

## Upper Street (North) Area Housing Panel

24<sup>th</sup> September 2009

1.1	<p><b>Panel Members</b></p> <p>Tracey Owen – Clifton/Haden and Chair          Tony Brown – Bennett Court          Richard Schunneman – Andover</p>	
1.2	<p><b>Councillors</b></p> <p>Barbara Sidnell          Michael O’Sullivan</p>	
1.3	<p><b>Staff</b></p> <p>Gary Bates – Senior Area Housing Manager-          Pritpal Chhoker – Area Housing Manager          Winston Morris – Estate Services Manager          Chris Donovan – CSDO</p>	
1.4	<p><b>Guest Speakers</b></p> <p>Virginia Stephens – Project Consultation Manager</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-Affordable Warmth (LBI)</p>	
1.5	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Jo Knight          Catherine Curzon          Aubert Court          Tawney Court          Six Acres          Vaudeville Court          Stephens Ink</p>	
2	<p><b>Affordable Warmth</b></p>	
2.1	<p>Definition of fuel poverty is when a household spends 10%+ of disposable income on heat to maintain a temp of 21 deg in living area and 18 deg in other areas.</p>	
2.2	<p>5m households in GB below that line and this is expected to rise as costs soar in relation to income.</p>	
2.3	<p>22% of Islington residents are in fuel poverty</p>	
2.4	<p>The Finsbury Park Ward has the second highest concentration of people in fuel poverty in Islington (after Clerkenwell)</p>	

2.5	This is partly due to high concentration of difficult to insulate 19 <sup>th</sup> /early 20 <sup>th</sup> century property.	
2.6	Private tenants are the worst off group.	
2.7	LBI are running an "Energy Doctors in the Home" project – a scheme of advisors.	
2.8	They also recognise that people on low incomes are often forced to use expensive pre-payment meters and are promoting EBCO – an energy company which does not charge extra.	
2.9	Small energy saver schemes are also being run in Bunhill and Clerkenwell wards – this may be extended to Finsbury Park	
2.10	The Safe and Warm scheme for the over 70s and those on benefits may also be of assistance to some tenants.	
2.11	The expanding Climate Change fund is concentrating on loft and wall insulation. LBI put in for an ambitious £4.35m govt grant and obtained everything it asked for. This money must be spent by April 2011	
2.12	Clarification on whether leaseholders can be assisted with insulation etc free of charge is being sought.	
2.13	It is possible that schemes will expand in future	
2.14	There is a drop in centre at 222 Upper St for advice and a FREEPHONE number 0800 953 1221 for residents to obtain advice.	
2.15	Publicity in the form of card thermometers is being used to advertise the problem.  Panel members and Councillors welcomed efforts being made.	
3	<b>Matters arising</b>  There were no matters arising from previous minutes	
4	<b>Minutes of Previous meeting</b>	
4.1	P6 Bennett Court Community Centre Doors	

	<p>TB Panel had given permission for the Tenants Compact underspend on the flooring of the games room of the hall to be used on doors to give nursery access to outside. This has not yet been done. VS to ask Conrad Giwa to contact TB. (Conrad on sick leave for 2 weeks)</p>	
5	<p><b>AOB To be added to Agenda</b></p> <p>TO and Cllr Sidnell wished to discuss estate inspection under AOB</p>	
6	<p><b>Tenants Compact</b></p> <p>6.1 PC The £95k identified under Tenants' Compact for the Andover Community Centre is not sufficient to complete the work. A further £3 ½ k is needed.</p> <p>Panel agreed to fund this from approximately £5k current underspend on the Tenants Compact projects but stated that Bennett Court must be paid either from the current year's Tenants Compact underspend or prioritised for 2010/11 schemes, which will be decided in December 2009.</p> <p>6.2 RS Persuaded Balfour Beatty not to charge for feather boarding – can the £718 saving be ring-fenced to Andover. CD Pointed out that this is not how the budgets usually work but will put forward Panel's decision that this be done.</p> <p>6.3 <b>Paving Works on Andover</b> Panel is concerned that Compact or Paving Budget money is being spent on repairing damage caused by contractors on Andover. Assurance requested that contractors are making good and Compact money only being used for improvements – not repairs. WM to bring report to next panel.</p> <p>6.4 Cllr S Panel has made point time and again that Compact money should not be used for repairs.</p> <p>6.5 Cllr S will be using pending walk about with Fred Leplatt and Mark Linton to review what needs to be sorted out and who is responsible.</p> <p>It was suggested that Albert Neal be asked to have a walkabout with contractors first and the results of that to be checked by</p>	<p>CC</p> <p>WM</p>

6.6	<p>Cllr S, Mark and Fred on their inspection.</p> <p>Noted Project Team are suggesting dates of 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec for allocation meeting for Tenants Compact. After checking diaries members stated they would be unable to make those dates and suggested 10<sup>th</sup> Dec.</p> <p>RS requested breakdown how the Tenants Compact is allocated between panels. CD stated it was pro rata by property numbers. RS requested the figures.</p>	CC
7	<p><b>Central Papers – Gary Bates</b></p> <p>7.1           1) <b>Feedback form Panels</b> – an information item only</p> <p>No questions or comments</p> <p>7.2           2) <b>Equality and Diversity</b></p> <p>Panels welcomed report. No comments or questions</p> <p>7.3           3) <b>Business Plan</b></p> <p>7.3.1       Noted that 71% of residents are not involved in TRAs, nor do they wish to be. This is a matter of concern.</p> <p>7.3.2       RS Pointed out that, as people tend to get involved when they are unhappy, this is not necessarily a bad thing as it might mean residents are, by and large, content.</p> <p>HFI does need to consider what it offers TRA members in return for their work and what HFI want from TRAs and how that accords with what residents want.</p> <p>7.3.3       RS Always difficult to find residents with time and enthusiasm to complete all work – the Tollington estates work well together and would like to consider amalgamating for efficiency’s sake – but only if they could retain their three votes.</p> <p>CD Has already investigated this on the TRAs behalf, under current governance rules this is not possible</p> <p>RS But it is neither fair not sensible that a TRA representing 1500+ members has the same voting weight as one with 24.</p> <p>CD Has made this point on the behalf of Tollington TRAs and</p>	

	<p>possibility of some form of proportional representation will be incorporated into discussions on the revision of governance rules by Service Development Team, Directors and others.</p> <p>RS Has immediate relevance as an AGM for Andover is due.</p> <p>CD Is happy to talk to TRAs about how a mid-ground can be established in meantime.</p>	
7.4	<p><b>4) Cyclical Maintenance Programme</b></p> <p>GB –read through paper</p>	
7.4.1	<p>RS Strongly suggests that cyclical repairs and maintenance are excluded from the main contract. Further suggest that HFI investigate possibility of doing work themselves.</p>	
7.4.2	<p>Cllr S –Declared an interest as it impinges upon her responsibilities but questioned what is happening over maintenance of guttering – this has been an outstanding problem for many years.</p> <p>RS Is not currently happening but will be taken in-house.</p>	
7.5	<p><b>5) Update on Procurement of Maintenance Contract</b></p> <p>No questions or comments</p>	
7.6	<p><b>6) Consultative Panel Updates</b></p> <p>No comments</p>	
7.6.1	<p>RS Reminded panel members that there is an “Open House” at Highbury House after 6pm</p> <p>Cllr S Timing is bad – set for convenience of staff not residents.</p> <p>Panel agreed and put forward suggestion that future events should be on a Saturday afternoon.</p>	
7.7	<p><b>7) Forward Plan</b></p> <p>No questions or comments</p>	
8	<p><b>Local Papers</b></p>	
8.1	<p><b>Dispersal Zone</b></p>	

<p>8.1.1</p> <p>8.1.2</p> <p>8.1.3</p> <p>8.2</p>	<p>Panel wish Justin to come to next meet to update them on progress</p> <p>TB Estates like Bennett Court, just beyond the boundaries of the zone are experiencing an increase in ASB as fallout from its success.</p> <p>Cllr S Whilst aware of this problem and local hotspots, anecdotal evidence suggests this has been the quietest summer for years – it is to be hoped that the measures taken are having an effect. Has discussed with new Borough Commander and it to be hoped there will be an increase in policing on the estates.</p> <p>Also suggests Out of Hours teams are tasked with keeping an eye on peripheral estates like Bennett.</p> <p><b>Joint Walkabouts with TRA and PC</b></p> <p>PC still open to requests for joint walkabouts – either as part of planned accompanied inspection or as an addition.</p>	
<p>9.</p> <p>9.1</p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p><b>Estate inspections</b></p> <p>TO reports issues about communication in organising recent walkabout. Although she understands co-ordinator was off ill the substitute arrangements were unsatisfactory. Staff were found to be inflexible about time and dates. Noted TB Has also experienced similar problems – substitute co-ordinator did not have master fobs and the inside of blocks could not be inspected.</p> <p>WM John was off for 4 or 5 weeks, but this is no excuse for the lack of flexibility and communication being reported. PC Some serious action has already been taken and more is in train. Cllr S Welcomed WM’s involvement.</p> <p>RS The service is in order of magnitude better than that previously supplied by LBI but is let down by particular staff and by poor communication.</p> <p>WM Has taken steps and trust this will show in an improved service. He stated that he will make time to attend inspections</p>	

	<p>himself and is taking up issue with staff.</p> <p>Although it is a general issue, this topic will also be taken up by Tollington group meeting. It was decided that next meeting would be on 15th October at Upper St AHO at 10am. CD will send out agendas and invited.</p>	
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