

Northwards Housing Panel Meeting Minutes

Panel: Wilton

Date: 04 August 2009

6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m

Whitemoss Local Services Office, Community Room

Chair: Anne Heywood

Attendance:

Anne Heywood (AH)	Panel Member (Chair)
Charles Taggart (CT)	Panel Member (Vice-chair)
Sue Ratchford (SR)	Panel Member
Jim Burke (JB)	Panel Member
Mavis Wilkinson (MW)	Panel Member
Cllr Ken Barnes (KB)	Panel Member
Cllr Naeem Ul Hassan (NH)	Panel Member
Claire Tyrrell (CMT)	Head of Neighbourhood Services
Danny Whitelock (DW)	Repairs Services Manager (Wilton)
Steve Kirkham (SK)	Head of Home Improvements (Wilton)
Julie Goreham (JG)	Resident Involvement Officer
Jon Nelson (JN) (observer)	Trafford Hall

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) AH welcomed attendees to the meeting and introduced Jon Nelson from Trafford Hall.	
1.2	b) Quorate was confirmed	
1.3	c) AH explained the meeting rules	
2.	Apologies for Absences	
2.1	Apologies had been received from Marjan Bazargan, Mark Bainbridge, Jacqui Tomlinson and Lee Dobbins. KB apologised that he would be leaving early, as would CT	
3.	Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters	
3.1	There were no declarations of interest. Confidential items would be discussed under 17 b)	
4.	Minutes of last meeting 02 June 2009	
4.1	The minutes were approved.	
5.	Matters arising	
5.1	5.2 JG informed the group that British Gas funds had not yet been received but had been promised within four days of invoicing which	JG

	had been sent to them on 28 July following receipt of a Purchase Order number. CMT explained that the delay had been due to British Gas rather than Northwards. KB asked that he and CT be informed as soon as the dates were confirmed so that they could inform the local residents.	
5.2	5.1 CMT had not received maps from Arthur Kay. She will speak to him at the next liaison meeting and if the maps are not available after this will ask Greig Lees for GPS data.	CMT
5.3	5.5 SK confirmed that he had spoken to Richard Jones and match funding had been received to a value of £35,000.	
5.4	6.2 CMT explained that the Business and Delivery plan would appear in the Annual report and then updates would be published in each issue of Northwards Natter.	
5.5	14.5 CMT reported that staff were uncomfortable with having their photographs on the website but that a list of names/areas would be posted up.	CMT
5.6	14.6 JB raised concerns that void gardening was falling behind. KB felt that the gardening should be done close to the letting date. CMT explained that it is aimed to complete gardening in time for the viewing. MW asked about gardens that have been missed. CMT explained that gardening is not completed in each void – a judgement is made on the condition of the garden. CMT invited MW to pass on the address in question so she can look into if it is due to be completed. JB felt that some gardens had not been worked on for years. CMT asked for address details so that she could look into if enforcement action was, or should, be undertaken.	
5.7	16.1 JG had sent Ada Nzeribe an Eric Hobin form to complete. Northwards will also provide a Big Brother booth.	
5.8	16.3 CMT and panel members had enjoyed this event	
5.9	17 b) JG to ask Diane Roberts to include the day of the week when listing meetings	JG
6.	On Call Manager	
6.1	CMT explained that Lee Dobbins had been unable to attend but would come to a future meeting.	
7.	Business and delivery plan update (Claire Tyrrell)	
7.1	As 5.4	
8.	Resident Involvement Agreement (Claire Tyrrell)	
8.1	CMT explained that the panels' sub-group had reviewed and updated this. There were no major changes. CMT invited panel members to make any final comments before the report goes to sub-committee in September. MW highlighted that the phone number on page 19 needed changing.	CMT
9.	Access Strategy Update	
9.1	There were no comments on this document.	
10.	Customer Service Excellence	
10.1	CMT explained that MS had updated on this at the June meeting. The report to the Board is available via the website or through the local offices.	

11.	Complaints and Praise Update	
11.1	CMT explained that the majority of complaints were to do with repairs. The complaints panel, which includes tenants, is working well and reporting directly to managers. When dealing with complaints managers now work through a check list. They are encouraged to speak to complainants whenever possible. Those who complain about repairs are invited to the repairs forum.	
11.2	MW raised a concern about people being informed that they have arrears when they pay rent by standing order. CMT explained the reason for this might be due to a gap between the tenancy start date and the date of standing order payment.	
12.	Empty Property and Concessionary Decorating Policy	
12.1	CMT explained that the empty properties policy had been reviewed looking at value for money and consistency. Guidelines had been produced for staff.	
12.2	CMT reported that the concessionary decorating policy had also been reviewed. The concessionary decorating would now be completed every three years and only for those over 75 or over 65 and claiming disability living allowance, who did not have anyone else who could help them with decorating. Those currently on the scheme would stay as they were for one year then move to the new scheme. MW asked if age concern still helped with decorating.	
13.	Repairs Update (Danny Whitelock)	
13.1	DW explained that the results for the key indicators were looking positive. He invited questions from panel members.	
14.	Major Works Update 2008 (Steve Kirkham)	
14.1	SK reported that the schemes were mostly running well with the occasional problem the team worked to resolve. JB, SR and MeB each gave positive comments about works/schemes in their areas. MeB asked what the unhappy faces in the report indicated. SK explained that an unhappy face indicates falling short of targets/poor customer satisfaction. This then triggers the team to take action to address this issue. In the case shown some members of personnel were removed from the project, which has been working better with new personnel.	
15.	Environmental Works Programme (Steve Kirkham/Claire Tyrrell)	
15.1	SK distributed the programme of works and invited comments on the schemes.	
15.2	SK introduced three new schemes that had come forward. Liverton Court residents had asked for increased funding for their scheme to create a garden in addition to the benches. This would bring the cost of the scheme to £2700. This was agreed by the panel.	SK
15.3	A scheme outline had been proposed for works in Larden Walk. The panel agreed for further details/costings to be obtained which would be brought back to the next meeting for agreement.	
15.4	The panel agreed that residents should be consulted about the garage site at Crossfell Avenue.	

16.	LSM Update (Claire Tyrrell)	
16.1	ASB CMT distributed the LSM report. A new injunction had been gained in Higher Blackley on the day of the panel meeting.	
16.2	Staffing CMT explained the changes in staffing and patches of the Neighbourhood Services Officers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Simon Banham has left Northwards ● Kelly Richardson is covering Higher Blackley South ● Devon Rooms is covering Cheetwood, Crumpsall and the major part of Blackley Village ● Christine Martin-O'Hara is currently covering Higher Blackley North but will be moving to Cheetwood from 10 August ● Mohammed Ali will be covering Higher Blackley North ● Nike Awodiji is currently covering Riverdale, but Michelle Butt and Joanne Tilley will be covering this patch as a jobshare once Joanne returns to work from maternity leave 	
16.3	Voids CMT explained that Nicola Holmes had joined the team on a temporary basis to carry out lettings. As the letting figures are high Michelle Butt and Emma Boodle would also be assisting with lettings. The voids figure is still over target but the situation is improving.	
17.	Community Update and Governance (Anne Heywood/Julie Goreham)	
17.1	a) JG circulated copies of Revolve.	
17.2	b) There had been no requests for observers. There were now three vacancies for the panel – a tenant, leaseholder and owner occupier. KB suggested that residents groups be approached to advertise the vacancies. He felt it would be good to have a geographic spread of panel members. JG to write to residents groups. JG explained that she would send out fliers for the AGM to panel members and asked for their help in circulating these and in recruiting new members. KB suggested David Smith from Blackley East Garden. JG to contact him. CMT will target those who attend residents forums.	JG/CMT
17.3	c) JG explained that the events booklet was available at reception desks in local services offices.	
17.4	d) AH, MW, JB and SR would attend the Northwards AGM. MW asked if Susan Edgar could also attend.	
17.5	e) JG asked for those who had not completed their Fair and Equal Service forms to please complete them.	
17.6	f) JG explained that the next stage of the TSA consultation on standards for social housing would begin formally at the beginning of September. She encouraged anyone who wanted to find out more information to contact herself or Diane Roberts.	
17.7	g) JG explained that it had been difficult to find a date when the majority of panel members could attend the training and asked if the panel wanted to try and find dates towards the end of August or wait until October half term. The panel agreed to hold the training on 28 and 29 October.	

17.8	h) SK gave some background on who impact are. KB expressed disappointment that Northwards are not building properties. SK explained that since obtaining three stars at inspection Northwards is able to apply to build properties and so a bid had gone in to build bungalows. NH asked when the result of the application would be known. SK explained it should be known in September or October. KB and CT left the meeting.	
17.9	i) CMT asked if panel members wished to continue receiving all the minutes of other panels, sub-committees etc as part of their packs. It was agreed that the minutes of other area panels would still be included but the other minutes omitted in future.	
17.10	j) The new constitution needed to be signed by panel members. JG to post out and panel members to return this.	JG/panel members
18	Any other business	
18.1	CMT apologised that there were no officers present at 6pm and assured panel members that they would be for future meetings	
19.	Date and time of next meetings	
	a) Area Panel Meeting Tuesday 8 September 2009, Cheetham Hill Local Services Office	

Meeting closed at 7.55pm