


Notes of Lyon Street Area Housing Panel 21th September 2009 @ 7.00PM

Present:

Cllr Barry Edwards	(BE)	Holloway Ward (Chair)
Brian Potter	(BP)	Pleasant Place TRA
Bill Millett M.B.E.	(BM)	Westbourne, 1 in 1000
Liz Colloppy	(LC)	Sturmer Way, 1 in 1000
Sadie Lambert	(SL)	Lion Court, 1 in 1000 (LH)
Pat Croci	(PC)	Papworth Gardens, 1 in 1000 (LH)
Mary Fitzpatrick	(MF)	Forest Court TRA
Amanda Arnold	(AA)	Fairdene Court TRA
Irene Johnson	(IJ)	Boston and Nailour TRA
Ray Tapper	(RT)	Thornhill Houses TRA
Kathy Daley	(KD)	Guest – Poynder Court
George Colloppy	(GC)	Guest – Sturmer Way
Dolly Sparks	(DS)	Guest – Papworth Gardens
Oriel Hutchinson	(OH)	Guest – Islington Conservative Association
Richard Bunting	(RBG)	Guest – Islington Conservative Association
John Kolm-Murray	(JKM)	LBI, Affordable Warmth Co-ordinator
Simon Kwong	(SK)	Director of Service Development (HFI)
Valerie Dawes	(VD)	Housing Investigations Manager (HFI)
Seval Halil	(SH)	Area Housing Manager (HFI)
Lyn Edwards	(LE)	Consultation Manager (HFI)
Catherine Curzon	(CC)	Special Projects Manager (HFI)
Brenda Rodney	(BR)	Consultation Officer (HFI)
Lee McDermott	(LM)	Community & Service Development Officer (HFI)

Apologies:

Richard Beal	(RB)	Keighley & Staveley TRA
Cllr Spall	(LS)	Caledonian Ward
Cllr Fieran-Reid	(EF)	St Mary's Ward
Irene Spence	(IS)	Mersey Estate TRA
Mary Barnard	(MB)	Fairdene Court TRA
Mary Bowman	(MBW)	Guest – Sebbon Street

ITEM	Matter raised	Action
1.0	Introductions	
1.1	<p>Introductions were given. LM advised the panel that apologies had been sent by Richard Beal, the Chair, and providing there were no objections Cllr Edwards had agreed to take the chair for the meeting. This was agreed.</p>	
2.0	Affordable Warmth	
2.1.0	<p>John Kolm-Murray (JKM) introduced himself to the panel and advised that his post had been funded by LBI and the NHS for a year.</p>	
2.1.2	<p>JKM advised the panel of the various schemes that were currently being undertaken by LBI and the substantial funding that had been provided to carry out further cavity wall insulation works across the borough.</p>	
2.1.3	<p>JKM advised that there were many schemes in operation across the borough such as the energy doctor and advised all residents could contact the Green Living Centre on 0800 953 1221 to book appointments. JKM advised that there was a not for profit energy supplier EBICO who did not charge an additional fee for customers on pre payment meters.</p>	
2.1.4	<p>JKM asked that we circulate the below summary to the panel.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Tackling Fuel Poverty in Islington.pdf</p> </div>	
2.1.5	<p>BP asked whether there would be a charge to Leaseholders for either the insulation or the scaffolding required to install it. JMK advised that as far as he was aware the costs would be met entirely by the grant.</p>	
2.1.6	<p>BP asked for clarification that where scaffolding costs had been met for purposes of insulation that HFI would not subsequently charge for scaffolding if any other work was completed whilst it was in place?</p>	LM
2.1.7	<p>SL asked how the list was compiled and whether blocks could request to be added. JKM advised the list was compiled using LBI/ HFI knowledge of blocks and approximate years that they were built as post 1960s properties were more likely to be of a cavity wall construction than earlier ones. JKM also advised that there was no way to request inclusion on the current list and that where the surveys found the properties suitable there would be no opting in or out of the works.</p>	

<p>2.2.1</p>	<p>HFI's Housing Investigations Manager, Valerie Dawes (VD).</p>	
<p>2.2.2</p>	<p>VD Introduced herself to the panel and gave some information about her team and their work. VD advised that over the past six months her team had recovered over forty sub let or illegally occupied properties in the borough. VD advised that her team consisted of 7 Investigations Officers and one administrator and that as part of their role they complete an annual tenancy check of 10% of the borough's housing stock and use various methods to ensure the right people are living in our properties. VD circulated a leaflet providing further information on her service and encouraged residents to report any suspicious or fraudulent activity to her team and that it may not seem much but people who occupy properties illegally deny many of the thousands of people on the housing waiting lists of homes.</p>	
<p>2.2.3</p>	<p>VD added that residents support and information was invaluable to her team.</p>	
<p>2.3.1</p>	<p>HFI's Special Projects Manager, Catherine Curzon (CC)</p> <p>CC introduced herself again and also advised the panel that Sarah Farley had recently joined her team as the new special projects officer dealing with tenant compact schemes.</p> <p>CC told the panel that the schemes for Lyon Street were running a little behind for the 08/09 financial year but that she hoped to bring that into line very shortly and further she intended bringing forward much of the tenant compact process and request more detail to enable HFI and its contractor to provide more realistic costs for schemes.</p> <p>BM asked who nominated schemes from estates where there were no TRAs or tenant reps. CC advised that they were received from a variety of sources and officers and staff from the area office would often submit schemes where there was no TRA.</p> <p>OH advised the panel that she had been contacted by one leaseholder who had received a bill for 36k for tarmac works on Treaty Street.</p>	<p>CC/LM</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Minutes and Matters Arising</p> <p>The panel agreed the minute of the previous meeting to be a true and accurate record.</p>	

4.0	Consultation Items:	
4.1	Report One - Feedback from July 2009 Consultation items:	
4.1.1	JK took the panel through the report. The panel noted this report but made no comments.	
4.1.2	BP advised on point 3.1.2 of this report (regarding double glazing) that there were a number of far more cost effective measures that should be taken to reduce heat loss before installing double glazing. BP advised that he had previously done some work on this and had calculated that it would take 95 years to recoup the installation costs.	
4.2	Report Two –HFI Equality and Diversity Strategy Review	
4.2.1	JK took the panel through the report and advised that now the strategy was over three years old HFI were currently carrying out a review and wanted the panels input.	
4.2.2	The panel made no comment. SK advised that if anyone wished to discuss or make any suggestions after the meeting they could contact the reports author directly and that his details were at the end of the report.	
4.3	Report Three – HFI Business Plan 2010 – 2015	
4.3.1	JK took the panel through the report. SK advised the author of this report had now left the organisation and the details of the person now responsible for covering this area was Simon James.	
4.3.2	OH advised that in a recent meeting with Eamon McGoldrick, HFI Chief Executive Officer, she was advised that HFI were getting rid of the framework contractors as they were not value for money. SK advised that he was not present at these discussions so could not comment as to the accuracy or background of this statement.	
4.4	Report Four – Cyclical Maintenance Programme	
4.4.1	SK took the panel through the report. SK advised that we were presently consulting on a draft seven year plan for cyclical maintenance contract and that we were very much looking for feedback from residents	
4.4.2	SK also advised that there was an appendix to the report which had details of the blocks.	
4.4.3	Many of the panel members looked for their own blocks on the list but a number could not be found and in one instance the number of units varied hugely from the actual number of units. Panel suggested that this report was reviewed and that more care be taken ensuring the blocks are present and details accurate.	

4.4.4	OH asked whether the contract had been allocated to only one contractor? OH went on to advise the panel the under the local government act she understood that the contract should only be for five years.	LM
4.4.5	BP added that he had raised this issue time and time again and he was still awaiting a satisfactory answer as to why there were the same four framework contractor's names appearing again and again? BP advised that looking at the works HFI is carrying out, the borough has clearly being divided into four distinct areas with each of these contractors getting all the work. BP advised that this meant that residents were clearly not getting value for money as the setup meant that the tender process was hinged in contractors favour.	LM
4.5	Report Five – Repairs & Maintenance Re-procurement Update SK took the panel through the report.	
4.5.1	BM asked if 3.3.4 meant that HFI would be building up its own repairs department? SK advised that, that was not the intention and that there had been a suggestion that some services may be provided by HFI and that the options were being considered.	
4.5.2	In 3.3.3 of the report it refers to 'strict criteria'. Can you please provide a full explanation of what these criteria are?	LM
4.5.3	RBG told the panel that he had received a letter from HFI which told him that this new contract would be for ten years and not four years.	
4.5.4	SK advised that the new agreement would be for 4 years and it could be extended by two years and then another two years and that he was sorry the letter had RBG had received contained incorrect information. However, it was clearly in the report that the contract was for four years with two, two year extension options.	
4.5.5	BP asked if the contract would be a profit share arrangement as with the current agreement. SK Advised he could not answer.	LM
4.5.6	SL advised that she would like the opportunity to employ more local firms with real accountability for the quality and costs of the work they carried out. Much of the current work is contracted out to who knows who and we find ourselves paying twice for work with no comeback when its not up to standard.	
4.5.7	OH advised that in order to even know which contracts were up for tender, companies had to pay large subscriptions to a restricted website which meant that many of the smaller firms were excluded as only the larger players could submit tenders.	
4.5.8	SK advised that this procurement exercise is being carried out very much within EU rules on tendering.	

4.5.9	BE advised that sometimes having lots of smaller companies doing the same job could also be expensive and time consuming to set up in legal costs and also in terms of monitoring and allocating work.	
4.5.10	AA asked that we look to insert a clause or requirement upon the successful contractor to have more local social responsibility and employ and train local people.	
4.5.11	BP advised that the whole process was in favour of the larger contractors and that the three or four large firms who work in the borough have taken over six hundred million Pounds out of the borough over the last few years and have paid only a small amount of that to sub contractors who actually carry out the work.	
5.0	Information Items:	
5.1	Report Six - Capital Programme – 09/10 Monitoring 1st Qtr. LE took the panel through this report.	
5.2	Report Seven - Homes for Islington – Panel Update BP asked why on page 115 in the fourth paragraph of this report it stated that ‘successful candidates’ would be notified. This implied that there would be screening of candidates and asked for clarification on this?	LM
5.3	BP also asked why HFI’s AGM was being held at the Andover Community Centre and not somewhere more central such as the town hall. The Andover is in the middle of the estate and the location will put many people off attending. Report Eight- Forward Plan This report was for information only. Panel Noted the report	LM
6.0	AOB	
6.1	BM advised that he had been waiting for a very long time for the lights to be installed at the front of the Westbourne community centre and asked what the delay was.	LM
	Date of next Meeting: Monday 16 th November 2009 at 7.00pm	