

Northwards Housing Panel Meeting Minutes

Panel: Wilton

Date: 18 November 2008

6.15 p.m. to 8.30 p.m

Whitemoss Road Local Services Office, Community Room

Chair: Anne Heywood

Attendance:

Anne Heywood (AH)	Panel Member (Chair)
Charles Taggart (CT)	Panel Member (Vice-chair)
Mike Bolshaw (MiB)	Panel Member
Jim Burke (JB)	Panel Member
Joan Wilson (JW)	Panel Member
Sue Ratchford (SR)	Panel Member
Mark Bainbridge (MaB)	Panel Member
Melanie Beckford (MeB)	Panel Member
Ken Barnes (KB)	Panel Member
Mavis Wilkinson (MW)	Panel Member
Jacqui Tomlinson (JT)	Local Services Manager
Steve Kirkham (SK)	Head of Home Improvements
Claire Tyrrell (CMT)	Head of Neighbourhood Services
Mike Stevens (MS)	Director of Neighbourhood Services
Gary Walsh (GW)	Repairs Manager
Julie Goreham (JG)	Resident Involvement Officer

From 6.00pm refreshments were provided and officers were available to answer questions. The meeting commenced 6.15pm

Item	Description	Action
1	Welcome and introductions	
1.1	a) AH welcomed attendees to the meeting	
1.2	b) AH explained that the Audit Commission inspectors would not be attending the panel meeting	
1.3	c) JG explained that AH had been nominated as Chair and CT as Vice-Chair of the panel. As both positions were unopposed, the panel was asked for their support in these appointments. The panel agreed.	
1.4	c) & d) Quorate was confirmed and meeting rules explained	
2.	Apologies for Absences	
2.1	Apologies had been received from Cllr Naeem Ul Hassan	
3.	Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters	
3.1	No confidential items were discussed. No Declarations of Interest were made.	
4.	Minutes of last meeting 21 October 2008	

4.1	The minutes were approved.	
5.	Matters arising	
5.1	KB explained that he and MaB and CMT had assessed the quality of the work being carried out by the new gardening contractors. They had concluded that the work was good.	
5.2	<i>Item 8.2</i> CMT reported that the signs had been ordered, and should be delivered in 3 weeks. The area to the rear has been seeded.	
5.3	<i>Item 10.4</i> JG suggested some dates for the Wilton study visit. The panel agreed on 23 February. Further details to follow.	JG
5.4	<i>Item 12.1</i> CMT circulated the grounds maintenance schedule and suggested that this be added to the agenda of the January meeting for discussion. KB asked that it be made available to secretaries of TAs and councillors. CT expressed concern that hedge trimming was not taking place as often as stated. CMT suggested that Arthur be invited back to the January meeting and the panel bring issues then.	JG/CMT
5.5	British Gas Partnership KB explained that there were a couple of ideas for projects in Higher Blackley – for dance activities and dance shows, following the consultation at the Extreme Sports event and for ice-skating in Riverdale, using the remainder of the Pot of Gold funds for that area. The idea of having an ice rink for two days on Easter weekend had also been discussed, with the time shared between Riverdale and Charlestown, splitting the £5000 costs with CASH grants in Charlestown. The ice rink would be combined with a consultation event. The panel discussed this, and agreed that the British Gas funds could be used for the ice rink event, and the remainder of Pot of Gold funds for the dance activities. MaB asked if boys would be able to attend the dance sessions. JG confirmed that they would.	SK
6.	Business and Delivery Plan	
6.1	MS invited the panel to feed ideas through for topics to be covered in the Business and Delivery Plan event on 17 January.	
7.	Repairs Update (Gary Walsh)	
7.1	GW distributed the latest results on satisfaction around repairs. There are a few more smiley faces reflecting the work with Manchester Working to keep improving the service.	
7.2	GW explained that the figure for measure NHL 824 in October was disappointing, and the team is investigating this. They are carrying weekly monitoring making sure that jobs are appropriately categorised, and fed back to local services and contractors. Manchester Working have agreed to provide feedback from operatives so it's possible to record cases where an emergency repair has been reported but actually the repair is not an emergency. On Call is also recording calls and the operatives are then contacted to provide feedback. JW asked if tenants know they are being recorded. GW explained that there is a standard message. MaB asked what Northwards	

	will do if they find out people have been lying. GW explained that they planned to put information in the Northwards Natter about the process of repairs, and the implications of falsely reporting repairs. MaB asked if a letter could be sent out to these tenants. GW felt that evidence needed to be gathered first. JW asked if a flier could go to tenants. GW explained that in his view a piece in the Natter, getting the statistics out would be a good place to start, showing the knock-on effect to other repairs. MW asked if the piece in the Natter could make clear the definition of an emergency. GW confirmed it could. AH asked if Northwards could provide replacement heaters where boilers were broken and there would be a delay before fixing it. GW confirmed that this happened. MW asked if the elderly and those with young children have priority. GW confirmed this.	
7.3	JB asked if Northwards is doing same day lets. CMT explained that this is not happening currently, but it is hoped that it can in the future. Properties are coming back from the contractors on time. MS explained that the average time of lets is coming down.	
7.4	GW explained that following the performance management event the repairs reports would be changing format as requested by panel members. The change would start in January.	
7.5	GW explained that Manchester Working has been assisting Northwards with home fire risk assessments. Doors have been removed from some properties creating an increased fire risk. GW explained that the team was considering sending letters out to tenants explaining the fire risks and offering to restore doors and recharge this work. There was general agreement with this course of action.	
7.6	GW explained that the hand held devices would be phased in from early December, starting with 20 devices.	
8.	Major Environmental Works Update (Steve Kirkham/Claire Tyrrell)	
8.1	There are two or three schemes experiencing some problems. The Walker Road scheme had seen improved figures for October and November. A problem in Riverdale North in August has been rectified. A problem with the electrical sub-contractor on Chain Road has been addressed, and this is reflected in the October/November statistics.	
8.2	JW reported that at the Hillside Tenants and Residents public meeting there had been a lot of positive feedback on the kitchen works, including those from Liverton Court.	
8.3	MaB said that there had been complaints in his area about the time kitchen works were taking, and asked if the 28 day figure being quoted was accurate. SK explained that because of the problems with the electricians works were taking longer. They had made the decision to suspend the opening up of properties so that they can complete the properties where works are underway, so the time for completion should reduce again.	
8.4	SK reported that the environmental scheme in Appleford is starting early in December and should be complete before Christmas. AH asked if the land was being reinstated or new	

	equipment put in. SK explained that it was being reinstated.	
8.5	CMT reported that there was not an update on Centaur Way from Groundwork yet.	
8.6	SK reported that the Queens Road scheme is complete. Cooper Lane needs to be finished. KB and CMT felt that need to look for further improvements in the future. MaB asked if there has been any dumping. SK explained that there has been some throwing over the fence.	
8.7	JG reported that the permission for the signage in Hendham Vale was still being sought. The rest of the scheme was complete following a planting event during the October half term break.	
8.8	SK reported that planning permission had been granted for the car parking on Torcross. There had been objections to the Weldon Drive scheme. KB reported that Highways was undertaking a consultation on white line/residents parking restrictions 8am-6pm on the corner of Cooper Lane. MaB was presented with a petition as owner occupiers did not want to share parking or lose the trees. KB wanted to withdraw the scheme. SK reported that only one property had been in favour, 6 against and 13 had not responded. The panel agreed to withdraw the scheme.	
8.9	SK reported the Central House works had been put back.	
8.10	SK reported that the Temple Square scheme is complete, AH agreed	
9.	Environmental Works Programme	
9.1	CMT distributed the list of costings for the proposed schemes and suggested that the panel chose priorities for funding and then look at the costings to see what they can fund.	
9.2	KB asked if the scheme is for 2 year funding. CMT confirmed that it is. SK explained that there is £370,000 available, subject to MCC approval. CMT explained that as the schemes are being looked at well in advance of April there will be an opportunity to come back.	
9.3	<p>Of the proposed schemes, the panel decided to fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterloo Road West scheme (£44182) • gate on Shaftsbury Road scheme (£1000) • £10,000 for improvements on the Lower Crumpsall estate (via further consultation) • renewal of fencing Moxley Walk (£6700) • £40,000 for a multi-use games area in Riverdale • Car parking, Printon Avenue (£38,993) • Garage site, Chapel Lane (£5000) • Fencing Northdale Road (£10,688) • Rockery, Glenbrook Rd/Heaton Park Rd (£5000) • Community garden contribution, Mirfield Road (£15,000) • £40,000 for consultation and subsequent works on former play area on Torcross Road <p>The panel asked for some schemes to come back to the January meeting with more of a breakdown of costings/more detail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inworth Walk, Hillbrow etc schemes 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acre Top/Munn Road/Ruthin including cost for tree crowning • Shaftesbury Road Communal doors • Car parking on Babbacombe Grove <p>The panel decided not to fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing at St James' House as they did not feel this would have enough benefit, and had concerns that as the other blocks were privately owned the appearance would be irregular • Car parking at Liverton Court as scheme was very expensive per space, and the panel did not think there was sufficient demand • Works to the "no mans land" on Chain Road as the scheme is very expensive 	
9.3	<p>CMT explained that panel members will be provided with further details for the January meeting, in order for them to make a final decision.</p> <p>MaB asked if costings could be made available at the time of the tour of the proposed schemes, for the next round of funding.</p>	CMT
10.	LSM Update (Jacqui Tomlinson)	
10.1	<p>JT explained that Kelly Richardson has been seconded to work with Greig Lees. There have been some changes in the patches of the remaining NSOs: Devon Rooms is now covering Crumpsall, Simon Banham Cheetwood, Christine Martin-O'Hara the Walker Road area. Joanne Tilley will be going on maternity leave mid-January. CMT invited feedback, if panel members felt that the workload was not being adequately covered by five NSOs.</p>	
10.2	<p>JT distributed the voids figures. They are currently slightly over target, but the figures on the morning of the meeting showed that there were only two ready to let properties. JT explained that there were various reasons for the high number of properties in "Re-let" figures - Operation Col meant more evictions being carried out and the time of year meant we had more deaths. "Items with remove" means that the properties need to be re-let. "With housing" means the properties are Right to Buy.</p>	
10.3	<p>JT reported that there are three big anti-social behaviour cases coming up in December. In the past month there has been one injunction and two noise abatement notices including one seizure of equipment.</p>	
10.4	<p>JT circulated a list of walkabout dates. MW expressed concern about the length of time until the walkabout in Lower Crumpsall as the Environment Officer is fairly new to the area. JT explained that additional walkabouts could be arranged between these dates.</p>	
11.	Community Update and Governance (Diane Roberts and Julie Goreham)	
11.1	<p>DR will circulate minutes of the chairs and vice-chairs meeting when they have been approved</p>	DR

11.2	DR will add MW into the information about rotation of members	
11.3	DR asked for volunteers for the constitution review – CT and JB volunteered	
11.4	DR asked for volunteers to help produce an induction programme for new panel members. JB and SR volunteered	
11.5	DR asked if anyone else wished to become involved in the steering group to plan the next tenants conference event(s). JB, CT, SR, JW and AH expressed interest (AH will attend if meetings are on Mondays or Wednesdays)	
11.6	MS reported that the Performance Management event had been successful, and the notes from this were enclosed.	
11.7	DR explained that there is a proposal to move the panel to the first week of the month rather than the third week, if all of the panels are in agreement. This would help provide more up to date repairs information in the meeting because of when this information is made available. The panel had no objections. The panel discussed moving the meeting back to 6.30pm to allow a slightly earlier finish. The agreed with this.	
11.8	JG circulated copies of Revolve, and the list of contact numbers for panel members. CMT highlighted the article on the Dogs Trust.	
11.9	There had been no requests for Observers.	
12	Any Other Business	
12.1	DR reported that the Tenant Service Authority will come into force on 1 December – they will be carrying out a period of consultation and setting standards in the new year. The panel will be kept informed of the events and consultations from January.	
13.	Date and time of next meetings	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) No meetings in December – 2009 meetings TBC b) Christmas social – Thursday 18 December 1.00-5.00pm, Whitemoss Road (JG will ring round about food. MW gave her apologies) c) Business Planning – Saturday 17 January, 9.30-12.30, Waterloo Centre, Cheetham Hill – Panel members to let Emma know if they want to attend. d) ASB and crime – Saturday 7 February 2009, 9.30-12.30, Waterloo Centre 	JG

Meeting closed at 8.45pm