

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

**White Moss Road  
Friday 27 April 2007 at 2.30 pm**

**Chair: Michelle Blakeley**

<b>Present</b>	Michelle Blakeley (MB) Joan FitzGerald (JF) Anna Trotman (AT) Sue Ratchford (SR) Fatima Adamjee (FA)	Board Member (Chair) Board Member Board Member Board Member Board Member
<b>In Attendance</b>	Mike Stevens (MS) Steve Wood (SW) Seema Kohli (SK) Lou Mitchell (LM)	Director of Neighbourhood Services Director of Business Services Quality/Customer Service Manager Communications Manager

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b></p> <p>Confirm Quorum.</p> <p>MB welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was agreed to be quorate.</p>	
2	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
3	<p><b>Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters/ Equality and Diversity Matters Arising</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or confidential matters.</p> <p>Equality and Diversity issues will be covered under agenda items.</p>	
4	<p><b>Minutes of Last Meeting – 30 March 2007</b></p> <p>These were agreed as a correct record.</p> <p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p><b>Item 7 Performance Indicators - ordering</b> - will be reflected as part of report to next meeting regarding targets.</p> <p><b>Item 8 Inspection Plan Update - italicising and shading</b> - addressed as part of update being circulated at today's meeting.</p> <p><b>Item 8 Inspection Plan Update - task groups on website</b> - will be done by next meeting.</p>	<b>MS</b>

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5	<p><b>Financial Inclusion</b></p> <p>SW described the background to the report and the worked carried out to date.</p> <p>FA asked about access to banking facilities. SW said that there were a variety of ways in which this could work - the purpose being to help excluded people gain access to financial services.</p> <p>Sub Committee members noted the schemes which provide low cost furniture to less well off people. This was thought to be a good idea worthy of further exploration. SW said that if we took anything like this forward we would of course seek to work with groups already doing this kind of thing.</p> <p>SW confirmed that we had already spoken to both Credit Unions referred to in the report, and would have further discussions with them as part of taking the work forward.</p> <p>SW reported that the MCC baseline study was still awaited. It made sense to take this into account, but the fact that we didn't yet have it wouldn't stop us getting on with doing further work in the meantime.</p> <p>JF asked about information to tenant groups - SW confirmed that groups would be properly informed and involved in taking forward any proposals.</p> <p><b>Sub Committee approved the recommendation to ask Officers to develop firm proposals etc in developing a Strategy taking into account;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Awaiting the outcome of the Baseline study that has been commissioned by Manchester City Council.</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Consider joint working with East Manchester Credit Union as this is an established Credit Union with links already in the Northwards area.</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Consider joint working with the Now Let's Talk Money campaign – this will be nationally advertised to raise awareness.</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Explore opportunities with charities for providing low cost furniture to less well off people.</b></li> </ul>	
6	<p><b>Performance Management</b></p> <p>MS and SW reported the latest position in relation to Civica. As a result of the implementation of the new system the usual performance management report is not yet available. It is hoped that a report will be available by the next meeting. SW reported that getting the system fully operational is the main priority at the current time, though work is also continuing in relation to performance reporting.</p>	

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	MS confirmed that a report about target setting would be brought to the next meeting.	MS
7	<p><b>Customer Satisfaction</b></p> <p>MS described the background to the report and summarised its contents. He said that a number of additional points should be included:</p> <p>A sheltered residents survey should be added to the schedule of survey activity - to take place in Jan 2008.</p> <p>A Neighbourhood Wardens survey also needed to be carried out. However further discussions needed to take place about the form and timing of this: especially bearing in mind the cross-tenure nature of the service; and also taking into account the work currently being carried out to review warden schemes generally and establish a proper evaluation and performance framework for the Northwards wardens.</p> <p>The report also needed to reflect the Customer Network which has been established: this is a database of customers who have said that they would be interested in taking part in consultation activity.</p> <p><b>The Sub Committee agreed that these should be incorporated into the report.</b></p> <p>MS also described the reasons for carrying out an annual survey of all Northwards tenants - for this year at least. Sub Committee members agreed that this was a good idea.</p> <p>AT asked about the suggestions which had been implemented in relation to</p> <p>2.1.5 (local office survey). SK to circulate details.</p> <p>2.6.5 Mystery Shopping - Amend to reflect the fact that only one update has been received so far.</p> <p>2.3.1 - Sub Committee noted the higher number of returns and satisfaction rates based on the new home improvements survey.</p> <p>JF asked about the arrangements for TLOs contacting tenant groups before and during a scheme - MS said he would ask Larry Patrick to speak to her about this.</p> <p>There was a discussion about Sheltered Housing, and it was agreed to invite Pat Scappaticci along to the next meeting to provide a short update about key developments in the service.</p> <p><b>Subject to the amendments referred to above, Sub Committee agreed to note the contents of the report and approve the schedule at Appendix 1.</b></p>	<p>MS</p> <p>SK</p> <p>MS</p> <p>MS</p> <p>MS</p>
8	<b>Complaints and Praise - Quarterly Report</b>	

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	<p>SK summarised the report's contents which were discussed by Committee members. MS and SK referred to the various measures which were being taken to improve performance.</p> <p>AT asked if future reports could include details of the longest outstanding complaint. SK to action</p> <p>MS reported that it was intended in future reports to provide a more detailed breakdown in relation to complaints about repairs - this being far and away the largest category.</p> <p><b>Sub Committee noted the report.</b></p>	SK
9	<p><b>Communications SLA</b></p> <p>MS and LM summarised the reports contents which were discussed by Sub Committee members.</p> <p>MS noted that the service received was generally a very good one, and had been shown to be competitively priced. The main issue has been how much we are likely to need going forward; and a detailed review had led to significant savings being identified as set out in the report.</p> <p><b>Sub Committee noted the report.</b></p>	
10	<p><b>"Tenant Friendly" Publications</b></p> <p>LM summarised the report's contents which were discussed by Committee members. The idea of developing our own standard rather than buying one in was felt to be a very good idea; and Sub Committee members noted the proposed arrangement for customers to be involved in checking publications and awarding them "tenant friendly" status.</p> <p><b>Sub Committee approved the recommendations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. That any reprints of Northwards Housing publications have a “tenant friendly” stamp (logo) placed on the front cover, once recommended amendments have been made to each publication. This stamp/logo is hoped to further encourage customers to use them and the accreditation of the stamp will be synonymous with accessible information that is easy to understand.</b></li> <li><b>2. That any new publications are agreed by Northwards Communications Task Group (also known as the editorial group) as being “tenant friendly” before being ‘stamped’ and printed.</b></li> </ol>	
11	<p><b>Tenant Inspection Update</b></p> <p>Sub Committee discussed the latest update. Sub Committee asked about</p>	

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	<p>the geographical spread of inspectors and also about the arrangements by which inspectors cover only areas other than their own. SK agreed to review these with the inspectors and report back to the Sub Committee.</p> <p><b>Sub Committee noted the update.</b></p>	<p><b>SK</b></p>
<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>Neighbourhood Services Team Improvement Plans - Quarterly Update and 2007/8 Plans</b></p> <p>Sub Committee noted the plans and discussed the future arrangements for monitoring progress against them. It was agreed that the Sub Committee would continue to receive quarterly updates, but that changes would be shown in bold and italics; and completed items would be shaded out. It was also agreed that items would be numbered.</p> <p><b>Subject to the above comments, Sub Committee agreed to note the plans.</b></p>	<p><b>MS</b></p>
<p><b>13</b></p>	<p><b>Respect Standard for Housing Management - Update</b></p> <p>MS provided a short verbal update which was noted by the Sub Committee.</p> <p><b>Noted.</b></p>	
<p><b>14</b></p>	<p><b>Right to Manage Update</b></p> <p>MS summarised the contents of the report and provided a more detailed update as to the current negotiations in relation to the proposed Avro Hollows TMO. Sub Committee members noted that there are potential staffing and budgetary implications in relation to this process; Sub Committee will be kept informed as to developments in this regard.</p> <p>MS also described how the relationship with SHOUT works. Sub Committee members asked about performance information in relation to the TMO. MS said he would look at the best way of reporting this to Sub Committee.</p> <p><b>Sub Committee noted the update.</b></p>	<p><b>MS</b></p>
<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>Inspection Plan Update</b></p> <p>MS circulated an updated copy of the plan. MS drew the attention of the Sub Committee in particular to item 13 (Access Review). Sub Committee noted that this piece of work is currently being scoped in order to make sure it takes in all Northwards services and not just the main "front facing" services (in particular the local offices). As it is likely to be a major piece of work we are also looking closely at how best to resource it. As a result this piece of work is likely to run beyond the original timescale of June 2007.</p> <p><b>Sub Committee noted the report.</b></p>	

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16	<b>Training</b>  <b>No items not covered by Board Training Plan.</b>	
10	<b>Any Other Business</b>  FA asked if the Jargon Buster 1st Draft 2006 was the most recent version or if it has been updated since. MS said he would find out.  JF and MB said that they had identified some issues with the investment programme internet search facility. MS to check these out.	<b>MS</b>  <b>MS</b>
11	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>  Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2007 – 3.00pm – Board Room	
12	<b>End of Meeting</b>  The meeting closed at 4.35 pm.	