

Northwards Housing Panel Meeting Minutes

Panel: Wilton

Date: 20 May 2008

6.45 p.m. to 8.45 p.m

Cheetham Hill Local Services Office, Community Room

Chair: Anne Heywood

Attendance:

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| Anne Heywood (AH) | Chair |
| Joan Wilson (JW) | Panel Member |
| Mark Bainbridge (MaB) | Panel Member |
| Mike Bolshaw (MiB) | Panel Member |
| Jim Burke (JB) | Panel Member |
| Sue Ratchford (SR) | Panel Member |
| Charles Taggart (CT) | Vice Chair |
| Cllr Ken Barnes (KB) | Panel Member |
| Cllr Naeem UI Hassan (NH) | Panel Member |
| Steve Kirkham (SK) | Head of Home Improvements (Wilton) |
| Larry Patrick (LP) | Director of Property Services |
| Gary Walsh (GW) | Repairs Manager |
| Anne Duffield (AD) | Head of Policy and Housing Options |
| Claire Tyrrell (CMT) | Head of Neighbourhood Services (Wilton) |
| Jacqui Tomlinson (JT) | Local Services Manager |
| Richard Eden (RE) | Communications |
| Julie Goreham (JG) | Resident Involvement Officer (Minutes) |

From 6.15pm refreshments were provided and officers were available to answer questions. The formal meeting commenced 6.45pm

| Item | Description | Action |
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| 2. | Welcome & Introductions Confirm Quorate | |
| 2.1 | The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting, and explained the meeting rules. Meeting was Quorate. Introductions were made. | |
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| 3. | Apologies for Absences | |
| 3.1 | None received. The observer had notified Northwards that he would not be able to attend the meeting. | |
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| 4. | Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters | |
| 4.1 | No confidential items are tabled | |
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| 5. | Minutes of last meeting 15 April 2008 15 April 2008 Confidential minutes | |
| 5.1 | The minutes were approved. | |
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| 6. | Matters arising | |

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| 6.1 | <i>Item 9.3</i> There will be a meeting between Manchester Leisure and Northwards Housing in June followed by a consultation with residents. Update to the June meeting. SK reported that match funding was being sought. | CMT |
| 6.2 | <i>Item 11.2</i> Carried over to June meeting | |
| 6.3 | <i>Item 12.1</i> A walkabout was still to be arranged. A report will come back to the next meeting. | |
| 6.4 | <i>Item 10.2</i> SK reported that 15 properties on Stockdale Road are being re-roofed, the rest in the Floyer Road area are not. Windows are being replaced. Roofs that are not being replaced have been assessed as having 10-15 years life. | |
| 6.5 | <i>Item 10.3</i> SK reported that on some rare occasions pointing had been carried out before lintel replacements – this was because lintels had not been due for replacement but window removal had revealed a problem that led to replacement | |
| 6.6 | <i>Item 10.4</i> SK reported that the difference in numbers was due to the inclusion in the Munn Road scheme of some properties that had not been able to be accessed on a previous scheme | |
| 6.7 | <i>Item 10.6</i> SK reported that Lucienne from Manchester Working had contacted JW, a walkabout had taken place. The panel will be updated | JW |
| 6.8 | <i>Item 16.2</i> SK met with a senior manager from Manchester Working – they will clear the greens. | |
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| 7. | Rehousing and Allocations (Anne Duffield) | |
| 7.1 | AD asked for comments on the paper circulated prior to the meeting. She explained that Northwards are registering 3000 people a year for rehousing, with numbers likely to rise in line with national trends. The team would like to speed up the registering process. Existing tenants would be unaffected by the plans (e.g. if they wished to transfer). | |
| 7.2 | Under the proposed plans only applicants needing extra help and advice or those requesting interviews will be interviewed. Currently a lot of people are being deleted off the system as they are interviewed but then take no further action. | |
| 7.3 | KB asked if customers would be told what information they needed to bring with them to appointments. AD stated a pack could be sent out, which would include different housing options (private rent and low-cost buy). | |
| 7.3 | JW asked how the identity of customers would be confirmed. AD explained that identification would still be needed at sign-up and a declaration check would be carried out | |
| 7.4 | MAB felt that more work needed to be done on under-occupancy. AD has met with the Department for Communities and Local Government about over-crowding as 20-25% lets are over-crowded. Northwards is reviewing its incentives and allocations policies, but this would not undermine the secure tenancy. | |
| 7.5 | NH expressed concern that customers are not used to the process of re-registering and so will find themselves removed from the list. Or if they moved house. AD explained that re-registering had been in place for at least 10 years. Before | |

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| | deleting applicants officers would look at whether there had been activity on the account in the last 6 months and would not delete those accounts with activity. Those moving house need to notify Northwards of the change of circumstance | |
| 7.6 | JB expressed concern that families may be moved into streets where the residents are all older and change the dynamic of the area. AD explained that the family needed to be matched with the property type. JB was concerned that the tenants be matched to the area. AD explained that references are taken from tenants and if a tenancy management issue arose then it would be dealt with. | |
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| 8. | Repairs discussion and quarterly report (Larry Patrick) | |
| 8.1 | LP introduced Gary Walsh who has been appointed to the post of Repairs Manager covering Wilton and Fourways. LP invited panel members to raise any repairs issues | |
| 8.2 | MaB had phoned for a central heating issue and was offered an appointment 3 days later. MaB had been told it would be 24 hours if it was an emergency. LP explained that the standard should be an appointment within 3 hours for an emergency, 24 hours for anyone without central heating. LP reported that he was looking into 'under-occupation' of diary appointments as it was not clear whether available slots were not being offered, or whether they were being refused when offered. MaB asked if it were possible to offer cancelled appointments to those awaiting an appointment | |
| 8.3 | LP explained that there had been some issues with the Manchester Working suppliers around central heating repairs. LP had met with Manchester Working's Repairs Manager to resolve the issue. Since this meeting the problem had not been reported again. | |
| 8.4 | MaB suggested that a diagram showing the terms on call use for reporting repairs be available online to improve/speed up communication when reporting repairs. LP believed this was available but agreed to check, and to look at how easy it was to navigate to. | LP |
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| 9. | Environmental Works Update (Steve Kirkham) | |
| 9.1 | SK distributed the latest programme. He reported that progress was being made on Temple Square. | |
| 9.2 | SK reported that a provisional date of December had been set for works in Centaur Way. | |
| 9.3 | Costings had been received from Groundwork for Queens Road, and Manchester Working were returning costings w/c 19 May, and should be on site mid-July. Soakaways have been started. | |
| 9.4 | Consultation had commenced on Hendham Vale, Seddons will match fund. | |
| 9.5 | SK reported that Cooper Lane had been problematic. A lot of clearance work needs to be completed at a cost of £20,000. This will begin at the end of June. Temporary access will need to be created as the site is land-locked. Boundaries will need to be defined. The residents do not want garden | |

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| | extensions. The land will be seeded once cleared and monitored to see if fly tipping continues. JB asked for excess soil and JW for bark. | |
| 9.6 | A report on the car parking scheme will be brought to the June meeting. CMT reported that the scheme is more expensive than expected and there may not be enough money for the 3 schemes. KB asked if match funding could be sought as Blackley East is a regeneration area. CMT is liaising with the regeneration team. KB suggested that the residents be consulted with before decisions were made about the funding. SK reported that further information would be brought to the next meeting. | |
| 9.7 | SK reported that he will receive a target cost for Sandyhill Court w/c 25 May. Works to commence mid-July. CT asked if it were possible to obtain secure parking across the road. SK and CMT explained that there is no budget for the work. | |
| 9.8 | SK reported that re-surfacing and bollards work would be taking place in Temple Square to deal with the parking issue. AH had met with the Police to ensure they would issue tickets to those parking illegally | |
| 9.9 | Pot of Gold (Claire Tyrrell) CMT reported that the board had noted a report on the Pot of Gold event. Wilton had received £30,000, much of which was for CCTV. Northwards is undertaking a review of CCTV and covert cameras as CCTV is costing £3700 a year per camera. Covert cameras are more affordable are mobile. CMT asked if the panel would defer decisions on spending the Pot of Gold until the review was complete. This was agreed by the panel. MAB said that the use of cameras provides peace of mind, especially where there is ASB but asked about the rules and regulations around the use of footage. CMT explained that you have to list the images you are trying to capture. | |
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| 10. | Major Works Update (Steve Kirkham) | |
| 10.1 | SK reported that spending had reached £82 million, above the £58 million target. The 61% target for Decency had been exceeded. The satisfaction rating is 9.55, greater than the 9.2 target for Wilton area. | |
| 10.2 | SK reported that most individual schemes are doing well. There had been problems on Riverdale North but the replacement of a water main meant the project was back on track. SK had met with tenants who were happy with the progress. Liverton Court was going well, and Walker Road was back on track. The infestation problem on Halliwell Lane had been resolved. | |
| 10.3 | CT asked when the windows were being completed on Riverdale North. SK will send the dates. These are also on the website. | SK |
| 10.4 | MaB asked if it was possible for tenants who chosen a new kitchen to pay to get a shower fitted. LP explained that this had been done in some cases following individual requests. Tenants paid up-front. MaB asked if the scheme could be publicised. AH expressed concern that works would be put | |

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| | behind if people took up the option. SK thought that take up would be low and it would be unlikely to cause a problem. | |
| 10.5 | MaB asked if Northwards was selling the parts from boiler replacements. LP explained that the cost of salvage was built into the contracts. SK explained this also happens with slates | |
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| 11. | LSM update (Jacqui Tomlinson) | |
| 11.1 | JT distributed the voids figures and explained that there were no major problems with lettings. JB asked about asbestos figures. CMT explained that a report would come back to a future meeting. JT explained that there is a target for properties that have been cleared for asbestos to be let within 3 days of completion of clearance work. CMT explained that Manchester Working are piloting a scheme in Newton Heath to reduce clear-out times by 2-3 days. | CMT |
| 11.2 | JT reported that in the first week of May there had been 47 ASB cases, 18 of these based in the Cheetham Office. There has been 1 eviction, 3 ex-party, 1 injunction, 1 extension of a provisional tenancy and 1 right to buy had been stopped. | |
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| 12. | Chair/Vice Chair Meeting Update (Anne Heywood) | |
| 12.1 | AH invited questions on the minutes of the chairs and vice-chairs meeting and invited other suggestions for the social event. | |
| 12.2 | MaB pointed out that item 6 on the minutes should read "Cheetham and Crumpsall" | |
| 12.3 | SR reported that an attendee at the Repairs Forum had expressed an interest in the area panel. JG to follow up. JG encouraged other panel members to pass on the details of anyone who may be interested in the panel. | JG |
| 12.4 | AH had attended Chair training at Trafford Hall | |
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| 13. | Community Update (Julie Goreham) | |
| 13.1 | JG distributed the May edition of Revolve and invited contributions to future editions. | |
| 13.2 | JG asked panel members to chose their top 10 choices of awards for the NorthAwards which will be presented at the AGM in the autumn. | |
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| 14. | Northwards Natter (Richard Eden) | |
| 14.1 | RE explained that future issues of the Natter will have a focus page on each area panel. | |
| 14.2 | The Natter now has residents' pages and contributions are welcome from all residents. | |
| 14.3 | RE welcomed suggestions on how to raise the profile of the panels through the Natter | |
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| 15. | Quarterly Performance Management Report | |
| 15.1 | CMT invited comments and questions on the report | |
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| 16. | Any other business | |
| 16.1 | <i>Review of Neighbourhood Wardens</i> CMT reported that a review of the wardens service is being | CMT |

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| | <p>carried out. Northwards is considering funding the wardens scheme. The Board had approved this in principle subject to a review of the service. The panel were invited to attend a meeting on May 27, 10.30-12. KB questioned the additional value of Neighbourhood Wardens and felt the money could be better spent elsewhere, as crime levels are falling and other services provided the Warden's function. CMT explained about the broader role of the Wardens and their youth engagement activities and the positive feedback from residents in areas covered by the Wardens service. KB asked that the panel be given the money allocated for the Wilton area and asked what they wanted it spent on. CMT will take these points forward. JB felt there was an interest in having a visible presence on estates. LP stated that the police value wardens and they were providing a good deterrent. JW felt that most of the trouble was between 9pm and 1am. AH encouraged the panel to attend the meeting, or to feed comments through CMT if they were unable to attend</p> | |
| 16.2 | <p>AH expressed disappointment that only 7 people had attended the Moving Forward event. Riverways were not represented at all. She had found it a useful morning. CMT explained that the items that had been discussed would be brought to future meetings.</p> | |
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| 17 | <p>Date and Time of Next Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) It's a Northwards Knockout – 13 September b) Awards and AGM - 2 October c) Study Visit – to be confirmed d) International Day 29 May – Abraham Moss JG asked volunteers to come and encourage involvement in the area panels. SR and JW offered to come. e) Panel meeting 17 June 2008, 6.45pm to 8.45pm – Cheetham Hill Road office f) Respect Event – 5 July g) August meeting to be confirmed | |
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Meeting closed at 8.45pm

Addendum

Following the meeting LP confirmed that the repair drawings are online in the "Order a Repair Section". The website will be amended to make it easier to find the drawings.