

Minutes



**Minutes of Area Panel 2 meeting held on
16th April 2009 at Bestwood Housing Office 5.00pm-
7.00pm**

<u>Present:</u>	Maria Hemphill (Chair)	(MH)	
	Phil England (Vice Chair)	(PE)	
	Ron Gillott	(RG)	
	Irene Gillott	(IG)	
	John Fletcher	(JF)	
	Ruth Davis	(RD)	
	Jackie Brown	(JB)	
	Lillian Bird	(LB)	
	M Bennett	(MB)	
	Raje Kaur	(RK)	
	Carl Rawson	(CR)	
	Jean England	(JE)	
	R Harrison	(RH)	
	Tracey Feriaki	(TF)	FHM Keepmoat
	Larisa Ciupruk	(LC)	Nationwide Windows
	Steve Callanan	(SC)	Vinshires

Nottingham City Council
Councillor Grocock
Councillor Wildgust
Councillor Smith
Councillor Newton

Nottingham City Homes
Paul Stanley (PS) Area Housing Manager Bestwood
Claire Reeves (CR) Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement
Officer
Nick King (NK) Property Services
Tony Leonard (TL) Property Services

Apologies: Valerie Hopkins, Gill Moy Director of Housing Operations and
Reginald Reddish

Action

1.0 Welcome, introductions and apologies

MH opened the Panel meeting and asked for

introductions.

2.0 Minute & Matters Arising

- 2.1 Councillor Grocock asked for an update on Garages
- 2.2 PS advised that 41% are currently void. Housing Officers have been given performance targets to let the garages. Adverts have also been posted in the area housing office.
- 2.3 PS updated that the tyre marks behind the bollards on Winterton Drive had been investigated.
- 2.4 RG reported that there were full drains on the garages which are overflowing.

NK

3.0 Secure Warm and Modern SWARM

- 3.1 TS attended the meeting to update the Panel on the progress of the SWARM programme. He also attended to discuss with the Panel the Environmental Budget
- 3.2 SWARM
- 3.3 TS circulated a presentation to the Panel and advised that the programme was now streamed so Secure would be delivered first, then Warm and then Modern as per customers' feedback. Every NCC tenant will receive a full stock condition survey that will assess the needs of the property.
- 3.4 Councillor Grocock advised that a surveyor had visited a tenant and advised that the artex contains asbestos.
- 3.5 TS advised that this shouldn't happen artex has a very low asbestos content. We sample the artex and then make contact with the tenant.
- 3.6 Councillor Grocock asked if tenants could refuse the work.
- 3.7 TS advised that tenants could refuse the work but we would try to work with them first to help them have the work.
- 3.8 Councillor Grocock asked about the procedure if a tenant was advised they weren't receiving an

improvement but thought that they should be.

- 3.9 TS advised that there is an appeals process whereby the tenant can query why they are not receiving an item of work. A booklet had been produced giving information about the SWARM programme which contains the appeals procedure.
- 3.10 Councillor Newton asked that these booklets be distributed to Councillors
- 3.11 Councillor Newton asked if the SWARM contractor partners use local labour.
- 3.12 TF advised that local labour is used where possible and appropriate and figures are regularly submitted to NCH.
- 3.13 Councillor Wildgust asked how NCH deal with tenants who neglect the property.
- 3.14 PS advised that there is a programme of tenant's visits, new tenancy visits, 9 month visits and biennial visits to try and remedy this. We also have a policy of re-charging tenants who cause damage.
- 3.15 Environmental Budget
- 3.16 TS advised that £17m of Decent Homes money had been allocated for environmental improvements for the city which will be delivered over 4 years. We have looked at each area surveys and allocated it a category based on need. The resulting category then allocates the pot of money that will be available for each area over the 4 years. We will be inviting potential environmental schemes from the community under 3 themes; Improving Security, Improving the Environment and Improving Spaces. The Panels role will be to look at the schemes and prioritise them so these can be put forward to Area Committee.
- 3.17 CR suggested that the Panel could consider carrying out a tour to look at the proposed schemes to help prioritisation.
- 3.18 Councillor Grocock suggested that Housing Patch Managers (HPM) join up with local Councillors when they carry out estate inspections.

TS

4.0 Housing Service Delivery

- 4.1 PS advised that we are looking at the number of outlets from which we deliver our services. The STATUS survey told us that 16% of people visit a housing office but most people contact us via telephone. We are investigating consolidating our contact centres to create better value for money and extend the service we can offer to tenants. We are also investigating implementing a visiting service so we can see tenants in their own home rather than tenants coming to us. We are looking to become more proactive and have staff out on the estates rather than based in an office.
- 4.2 PS advised that permission had been given by the Board to consult with TRAs and Area Panels and tenants and leaseholders about potentially closing some of the offices as we have been analysing the footfall to offices and to some it is very low. If any housing offices do close we will deliver services in a different way e.g. through surgeries or a free phone or touch screen computer in partners offices e.g. libraries.
- 4.3 PS advised that Southglade housing office had a very low footfall and we consulted with tenants and leaseholders and the office had closed. We are also consulting over the future of Bilborough, Lenton and Victoria Centre housing office as these also have a very low footfall. Tenants can pay their rent via PayPoint, at the Post Office and via Direct Debit.
- 4.4 Councillor Grocock asked if other people who use the housing offices would be contacted for consultation as well as tenants and leaseholders i.e. those who pay Council Tax.
- 4.5 LB thought that it is convenient to pay rent in Bulwell as there are shops.
- 4.6 RK thought that housing offices are there for people who need support.
- 4.7 The Panel were concerned that if services were delivered via a call centre there might not be the same level of local knowledge.
- 4.8 Councillor Wildgust was concerned that arrears might rise if offices were closed.

- 4.9 PE asked what would happen to staff.
- 4.10 PS advised that he was not aware of any redundancies.
- 4.11 PS advised that he would forward all the Panels comments into the consultation.

5.0 Area Committee

- 5.1 MH advised that the Committee had discussed the achievements of the Top Valley Week of Action.

6.0 Local Area Housing Round up & Success Stories

- 6.1 PS advised that the proposed dates for Estate Inspections had been circulated and advised that partners, Councillors and tenants and residents would be invited to attend.
- 6.2 JF advised that he had been provided with the wrong meeting place for the Top Valley Estate Inspection. **PS**
- 6.3 JE advised that there hadn't been an inspection this year and wasn't one planned till October. **PS**
- 6.4 PE agreed to investigate.
- 6.5 Councillor Wildgust asked for the list to be circulated to Councillors. **PS**

7.0 Performance

- 7.1 The performance report had been circulated with the papers prior to the meeting.
- 7.2 PS went through the summary report.
- 7.3 The Panel decided that the full performance report is difficult to understand and asked that only the summary be circulated in future.
- 7.4 Councillor Newton queried the figures for calls answered at the repairs call centre. **NK**
- 7.5 NK agreed to investigate and feedback to the Panel.

8.0 Any Other Business

8.1 Councillor Wildgust advised that there was a tenant through the Bestwood Partnership Forum who would be willing to give out welcome packs to new tenants.

BG/PS

8.2 Councillor Newton advised that a petition was taking place to save Basford Hall College.

10.0 Future meeting date

Thursday 18th June 2009 5.00-7.00pm Bestwood Housing Office