

Northwards Housing Panel Meeting Minutes

Panel: Wilton

Date: 15th April 2008

6.45 p.m. to 8.45 p.m

Cheetham Hill 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
Melanie Beckford	Panel Member
Cllr Ken Barnes (KB)	Councillor
Steve Kirkham (SK)	Head of Home Improvements (Wilton)
Claire Tyrrell (CMT)	Head of Neighbourhood Services (Wilton)
Mike Stevens	Director of Neighbourhood Services
Jaqui Tomlinson (JT)	Local Services Manager
Deborah Dalton (DD)	Business Support
Steve Finegan (SF)	Business Support
Tara Kelly	Business Support
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
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.	
3.	Apologies for Absences	
3.1	Mike Bolshaw, Sue Ratchford	
4.	Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters	
4.1	Confidential items were tabled under item 15. The Chair explained that one of these items would be brought forward to item 8.	
4.2	No declarations of interest were made	
5.	Minutes of last meeting 18 March 2008	
5.1	Item 10 Copper Lane should read Cooper. The minutes were approved with this correction.	
6.	Matters arising	
6.1	KB asked if there was an update on the compensation	MS

	<p>scheme for broken repairs appointments. MS reported that Andy Woods will start in post as Head of Responsive Repairs in June and will be given this piece of work. More details on the proposed scheme will come to the panels and the Property and Procurement Sub Committee later in the year</p>	
6.2	<p><i>Item 15.4</i> The amended logo was approved</p>	
6.3	<p><i>Item 20</i> KB asked if information on the Gardening competition had gone into the Northwards Natter. CMT explained that it would be in the Summer edition</p>	
6.4	<p>Tenant Incentive scheme (Deborah Dalton/Steve Finegan) <i>Item 8</i> DD invited questions on the tenant incentive scheme. A discussion followed in which concerns were raised by MaB, KB and JW on the detail of the scheme, about which businesses might be able to take part, that services not be withheld from tenants because of arrears and the impact on the rest of the household. KB asked if the scheme would enable Northwards to obtain another star in the audit. Officers explained that the Audit Commission would not award an additional star for having the scheme, but would look favourably on a scheme as it meets value for money targets. There is to be further consultation on the detail, at this stage approval was being sought for the scheme in principal and to do further work. The Countdown Card scheme was being considered and that the team had discussed the inclusion of local businesses who could chose to opt in. Northwards will talk to Tenants and Residents Groups about advertising the scheme locally. The scheme would incentivise good behaviour. It should contribute to reduced re-let times and show that Northwards has explored all methods to keep tenancies in order.</p> <p>The panel agreed the scheme but wanted to above reservations noted. They also requested further consultation/ involvement on the details. The status of leaseholders would need to be considered as they pay a service charge.</p>	
6.5	<p>Owner Occupier letter (Steve Kirkham) The owner occupiers on Chain Road had been sent letters inviting them to join the improvements scheme. This is a trial. They had had 11 responses requesting the work (8% response rate). They have had to ask for payment up front, SK is investigating the use of holding accounts. The service should provide quality, health and safety standards and value for money.</p> <p>KB had received positive feedback from residents and felt the up front payment was not ideal but as the work was carried out by the contractors/ Northwards there were guarantees that the work would get done. SK explained that Northwards would support any residents with issues related to the works. In the future if the scheme rolls out owner occupiers would be invited to open days, and involved earlier on in the process</p>	
7.	<p>Customer Satisfaction Survey (Steve Finegan)</p>	
7.1	<p>There had been a 17% response rate from the survey, and</p>	

	generally the feedback was positive. Some areas to improve.	
7.2	An action plan for the improvements for the next 12 months has been created.	
7.3	MaB commented that issues around gangs of youths stand out but otherwise the results were positive, and there was little variation between the panels.	
7.3	SF explained that the next survey carried out over the summer would ask the same questions to allow a direct comparison.	
7.4	JB raised concerns about resident's satisfaction with works on kitchens. SK assured the panel that he would be taking comments back to the team, especially around communications issues. SF highlighted action 7 on p.40 – Northwards is committed to looking at this issue.	
7.5	JW felt that the "20 days" quoted as the timescale of the works on the letter should have added a statement that if problems arise in the property, this period will be longer. She felt that social services needed to be informed about tenants with health issues. SF explained that communication around vulnerable tenants will be improving. SK added that the need to communicate better with all tenants had been taken on board.	
8.	Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan (Tara Kelly)	
8.1	See confidential minutes	
8.2	TK invited comments on the Equality Action Plan. AH felt that the young people's film project was a good idea. TK explained that this would help to build a relationship with young people. MaB suggested a competition for short films.	
8.3	MS advised the panel that they could contact TK after the meeting with any further ideas or suggestions. Tel 0161 227 3044	
9.	Environmental Works 2008 Update (Steve Kirkham)	
9.1	SK distributed the latest programme. He and CMT had met with Groundwork who were currently working on costings for 2 schemes which will start in June.	
9.2	SK distributed plans for the Queens Road maisonettes which are under consultation. AH questioned whether some of the existing trees on the plan were actually present and raised a concern that people would park on the grassy areas. CMT explained that the Temple Square scheme includes bollards which should address this particular parking issue.	
9.3	MeB asked for details of the timing of the Centaur Way (5 a-side) scheme. The completed scheme would be a good advertisement of the achievements of the panel. SK explained that there would be a period of consultation (April-September) and then it will go ahead later in the autumn. CMT added that groundwork will be looking to match fund the scheme. She will arrange for Groundwork to contact MeB	CMT
9.4	SK reported that the Cooper Lane scheme will be starting fairly quickly by cutting back overgrowth and defining	

	boundaries. Residents have been consulted.	
10.	Major Works Update (Steve Kirkham)	
10.1	SK explained that the Walker Road scheme had produced complications due to defective brick work. Roofing and pointing schemes have been accelerated.	
10.2	JW raised the issue of Floyer Road where a resident had complained that the street had not been re-roofed. SK to follow up.	SK
10.3	MaB raised concerns that in some properties pointing of brick work was being carried out before lintel replacements. SK agreed to look into this.	SK
10.4	JW queried the difference between number of units on the 2 Munn Road schemes. SK to follow up.	SK
10.5	AH asked if the Northwards had incurred costs as a result of the problems with the Queens Road maisonettes. SK explained that a settlement had been reached, and the damage would be put right. Northwards had shared some of the costs.	
10.6	SK asked the panel to identify a scheme to pilot the Manchester Working Resident Participation Strategy. It was agreed to use the Munn Road and Liverton Court schemes.	SK
11.	LSM update (Jacqui Tomlinson)	
11.1	JT distributed the voids figures and explained that 'ready to let' figures had increased due to difficulties letting adapted properties.	
11.2	KB expressed concern that properties were empty for more than 6 months because of asbestos removal programmes were slow. JT assured the panel that she raised this issue regularly. JB expressed concern that unnecessary works might be taking place. CMT explained that the issue was being looked at as part of the void revue and information on this would be provided to the panel at a future meeting.	CMT
11.3	JT explained there are currently 41 antisocial behaviour cases across Northwards, 18 of these with Wilton. JT reported that the garden order had resulted in the garden being cleaned up.	
11.4	JT informed the meeting that Sue Ellen Jemaa would now cover Higher Blackley North and Simon Banham Blackley and Crumpsall.	
12.	Estate Based Service Review (Claire Tyrrell)	
12.1	CMT explained that Northwards is piloting the use of a different company for void and concessionary gardening. A private company in Higher Blackley and a social enterprise in Charlestown. CMT explained that tenant inspectors would be monitoring the work and encouraged feedback from other panel members. KB will arrange a walkabout with Elaine Gladstone. MS explained that customer feedback could be measured through the voids questionnaire completed at the start of the tenancy. MaB welcomed the change as an example of how the ALMO was getting better value services.	

12.2	JW raised a concern that community payback are not receiving funding but clearing up areas which contractors should be clearing as part of their payment. MS explained that if payback are doing work where Northwards is already paying contractors then they are exploring the transfer of that 'debt' to get the contractors to perform other works.	
13.	Community Update (Julie Goreham)	
13.1	JG distributed the April edition of Revolve and invited contributions to future editions. JB recommended the inclusion of numbers for SHINE and Care and Repair. JG distributed Trafford Hall training brochures and the revised Resident Involvement Agreement.	
13.2	The Tenants Conference will take place on 13 September 2008 at Boggart Hole Clough. The panel was invited to give ideas for a name for the event. An AGM/Award night will take place a week after the tenant's event.	
13.3	JG explained that panel members were welcome to observe other panels. Study visits were being planned.	
13.4	JG reminded the panel that Northwards is holding an international day on 29 th May and invited panel members to contribute to this	
14.	Area Panel Work Programme	
14.1	The work programme was enclosed in the papers and comments invited.	
15.	Confidential Items	
15.1	See separate minutes	
16.	Any other business	
16.1	MaB was concerned that there was no-one present from the Repairs and Improvements team. He wished to raise some policy based issues. CMT assured the panel that Gary Walsh will be there for the May meeting.	
16.2	AH invited participants to raise individual issues through the Issue Sheet sent out with the papers. JB had presented a sheet, these issues will be responded to at the next meeting.	
17	Date and Time of Next Meetings	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Study Visit – to be confirmed b) International Day 29 May – Abraham Moss c) Moving forward workshop Area Panel Members -17 May, 9.30am to 12.30pm, followed by lunch Abraham Moss Conference rooms d) Panel meeting 20 May 2008, 6.45pm to 8.45pm – Whitemoss Road office 	

Meeting closed at 9.05pm