations work alongside and complement other initiatives such as Sure Start.</p> <p>Sub Committee noted the contents of the report.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Performance Management Framework</p> <p>Sub Committee reviewed the Corporate Performance Indicators (PIs) which fall within its remit and discussed setting targets for those PIs where this is needed. It was agreed that in the case of the annually reported PIs this would be considered at the next meeting. In the meantime the following targets were agreed:</p> <p>PI 6 Racial incidents resulting in further action: 100% (currently 100%) PI 21 Complaints answered in 10 working days: 87% (currently 77%) PI 25 Rehousing offers accepted first time: 40% (currently 36.5%) PI 26 Lets to BME applicants: 14% (currently 29.5%)</p> <p>There was considerable discussion in relation to PI 26. This will be given further consideration throughout the year as updates are brought to Sub Committee: These will include detailed analysis of the figures underlying the "headline" figure. In the meantime it was agreed that a target of 14% should be set as this is the % BME population for the Northwards area.</p> <p>It was suggested that some of the indicators could be re-ordered to make easier to read. MS to action.</p> <p>It was also noted that "ASB" needs to be deleted from PI 5 - MS said this had already been done.</p> <p>MS explained how the separate BME satisfaction figures were calculated and the reasons for collecting and reporting this information. Sub Committee noted that it was now intended to collect satisfaction data across a much wider range of service areas.</p>	<p>MS</p>

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	<p>Sub Committee also discussed how the request from the March Board meeting regarding the % rehousing offers to different priority groups should be reported. It was agreed that this should not be a Corporate PI; but noted that it would be reported as part of the regular reporting to Sub Committee on rehousing and allocations (as discussed earlier at Agenda Item 1).</p> <p>Sub Committee noted the PIs falling within its remit; agreed the targets set out above; and agreed that targets for the other PIs (where applicable) would be considered at the April meeting.</p>	
8	<p>Inspection Action Plan Update</p> <p>This was considered by Sub Committee.</p> <p>MS agreed to recirculate the report with changes shown in italics.</p> <p>Item 4.2 - it was noted that this fits in with the work being undertaken by Greig Lees in relation to sustainability.</p> <p>Item 12 - falls within the remit of Procurement & Property Sub-Committee.</p> <p>Item 24 - complete so should be shaded.</p> <p>Item 48 - task groups not yet on website but action in hand to do this.</p> <p>Item 55 - Leaseholder's Handbook being considered at April Meeting of Leaseholder Forum.</p> <p>Subject to the above comments, Sub Committee noted the update.</p>	<p>MS</p> <p>MS</p> <p>SF</p>
9	<p>Training</p> <p>No issues identified.</p>	
10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>MS reported that Steve Wood had asked to bring a report on Financial Inclusion to the next Sub Committee meeting. This was agreed.</p>	
11	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Friday 27th April 2007 – 3.00pm – White Moss Road Local Services</p>	
12	<p>End of Meeting</p> <p>The meeting closed at 4.35 pm.</p>	