

Notes of Holland Walk Area Housing Panel

23 January 2008

Present

Judith Williamson	Brecknock	
Tracy Miller	Brecknock	
Claire Skinner	Highcroft & Highlands	
Mr King	Hilldrop Crescent	
S Gibbs	Hilldrop Crescent	
Joanne Deutrom	Hornsey rise & Manchester Mansions	
Justine Gordon-Smith	Ilex House TRA	Chair
Gill Empson	Ilex house TRA	
Thomas Cooper	Lower Hilldrop CRA	
Josie Ranger	Lower Hilldrop CRA	
Tracy Willoughby	New Orleans	

Chris Graham	1 in 1000 Rep	
Ron Vince	1 in 1000 Rep	
Eileen Avis	1 in 1000 Rep, Associate Director	
Arthur Perry	Disabled Rep	

Cllr Wally Burgess	St Georges Ward	
Cllr J Burgess	Junction Ward	
Cllr Ursula Woolley	Junction Ward	
Cllr Tracy Ismail	St Georges Ward	
Cllr Richard Watts	Tollington Ward	

Robert Taylor	Elthorne Community Project	
Celia Facey	Elthorne/Miranda Youth Club	
M Robb	Youth Club Member	
Angela Blogg	Youth Club Member	
Amanda Carter	Youth Club Member	
M Bailey	Youth Club Member	
M Amarty	Youth Club Member	

Bryony Willetts	Housing Strategy HFI	
Neville Archer	Housing Strategy HFI	
Skevos Loizou	Young Peoples Services	
Garry Bates	Senior Area Housing Manager	
Liza Durrant	Community & Service Development Officer	
Baljit Sheemar	Area Housing Manager	

Apologies

John Slaughter	Moelwyn Hughes TRA	
Hornsey Lane EMB		

ITEM	Matter raised	Action
1.0	Introductions	
1.1	Introductions were made.	
2.0	Previous Minutes	
2.1	Amendments	
2.2	A paragraph of a statement made by TC was omitted in the previous minutes. TC recounted to the Panel a conversation with Cllr Ismail where she supported the view that housing funding should be spend on housing needs (not Youth Services, which should be funded centrally), she confirmed this view to the meeting and committed to support the panel in this view up to and beyond the AHP meeting in January 2008. Cllr Richard Watts also commended the cross-party working.	LD
2.3	CG will present new Trafford Hall training brochure at the next meeting	CG
2.4	Panel agree to raise any issues from the feedback sheet at the next meeting,	
2.5	Minutes agreed	
3.0	Local Issues	
3.1	One petition was bought to the panel	
	<p>Elthorne/Miranda Youth Clubs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year the Area Housing Panel receive an Estate Security Budget which they have allocated to various Play and Youth initiatives over the past three years, the main ones being Elthorne and Miranda Youth Clubs and outreach youth partnerships across the Holland Walk area. At the Area Housing Panel meeting in March 2007 the panel members voted by majority to agree continued funding for 07/08 budget, but gave the Youth Services Director, (Skevos Loizou), and the Executive member for Children’s Services, (Cllr Ursula Wooley), a years notice that they would not fund the youth projects the following year (08/09). This was agreed in order to enable the Youth Services / LBI the appropriate timescale to secure alternative funding so that services for young people could continue without disruption. 	
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following this meeting a petition was received on the 13th November 2007 signed by over 300 residents, regarding the possible removal of funding for youth clubs in the Holland Walk Area, specifically the Elthorne and Miranda Youth Clubs. 	
3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The petition asks that the panel reconsider its decision not to fund 	

	the youth initiatives in 08/09. The petition was accompanied by two letters of support from local residents and the Police.	
3.4	Following this YPS presented an update of the play and youth schemes that the AHP have funded over the past years and again requested the panel continue to fund them. Concern was raised from the general public, YPS and the Elthorne Community Project that a cut in the funding will negatively impact both general and personal security on the estates.	
3.5	A discussion from the panel followed. Cllr WB asked if YPS had asked the council to fund the initiatives. Cllr UW responded that youth services are relatively well funded by the council, but that the council seeks to secure funding wherever possible to ensure young people get the best service provision. Cllr UW expressed concern about the impact of the HWAHP decision would have on youth services.	
3.6	The panel reiterated that they had made a decision last March not to allocate any further funding to this youth provision and they gave YPS a year to find alternative funds. Concern was expressed by the Chair, that many people signing the petition did not clearly understand the issues or why the panel had reached the decision it had.	
3.7	One panel member compiled a report on the discussion prior to the meeting (please find attached). The report raises issue of the panel not even having the powers to pay for youth provision through the HRA budget – this also applies to ASB provision.	
3.8	After further discussion the panel agreed again not to continue funding for the projects from the estate security budget. The panel regret having to make the decision at the 11 th hour and to cutting the funding. HWAHP support youth services, but understand that this budget is designed for one off projects. The youth clubs need secure long term funding and the Council should be aware that it's completely inappropriate to ask the panel to decide to use HRA ring fenced funding to support services beyond the remit of the HRA and therefore the Panel.	
3.9	Following this decision Cllr UW made a commitment to continue funding the youth projects. The panel thanked the Cllr UW for breaching the gap in funding.	Cllr UW
3.10	Skevos thanked the panel for the years of support and respects the decision the panel have made. The Panel praised the work of the Youth Services and expressed their appreciation of Skevos work.	
4.0	Council Items	
4.1	Report 2 – Developing Islington’s Housing Strategy This report is for consultation. NA took panel through report.	
4.1.1	NA asked the panel what are the main housing issues that Islington residents face.	

	<u>Issues</u>	
4.1.2	Rapid turnover of tenancies, which creates a breakdown of communities. People don't know their neighbours. A sense of cohesion and security is lost when you get a rapid turnover.	
4.1.3	Overcrowding	
4.1.4	Nobody knowing who lives in properties. There must be stronger accountability and control of properties.	
4.1.5	HFI and Council don't know how to cope with the duty of care to their residents and more partnership and mutual respect needs to be cultivated between staff and residents.	HFI / residents
4.1.6	More social housing is needed	
4.1.7	People living in properties that are too big for them and the current points system goes against people who do want to downsize. HFI have a tendency to only give people one choice and often a property in very poor condition. More consideration, support and incentives could to be offered to people in exchange for downsizing.	
4.1.8	The large amount of empty properties in Islington. The council should develop a strategy to engage private landlords better and bring them into a scheme to redevelop empty properties as social housing.	
4.1.9	Protection for those tenants who have private landlords. A need for more regulatory control of landlords.	
4.1.10	There are no links in the report to the existing housing strategy, it should fit into the umbrella of the GLA and wider needs and strategy of London as a city.	LBI
4.1.11	It is vital that the council / HFI comes up with a proper strategy to work with housing associations and other types of landlords / housing management. Needs to be more partnership working with Council and HFI and external partners.	LBI/ HFI
4.1.12	Sufficient soundproofing is needed	
4.1.13	Energy efficiency and door to door recycling. Issue when tenants change so frequently they don't get to learn these new processes.	
4.1.14	New tenants should receive essential contact information for the council, HFI and their local office, such as a welcome pack of local information and services / contacts.	
4.1.15	High turnover of staff. History gets lost and there is no consistency. Staff should to be rewarded and not driven out. Better record keeping is	

	needed and staff supported.	
4.1.16	Quality of repairs poor, too many missed appointments even though the tenant is in and or has taken time off work for repairs. This impacts on quality of life for residents in many ways. If the repairs service improved, resources would be greater, because Kiers are currently still paid a fee even for missed appointments. Lots of money wasted through poor supervision. If supervision of jobs better could lead to higher standards and improve quality of living and cut down on large turnover of tenants.	Kiers/ HFI
4.1.17	NA thanked panel for views and advised that if any reps wanted opportunity to become more involved then they could contact him.	
4.2	Report 1 Housing Revenue Account: Review of rents, Fees and Charges for 2008/09. This report is for consultation. GB takes panel through the report	
4.2.1	General comments One panel members didn't consider there any point in commenting on the rent as it is government led and was more interested in the heating charges. Noted that it would be beneficial to have a report detailing exactly how much is spent on heating resources. Tenants should be enabled to be sensibly engaged on how energy is used efficiently. The rest of the panel agreed that it is a complicated issue.	
4.2.2	GB agreed with the panel on the point regarding energy efficiency. The proposal is to move away from the 102 charges for different property types. The report is asking for consistency.	
4.2.3	One panel member questioned whether it would be good to have one communal boiler and is it cost effective for everyone to have different boilers and services.	
4.2.4	Panel requested that the Council / HFI look at what energy efficiency processes there are in place in each building.	
4.2.5	Panel propose that HFI consult with the individually affected blocks as they feel uncomfortable making the decision on their behalf.	
4.2.6	<u>Caretaking</u> Panel noted that the rate of inflation isn't 3.9% and if wages are only going up 2% how come rent is going up 6%?	
4.2.7	If caretakers charges are going up by 3.9% are caretaker's salaries going up by the same amount?	
4.2.8	One panel member reads from a report that states that council are heading towards a surplus so if there is no problem with funds then why are we trying to fix it?	

4.2.9	There was a discussion around TMO's being asked not to build up a bank of funds when it can be spent elsewhere. TC stated that if residents wanted more locally based services that they should consider setting up as TMO's.	
4.2.10	Panel asked if there is going to be a cap on digital TV?	HFI
5.0	HFI Consultation Items	
5.1	Report 3 – Consultative Panel Tenants Compact and Estate Security This report is for consultation. GB took panel through report	
5.1.1	Panel agree to have two separate sub panel meetings in March to prioritise the tenant compact budget. LD to notify TRAs of date in February.	
5.1.2	Panel agree to allocate Estate Security funding at the March Area Housing Panel. Proposal forms have already been sent out to TRAs. Deadline for return is Friday 8 th March 2008.	
5.2	Report 4 – Disposal of Land Managed by HFI This report is for information. GB took panel through report	
5.2.1	Panel commented that the Scout Hut is a fantastic resource for the community and it would be a shame if it were turned into homes. It was confirmed that the Scout Hut would become part of the new development	
5.2.2	Panel expressed concern over the fact that council are selling off land when there is a recognised need for more social housing.	
5.3	Report 5 – HFI and panel update This report is for information. GB took panel through report	
5.3.1	Panel suggested that the revised ASB policy reflects mental health issues of perpetrators. HFI may be asking people to change their behaviour when they don't even know they are doing something wrong.	
5.3.2	Policy does not link into health service and doesn't signpost staff to relevant services, specifically mental health teams or drug and alcohol support services or debt management agencies.	
5.4	Report 6 – Items considered at Sub Boards and consultative panel forward plan This report is for information. GB took panel through report.	
5.4.1	Panel noted report	
6.0	AOB	
	No smoking signs are needed on estates and in blocks. HFI need to enforce this law, but panel discussed realistic difficulty for HFI in doing	

	so.	
7.0	Date of next Meeting	
	Wednesday 19 th March 2008	