

**MINUTES
OUTER WEST AREA PANEL MEETING
5.30pm at Westfield Chambers
Wednesday 13th April 2011**

Attendees:

Area Panel Members

Kevin Sharp (Chair)
Brian Falkingham (Vice Chair)
Margaret Rimington
Lydia Appleby
Corinne Brown (Board Member)

Officers:

Sharon Guy	- Area Performance Manager Wortley/Pudsey
L Wright	- Customer Involvement Manager
MariePierre Dupont	- Neighbourhood Planner
Rebecca Mell	- Investment Planning Manager
Mary Kerr	- Administration Officer (Minutes)

Guests:

Sheila Mecklenburgh
Lee Dobbins - Morrison FS

Action

1.0 Election of Chair

- 1.1 SG said there had been only one expression of interest for the position of Chair to the Area Panel.
The expression of interest had been received from KS.
SG enquired if the panel members present had any objections or if they were in approval of KS being the Chair for this area panel.
All panel members present agreed for KS to stand as Chair.

2.0 Apologies for Absence:

- 2.1 Councillor Lewis, Councillor Marjoram.

3.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting Held on 9th February 2011:

- 3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were **agreed** as a true record.

4.0 Matters Arising:

- 4.1 Arising from Item 3.1

AP12-09 - Conservatory to be installed on Rycroft Green
BF mentioned the Conservatory has been completed.

MPD informed members that after querying the fees charged by PMS some of them were reduced.

KS mentioned that interviews had been held for all four of the Area Panels regarding new members joining.

There was one application received for Outer West.

Lydia was welcomed as a successful applicant and now a member on the Outer West area panel.

KS said that invitations will continue to be given to encourage more people to join.

Regarding the Tenant Scrutiny panel 6 more people have applied for this. Interviews are to be held end April or early May.

LW mentioned for those people who have applied, he would be happy to arrange coaching sessions to support and assist if required.

Arising from item 4.5

A meeting was held with NL regarding the procurement procedures

The gates for the Heights have been ordered and should be installed shortly.

Arising from item 6.1

It was mentioned that the surplus funding was shared as agreed and used up on projects regarding self-seeders, bollards and painting schemes.

Arising from item 6.2

The photograph which was to be taken after completion of the Highfield Green foot path did not go ahead due to the weather conditions.

5.0 Customer Involvement

5.1 Update

LW went over the report and the following points were noted.

Customer Involvement Strategy

LW mentioned the Customer Involvement Strategy is currently being reviewed. The review is to update the strategy taking into account customer feedback, organisational changes, legislative and regulation changes and good practice. The revised strategy will be presented to the Board for approval on the 25th May 2011.

The current strategy outlines five priorities which can be summarised as:

- a. To make sure customers can genuinely influence our services.
- b. To increase the number of customers involved and to do it in a way that includes everyone.
- c. To provide customers with training and support to help them to get involved.
- d. To publicise how customers can have their say and to inform customers how or where their involvement has made a difference.
- e. To make sure all staff have the skills and knowledge to able them to effectively involve customers.

Customer Training Programme

Aire Valley Homes and East North East have both decided not to enter into partnership with WNWHL to jointly buy into the Active Learning for Residents accredited training scheme run by the Chartered Institute of Housing. Unfortunately WNWHL are unable to proceed alone due to the increased costs and staff resources that would be required to run the programme.

Funding will continue to be provided for relevant training for involved customers during 2011/12.

LW mentioned that e-learning opportunities are being looked into and if successful this will continue.

Incentives and Awards for Tenant & Residents Associations (TRAs) and Area Representatives (ARs)

A new initiative is being introduced in 2011/12 that aims to: recognise well run Tenants and Residents Groups, help sustain existing groups and Area Representatives, further empower the most active groups and promote further customer and community involvement.

As well as receiving the Annual Support Grant, TRAs will also be able to receive up to an additional £100 core training incentive if committee members undertake relevant training.

TRAs and ARs will be able to apply to a Capacity Fund with upto £300 towards the cost of participating in relevant local, regional or national training, conferences or good practice activities.

Gold Standard Awards will be awarded to TRAs and ARs who meet the criteria in the following three categories:

- Good Management of the TRA Award
- Mentoring Award
- Involving the Community Award

All of the above will be managed within the existing budget for TRAs therefore there is a limit on the amount available for core skills training and capacity fund.

The Diverse Community Fund remains in place. The Diverse Community Fund is located in a separate budget which TRAs and others can apply for.

Involving Diverse Tenants

By the end of March 2011, there were 12 forums that had been arranged, of these 8 took place and 4 were cancelled due to lack of interest from customers.

KS enquired if any were in the Outer West area, if so could they not be invited to attend and observe the area panel meeting and if interested they could join.

LW said all newly involved tenants will be invited to get further involved by offering shadowing of meetings, however many newly-involved tenants require support, experience and confidence before they would get further .

5.2 Tenancy and Estate Management

SG presented this report and the following points were noted for both January and February months.

Estate Grading – SG mentioned the targets for these are being revised. Most problems caused are from litter etc. Wortley seems to be worse due to the hills which make cleaning in this area quite difficult to upkeep.

Estates which reflected estate grading as poor were given priority attention.

Mystery shopping has now been introduced to ascertain results regarding the poor performance from the Contact Centre.

LD mentioned S Buncall and J Russell were invited to visit the Morrison FS contact centre and see how this was run.

It was also said that staff from Morrison FS will be based at the Contact Centre in Leeds to help assist with repairs being reported. This may help to improve results.

It was mentioned that lack of staff and sickness levels are key factors which do contribute to poor performance.

A suggestion was made that a survey be done on a week to week basis to find out where any weaknesses are so they can be addressed.

BF mentioned that there seemed to be a problem for the last 7 weeks when he has tried to make his rent payments on line.

SG said she would speak to the Customer Accounts Team and inform them of the problems being faced on line.

5.3 Area Panel Budget Update

KS asked what the total was for the outhouses.

MPD said she is unsure of this at present as the costing need to be reviewed. An update will be given at the next meeting.

MPD

The budget for this year is £100,000.00 and the breakdown is as follows:-

- £75,000.00 will be done as Capital Budget
- £25,000.00 will be done as Revenue Budget

Demolitions will come under the Capital Budget .

5.4 Area Panel Bids

April Bids

- AP1-2011 – Funding for a target hardening scheme

The value of this bid is £10,000.00.

This bid is to allow CASAC to assist the police and other agencies in making properties more secure against the threat of burglary.

The work involved would be to fit additional security measures which would include the fitting of window / door locks, door chains, spy holes etc. Particular attention is paid to PVC doors which have been identified by the police as a common entry point for burglars. CASAC would ensure that weak euro profile cylinders would be replaced by more robust anti-bump and anti-snap cylinders. An analysis by Safer Leeds reflected that the repeat burglary rate on non target hardened properties is 8% where if a property is target hardened this is reduced to 2%.

Target hardening costs on average £150, where the average cost of a burglary is £1800.

It was mentioned the Outer West Area Committee met on 17th December 2010 and approved the funding of £10,000.00 for target hardening.

A similar request was sent to the safer estates team who already granted funding to target WNWHL properties.

This bid was **refused** due to funding already being received.

- AP7 -2011 – harden the grass verges at The Gardens, Farsley

The value of this bid is £6,500.00.

This bid is to request funding to use a grass filled ground reinforcement system to create additional car parking spaces.

A map of the area concerned and photographs of the proposed work carried out on a previous scheme were provided.

Highways have provided a map of the Statutory Undertakers equipment. Due to a verge hardening scheme being done the relevant services from BT or Yorkshire Electricity would not need to be moved.

MPD said the Area Committee have granted match funding of £4k towards the total cost of this scheme which is £10,500.00.

Queries were raised whether these could be damaged by Highways when road surfacing is carried out in the area.

It was mentioned this would be unlikely as not in the road.

This bid was **approved**.

Total value spent this meeting £6,500.00.

6.0 Revenue and Capital Expenditure

6.1 Capital Programme Update 10/11

RM went over this report and the following points were noted.

The total current programme for 2010/11 stands at £21.8 million and the funding available is £22.4 million. Currently £21.1 million has been committed which includes carry over schemes from 09/10.

Actual spend to date amounts to £19.6 million.

RM stated final figures will be given next month.

RM

Non Decency Position as at 31st March 2011

Year end target excluding electrical	2.00%	412 units
Actual on 31/03/11	1.53%	315 units

Year end target including electrical	2.61%	537 units
Actual on 31/03/11	2.14%	440 units

Some electrical data was recently placed into the Keystone Asset Management System which had an adverse affect on the % of non decent homes.

A list of the failing properties will be made and the information will be passed onto Morrison FS.

A question raised was after decency done what the emphasis will be on.

RM mentioned a target of 4% non decent homes has been given, this is due to the budget being cut by 33%. It is hopeful that savings can be made through new contracts set up however this is up to the Board to decide.

CB enquired when the council are looking into doing solar panels for elderly people and families.

RM said a number of properties are being looked into which would be suitable for this. Letters will be sent to the customer once properties have been identified asking if they would be interested in having this done.

KS mentioned he would like more information regarding this to be fed back at the next meeting.

7.0 Any Other Business

7.1 Morrison Facility Services Introduction

LD gave an overview of the company Morrison FS and what they would like to achieve.

From the 1st June repair appointments will be changed to offer 2 hour appointment slots for example 8 – 10 or 10 – 12. It is felt that this would be more beneficial to the customer ensuring access is gained to the property to carry out the repair.

All employees will have a smart card with a number, which the customer can phone, to verify if the employee is a contractor employee.

Morrison FS are working at Moorside TARA putting in a new ramp and giving assistance with the garden.

Schools will be visited to speak to the pupils about the environment and how they can make a difference.

LD mentioned that Morrison FS has put aside £100,000.00 per year for worthwhile Community Projects. These funds will be shared between Aire Valley and WNWHL.

LD said a contact centre would be opened up in Leeds where forum groups or customers could go in and see what the results are regarding satisfaction and find out information all about the company and the works done.

In September Morrison FS are looking at having 180 apprenticeships which would create 150 new jobs to assist with the worklessness project.

Discussions will be held with customers to enquire what they feel works well and what does not.

KS mentioned if someone is to attend the meetings on a regular basis what information would they bring to the meeting.

LD said it is up to the panel to decide what information they would like brought to the meetings.

LA asked if quality checks would be done on works once they have been completed.

LD stated yes, these would be done via tenant inspections and other ways. At least 20 to 30% of the jobs completed will be checked.

LD commented this is one of the ways that further training needs could be picked up for staff.

KS enquired from SM how she found the meeting.

SM stated she had found it very interesting.

8.0 Date, Time and Location of next meeting

8.1 **Date:** 8th June 2011

Time: 5.30pm (5.00pm – Refreshments)

Venue: Westfield Chambers Board Room

Signed.....

Date.....