

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

**Board Room – Hexagon Tower
Friday 25th January 2007 at 1.30 pm**

**Chair:
Joan Fitzgerald**

Present	Joan Fitzgerald (JF) Vera Salvatore (VS) Paul Seymour (PS) Anna Trotman (AT)	Chair Board Member Board Member Board Member
In Attendance	Mike Stevens (MS) Steve Finegan (SF) Julie Wilson (JW) Anne Duffield (AD)	Director of Neighbourhood Services Head of Business Support (Items 7-8) Head of Neighbourhood Services – Fourways (Items 1-9) Head of Policy and Housing Options (Item 10)

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	Welcome and Introductions JF welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was agreed to be quorate.	
2	Apologies for Absence Helen Blackey June Hitchen Sue Ratchford	
3	Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters/ Equality and Diversity Matters Arising There were no declarations of interest or confidential matters. Equality and Diversity issues will be covered under agenda items.	
4	Minutes of Last Meeting – 23rd November 2007 These were agreed as a true record. Matters Arising Item 4(10) – Right to Manage MS updated on the result of the Avro Hollows ballot. The vote was narrowly in favour, and MS would be meeting the relevant MCC officer and the TMO's Tenants' Adviser to discuss how to proceed. SHOUT/200 Estate would also be discussed at that meeting. MS will update further at the next meeting.	MS

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	<p>Item 5 – Respect Standard</p> <p>On agenda.</p> <p>Item 6 – Domestic Abuse Policy</p> <p>Being implemented.</p> <p>Item 8 – Cover Sheets</p> <p>Also to be provided for Inspection Plan Updates.</p> <p>Item 8 – PCs for Retirement Schemes and Caretakers</p> <p>This is on schedule subject to the conclusion of SLA negotiations with the MCC Central Technology Unit. MS noted that where already in place this is leading to improved communication and increased efficiency.</p> <p>Item 10 – Access Review</p> <p>MS confirmed that the cost to the Council per transaction at the Post Office is 32p.</p> <p>It was suggested that a future Northwards Natter could include something on utility bills: MS said that could be looked into.</p> <p>Item 11 – Estate Based Services</p> <p>MS said that MCC is carrying out a strategic review of land management. There are no outcomes from this yet; but it is thought unlikely that there will be any significant change in NH's role in this regard. MS said that Sub-Committee will be kept updated as to any significant developments.</p> <p>There was a discussion about various issues in relation to land maintenance; particularly where ownership or responsibility are unclear and there are problems such as fly-tipping or weed growth or use of the land for anti-social behaviour or illegal activity. MS referred to some recent examples; and confirmed that NH staff always work closely with MCC colleagues in such cases, with the overriding aim of resolving the problem. At the same time they tried to make sure that NH tenants were not unfairly penalised by paying for maintenance of land which was someone else's responsibility. Sub-Committee members noted the approach taken.</p> <p>MS also update on the latest position in relation to Mobile Cleaning. NH officers are currently costing up a proposal that the service be brought in-house. MS will bring a further update to the next Sub-Committee.</p>	<p>MS</p>
5	<p>Customer Satisfaction</p> <p>MS said that the report on the results of the annual survey had been received, but the figures were currently being checked and validated.</p>	

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	<p>Therefore a more detailed report, including a commentary and draft action plan, would be brought to the next Sub-Committee. MS suggested that once this had been approved by Sub-Committee, it should go to the Area Panels for comment before coming back to the Sub-Committee for final approval. Sub-Committee members endorsed this approach.</p> <p>MS noted that the turnout for this year's survey was 17%, compared with 14% in 2006.</p> <p>JF asked about the confidentiality of the personal data included. MS said that this was kept confidential, and an individual's details were not disclosed to NH staff (or anyone else). JF wondered if this was made sufficiently clear in what was sent to tenants; MS said that this could be considered when Sub-Committee reviewed the results of the survey next month.</p> <p>Sub-Committee members noted the update.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
6	<p>Chartermark Update</p> <p>MS summarised the report and outlined the approach being suggested. Sub-Committee members endorsed this approach.</p> <p>MS said that a further update would be brought in May after the assessor's visit.</p> <p>Sub-Committee members noted the update.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
7	<p>Incentive Scheme</p> <p>SF outlined the proposal set out in the paper.</p> <p>AT asked about discounts with local businesses. SF said that consultation was important in relation to this: it would be interesting to see what ideas people had.</p> <p>VS asked about how an incentive scheme would be expected to encourage positive behaviour. There was a discussion about this, and it was agreed that publicity and marketing was important: people had to know that good behaviour was being recognised and rewarded.</p> <p>PS said that it was also important that any scheme linked into other strategies and policies such as gas servicing, financial inclusion and resident involvement.</p> <p>Sub-Committee members also made the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of the scheme is important; • There are pros and cons of whatever approach we adopt, and no right or wrong way of doing it – we need to choose the one which works for NH tenants; • We need to keep it simple, at least initially. 	

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	<p>VS asked whether TMO tenants would be included. MS said that this would need to be considered as part of developing any scheme.</p> <p>Subject to the above comments, Sub-Committee members noted the report and approved the recommendations which were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the next stage of development i.e. consultation with Area Panels and Task Groups on the relative merits of introducing a scheme. 2. To make an in principle commitment to setting up a scheme in Northwards subject to: a positive outcome to the consultation; a budget being identified in 2008-09 to fund the scheme; and consideration by Sub-Committee of a more detailed policy on the proposed scheme. 	Approved
8	<p>Customer Profiling</p> <p>SF described the progress made in completing the project plan and the further actions being taken.</p> <p>AT asked about the prize draw: were those tenants who had already completed a form included? SF confirmed that they were.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the report and agreed to consider a further updated report in June 2008.</p>	Noted
9	<p>Respect Standard</p> <p>JW updated on the actions taken so far to review our services against the Respect Standard for Housing Management; and described the methodology being adopted. She also alluded to some of the themes already emerging, such as the need to get better at publicising actions taken (she described a recent case in Crosslee where a considerable amount of work had been done, with a successful outcome, but most local residents were unaware of NH's role in resolving the problem).</p> <p>JF said that she had attended one of the sessions which took place towards the end of last year; and now understood better what it was about. She remarked in particular on the link between respect and responsibility.</p> <p>Sub-Committee members noted the links between this and other items on today's agenda; in particular incentivisation and customer satisfaction.</p> <p>AT asked about the timescale for the review. MS said that it was expected to culminate with an event in July 2008 for area panel members, tenant groups and others; at which we would feed back on the review's findings and a draft action plan. A final report and action plan would then be taken to the following Sub-Committee.</p> <p>Sub-Committee members noted the update.</p>	Noted

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10	<p>Rehousing Update/Allocations Policy Review/Housing Demand Update</p> <p>AD gave a presentation on rehousing and voids. This included a review of activity for the year to date; changes in the Rehousing Team; and an update on the Allocations Review and Choice Based Lettings.</p> <p>AD noted that, although still too high, there had been progress on void turnaround times. The overall void level is currently running at 1.97%, this being the lowest it has been since NH was established. She noted that the turnaround figure was to some extent still being inflated by a small number of long term voids.</p> <p>AD also updated on the implementation of changes to the Council's Allocation Policy, particularly in relation to Community Connection. She also updated on the review of Choice Based Lettings; and said a further update would be brought to the next Sub-Committee. The timetable for replacing Homefinder is expected to be January 2009.</p> <p>AD also said that MCC has begun to review its Homelessness Strategy. NH will have an input into this; and a more detailed update will be brought to a future Sub-Committee.</p> <p>AT asked if future updates could be in the form of a report rather than a presentation. AD said this would be done.</p> <p>MS said that PS had suggested that there should be a Housing Opportunities Board Champion, covering allocations and lettings, affordable housing and homelessness. Sub-Committee members agreed with the suggestion, and MS said that this would be incorporated into the report going back to the Board on Board Champions. PS said that he would be happy to be the Board Champion.</p> <p>Subject to the above comments, Sub-Committee noted the update.</p>	<p>MS</p> <p>Noted</p>
11	<p>Inspection Plan Update</p> <p>MS drew particular attention to the latest position in relation to item 49 (Civica ASB module); and 51 (funding for Neighbourhood Wardens).</p> <p>Sub-Committee members noted the update.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
12	<p>Resident Involvement Agreement</p> <p>MS summarised the report and said that the revised agreement had been approved by all three Area Panels with no further amendments.</p> <p>Sub-Committee members made the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 3 Introduction – insert to specify Northwards Housing • Page 4 Mission Statement – amend 2010 to read 2010/11 (as 	

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	<p style="text-align: center;">agreed by the Board)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 6 Delete (on a non-voting basis) – again as per discussion on Board <p>Subject to the above amendments, the Agreement was approved.</p>	Approved
13	<p>Business Delivery Plan</p> <p>Sub-Committee members noted the process for reviewing the Business and Delivery Plan. Sub-Committee members will let MS or SW know of any suggestions and ideas about the Future section.</p>	
14	<p>Training</p> <p>No new items.</p>	
15	<p>Date of July Meeting</p> <p>MS to email details of proposed new date.</p>	MS
16	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>No new items.</p>	
	<p>Meeting ends</p> <p>The meeting ended at 3.40pm.</p>	
14	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Friday 22nd February – 1.30pm – Board Room.</p>	