

Boleyn Road Area Housing Panel Minutes 13/07/06		
<p>Present:</p> <p>Lorna Reid – (LR) Chair Jon Farrant – Senior Area Housing Manager – Upper Street (JF) Pritpal Chhoker – Boleyn Road Area Housing Manager (PC) Peter Rushbrook – Estate Services Manager (PR) Stan Goulding – Estate Services Co-ordinator (SG) Alan Woolley - Mayville Estate TRA (AW) Mrs Maura Lea - 1 in a 1000 Rep (ML) Hazel Slark – Aberdeen Park & Fieldview Court TRA (HS) Councillor Anna Berent (Cllr B) Stephen White – Performance & Partnership Officer (SW)</p> <p>Apologies:</p> <p>Shingi Njopera – Athenaeum Court Margaret Johns - Kerridge Court TRA Pat Krause - Hathersage Court TRA Jessie White - Hawthorne Close TRA Carol Johnson - Burder Close & Boleyn Road TRA Jenny Greenfield – Area Programme Manager Councillor Terry Stacy</p> <p>Observer Brian Potter</p>		
Item		Action
1	<p><u>Panel Reports – Consultation Items</u></p> <p>1) LR Informed members of the panel of her unhappiness with the volume of reports for consultation, which was relayed in a letter to members of the panel highlighting the inadequacy of the time allocated to discuss them. Invited comments from panel members.</p> <p>The Chair felt that regardless of what the panel says that “they will do as they wish”. Following discussion it was agreed to look at items 1, 4 and 6. The remaining items were deferred to a future meeting.</p>	
2	<p><u>Minutes of last meeting 11.05.06</u></p> <p>1) – Noted Highbury Estate having a meeting next week – Page 2</p> <p>2) AW - Repeated request for P.I's in regards to Partners which were not available for this meeting – Page 3</p> <p>3) AW - Repeated request for information re: digital switchover in regards to item 8 – Page 4</p>	

- 4) - Noted that **PR** and **AW** had a walkabout on the Mayville Estate regarding tenant compact works, which was very successful. – **Page 5**
- 5) **AW** - Asked if we had more details in regards to caretaking service level agreements. (**item 12 - Page 6**) Noted that **PR**, **SG** and **Dave Evans** will address this at the next meeting of Mayville Estate TRA.

3

Boleyn Road Local Reports

- 1) **PC** - Introduced this item to panel members. .

In regards to caretaking issue, it was **agreed that the next caretaking sub-panel meeting will be on 10th August 2006 at 7.00pm in the Boleyn Road Area Housing Office.**

HS – Asked how long did it take for an ASB case to go to court and **PC** advised that cases follow a process and the idea is to not go to court but to provide assistance. If this does not work then we go to court. Some cases took much longer than others. Noted that in some cases we arrange mediation between the parties and sometimes this works and helps to resolve the problems.

Tenants Compact

PR - Laid around supplementary items for members consideration in regards to the Tenants Compact and introduced **SG** to panel members. In referring to the tenants compact, **PR** provided more information regarding items 52, 53 and 54, advising members that item 54 was for consideration at this evening's meeting. **SG** could provide more detailed information in regards to works and items for consideration. He explained details behind item 12 on the supplementary list in regards to Hawthorne Close, which was for consideration for match funding. Advised panel members that if item 10 on supplementary list was moved to estate security budget and groundwork item re: Highbury Quadrant or Hawthorne Close included we could do everything on the supplementary list.

AW - Noted that Groundwork are good but their feasibility studies are expensive and we did not seem to be able to get a breakdown of those costs.

LR - Noted that Highbury Quadrant item keeps coming back and proposed that this item be removed. **Panel agreed that the Highbury Quadrant item is rejected and Hawthorne Close project is agreed.**

PR - The total tenants compact budget will now be used bar £201 and proposing that this is included with the funds for Hawthorne Close.

Panel agreed with PR's suggestion.

Estate Security Budget

PR - Introduced item to members of the panel and noted that the budget was £30,285 and that if panel wished to use the services of play and youth service this will be reduced by £10k.

	<p>LR - Stated that she was in favour of ring fencing monies for play and youth but not LBI's play and youth as, we never get any reports as to what the money was spent on despite asking for it. She felt that they did good work but there was a lack of accountability. Cllr B suggested that we should place conditions on play and youth service as part of funding.</p> <p>LR - Noted that Play and Youth Service have had opportunities to do this in the past. She proposed, and it was agreed, that the decision regarding the £10k is deferred to another meeting but she remained sceptical about the panel agreeing to this. Cllr B undertook to look into this and chase up a report from play and youth.</p> <p>PR - Advised the panel that if they agreed to the present proposals, there would be a total of £17k plus agreed and committed. He suggested that if any panel member had any other ideas or recommendations they should let SG know and we will get quotes.</p> <p>Items proposed to date agreed by panel members.</p>	
4	<p>Restructuring of housing management post PF2 contract</p> <p>1) JF - Introduced report to panel members with a brief resume of the reports content. Requested the careful consideration of panel members in respect of the report. Main points highlighted i.e., all street properties to be managed by Partners, housing stock will substantially reduce, management fee to HFI will reduce, reduced use of local housing offices and the fact that the report highlights HFI's proposals for dealing with these issues. Provided members of the panel with more details about the two options contained within the report.</p> <p>AW – Stated that Boleyn Road closing sounded logical but what about the elderly residents etc how will they get to the services. He observed that this was a poor part of the borough and several residents did not have access to the internet etc. He did not believe that the needs of residents were being considered in this report.</p> <p>JF - Evidence suggests that the ratio of callers was associated with the location of the office i.e. Upper Street having a high volume of callers. The key users of Boleyn Road are people living in the ward but more people go to centrally located offices where they can get more than one service, also things like rent can be paid at post offices etc. With the reduction in offices we accept that people cannot go local but we will be looking at how we can deal with this with a view to taking the service to the more vulnerable and that we will be looking at this carefully. He hoped that we would be able to offer reassurances in that area.</p> <p>AW - If LBI stopped selling off properties we would not need to do this and thought that this was the crux of the matter.</p> <p>JF - What we are trying to do is respond to the issues and continue to provide a good service. What we do not want to do is find ourselves in a situation where an office is there/open but incapable of providing a service.</p> <p>AW - Felt that the report author should give more detail regarding the information contained in the report and costings for adapting the offices.</p> <p>LR - Stated that the figures contained in report for callers to the offices etc can be read and interpreted in different ways. Also highlighted the fact that figures for the number of people using Boleyn Road had, according to HFI figures, remained consistent over the last two years. She observed that this will be the third office closure in this area and wanted to know why "they were closing all the offices in</p>	

this area". She wanted to know what was going to happen to Boleyn Road office, as presently there was no information on that. She felt that the financial information in the report did not stack up.

JF - Responded that at one time there were 24 offices and he was fully aware of the closures but that Mildmay was not the only area to have had offices closed. He agreed that this proposal would leave Mildmay without an office.

LR - Said that the Finances do not add up and had asked for more detailed information in advance of this meeting. Also staffing cost did not appear to add up, how was this worked out.

JF - There is a cost per staff within the staffing structure of the offices. If you break this down you can get staffing cost and take a view based upon anticipated callers to the offices.

LR - The report is feeble and you cannot make a decision unless you know:

- a) Where the staff are going to go
- b) How much it will cost to adapt the offices
- c) The cost associated with staff having to undertake more visits.

JF - More will be done around staffing cost and related issues but this proposal would not be before the panels if it were not something that was practical.

LR - What will happen with the Boleyn Road and Isledon Road offices. Can see that the proposal is for Isledon to go to Partners.

JF - That would be something ultimately for LBI to decide upon.

AW - Proposed that it be put to the panel that the report is rejected pending the provision of more detailed information and costings in regards to the proposal. Panel in voted and agreed this proposal

JF - The concerns of panel are appreciated but there is a commitment to providing housing in a professional manner. However, we need to get the balance right and we do recognise there is a need to have face to face contact with our clients and there is a strong commitment to doing this.

HS - When are proposals due to be implemented.

JF - This will go to the board for a decision and when a final report is drafted there will be a timetable to it but it should be within this financial year.

AW - Felt that there should be public meetings.

LR - There is no evidence as to how this £400k is going to be saved and info given so far is of little use.

JF & PC - **Provided a breakdown of the £400k for panel members focusing on the running cost for Boleyn Road.**

LR - Requested a breakdown of the running cost element of £40k in regards to Boleyn Road and JF agreed to look in to this and provide the relevant information.

LR - Asked what the savings were from Home Ownership moving and FITA moving from Drayton Park.

JF

	<p>JF - Stated that there might be no savings from moving Home Ownership as they still have to be located somewhere but hopefully it will be cheaper than Tufnell Park. He said that in the context of the report we were seeking comments as to where home ownership could be located.</p> <p>LR – Commented as to why we were transferring staff under PF2 when it was causing so many problems and that no one wanted PFI. She asked why we were not proposing to cut staffing cost at the top rather than cutting resources.</p>	
5	<p>Land Disposal Update - consultation</p> <p>1) JF - Introduced the report focusing on issues relevant to Boleyn Road.</p> <p>LR - Said that this arose out of the problems relating to Neptune House and also raised concerns in regards to the report about Reception Centres. She asked for more information.</p> <p>JF - Asked if members were happy with the report and LR responded that they were not happy with consultation process. JF agreed to feedback panels concerns.</p> <p>LR - Felt that she could not understand the selling off of Reception Centres when the Council were in the local press stating that they needed more properties. She felt that the consultation process was once again lacking.</p> <p>AW - We are asked what we would like to do with the land and then we are told 'no' we are still going ahead.</p> <p>LR - Placed question 3.1.1 (Do you feel that this procedure has been followed?) to panel members and their response was 'No'.</p>	JF
6	<p>Consultative Panel Processes - consultation</p> <p>1) JF - Introduced the report and placed questions to panel and their responses were as follows:-</p> <p>4.2 - This is a good idea but reports should be in a more readable format.</p> <p>4.3 - This would depend on what local issues there are, as these should take precedence.</p> <p>4.4 – Yes, these should be included and are necessary.</p> <p>4.5- No, but definitely not an unnecessary report.</p> <p>4.6 – No, this is now a process that residents have become familiar with but too many items pop up at the meetings.</p> <p>4.7 - Yes as it seems like an appalling waste of paper and we only need information regarding works in the Boleyn Road area and not the entire borough.</p> <p>4.8 Yes</p> <p>4.9 Yes would like,</p> <p>a) accurate reports b) Interesting presentations</p>	

	<p>c) the truth d) reduction in the amount of papers presented to panels for consultation at any one time as this reduces the time for serious consideration and consultation and instead reports should be staggered</p> <p>JF - Asked if there were any suggestions on 4.9</p> <p>LR - Felt that this was an issue for the Governance Team. AW felt that quite often additional information requested in regards to reports is very slow in forthcoming.</p> <p>JF - Stated that HFI should be able to get responses to Panel members by the dates of the next meetings.</p>	
7	<p>Tenant Incentive Scheme Update – information</p> <p>1) JF - Introduced report to panel</p> <p>LR - Asked if this information will be available in a range of formats for the blind and residents who cannot speak English etc. She felt that paying by direct debit was o.k so long as you had a bank account which, she felt, the poorest in the borough did not have. Also there was no incentive for those on benefits such as income support.</p> <p>ML - Felt it seemed to discriminate against leaseholders</p> <p>LR - Asked if equalities issues were going to be looked at.</p> <p>AW - Felt that this had come up before and it was agreed that, if tenancy conditions were enforced you would not need this.</p> <p>JF - If affordable incentives are available, we should consider them.</p>	
8	<p>2005/2006 Performance Indicators - <i>information</i></p> <p>LR - Said that she would like to know how many of the 122 NOSP'S served went to court.</p> <p>Panel noted report</p>	
9	<p>HFI update – <i>information</i></p> <p>Panel noted report</p>	
10	<p>Items Considered at Boards and Sub-Boards – <i>information</i></p> <p>Panel noted report</p>	

<p>11</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>1) SW - Raised issue of rubbish dumping and the request for sheds on Athenaeum as relayed by Shingi. PR responded that creating sheds was not feasible but could create more parking spaces. Agreed SG to investigate this possibility..</p> <p>2) HS - Stated that somebody was dumping rubbish on Aberdeen Park. Agreed PR to look into this.</p>	<p>PR</p> <p>PR</p>
	<p>Date of next meeting – 21st September 2006</p>	