

# Northwards Housing – HR and Equality Sub-Committee Meeting

Hexagon Tower  
Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2008 at 7.00pm

Chair: Martin McKeivitt

**Present:** Martin McKeivitt (MM) Board Member & Chair  
Joan Fitzgerald (JF) Board Member  
Fatima Adamjee (FA) Board Member  
Rachel Christie (RC) Board Member

**In Attendance:** Robin Lawler (RL) Chief Executive  
Steve Wood (SW) Director of Business Services  
Lisa McBurnie (LMcB) Head of Human Resources  
Tara Kelly (TK) Equality & Diversity Officer

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>  The meeting was confirmed as quorate.	
2	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>  Apologies received from June Hitchen.	
3	<b>Declaration of Interests / Confidential Matters / Equality &amp; Diversity Matters Arising</b>  There were no matters for noting under this item. Item 6 is a Confidential Report.	
4	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting – 27<sup>th</sup> November 2007</b>  The minutes of the last meeting held on 27 <sup>th</sup> November were approved and signed by the Chair.	
5	<b>Matters Arising</b>  <b>a) Board Champions</b>  One existing champion – Diversity. 2 suggested – Health and Safety (H&S) and Human Resources (HR). MM expressed an interest in the HR Champion role.  <b>b) Absence Performance</b>  LMcB to report under specific item on agenda.	

	<p><b>c) Code of Practice Update</b></p> <p>TK to report back under specific item on agenda concerning Single Equality Scheme.</p> <p><b>d) Health &amp; Safety: Fire Doors.</b></p> <p>SW advised that fire doors have been checked and are functioning properly.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Northwards HQ Reception</b></p> <p><b>See Confidential Minute</b></p>	
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety (H&amp;S)</b></p> <p>SW presented a report which updated the Sub Committee on revisions to H&amp;S Policy and Procedures, the work of the H&amp;S group and changing roles within CDM Team to cover all aspects of H&amp;S.</p> <p>H&amp;S Group has met 4 times and represents all parts of the business. It is getting to grips with its role and actively assessing H&amp;S practice at different offices.</p> <p>Still working through Audit Recommendations undertaken by MCC on our behalf.</p> <p>SW outlined changes to H&amp;S Policy &amp; Procedures.</p> <p><b>Sub Committee approved the recommendations:</b></p> <p><b>a) Revisions to the Health &amp; Safety Policy &amp; Procedures.</b>  <b>b) Changing the focus of the present CDM Team to that of a Health and Safety Team to cover all aspects of Health and Safety across the organisation.</b></p>	
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Business &amp; Delivery Plan 2008-13</b></p> <p>SW presented an outline of the Business &amp; Delivery Plan for the next 5 years and invited comments which can be fed into the review of current Plan and revisions for the next Plan.</p> <p>SW recognised the need to properly engage the Board in the Business &amp; Delivery Plan review &amp; revision. Resource &amp; Audit Sub Committee raised new business opportunities, including new build.</p> <p>RC suggested that we need to embed performance management within the organisation.</p> <p>SW welcomed comments and asked for these over the next month. The report will be taken to the Board in March.</p> <p>FA asked about "Mix on Board". RL explained that this means mix of skills &amp; representation.</p> <p><b>The report was noted.</b></p>	<b>ALL</b>

9	<p><b>Partnership with Salford University: CPD in Regeneration</b></p> <p>RL explained that the report prepared by Greig Lees which recommends a partnership with Salford University to offer regeneration learning to staff, Board Members and other stakeholders. This will be a practically focussed learning programme drawing on best practice in the city and beyond and applying the learning to North Manchester.</p> <p><b>Sub Committee welcomed the proposal and considered that it is very much what Northwards should be doing.</b></p>	
10	<p><b>Inspection Action Plan</b></p> <p>Sub Committee noted progress with actions arising from Inspection Action Plan 2006. There is one overdue supplementary comment relevant to this Sub Committee, which relates to achieving Equality Standard Level 3.</p> <p><b>Sub Committee noted progress to date.</b></p>	
11	<p><b>Customer Profiling Action Plan</b></p> <p>The report set out a plan of action to gather information from at least 70% of our customers by Summer 2008. This will build upon 13% (2089 tenants) who have already completed the questionnaire.</p> <p>TK outlined the actions to gather customer profiling data.</p> <p>RC asked about incentive schemes and suggested environmental or community benefits be offered.</p> <p><b>TK to provide regular updates to the Sub Committee on the progress that has been made in completing the project plan. Sub Committee requested a further updated report on the project in June 2008.</b></p>	TK
12	<p><b>Domestic Abuse Policy &amp; Procedure</b></p> <p>TK updated Sub-Committee on the work being undertaken in partnership with MCC, GMP, Eastlands, Parkway Green and Willow Park on developing sustainable solutions to Domestic Abuse.</p> <p>A copy of the Policy &amp; Procedure is attached to the report.</p> <p>Dual objectives – zero tolerance of abuse &amp; protecting and supporting victims.</p> <p>Policy is supported by staff training and champions in each office.</p> <p>RL said that there is clear business benefit adopting this approach.</p> <p>MM asked what support for perpetrators? TK to check what support is available.</p>	TK

	<b>The Sub Committee noted the report.</b>	
<b>13</b>	<p><b>E&amp;D Working Group: Work Plan</b></p> <p>TK presented the Work Plan of the E&amp;D Working Group for information. Specific actions will feed through to the Sub-Committee in due course. Group first established in early 2006, but recently reviewed and revamped. TK circulated E&amp;D Staff Newsflash for information. TK to provide regular updates.</p>	<b>TK</b>
<b>14</b>	<p><b>Single Equality Scheme</b></p> <p>TK gave a verbal update on progress with developing a Single Equality Scheme for Northwards. First draft of Scheme has been prepared – to be used as basis of consultation with E&amp;D Group, Tenant Focus Groups &amp; stakeholder or interest groups. This scheme will be supported by Action Plan. TK agreed to provide an update to the Sub Committee in March or April.</p> <p><b>The Sub Committee noted the report.</b></p>	<b>TK</b>
<b>15</b>	<p><b>Absence Performance: to 31/12/07</b></p> <p>LMcB presented the absence report for 9 months to 31<sup>st</sup> December and outlined actions being taken to address short &amp; long term absence. Current projection is 13.2 days for 2007/8 against the target of 9.5 days. There was a reduction in absence in December on the previous month, but problem persists with long term absence (56% of total absence). Report provides breakdown by team on % change &amp; % absence.</p> <p><b>Sub Committee noted the report.</b></p>	
<b>16</b>	<p><b>Training</b></p> <p>SW reminded the Sub Committee of the Board of Companies Act training on 12 Feb.</p>	
<b>17</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>There was no other business.</p>	
<b>18</b>	<p><b>Dates of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Next Meeting will be held on <b>Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March</b> at 7.00pm.</p>	