

## Northwards Housing Panel Meeting Minutes

### Panel: Wilton

Date: 16 September 2008

6.45 p.m. to 8.45 p.m

Whitemoss Road Local Services Office, Community Room

Chair: Anne Heywood

#### Attendance:

|                        |   |
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| Anne Heywood (AH)      | Chair                                   |
| Charles Taggart (CT)   | Vice Chair                              |
| Joan Wilson (JW)       | Panel Member                            |
| Mark Bainbridge (MaB)  | Panel Member                            |
| Mike Bolshaw (MiB)     | Panel Member                            |
| Sue Ratchford (SR)     | Panel Member                            |
| Cllr Ken Barnes (KB)   | Panel Member                            |
| Melanie Beckford (MeB) | Panel Member                            |
| Jim Burke (JB)         | Panel Member                            |
| Gary Walsh (GW)        | Repairs Manager                         |
| Steve Kirkham (SK)     | Head of Home Improvements (Wilton)      |
| Claire Tyrrell (CMT)   | Head of Neighbourhood Services (Wilton) |
| Mike Stevens (MS)      | Director of Neighbourhood Services      |
| Julie Goreham (JG)     | Resident Involvement Officer (Minutes)  |
| Ruth McWhirk           | Observer                                |
| Sylvia Parfitt (SP)    | Observer                                |

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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| <b>2.</b> | <b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b><br><b>Confirm Quorate</b>   |        |
| 2.1       | The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting, and explained the meeting rules. Meeting was Quorate. Introductions were made, and the Observer's welcomed. |        |
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| <b>3.</b> | <b>Apologies for Absences</b>  |        |
| 3.1       | Apologies had been received from Jacqui Tomlinson  |        |
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| <b>4.</b> | <b>Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters</b>   |        |
| 4.1       | No confidential items were discussed. No Declarations of Interest were made.   |        |
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| <b>5.</b> | <b>Minutes of last meeting</b><br><b>15 July 2008</b>  |        |
| 5.1       | The minutes were approved.   |        |
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| <b>6.</b> | <b>Matters arising</b>   |        |
| 6.1       | <i>Item 6.1</i> KB reported that the walkabout had not taken place due to holidays in August. Her expressed concern that Elaine                              |        |

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|           | <p>Gladstone, the Environment Officer, was being moved away from the area. MaB, JW, JB and KB expressed their concern and sadness at this decision, and felt that Elaine had a lot of local knowledge which would be lost. CMT and MS explained that the decision was part of an organisational change – Elaine is moving to the Monsall office and Steve Shaw, currently an Environment Officer for parts of Cheetham, Crumpsall and Higher Blackley, will be taking on this area. Michael Tetteh-Lartey will be moved over from Monsall and take over Steve Shaw's previous area. There will be no change to Riverdale. Steve Shaw would bring new skills and the level of service received by residents would remain the same. MS expressed regret that the decision had not been discussed at the panel before it happened, but explained that it was difficult to discuss staffing issues in advance. KB asked for the panel's appreciation for Elaine's work to be noted.</p> <p>JW reported that the tenant inspections on gardens had taken place before all the work was completed. AH asked if the tenant inspectors could be informed of the timetable for garden works.</p> | <b>WHO??</b> |
| 6.2       | <p><i>Item 6.3</i> CMT met with Arthur Kay and his manager and agreed a set of standards which will be brought to the next meeting. KB asked for this to be an item at the next meeting. This was agreed. CMT will invite Arthur Kay</p>  | <b>CMT</b>   |
| 6.3       | <p><i>Item 9.12</i> MaB stated that he would have liked the minutes to say yes to driving on the greens at Northridge Road. CMT explained that a surveyor had informed Northwards that the pavements were not suitable for parking on. Tenants with cars had been informed of this. MaB asked CMT to check that tenants had been informed.</p>  | <b>CMT</b>   |
| 6.4       | <p><i>Item 9.8</i> KB was unsure of the situation re Cooper Lane. SK explained that he would update the meeting under item 9</p>  |              |
| 6.5       | <p><i>Item 9.13</i> KB informed the meeting that the Blackley event was progressing and that JG and Leisure would be carrying out consultation and will report back and look at spending. CMT explained that Cheetham and Crumpsall funds would be spent through the Youth Activities Group, and would involve an element of participatory budgeting. JG is working on this and it should be a beneficial project.</p>  |              |
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| <b>7.</b> | <b>Neighbourhood Wardens Update (Mike Stevens)</b>  |              |
| 7.1       | <p>MS reported that the Northwards agreed to fund the expansion of the wardens service. There are ongoing discussions taking place regarding the practicalities. An updated will be brought to the October panel and wardens will attend the panel in November. The new service will begin in January. There will be 6 wardens in the Wilton area, mainly working outside of hours.</p>   |              |
| 7.2       | <p>MS invited the views of the panel on what the Wardens are needed for in the Wilton area. JB expressed support for the expansion, KB disagreed. MS explained that the report to the board had reflected differing views from the panel.</p>   |              |
| 7.3       | <p>JB raised a query about what HR and RSL meant on p.40 of the papers. CMT suggested the panel is provided with an updated glossary of terms</p>   | <b>JG</b>    |

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| <b>8.</b> | <b>Repairs Update (Gary Walsh)</b>   |            |
| 8.1       | GW circulated a summarised report of the repairs service information and explained that they showed a number of targets which were not being met, but that there was an improvement in meeting targets. The team is seeking to get information which was cumulative and information which can be drilled down into. The team are working at the senior level and ground level to improve the service. GW explained that there is an error with the figure for average cost of voids which is being investigated.   |            |
| 8.2       | GW invited questions and comments on the format. MaB expressed concern at the number of “red” areas indicating where targets are not being met, particularly the number of appointments being met. This is the main complaint he hears from tenants. GW had looked into this and discovered that sometimes work is carried out at a later point by agreement with the tenant, but this counts as a failed appointment by the measuring system. The hand held technology should help to give more accurate data. GW explained he believes the data understates performance but recognises that there is too much “red”. MS felt that the figures in themselves are good compared with other organisations. MS explained that a meeting was planned for October for the panels on Performance Management to look at whether what we measure is what the panels think we should measure, what areas are most important etc. MS will raise this again in AOB |            |
| 8.3       | JB asked about the appointment system and advised that appointment letters should inform people that if no-one has come to carry out the repair by the end of the timeslot they are not coming, to avoid people waiting in all day for the repairs. GW explained that by the new year the hand held technology should be in place to make it easier to inform tenants if the repairs staff are running late. KB asked if the data could show which operatives were not attending appointments. GW explained the hand held technology would do this. CT felt this would show how different contractors performed also   |            |
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| <b>9.</b> | <b>Major and Environmental Works Update (Steve Kirkham/ Claire Tyrrell)</b>  |            |
| 9.1       | CMT reported that Centaur Way works are currently being consulted on. A ‘space shaper’ event had taken place which MeB attended, as well as 3 other residents and stakeholders. The project had been looking into the 5-aside pitch but as this had fallen into disrepair in the mean time it is looking at the environment more generally. The results of the event will be taken back to the group, and displayed for further consultation in a gazebo on the site for an after-school session to obtain residents views. A update will be brought back to the panel in future.  | <b>CMT</b> |
| 9.2       | SK reported that works are going well on the Queens Road project. AH asked if broken flags in Temple Square will be dealt with along with the Queens Road flags. SK will find out.   | <b>SK</b>  |
| 9.3       | JG reported that work was ongoing in Hendham Vale. Seddons   |            |

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|     | had been carrying out some in kind work, and Groundwork had consulted tenants on planters and signage.   |                               |
| 9.4 | SK reported that the Copper Lane site has now been cleared. Tenants do not want the gardens reinstated so the boundaries will be fenced off. CMT explained that number 14 and 16 had approved permanent access and the site would be sewed with a slower growing clover mix seed. The site will be monitored for fly tipping. MaB asked who will cover the maintenance costs. CMT explained that the site will be added to the grounds maintenance list, and more consultation on the use of the land will take place next year. JW asked if the space could be used as a building, KB asked about a community garden and MaB asked about garages. CMT explained that there is no access for a garage or building but a community garden was a possibility and if Murfield Allotments are successful this could be seriously considered, working with Pike TA. |                               |
| 9.5 | SK reported that Groundwork and MEDC are beginning works in Weldon/Torcross/Finingley, with a provisional start date in January. Groundwork will carry out consultation. KB felt that residents should be being talked to before work began. SK explained that Groundwork had been briefed on consultation.  |                               |
| 9.6 | SK reported that work was on schedule on Sandyhill Court. JW asked why Munn Road wasn't included in the list of schemes. SK explained that the money had moved out of the environmental budget into the capital scheme pot   |                               |
| 9.7 | SK reported that the Central House works were being included with the end of the kitchen programme   |                               |
| 9.8 | CMT reminded the panel that the November meeting would look at new schemes, and asked for ideas to be submitted by a week before the October panel. This would enable to schemes to be priced, and a bus tour would then be arranged before the November panel meeting to look at the potential schemes. Schemes can be submitted through CMT, the EOs, NSOs, and JG. There would be a similar amount of funds to the last round, allocated for a 2 year period as before. CMT asked panel members to speak to people in their area, and explained that the ideas need not be detailed. KB asked if tenants and residents groups had been informed. CMT explained it was in Revolve, and would check if a piece is in the Natter.  | <b>CMT, all panel members</b> |
|     | <b>Major works</b>   |                               |
| 9.9 | SK referred to the report which was in a new format and explained that the number of properties to number of questionnaires returned figures do not always match as questionnaires are returned at different times. The target is 75% returned questionnaires – in some areas this is not met, in others it is exceeded. There are some issues re return of questionnaires from Walker Road schemes. Northwards is committed to constructive criticism. MiB asked if it could be compulsory to complete questionnaires. SK explained that people could not be forced, but more work could be carried out to engage and encourage tenants. JW reported that phonecalls made as part of her work as a tenant inspector had shown a positive response to the works.   |                               |
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| <b>10.</b> | <b>LSM Update (Claire Tyrrell)</b>  |  |
| 10.1       | CMT explained that Housing Assistant Leslie Matthews and NSO Sue-Ellen Jemaa were on maternity leave. Christine Martin-O'Hara is covering Sue-Ellen's leave.  |  |
| 10.2       | CMT reported that there are currently 46 cases with the Anti-social behaviour team, 21 of these are from the Wilton area. There are 4 undertakings, and 1 injunction ...  |  |
| 10.3       | CMT distributed the Voids figures and explained that a lot of Ready to Let properties had become available at once which is why the figure is high. JB asked if Northwards is still charging former tenants for damage to properties they vacate, CMT stated that they are.   |  |
| 10.4       | At this point in the meeting SP had to leave the meeting, and was invited to ask any questions before she left. SP felt that Blackley Village was never mentioned. CMT explained that it is included in the Crumpsall Ward. MS suggested that a walkabout be organised in the area. MiB explained that there is a panel vacancy. JG stated that this could be discussed further under 12(b).                          |  |
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| <b>11.</b> | <b>CIH Active Learning Programme (Claire Tyrrell)</b>   |  |
| 11.1       | CMT distributed further information on the CIH Active Learning Programme which accredits the learning of those volunteering. She invited anyone who was interested to give their names or contact Diane who would find out further information. JW expressed interest in finding out more.  |  |
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| <b>12.</b> | <b>Community Update and Governance (Julie Goreham)</b>  |  |
| 12.1       | JG distributed the September issue of Revolve and invited articles for the October issue, which need to be submitted by the Friday before the next panel meeting  |  |
| 12.2       | JG explained that there is a tenant and owner occupier vacancy for the panel, and the option to co-opt additional members. Mavis Wilkinson from Lower Crumpsall Tenants and Residents Group had expressed an interest in standing for the panel. It was hoped that others who had come as observers would consider standing.  |  |
| 12.3       | There had been no requests to observe the panel at future meetings  |  |
| 12.4       | JG reported that Fourways and Wilton would be holding study visits in February and November respectively. JG suggested that the Wilton study visit could be combined with the environmental works visit. CMT explained that as the study visits are open to other panels this would not be appropriate and so the date of the Wilton visit may have to be reconsidered.   |  |
| 12.5       | JG explained that the panel AGM would take place in October. Publicity would be available shortly. SR and JW are up for rotation, and JG asked them to inform her whether they intended to stand again, either during the meeting, or in writing after the meeting. JW and SR stated that they wished to stand again. JG asked if anyone had any suggestions about refreshments etc for the panel. JW asked for fish! |  |

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| 12.6      | JG gave out invitations to the Board AGM and northAwards to those who had said they planned to attend and asked that they confirm their attendance with Diane by the 22 September, as stated in the invitation.  |  |
| 12.7      | JG stated that she had enjoyed the It's a Northwards Knockout event and invited the panel to make comments on the event. AH thanked the steering group for all their organisation, on behalf of the Wilton panel. She felt it had been a well-run event, and that the weather had made all the difference! SR thanked JB for chairing the steering group. JB said he had enjoyed the experience.   |  |
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| <b>13</b> | <b>Re-inspection programme (Claire Tyrrell)</b>  |  |
| 13.1      | CMT explained that the briefing in August had outlined the inspection programme for the panels, and that the handouts were in the papers for those who had not been able to attend. The inspectors will arriving week commencing 17 November.  |  |
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| <b>14</b> | <b>Any other business</b>  |  |
| 14.1      | MaB informed the meeting that he wished to resign from his position on the panel. This was because he had been told to resign by others in Northridge Road because the parking scheme was not going ahead, and because of issues with staff. He thanked members of the panel and staff who had been constructive to work with. MiB felt that Mark had been put in an intolerable position and that Northwards should contact the tenants in the area to fully explain why the scheme wasn't going ahead. CMT agreed that this needed to be done, and would meet with tenants and also with Mark to discuss staffing issues. MaB felt he could not remain without local people's support. Panel members and staff urged MaB to wait and reconsider and stated that MaB was not there to represent his street but rather to bring his skills and assist with making decisions on behalf of all tenants. After some discussion MaB agreed to reconsider and defer a decision to the next meeting. |  |
| 14.2      | SR explained that panel members had been invited to a Manchester Working event to thank them for the work they had been doing. SR had 8 invitations. JB, JW, AH, SR and CT will attend.  |  |
| 14.3      | MS asked the panel about their preferences on when to hold the Performance Management session. The general preference for a Saturday morning remained.   |  |
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| <b>15</b> | <b>Date and time of next meetings</b>  |  |
|           | a) Board AGM and northAwards – 2 October<br>b) Area Panel AGM – 21 October, Cheetham Local Services Office   |  |

**Meeting closed at 8.25pm**