

Minutes



Minutes of Area Panel 4 held on
4th November 2009
@ Mary Potter Centre
6.00-8.00pm

Present:

Chris Newton – Chair (CN), Frank Griffiths (FG), Cllr Tony Marshall - NCC (TM), Gill Moy – NCH (GM), Shaun Elliott – NCH (SE), Afzaal Nawaz – NCH (AN)

Apologies:

Steve Harrison – NCC (Neighbourhood Manager)

1 Welcome and introductions

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were signed off as a true representation of the meeting

3 Matters arising

3.1 CN asked if survey results had been received and what was the outcome of these. AN advised was not sure what had been received but would check and then call CN to advise.
GM highlighted the importance of actions are reported. If staff are unable to attend they should at least provide an update.

3.2 FG stated that tenants in area 4 should not be involved with office closures (Lenton, Bilborough, Victoria Centre).
GM advised in terms of possible office closures was just providing Area 4 Panel a picture of what is happening else where in the city. The tenants from the areas being affected by the closures have been consulted. NCH costs are high at the moment and

Action

AN

are expecting a reduction in funding from the government.

3.3 A further discussion then took place on how much it is costing NCH to be based in the Mary Potter Centre.

GM stated we need to think whether we want to commit to being in the Mary Potter Centre because there are plans for LIFT projects in Bulwell and St Anns. Cash collection is expensive at housing office and tenants are saying they prefer to contact us by phone.

FG stated he was surprised NCH are questioning being in the Mary Potter Centre because it has only been 2 years and NCH were very positive about the move.

GM stated due to the expected reduction in government funding NCH have to review how they make the best use of their resources. Are expecting a 20% reduction in the funding.

4 Business Planning – Janet Glass

4.1 JG introduced herself as the Head of Business Improvement and Development for NCH. JG advised she was attending Area Panels, Forums and TLC asking tenants and leaseholders what they think are the most important service areas and their priorities in the current climate. NCH are looking at 20% efficiency savings over the next three years. CN stated NCH needs to have cost effective housing offices therefore should renegotiate costs with Mary Potter Centre. GM advised the cost for being situated in the Mary Potter Centre was 99,000 over nine months compared to 40,000 per year for the old Radford housing office. There is also lack of signage and leaflet space in the LIFT Projects. One of the options is to have less housing offices. Want officers to be more mobile for example come out to visit tenants and leaseholders and to have surgeries at local centres like Sure Start etc. FG advised he would not like NCH to move out from Mary Potter Centre and felt this was important to tenants but not the most important. CN advised he would like staff being kept rather than housing offices which may include staff moving to Hounds Gate but coming into the areas when needed. Cllr advised she would like new council homes built. GM highlighted NCH have been given permission by the government to build 8 houses and have submitted an application to build another 40 new houses.

4.2

There was a discussion on a report in the Evening Post stating NCC were selling 1000 properties and whether NCH were consulted on this decision. GM advised NCC have 1000 corporate properties (non traditional houses). Majority of these properties require a lot of investment and would be very expensive to bring up to decent homes standard. NCC took the decision years ago that these types of properties would be sold when they become void. There are around 80 properties which we have to decide what we are going to do with them. The report is misconstrued. If the properties are being sold then it is because they are expensive to repair or outside the city boundary. These properties often have health & safety issues i.e high stairs and therefore not suitable for family accommodation. NCC is looking into the possibility of converting these properties for the use of key workers such as teachers and hospital staff.

5

Performance Report

5.1

SE advised mystery shoppers had voted Radford and Hyson Green best office of the month. They assess performance, correspondence and staff sickness etc. They also assess office receptions in this category our office came bottom. Mainly due to lack of signage, leaflet displays and lack of poster space.
CN asked why performance information came out so late and would like this information with the minutes. JG apologised for the lateness of the performance reports and will make sure it does not happen again. SE advised will send out performance report out with the minutes in the future.
SE advised vast majority of the estates are 3 stars although one estate (Arboretum) has slipped down to 2 stars.
FG stated he was very happy with the improvements made to Garfield Court which were carried out a year earlier than planned.
FG advised he was disappointed with figures for number of properties being let at the first attempt because Homelink should have improved this because they should only bid for a property if they really want it. Therefore not in the right area should not happen because they are the ones bidding for the property in the first place.

SE

6

Environmental schemes 2009/2010

6.1

SE presented on this item and confirmed £46k is

<p>available per ward for schemes this financial year. A handout was given to members highlighting the schemes that had been put forward. In the Radford & Park ward it is very easy to spend the 46K because of the number of NCH properties. It is more difficult to identify schemes in the Arboretum and especially Berridge ward because of the low number of NCH properties in these wards.</p> <p>FG advised tenants do not look at ward boundaries as long as the money is distributed in Area 4. He would not have a problem if some money was transferred from one ward to another depending on need of the ward.</p>	
<p><u>6.2</u> There was a discussion on providing off street parking for properties. SE advised this debate was continuing with NCC and what should be done with these requests. Still awaiting final decision for NCC. GM stated environmental money should not be spent on hard standing for individual properties unless there is a very good reason because of the limited amount of money for environmental schemes.</p>	
<p><u>7</u> Any other Business</p>	
<p><u>7.1</u> SE advised of two Not in my Neighbourhood Weeks and Crime & Drug Partnership Week of Action for New Basford starting 16th November. There will be an event held at New Gate School on the 17th November.</p>	
<p><u>7.2</u> The Panel requested Business Planning to be on the agenda for future meetings or a report on what is decided. Also they would like feedback from survey sent out to mailing list on what could be done to improve attendance. The Panel suggested having the meetings earlier especially in the winter months. It was agreed the meeting in January would begin at 3.00pm.</p>	
<p>Next Meeting</p>	
<p>Wednesday 20th January 2010 - 3.00pm Mary Potter Centre</p>	