

Minutes



Minutes of Area Panel 4 held on
Wednesday 20th January 2010
@ Mary Potter Centre
6.00-8.00pm

Present:

Chris Newton – Chair (CN), Linford Stevens (LS), Frank Griffiths (FG),
Surriya Meherban (SM), Cllr Tony Marshall - NCC (TM), Gill Moy – NCH (GM),
Shaun Elliott – NCH (SE), Andrew Filer – NCH (AF), Katy Follows – CDP (KF),
Claire Stainthorpe – CDP (CS), Steve Pepper – NCH (SP)

Apologies:

Cllr Jones

1 Welcome and introductions

CN welcomed everyone to the meeting, introductions were made.

2 Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

2.1 A couple of minor amendments made. The minutes were signed off as a true representation of the meeting

2.2 **Item 3.1**

AF gave an update from the survey sent out. Only four replies were received. The three areas where issues were raised were: the marketing of the Area Panel and the need to clarify what the meetings are about, to ensure that feedback is given to show that what was discussed at the meetings has been dealt with ('you said, we did'), and to move the meetings to the afternoon due to potential problems with finishing the meetings late at night in the dark.

2.3 **Item 7.2**

FG commented on his disappointment that business planning was not on the agenda for this meeting. He felt that this is an important agenda item and should be included early on the agenda of all future meetings.

FG continued that he was aware Chris Langstaff had visited 10 Downing Street. GM advised he had been for a meeting with the Prime Minister to discuss the possibility of Nottingham City Homes

Action

**SE / SP
/ CN**

coming out of the housing subsidy system in the future, but advised that further research is required before an informed decision can be made.

2.4 GM added that as NCH were looking at having to save 20% savings over the next 3 years, cash collection was being reviewed, with consultation starting to see if cash collection at all Housing Offices with the exception of Bulwell, Clifton and Mary Potter, would be stopped as it is a very expensive service. This could save the company in the region of £250,000, and could possibly help local Post Offices and other PayPoint providers by giving them more business. Cash collection would then also be reviewed at Bulwell, Clifton and Mary Potter again in the future.

LS raised the issue that PayPoint do not accept cheques. GM advised she was not aware of that, so will find out and report back to the Panel.

Response from GM: LS is correct, cheques are not accepted at PayPoint outlets.

2.5 GM advised SP is currently writing a Business Plan for the Radford / Hyson Green area, so would suggest this is brought to the next meeting for consultation. SP confirmed he would do this, as has he did last year. FG said this added to the importance of having this as a continuing agenda item.

SP

3 **Justice Seen, Justice Done**

3.1 KF and CS presented this item (presentation enclosed) and are deputising for Allan Breeton. This subject is high priority across the City, and has cross-party support, so will continue even if there is a change of government.

Alan Breeton's role is to help deliver better partnership working in this area and to advertise the services that are provided and who to contact in different instances, and to improve the service provided to victims of anti-social behaviour and crime.

3.2 Community Payback was previously known as Community Service which was always done quietly as did not want negative feedback. Work is now visible with approximately 60 adult offenders (aged 17 – 70) currently working 6 days a week across the City. Presentations being done at each Area Panel, to give an opportunity to engage with the community to find suggestions for work to do. Offenders are supervised at all times, and can do work such as garden / land clearances, litter picks, painting and decorating, and small building work. All jobs are risk assessed prior to being started. Not individual jobs.

3.3 Work has been done already around the St Anns area (such as painting railings and removing overgrown shrubbery), but not many jobs have been identified for work around the Radford / Hyson Green area. They want the community to nominate work to be done, and 3000hrs have been ring-fenced for work within the NCC boundaries. Contact details are available on the leaflet enclosed.

- 3.4** CN raised an issue that there are vast differences between the nationally publicised Policing Pledge, and the Nottingham Policing Pledge. KF advised Nottingham did make a few amendments, but after negative feedback, this has now been amended again. KF to distribute the latest copies of the Policing Pledge.

- 3.5** CS advised she has only been in post since the start of January, so it is still early days, but is leading on the Community Justice project which is due to be delivered by the end of March. The project is currently behind schedule. The Community Justice Initiative focuses on problem solving aspects of the court process to look at vulnerability issues and potential support is required to try and reduce re-offending. A Victim / witness Charter is being devised to set out the level of help and support that should be given.

- 3.6** Another aspect of the initiative is to ‘name and shame’ with details of offenders publicised in the local areas to act as a deterrent for others. CN added that this is a good idea as long as enforcement is carried through should there be a breach of any agreement. CS advised her role is also to monitor and evaluate community impact statements to ensure they are effective.

- 3.7** FG raised the point that he couldn’t see anything new about this scheme apart from further meetings and bureaucracy. SE added that ASBOs are now back in favour, but enforcement powers are not likely to be expanded. The key is to ensure it is promoted properly, involve the community more by giving them more of a voice, and communicating clearly what is happening.

- 3.8** LS started a discussion on the recent issue of rubbish being thrown out of a high-rise window. SE continued that this had received publicity in the Evening Post, and two tenants had now been served with injunctions. This issue causes a risk to the public and caretakers. A CCTV camera has been bought, and will be used throughout the city to catch people doing this in the future. If these injunctions are breached it could lead to possible eviction action. Swift action was taken in these cases, and this will be publicised to be a deterrent for anyone else doing this. SE added that the Public Realm Enforcement Team was also looking at issues of fly-tipping around the city and will go through rubbish looking for evidence of who has dumped it.

4 Environmental schemes update

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| <u>4.1</u> | A discussion was held as to why environmental schemes are done, due to new members being present. |
| <u>4.2</u> | All the schemes that have previously been put forward are either all fully agreed, or having final checks done on them. As it is coming to the end of the financial year, it is now time to start collating ideas for next year. Please pass on any recommendations to SE or SP. |
| <u>4.3</u> | GM added that garage sites are also being reviewed currently. SE continued that there are not many within Area 4, but he is leading |

<p>on this project for NCH, as NCC are potentially looking at using some sites as a plot to build new properties. Several sites across the city are under-used which results in lost revenue to NCH of around £100,000 per year. Several sites are also quite run-down and in need of regeneration.</p>	
<p>4.4 SM queried whether individual hard-standings are possible through the environmental improvement scheme, as had several issues with anti-social behaviour and car has been damaged on numerous occasions. Several other properties on her street have had hard-standings previously. SE answered that NCH and NCC reviewed this recently, and individual hard-standings are now very rarely agreed, partly due to reduced funds, but planning laws and regulations have also been tightened up. GM added that it is highly unlikely this budget would be used, as the schemes chosen are ones which have the biggest impact on as much of the community as possible. SE to discuss issues further with SM outside of meeting.</p>	
<p>5 Performance report</p>	
<p>5.1 SE advised that the performance report for December has yet to be finalised, and so only the figures for November were available.</p>	
<p>5.2 GM advised that although the indicator for number of evictions is showing a downward trend is a false indicator. This is not necessarily a bad thing, and changes to the way NCH deals with the abandoned procedure have been made where they are classed as being evicted for non-payment of rent. This allows NCH to take the property back in a shorted timescale.</p>	
<p>5.3 GM added the rent loss figure again showing a downward trend includes figures for the long-term void properties, so again doesn't give a true reflection. CN asked how many voids are there currently in Area 4. SE will find out the information and produce a short report for the next meeting. GM continued that the current void figure of 352 is at the lowest level ever. Less voids across the city and quicker turnover times, added to the arrears figures being vastly reduced, means that less savings need to be made as more money is coming in to the company. GM commended the Rents and Voids teams for the good work they have been doing.</p>	<p>SE</p>
<p>5.4 FG commented on the star rating given to the various estates within Area 4, with the majority being rated as 3*. SP added that an action plan is being devised for the Arboretum estate to get it back up to a 3* rating, as it has recently been marked down to a 2* rating. The main issue in this estate is that a large portion of the properties are non-NCH. AF continued that these results are good as it is tenants and leaseholders that make the assessment independently to staff so should give a true reflection of the areas.</p>	
<p>5.5 SE commented that he was looking at getting the Tenant Service Inspectors to start assessing garage sites to help improve those areas as discussed earlier in the meeting.</p>	

6	<u>Any other business</u>
6.1	<p>AF advised the Panel on a couple of updates within the Involvement Team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual Conference has now been booked for Saturday 20th March at the Council House. A working group is finalising the details of the day, with the next planning meeting being at 2pm on Wednesday 3rd February. All are welcome to attend. ○ The Tenant & Leaseholder Resource Centre is now fully up and running after being officially opened by the Lord Mayor of Nottingham on Monday 11th January. An article was in the recent issue of NCH News, and leaflets have just been printed and are being distributed shortly.
7	<u>Future meetings: possible agenda items and guest speakers</u>
7.1	<p>It was suggested the meeting in March looked at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business Planning including the accommodation strategy and stopping the rent collection service ○ A report on garages ○ The estate action plan for Arboretum ○ Update on the rent increase
7.2	<p>For the May meeting, it was suggested that the main topic for discussion would be a report on the voids within Area 4. A more in-depth discussion on Anti-Social Behaviour could also be looked at.</p>
8	<u>Next Meeting</u>
	Wednesday 17th March 2010, 3.00pm, Mary Potter Centre