

Northwards Housing Panel Meeting Minutes

Panel: Wilton

Date: 02 June 2009
6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m

Whitemoss Local Services Office, Community Room

Chair: Charles Taggart

Attendance:

Charles Taggart (CT)	Panel Member (Vice-chair)
Sue Ratchford (SR)	Panel Member
Mark Bainbridge (MaB)	Panel Member
Jim Burke (JB)	Panel Member
Mavis Wilkinson (MW)	Panel Member
Cllr Ken Barnes (KB)	Panel Member
Claire Tyrrell (CMT)	Head of Neighbourhood Services
Mike Stevens (MS)	Director of Neighbourhood Services
Danny Whitelock (DW)	Repairs Services Manager (Wilton)
Steve Kirkham (SK)	Head of Home Improvements (Wilton)
Julie Goreham (JG)	Resident Involvement Officer

From 6.00pm refreshments were provided and officers were available to answer questions. The meeting commenced 6.30pm.

Item	Description	Action
1	Welcome and introductions	
1.1	a) CT welcomed attendees to the meeting.	
1.2	b) Quorate was confirmed	
1.3	c) CT explained the meeting rules	
2.	Apologies for Absences	
2.1	Apologies had been received from Anne Heywood and Joan Wilson.	
3.	Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters	
3.1	There were no declarations of interest. Confidential items were tabled under item 14 b).	
4.	Minutes of last meeting 05 May 2009	
4.1	The minutes were approved.	
5.	Matters arising	
5.1	5.1/6.5 CMT is awaiting the maps from Arthur Kay	CMT
5.2	5.2 SK had spoken to British Gas who have confirmed that the payment of funds is in their system.	
5.3	6.5 MaB reported that Arthur Kay had not rung him. CMT will pass on MaBs details to remind him.	CMT
5.4	6.1 SR reported that the grass had been cut and cleared in her local area and that an excellent job had been done. MaB felt a good job	

	had been done in his local area too. JB expressed concern that road sweepers had not been as visible as usual. MW asked whether the weed clearance work was up and running. KB had been informed that the work has just started.	
5.5	11.1 Blackley East had confirmed that they would jointly fund this scheme. CMT to contact Richard Jones to arrange payment.	CMT
5.6	8.1 DW apologised that the report had been tabled rather than enclosed in the papers.	
5.7	15.1 JG had spoken to MW about CRB checks following the meeting	
6.	Business and Delivery Plan Update (Claire Tyrrell)	
6.1	CMT asked if the panel was happy with how the update was set out and explained that the document will be updated as work is taking place. JB asked if concessionary gardening could be included.	
6.2	KB suggested that the content be included in the Northwards Natter. CT suggested that it could be published on the Area Panel page. MS felt it could go in the Natter and CMT explained that an update could go in Revolve.	CMT
6.3	MaB was concerned that one of the issues included was not Northwards' responsibility. MS explained that the response would explain this but that Northwards is working with the council on the issue.	
7.	Quarter 4 Performance Report (Mike Stevens)	
7.1	MS explained that this was brought for information, showing the main performance indicators.	
7.2	MaB raised concerns about the working days lost due to sickness. MS explained that the figure is not on target but is an improvement. The target is 8.4 days for this year. The Resources sub-committee is monitoring this.	
8.	Inspection Action Plan Update (Mike Stevens)	
8.1	MS explained that the action plan is looked at during every board meeting until all the actions are completed. Some of the "red" actions had been completed in the last two-three weeks.	
9.	Customer Satisfaction Survey (Mike Stevens)	
9.1	MS explained that the report summarises the main points of action. The report had included High Rise living for the first time, and an action plan is being worked through with the High Rise Forum.	
10.	Repairs Update (Danny Whitelock)	
10.1	DW reported that 10 out of the 13 Performance Indicators are exceeding or close to target. Handhelds are starting to help with improvements in this.	
11.	Major Works Update 2008 (Steve Kirkham)	
11.1	SK reported that resident satisfaction scores have increased to 9.4. They are a good set of results, with the programme being on target.	
12.	Environmental Works Update 2008 (Steve Kirkham/Claire Tyrrell)	

12.1	Centaur Way order has been raised, there is a provisional start date of 6 July.	
12.2	Hendham Vale scheme is complete apart from the sign which is being negotiated with the Planning Department.	
12.3	Torcross/Finningley planning application is in. The scheme will be amalgamated with Babbacombe and other car parking schemes.	
13.	Environmental Works Programme 2009 (Steve Kirkham/Claire Tyrrell)	
13.1	SK reported that the works programme was approved by asset management sub-committee. There is still some money to allocate, but some of this will need to be held as contingency funds. Once remaining funds have been allocated the proposed schemes will be approved at a future asset management sub-committee. SK will bring a master plan for the works to the next meeting. This will be carried out across the three panels to maximise cost savings.	
13.2	SR expressed concern that railway sleepers were listed in the Ruthin scheme. CMT explained that this had been left in in error, and spelling errors would be corrected.	
13.3	KB felt that landscaping was needed as well as parking at the Boothroyden scheme.	
14.	LSM Update (Jacqui Tomlinson)	
14.1	ASB JT reported that the number of open cases has fallen since the enclosed report as several legal actions had been secured – one injunction, one ASBO warning, and a possession order with ASBO to ensure the individual concerned cannot get a property on Riverdale.	
14.2	Voids JT reported that the average voids figure is 73. There were currently 19 ready to let properties. Four residents who had accepted properties had changed their minds. KB asked what reasons had been given. JT explained that some did not like the area, some found the properties were too small. The team had been proactive in working with Rehousing to let properties that had been empty for a long period for example they had carried out multiple viewings for low-demand properties on French Barn Lane. KB asked if people are bidding for properties without knowing much about them. MS explained that most refusals are from those on the emergency list where they are queued automatically. Work is being done city wide on the allocations policy in the hopes of improving this. JT explained that the process of offering and subsequent refusal of someone on the emergency list can take up to three weeks.	
14.3	JB asked if adaptations are removed from properties before they are re-let. JT explained that if they cannot be let they are removed. Usually this is where there are walk-in showers. A stair lift would not be taken out unless the property could not be re-let.	
14.4	JB asked if new tenants receive a welcome pack with information on schools etc. JT reported that they do receive this information during an accompanied viewing and sign-up.	
14.5	MaB asked if it is possible to put who the housing officer is for each area on the website with a photograph. JT and MS felt that names	JT

	could certainly be put on, but would canvass the opinion of staff about photographs.	
14.6	<p>Voids/concessionary gardening</p> <p>JT reported that 309 concessionary gardens had been completed in May under the new contract. The EOs will be monitoring the service over the summer, doing sample checks of approximately 10%. Void gardens will all be checked to ensure that work is satisfactory. MS explained that if there are issues with gardens of private tenants/owners then the council can be contacted about this.</p>	
14.7	<p>MaB expressed concern that Manchester City Council had won the contract for gardening services, and felt that PNS had been doing a good job. CMT explained that the tender had been set up as 50% of the score for quality and 50% for price. MCC had scored highest in both categories. Using MCC could save up to £100,000 this year. MS explained that they will have to deliver or they will not renew the contract. CMT added that the EOs and tenant inspectors will be monitoring the work. SR explained that MCC scored highly on quality, and equality and diversity. PNS and Grassroots who had both been shortlisted had been told why they had not been given the contract so have an opportunity to improve for the next tender process.</p>	
15.	Community Update and Governance (Anne Heywood/Julie Goreham)	
15.1	a) JG circulated copies of Revolve. JB asked if a piece could go in for the St Georges parade. Also if this could be advertised in Revolve next year. JG to contact Regeneration.	JG
15.2	b) There had been no requests for observers.	
15.3	c) JG reported that FaD 09 had taken place and had gone well, with a good number of attendees and lots of positive feedback. CMT thanked SR for baking cakes for the event!	
15.4	d) Revised Constitution – JG explained that panel approval was being sought for the enclosed constitution. If approval was given the constitution would be formally adopted at the Area Panel social in July. The panel should let Diane or CMT know if there are any problems with this.	
15.5	e) AGM and recruitment – JG explained that this had been enclosed for information	
15.6	f) JG asked panel members to complete and return their Fair and Equal service forms.	
15.7	g) – i) JG explained that these items had been included for information.	
16	Any other business	
16.1	KB asked if Northwards would sponsor the Blackley Extreme Sports event. CMT committed £500.00 and will see if there is any events budget left to commit more. JG will work with the event planning committee.	CMT/JG
16.2	KB promoted the Blackley Midsummer Madness event taking place 1-5pm, on 20 June at Planthill Park.	
16.3	JG informed the panel that Sandyhill Court were holding a neighbours day event on 4 June. KB asked if someone could bring a	CMT

	camera. CMT to ask Richard Eden to attend.	
16.4	MS reported that the Chartermark Assessor had carried out an assessment and Northwards had passed with flying colours!	
17.	Date and time of next meetings	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Area Panel Meeting Tuesday 7 July 2009, Cheetham Hill Local Services Office b) Area Panel Social and Adoption of new Constitution Wednesday 15 July 2009. JB suggested 10 pin bowling! MW asked for days of the week to be included as well as dates. JG to ask Diane. 	JG

Meeting closed at 7.45pm