

Minutes for Upper Street Area Housing Panel 16/1/06

<p>Present</p>	<p>Brian Potter – Chair and Pleasant Place Christian Clark – Marquess Western Isles Irene Spence – Mersey Elsa Topping – 1 in 1000 Mary Bowman 1 in a 1000 Ann Marie Greensmith NEETARA Tom Wells – Packington Valerie Semper – Cluse Court Andy Gadener – Marquess St Paul’s Terry Birchall - Cumming</p> <p>Simon Kwong John Farrant – Senior Area Housing Manager Chris Donovan – PPO</p>	
<p>Apologies</p>	<p>Barbara Coventry - Popham</p>	
<p>Mins of Previous AHP</p>	<p>Packington</p> <p>TW Packington Reference Group is in process of being disbanded and a shadow board elected.</p> <p><i>Ed note</i> <i>Board will be 6 tenants, 1 leaseholder, 1 TRA rep and 1 commercial rep; the whole supported by an independent advisor</i></p> <p>TW Hyde appear to be disbanding TRA</p> <p>CD Whilst Packington belongs to HFI and the TRA abide by the rules, that is it holds annual elections etc, there are no plans to disband the TRA.</p> <p>BP Anyone who wants to contact him for advice is welcome to do so 7 days a week.</p> <p>Tenants Compact funded projects</p> <p>ET Is there time to add projects to list? The items for Marquess are less a priority than other matters on the estate.</p> <p>CD The list can be added to up to April. There will be a meeting to vote on the initial list February 13th – members will get notification in near future.</p> <p>New River</p> <p>ET Has New River project finished?</p>	

	<p>CD Except for Nightingale Park and a few minor landscaping issues – replacing turf where contractors store has damaged etc. Both Marquess and Channel Islands are due for internal works as part of 7 yr programme. There is a plan to put CCTV in area – there will be public meeting, probably on 2nd or 9th Feb.</p> <p>ET A wide bollard installed as a replacement for guard railings around the gas pipes is providing a convenient seat for anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>CD Will get as team to get in touch to take details and add to list for tenants compact.</p> <p>JF A replacement for Kofi will be appointed in next few days who will supervise compact plans.</p> <p>CC Need some way of enforcing age restrictions on play area in Nightingale Park.</p> <p>JF Agreed - can put up notices but problem of enforcement. CCTV may help deter anti-social behaviour. CD is in the process of organising a public meeting to inform residents of plans. In general proposals are to site cameras at main junctions. The images will be stored for 1 month and can be downloaded and viewed in real time from secure computers in police station, Southern Housing and Upper St office. The cameras will not be continuously monitored but will be used in response to incidents.</p> <p>BP Residents should be aware that there will be a charge for CCTV.</p> <p>AMG Why is New River CCTV not included in the Tenants Compact meeting?</p> <p>JF It is not being funded from the tenants compact.</p> <p>CD requested guidance on priorities for tenants compact projects.</p> <p>It was agreed that security matters take precedence.</p> <p>AOB</p> <p>BP Will be going to a social housing conference in</p>	
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	Belgium and noted that his attendance at the events is funded by him personally, not by HFI or FITA	
<p>Main Papers</p> <p>Rents</p> <p>LBI consultation paper</p>	<p>BP Unpooling refers to the separation of service charge from rent, which used to be shown as one amount for tenants but is now separated. The problem is that although increases in rent charges are capped as explained in the paper the charges for services are not and can be put up by as much as the council wants.</p> <p>AMG Does anyone know how service charges are worked out for street properties?</p> <p>SK Noted that the normal format at other Panels is for the director to present the papers on behalf of LBI and HFI.</p> <p>There is quite a lot in this paper about the fact that ‘unpooling’ of rent is government policy rather than the Council’s. There is little choice in the matter.</p> <p>MB If you don’t get a good service from a caretaker the why you should pay. Wakelin had an excellent caretaker but he was transferred - as soon as a good member of staff gets used to the patch and people he is moved.</p> <p>JF Non-resident caretakers are moved more often than residential ones. We expect consistently high performance but are aware of the reality that performance varies. When standards do fall in an area for whatever reason, then we will move resources around in an effort to even matters out.</p> <p>Caretaking performance is monitored by a central section as well as by Upper St caretaker managers. Changes in the way the caretaking and estate services are run will free up more inspection time as the supervisory functions for caretakers and estate services will be combined. The new post-holders will be expected to spend 5 hours a day inspecting estates and talking to residents. There will also be work on expanding the pilot for Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for those estates with tenants and residents associations. These are agreements between the estate services and TRAs over the caretakers work rota – for example if they want the caretaker to spend more time cleaning stairs and less raking out rubbish from shrubberies this can be</p>	

	<p>agreed. It is hoped that this will use residents' local knowledge to target resources most effectively.</p> <p>CD Will inform caretaker manager of training needs.</p> <p>ET Pleased with steam cleaning.</p> <p>JF There is now one steam cleaning crew per office and blocks are done by rota to ensure that they are cleaned regularly. Not all blocks are appropriate as steam lifts some lino tiles. Any TRA can request this work.</p> <p>Upper Street has also employed some agency staff as a 'blitz' team to bring blocks where there are particular problems up to a standard the caretaker can then maintain. Jersey and Guernsey on the Channel Islands were done over Christmas.</p>	
<p>Local Area Agreements LBI info paper</p>	<p>BP This is a government version of Tenants Compact.</p> <p>SK Explained that this is a government initiative.</p> <p>In summary it is aimed at ensuring local services are delivered in line with resident priorities.</p> <p>LAA will have to be signed off by Government of London (GOL).</p> <p>The version of the agreement Islington is developing is summarised at paragraph 3.3 with a list of desired outcomes. Numbers 7-8, 11-13, 18-23 are housing and local environment related.</p> <p>Islington LAA is based around functional mechanisms, people and places (i.e. what are we trying to do, for whom and where).</p> <p>An emphasis has been put on helping tenants move from social housing to low cost home ownership, even if they do not meet the key worker definition.</p>	
<p>HFI Decisions</p> <p>HFI info paper</p>	<p>AMG What was specific nature of members meeting?</p> <p>SK It was about how new members were distributed around the various committees.</p> <p>AMG Is there somewhere we can look up what happened and who got what?</p>	

	SK Yes the minutes are on website	
HFI Update HFI info paper	<p>SK Audit Commission rate LBI as “3 stars and improving well”.</p> <p>The March edition of the residents newsletter will contain results of the mystery shoppers visits to area housing offices.</p> <p>Para 3.4.1 contains details of the transfer of the Ringcroft Estate to Hyde.</p> <p>3.4.2 Termination of St Luke’s TMO at the request of its members.</p> <p>3.5 Recycling – HFI has a target of 18%.</p> <p>3.6 HFI are Stonewall Diversity Champions – an important step in ensuring good employment practice.</p> <p>3.7 Highbury Grove properties suffering from subsidence have been brought up to the Decent Homes Standard.</p> <p>AMG What happened concerning rubbish being exported to Indonesia?</p> <p>CD A report is being prepared and will be available soon.</p> <p>TW Can this be brought to the next panel with an outline of costings/income from recycling.</p> <p>IS Mersey Recycling – Where are bins to be sited.</p> <p>CD Will ask Steve Sorrill to get in touch – Mersey is the only estate in borough not taking part in recycling at present.</p>	
Tenants Compact HFI Decision paper	<p>SK Sets out how various Compact monies are spent.</p> <p>For 2006/7 each panel has £250k to distribute amongst proposed schemes. This should be allocated by February for preference, by June at latest.</p>	

	<p>£83,333 is for environmental works. £166,667 is for capital works.</p> <p>This split can be flexible.</p> <p>In addition there is an Estate Security Budget of £181,500. Panels have the freedom to decide how this is spent to improve estate security. Upper St has previously used £30,000 to contribute to Rosebowl Youth Centre and Sebbon St Youth Club and to carry out security, lighting and paving works.</p> <p>Details of the 05/06 spend and that of other area offices are in the paper.</p> <p>CD A list of the projects already proposed for Compact and Estate Security funding has been circulated with the papers. This list is still open if TRAs have any projects they wish to add.</p> <p>A special meeting of the Panel will be called 6th February to begin the process of examining projects and voting on them. Outline costings will be attached to the projects for member's guidance.</p> <p>A replacement for Kofi is being appointed and will have the responsibility for these projects.</p> <p>Any project which is on the list and voted through but is subsequently able to be funded from another budget will free money for extra resident projects. Upper Street AHO traditionally produces a 'reserve list' of projects above the budget limit to ensure that should a project come in under budget or be funded from elsewhere that the full budget allocation is spent in accordance with the panels wishes.</p> <p>IS Mersey estate needs work on paving and improved lighting.</p> <p>CD Will add to the list.</p>	
<p>Leaseholder Associations</p> <p>HFI Consultation Paper</p>	<p>SK There are several leaseholder associations being set up at moment. They fall into two groups, those which are recognised by Leaseholders Valuation Tribunal – and hence by HFI (currently only Pleasant Place) and those recognised by HFI.</p> <p>There are issues to resolve about different forms of</p>	

	<p>recognition and about which organisation holds a vote on the panel when there may be a TMO, a TRA and an LA all on the same estate.</p> <p>This paper attempts to lay out a logical way of resolving these anomalies.</p> <p>Statutory Leaseholders Associations have a seat on the leaseholders forum but not on the area housing panel.</p> <p>Leaseholders Associations will not be recognised on and estate which already has a recognised TRA. The TRA takes precedence as it represents both tenants and leaseholders.</p> <p>Where leaseholders wish to form a temporary association for the duration major work projects, a Leaseholders Major Works Steering Group should be set up.</p> <p>BP Islington Leaseholder Forum has rejected this paper. He advises all leaseholders to form Leaseholder associations and apply to the LVT for statutory recognition.</p> <p>A surveyor has now been appointed to work with ILF when there are challenges to necessity, cost or quality of work. Hopefully this will do away with adversarial aspects of recharging leaseholders. If there is a discrepancy between the leaseholder's surveyor and HFI clerk of works which cannot be negotiated the matter will be forwarded to the Land Valuation Tribunal to settle.</p>	
<p>Diversity Monitoring</p> <p>HFI Information paper</p>	<p>SK A survey will be conducted to highlight any inequalities faced by minority groups in the services HFI provides.</p> <p>Noted</p>	
<p>Learning From Complaints</p>	<p>SK An analysis of complaints received and changes in procedures resulting from this.</p> <p>Noted</p>	
<p>AOB</p>	<p>BP REITS (Real Estate Investment Trusts) come into force in January 07. There has been a test case in Hong Kong which was over-subscribed 130 times. Ownership of social housing could well pass by the</p>	

	Council – ALMO – REITS route and be run for the profit of investors. BP will continue to monitor and report	
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