

NOTES OF THE CENTRAL STREET AREA HOUSING PANEL

Thursday 17th July 2008 – Brunswick Estate Meeting Room – 7pm

Present:

Helen Cagnoni (HC)	Greenwood, Wilmington, Farringdon TRA (Chair)
Shirley Lefevre (SL)	Pleydell Estate TMO
Terry Lefevre (TL)	Pleydell Estate TMO
Francois Smit (FS)	Margery Street TRA
Dennis Kleinburg (DK)	Whitbread Estate TRA
Blanche Woodbridge (BW)	King Square
Sharon Hayward (SH)	Finsbury Estate TRA
Adrian Hall (AH)	Peregrine House TRA
Frances Sullivan (FS)	King Square TRA
Maureen Smith (MS)	Brunswick TRA
Una O'Halloran (UH)	Pleydell TRA
M Blundell (MB)	Mulberry Court
Irene Frances (IF)	St Lukes TRA
Andy Murphy (AM)	Chief Exec. EC1 New Deal for Communities
Adam Borrie (AB)	Chair of HFI Board
David Salenius (DS)	Area Housing Manager, HFI
Miranda Griffith (MG)	Community & Service Development Officer, HFI
Jo Knight (JoK)	Principal Operations Manager, HFI
Jonathan Kenney (JK)	Head of Repairs, HFI

1	APOLOGIES	
1.1	Apologies received from: Barbara Coventry Barbara Jacobsen Joe Trotter Cllr Jyoti Vaja	
2	NOTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING	
	A. HC congratulated DS on item 2.1 relating to windows on Whitbread estate being carried out.	
	B. HC also commented that having the printed action sheet with updates is very positive and saves time.	
3	HFI BUSINESS PLAN 2009/14: ADAM BORRIE –	
	A. AB introduced himself to the panel as Chair of HFI, which he has been since December 2007.	
	B. AB explained that in the past tenants have felt the HFI board has not been fully accountable, as all it's members are not elected. The business plan presented goes some way to address this by offering standards of services tenants should come to expect and if the opportunity for tenants and residents to question why.	

- C. The business plan governs the direction and decisions that need to be made in an organisation, setting out where it is, where it wants to go, and what can be expected.
- D. AB wants to hear about what people think about the plan, particularly about the balance between providing property and people services, and any particular issues that residents have. The plan also enables longer term planning rather than making short term changes every year.
- E. AB pointed out that residents can also feed back any thoughts they have in their own time by emailing Paul Davey, strategy manager, on the address in the report.
- F. SH reported that she has asked HFI officers on two occasions on what kind of sustainability assessment has been developed around major works on her block, but has never been given a clear answer.
- G. AB reported that this kind of information has been provided in very few local authorities in the past, however information such as in-depth surveys required from the major investment in Decent Homes works can now feed into an asset management strategy, providing information such as when materials need to be replaced.
- H. HC commented that a lot of buildings built in Islington in the 60's have been sturdy and lasted well for 45 years, but they are now being maintained using cheaper materials. HC felt it is also a concern that the business plan contains no figures.
- I. AB reported that the paper presented this evening doesn't have figures but the actual plan does. The aim of this paper was to enable tenants and residents to be part of the business planning process and for the HFI board to find out how service resources should be allocated and what's important to tenants.
- J. HC and SH argued that the report needs to contain figures in order to provide a context for what the percentages stand for.
- K. AH asked how HFI plans to consult residents beyond the panels on this plan.
- L. AB commented that he would like staff to integrate consultation into everyday contact with the public and come up with ideas on how best to reach a wide audience.
- M. UH commented that there have been lots of problems through contractors carrying out major works on estates, and asked who will be liable for cutting corners, Murphy's or HFI? Because everyone's subcontracted out its hard to keep track of who is liable for problems such as potholes. However problems will always rebound to HFI in the end, and it's public money that will be spent on fixing problems.

	<p>N. AB commented that that shouldn't happen.</p> <p>O. JK introduced himself as Head of Repairs and commented that as a result of this discussion it may be a useful to consult the public on whether it is better to use one or a few contractors in the future.</p> <p>P. SH commented that prior to Decent Homes her toilet had no problems for 46 years but she now has problems with the newly installed dual flush cistern toilet within a few months of fitting in her flat and felt it was due to the cheap materials used.</p> <p>Q. IF added that the insulated roof that had been recently been put in on her balcony moved and cracked when she walked on it.</p> <p>R. JK will investigate these cases.</p> <p>S. HC agreed, commenting that currently there is no consultation around choosing contractors even though several TRA reps took time to go around sites, meet contractors and attend meetings that were supposed to allow input it made no difference to the ones finally chosen.</p> <p>T. FS commented that a transparent planned maintenance programme is needed so tenants have some kind of control over what's happening, and an idea of the kind of support that people housed on estates require from the community; i.e. some control over everyday life in their homes.</p> <p>U. AB said that choosing contractors depends on what priority an organisation gives issues such as cost/quality/communication. Maybe in the future HFI will have to go down a supply-chain management or contract management route and change the way contracts are led.</p> <p>V. SH feels that when services were provided in house before outsourcing, problems were easier to report and organisations were more accountable.</p> <p>W. AB responded that £600 million is being spent in the borough through Decent Homes, a level of investment in social housing that has not been seen since the Second World War.</p> <p>X. HC thanked AB for his attendance but feels that the report should have contained figures to enable everyone present to make decisions based on 'value for money' and future maintenance for the mistakes now being made.</p>	JK
4	REPAIRS POLICY REVIEW: JONATHAN KENNEY	
	<p>A. JK introduced himself as Head of Repairs.</p> <p>B. JK reported that a steering group made up of Council and HFI officers and residents from the residents involvement register contributed to the policy review.</p>	

- C. The aim of the review was to try and collate points of view and to help make the repairs service more efficient and effective.
- D. AH expressed concern about the references in the report to making cuts to the Assisted Redecoration Scheme, as he feels it also goes beyond its primary role and also helps older and more vulnerable people retain their dignity. It should therefore be a high priority not to cut this service.
- E. JK responded that the policy doesn't intend to end the Assisted Decorations scheme, but ensure the repairs service runs properly so HFI can continue with it. The aim is to ensure the programme assists those who are in need of it.
- F. AH asked if the money for the scheme is ring fenced or in the overall budget. JK responded that it's in the overall budget.
- G. HC commented that in previous meetings she's attended, officers had denied there would be cuts to this service. Approximately 22% of the population fall into the older age range, and there doesn't seem to be any kind of option to get help elsewhere.
- H. JK commented that he has understood that in past the scheme has been carried out over the winter and autumn months; hopefully by that time of year through prudent management it will be fully affordable.
- I. DS explained that officers, neighbours or residents themselves can nominate themselves onto the scheme. A list would then go to JK's team and a decision is made on how many can be completed from the available budget.
- J. JK commented that he understands the concerns and feels the scheme is something repairs should be doing, and efforts to improve efficiency should ensure it can continue. He also believes that resident satisfaction scores should be used on completion of works to inform where to use contractors in the future.
- K. BW asked what happens if workmen don't keep to their appointments?
- L. JoK responded that residents are entitled to compensation. One option that's been discussed with Kiers is that when contractors turn up at property and there's no response the operatives ring the office, an HFI officer rings the tenant to check if they're home to verify contractor's word. There also needs to be a better balance between emergency and urgent jobs so contractors can better plan ahead.
- M. There is also a move to build up a customer database of people that are vulnerable in some way, so there are notes such as 'please allow time for customers to get to the door'.
- N. JoK reported there are also moves for a system to ensure that emergency and urgent repairs are verified as being such by contractors, to cut down on misreported repairs.

	O. SH commented that repairs are sometimes misreported by call centre staff to contractors. HC responded that all phone calls are recorded so they can check if there's a discrepancy.	
5	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (PI's): JO KNIGHT	
	Due to time restrictions, the report was not presented. Panel members were asked if they had any questions; no questions were raised.	
6	COMPLAINTS MONITORING OCTOBER 07 – MARCH 08: JO KNIGHT	
	As per item 5.	
7	DISPOSAL OF LAND MANAGED BY HFI: JO KNIGHT	
	As per item 5.	
8	ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR UPDATE: JO KNIGHT	
	As per item 5.	
9	SUMMARIES OF LAST BOARD AND SUB-BOARDS: JO KNIGHT	
	As per item 5.	
10	HFI AND CONSULTATIVE PANEL UPDATE: JO KNIGHT	
	As per item 5.	
11	FORWARD PLAN: JO KNIGHT	
	As per item 5.	
12	CENTRAL STREET PERFORMANCE REPORT – JUNE 2008: DS	
	DS reported that area performance reports were available once a quarter. As yet the performance report for the second quarter has not been fully compiled; however the office is expected to receive June's report in the first week of August. It will be presented at the following Area Housing Panel.	
13	ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR UPDATE: DS	
	MG apologised to the panel for the lack of this report which had unfortunately not been brought to the panel. The report will be emailed to panel members and sent out with the minutes for any comments.	MG
14	ESTATE SECURITY FUNDING: DS	
	<p>A. A summary of the agreed Estate Security Funding was distributed to the panel.</p> <p>B. DS reported that allocations had been submitted to the finance department.</p> <p>C. Those with successful bids will present a monitoring report to the panel in September 08 and at the end of the financial year in March 09.</p>	

15	EC1 SUCCESSION PLANS: ANDY MURPHY	
	<p>A. Andy Murphy introduced himself as the Chief executive of EC1 New Deal, and explained that he was at the panel to talk about what happens after EC1 money has gone and what should be left behind.</p> <p>B. EC1 is consulting with residents within the NDC area around 4 areas; priorities in the longer term, what the new area boundaries could be, structures for ongoing decision making, and ensuring effective community involvement.</p> <p>C. AM explained that across the borough, the Council and Local Strategic Partnership have set up neighbourhood groups that bring together residents, Councillors and a range of service providers to resolve issues, called 'Neighbourhood Management' boards. These are usually within areas of concentrated deprivation.</p> <p>D. AM asked what panel members felt should be the relationship between such a forum and their existing panels</p> <p>E. SH and HC agreed that it would be useful to have papers sent out on EC1 plans to give the discussion some context. MG will source the consultation paper from AM and send out with the minutes.</p> <p>F. Panel members agreed that it sounded similar to the old forum structure that closed down in around 1998. Here, service providers, Councillors and residents came together from all areas of the borough to discuss anything of concern occurring in the area from schools to transport.</p> <p>G. HC added that it was very useful in being consulted particularly around planning. It was an open public meeting; no one was excluded with representatives from every street and estate, and elected street representatives. It made Councillors accountable for what's going on, and there have been complaints about lack of consultation since the Forums were closed down.</p> <p>H. On being asked where area boundaries for such a forum could be, panel members gave a general consensus it would be a general forum for Clerkenwell and Finsbury.</p> <p>I. FS stated it was his understanding the old forums were stopped because it was a talking shop and weren't focused.</p> <p>J. AM reminded the panel that referring back to the conversation about community members needing support, that EC1 Connect goes some way to provide this service in EC1.</p> <p>K. There was a general consensus that the old consultative panels worked well.</p>	MG
16	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	

CIRCULATION OF DOG CONTROL ORDERS PUBLIC ORDERS

- A. DS referred to the information on dog control orders from LBI that was sent out with the agenda, and informed the panel that dog free zones signs are currently being put up by sub contractors.
- B. HFI can now take action directly to fine irresponsible dog owners £80 for failing to clean up after their dogs in public areas, refusing to put your dog on a lead when asked by an authorised officer, and allowing dogs into clearly marked dog free areas. Any problems with irresponsible dog owners can be reported to the Central St office or the ASB hotline.
- C. FS remarked that he hadn't seen any consultation papers on this issue before.
- D. JK asked the panel if they would like Abena, the Environmental Coordinator to explain the document to the panel further. The panel agreed they would. JK will arrange this.
- E. FS said he would like to find out more information about estate parking and clamping in the future – JK to provide such information to him via email.
- F. FS felt the document is very confusing.
- G. HC remarked that there need to be dedicated areas for dogs as well as exclusion zones. – needs to be other areas that are dedicated.
- Other:**
- H. HC requested that panel members receive information on activities for young people that are taking place over the summer organised by the police. MG to action and send out information.
- I. HC reminded tenants that the Kier Fun Day was taking place at the beginning of August and handed out leaflets, more posters/leaflets will be available at the Central Street Office soon.

JK

JK

MG