

Northwards Housing Panel Meeting Minutes

Panel: Wilton

Date: 18th March 2008

6.00 p.m. to 8.30 p.m

Waterloo Centre Local Services Office, Community Room

Chair: Anne Heywood

Attendance:

Anne Heywood (AH)	Chair
Joan Wilson (JW)	Panel Member
Mark Bainbridge (MaB)	Panel Member
Jim Burke (JB)	Panel Member
Charles Taggart (CT)	Vice Chair
Sue Ratchford (SR)	Panel Member
Cllr Naemm UI Hassan (NUH)	Panel Member
Cllr Ken Barnes (KB)	Panel Member
Steve Kirkham (SK)	Head of Home Improvements (Wilton)
Claire Tyrrell (CMT)	Head of Neighbourhood Services (Wilton)
Jackie Tomlinson (JT)	Local Services Manager
Diane Roberts (DR)	Governance Support Officer
Deborah Dalton (DD)	Performance Improvement Officer
Steve Finegan (SF)	Head of Business Support
M Swirles (MS)	Resident Liaison Manager, Manchester Working Ltd
Lucienne Calaghan (LC)	Resident Liaison Manager, Manchester Working Ltd
Margaret Urmston	Observer
Beryl Gardener	Observer
Angela Kakanekas	Observer
Sadie O'Shea	Observer
Anne Doyle	Observer
B Hunt	Observer
Annette Wilson	Observer
Jane Smith	Observer
Julie Goreham (JG)	Resident Involvement Officer (Minutes)

From 6pm refreshments were provided and officers were available to answer questions. The formal meeting commenced 6.30pm

Item	Description	Action
2.	<p>Welcome & Introductions Confirm Quorate.</p> <p>2.1 The Chair Welcomed all attendees to the meeting, and explained the meeting rules. The Meeting was Quorate. Introductions were made.</p>	
3.	<p>Apologies for Absences</p> <p>3.1 Melanie Beckford, Michelle Carmichael, Roland Shrewsbury</p>	

4.	<p>Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters</p> <p>4.1 As the meeting was an Open meeting there were no confidential items tabled. No declarations of interest were made</p>	
5.	<p>Minutes of last meeting 22 January 2008</p> <p>Approved</p>	
6.	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>Item 4 KB asked if there was an update on void gardening CMT explained this will go to sub-committee on 28 March, and that an update would be scheduled for the April meeting</p> <p>Item 16.5 KB requested an update regarding broken repair appointments. This will be brought forward to the next meeting</p>	<p>Claire Tyrrell</p> <p>Mike Stevens</p>
7.	<p>Resident Partnership Strategy (Lucienne Callaghan)</p> <p>7.1 LC explained Manchester Working's Local Resident Partnership Strategy. Northwards have approved the strategy at board level but approval of the panels was being sought. The strategy is to be piloted in 2 areas in 2008 – 1 in Wilton area and the other in Fourways.</p> <p>7.2 The strategy aims to ensure 5-6 month lead-in with early involvement and the chance to ensure that aids and adaptations are identified during the pre-entry survey and incorporated at the time of works. It also aims to ensure ongoing accountability to residents.</p> <p>7.3 JW asked how residents would be informed about coffee mornings and other meetings, asked whether those not in residents groups would be welcome and expressed concern at the time commitment it would involve. LC explained that pre-entry packs would list all dates, that all would be welcome and that residents could decide on the level of participation, but this would probably be around an afternoon a month. SK explained that this strategy was building on work already being done by working in partnership with groups/forums that already existed.</p> <p>7.4 KB expressed concern that the strategy could divert resources from the repairs work itself, decrease profits and duplicate the work of Northwards staff. SK explained that Northwards does not have resources for consulting in detail around every job. There will be monitoring to avoid duplication. LC explained that the project used existing resources.</p> <p>7.5 MaB asked about involvement in areas without residents</p>	<p>PANEL</p>

	<p>associations. LC explained that every property receives a pre-entry survey and that the letter informing residents about works includes the offer of support in setting up a group. CMT described how this has led to a group forming in Lower Crumpsall.</p> <p>7.6 SR asked where the meetings/coffee mornings etc would be held. LC explained that they would be held very locally.</p> <p>7.7 CT expressed concern that as Manchester Working use sub-contractors this process might not enable communities to meet with those actually carrying out the work. AH and SK emphasised that Manchester Working is responsible for the works.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Tenants Incentive Scheme (Deborah Dalton)</p> <p>8.1 DD handed out a summary report on the proposed Tenants Incentive Scheme which had been agreed in principle by the Neighbourhood and Equality Services sub-committee. DD explained that the panel's views on it were being sought.</p> <p>8.2 MaB expressed some concerns including that problems with the benefits service that were not the fault of tenants could result in their exclusion from the scheme and raised concerns about the definition of an untidy garden and those who's health might make it difficult to keep their garden tidy. DD explained that they would only be excluded if they had not been providing information to the benefits agency or were not keeping to any rent repayment agreement and tenancy agreement, which included a standard for gardens. JB explained that concessionary gardening scheme supports those who cannot maintain their own garden.</p> <p>8.3 DD explained that on the basis of rent payments, 85% of Northwards Tenants would qualify for the scheme. JB felt that tenants should have to be up to date on rent payments before being allowed to join the scheme.</p> <p>8.4 KB felt that there was not enough 'stick' to match the carrot, and expressed concern about the potential cost of the scheme, but would welcome the promotion of local shops. SF explained that the scheme would cost £40,000 for the first year. SF gave the example of Irwell Valley where a similar scheme had decreased anti-social behaviour and encouraged rent payment. The 'stick' would be what Northwards is currently doing on rent arrears/tenant behaviour.</p> <p>8.5 AH requested that more information be available at the next meeting for further discussion and that the concerns expressed in the meeting be put to the board. SF will bring a</p>	<p>SF</p>

	<p>more detailed report to the next meeting. CMT requested that a copy be sent with the papers and that people come prepared with questions.</p> <p>8.6 SF explained that the initial stage of the access review should be completed by May and some improvements could be implemented this year where possible. Further improvements would be made in the future.</p>	
9.	<p>Customer satisfaction survey</p> <p>9.1 SF will bring the outcome of this to the next meeting. The results have come out and are generally positive. Following analysis of the results an action plan will be formed on tackling issues and making improvements.</p> <p>9.2 The next survey will take place earlier in the year, possibly in June as return rates are higher from summer surveys.</p> <p>9.3 SF gave out his number - 0161 227 3012 – to be contacted with any queries.</p>	SF
10.	<p>Environmental Works Update (Steve Kirkham)</p> <p>10.1 Consultation on schemes is now complete and work will commence shortly on the first batch of schemes.. SK will be meeting with CMT and Groundwork soon to discuss the programme and a fuller report will be available for the April meeting. The schemes for this year are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queens Road maisonettes • Temple Sq refurbishments • Ruthin Ave flats • Gardens Copper Lane / Alworth Road • Sandyhill Court <p>10.2 A query was raised about a fencing scheme in Cheetham Hill. CMT explained that this had not been approved in the last funding round and had been put on the reserve list</p>	
11.	<p>Major Works Update (Steve Kirkham)</p> <p>11.1 SK will update monthly as this is a moving programme and dates will change. Dates will be published on the website, in newsletters etc.</p> <p>11.2 KB asked if homeowners/private tenants were being invited to join the schemes. SK has been working with the contractors to obtain a better price so that the wider community can benefit from changes to the whole area. It is a government initiative that they have not really been promoting to date. Northwards is part of “Impact Manchester”</p>	

	<p>which has been coming up with ways to promote the scheme. SK showed KB a letter which is to go to private residents about the improvements, KB asked for this to be circulated at the next meeting.</p> <p>11.3 JW raised concerns about staffing issues of Manchester Working on the Munn Road improvements. SK explained that there is a skills shortage in the industry. JW said the works staff were doing a good job under difficult circumstances.</p> <p>11.4 SK thanked MaB for his contributions to making improvements in his area</p>	
12.	<p>Repairs Update</p> <p>Apologies were given that the repairs manager was not available for the meeting and CMT invited attendees to raise any issues after the meeting which she would report to the repairs manager.</p>	
13.	<p>LSM Update (Jacqui Tomlinson)</p> <p>13.1 JT distributed the voids figures. A query was raised about the Low Demand property figure and it was explained that the Cheetham office does not have any low demand properties</p> <p>13.2 There are 41 cases of anti-social behaviour with the action team, 24 of these are in Wilton area. There have been 2 seizures of equipment and Northwards has won it's first garden injunction – the tenants have 4 weeks to get their garden improved and the order requires them to maintain it. If it is not improved Northwards can go back to court for possession. The court awarded costs.</p>	
14.	<p>Chair/Vice Chair Meeting Update (Anne Heywood)</p> <p>14.1 AH explained that at the meeting an agreement had been reached to provide an issues sheet for specific issues to be raised and have half an hour prior to the meeting where the chair and officers will be available to answer questions.</p> <p>14.2 Ideas are invited for the area panel social event. Those attending forums will be invited to come too.</p> <p>14.3 Board training is open to panel members. Groundwork will attend the August panel meetings re 2009-10 works. AH had found the chairs training useful. Revolve will be produced the Friday before panel meetings.</p> <p>14.4 Information will be sent out about Panel vacancies following the meeting.</p> <p>14.5 AH talked through the forthcoming panel events. CMT</p>	

	highlighted the Moving Forward workshop on the 7 th as very important	
15.	Community Update (Julie Goreham)	
	<p>15.1 JG encouraged attendees to contribute to Revolve</p> <p>15.2 JG explained that the Tenants Conference was being planned for September. Those with ideas for the conference can feed them through Jim Burke who is chairing the planning group or Julie Goreham</p> <p>15.3 JG explained that panel members were welcome to observe other panels. Study visits were being planned</p> <p>15.4 JG invited comments on the Area Panel leaflet and asked attendees to choose a logo. The leaflet met approval and Option 2 was the chosen option for the logo, but with the tree from Option 3.</p> <p>15.5 JG asked for volunteers to go to Forum meetings and talk about the panel. SR explained that the forums were looking for more attendees from the Wilton area. MaB and CT requested dates for the meetings, JG to send details.</p> <p>15.6 JG explained that Northwards is holding an international day on 29th May and invited panel members to contribute to this</p>	
16-18.	Business and Delivery Plan	
	<p>16.1 Key issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7.8 on p.49 • p.65 • p.67 – SHOUT TMO ballot in Autumn. Avro Hollows ballot successful, properties to be handed over in July (Croydon Drive estate). 	
19.	Communications	
	<p>19.1 JG highlighted the number on p. 73 for those needing information in other languages.</p> <p>19.2 JG informed the meeting that an induction loop was available for panel meetings. Attendees are to inform Julie Goreham if this is needed so that it can be booked for the meeting</p>	
20.	AOB	
	<p>20.1 KB raised concerns at the lack of publicity/knowledge around the Higher Blackley gardening competition winners. CMT has asked for better publicity, and the winners will be in a future edition of Northwards Natter.</p>	

	<p>20.2 MaB expressed concern at a form received to choose kitchen/bathroom which asked “Do you understand English?” but required a response there and then.</p> <p>20.3 JB encouraged panel members to attend a meeting at North City Library at 12pm on 14th April to ask for a Respect Action week in Higher Blackley</p>	
21	<p>Date and Time of Next Meetings</p> <p>AH reminded attendees that she would be present 30 minutes before the next panel meeting to take AOB points and officers there to answer questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Moving forward workshop Area Panel Members -7 April, 11.30am to 4.00pm, Abraham Moss Conference rooms b) Performance Management – Board Training - 8 April, 6.00pm to 8.30pm, Board Room, Hexagon Tower c) Regeneration Tour – joint Area Panel and Board 12 April, 9.30 to 12.30 followed by lunch, Hexagon Tower d) Study Visit – to be confirmed e) International Day 29 May – Abraham Moss a) Panel meeting 15 April 2008, 6.45pm to 8.45pm - Cheetham Hill office 	

Meeting closed at 8.25pm