

**MINUTES OF THE
INNER WEST AREA PANEL MEETING
held on
Monday 16th April 2012
5.30 pm, at Westfield Chambers**

Attendees:

Area Panel Members:

John Willshaw	JW
Andy Liptrot	AL
Hugh Morgan Pugh	HMP
Jean Paxton	JP
Jenny (Zeniada) Holt	JH
Deanne Hodgson	DH
Betty Nyamayaro	BN
Harry Shields	HS
Cllr J McKenna	CllrJMC
Graham Ollerenshaw (Morrison FS)	GO
Graham Hepworth (Morrison FS)	GH

Officers:

Akbar Khan – Area Performance Manager Bramley/Armley	AK
Margaret Houchen – Minutes	MH

1.0 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from, Francesca Harris and Julie Haile (Morrison FS).
- 1.1.1 AL opened the meeting on behalf of JW, pending election of the positions of Chair and Vice Chair.
- 1.1.2 Only one expression of interest for the position of Chair was put forward at the meeting, by JW. He was therefore duly re-elected to the position of Chair of the Inner West Area Panel.
- 1.1.3 HS retained the position of Vice Chair of the Inner West Area Panel.
- 1.1.4 Subject to verification from the Governance Team, JW requested for AL to chair the meeting.
- 1.1.5 The panel members and guest speakers, Graham Hepworth, Void Account Manager, and Graham Ollerenshaw, Maintenance Manager, both for Morrison FS, were warmly welcomed to the meeting, by AL.
- 1.1.6 For the benefit of those present, introductions were given.

Action

2.0 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 13th February 2012

2.1 The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 New panel member: Tracey Seddon (item 8.3 refers): MH advised that no response has been received by the Governance Team, regarding her application to join the Inner West Area Panel.

4.0 Morrison FS: Business and Voids Update

4.1 GH provided an update on voids performance, and copies of this information were circulated at the meeting. He spoke of the difficulties that arose in the mobilisation period, and of his new role managing the Voids across both ALMOs.

4.1.1 Teams have been relocated, now known as the Inner and Outer teams. Southern Electric is dealing with the rewiring of properties, which has proved positive.

4.1.2 Currently, forty voids are sat with asbestos.

4.1.3 Now a better system of communication, and a voids tracker system has been developed, which will chart the progress of void properties.

4.1.4 Morrison FS now have 200 open properties, against a target of 232, thanks to the support that has been provided from ENE contractors.

GH asked if the panel had any questions.

4.1.5 AK advised of the volume of queries his housing office is receiving, regarding the chase up of repairs, due to no feedback/insufficient answers being provided from the Planners.

GO agreed to take this point back to Morrison FS. In addition, he agreed to take back any points that cannot be answered at the meeting.

GO

4.1.6 CllrJMC spoke of there being a lot of anger amongst the Cllrs, owing to the problems with Morrison FS. He added that when there is a failure to respond to issues, by Morrison FS, the Cllrs then become involved because the service has fallen down and gone very wrong.

4.1.7 JW reported that having visited the contact centre eight weeks ago, six out of ten repairs were reported incorrectly.

GO advised the panel that currently a group has been tasked with looking at misdiagnosed repairs.

4.1.8 Following AL's explanation of problems with the current system, JW mentioned hearing that AVH are to re-introduce diagrams for repairs, in the tenant's handbook. GH advised that AVH feel it will be too expensive to re-introduce the handbook.

4.1.9 HS thought it alarming that the current Orchard system is not fit for purpose.

4.1.10 JH spoke of the problem with her gas heating, which GO agreed to take details of after the meeting, and follow up on her behalf.

GO

4.1.11 A final Service Improvement Recovery Plan (3rd edition), has now been compiled which GH feels will prove positive.

4.1.12 JP asked of the time that operatives finish, and she was informed by GH of the out of hours service provision, from 7.00 pm, onwards. JP then went on to explain that she received a card explaining that an operative called at 11.40 pm, yet she reported the repair at 8.00 am that morning.

GO explained that an operative should have attended within three hours, and if the repair could not be completed in the first instance, then they would return by the required timescale to complete the work.

4.1.13 HMP enquired if housing surveyors still attend the properties with the operatives, and when he was informed that this is no longer the system, he queried the reasons why.

AL agreed to take this point forward.

The panel were advised by GO that the inspection process was removed, and the problem now is that inspections are done on the repairs order. He believed that it should return to old system of inspections first, and then to communicate the whole subsequent repair process to the customer.

4.1.14 DH spoke of the operatives turning up out of the blue, with no repairs slip, to see to her roofing repair.

GO to take this forward on DH's behalf.

The correct repairs process was explained to DH, and he advised her that the operative should have provided evidence of his ID, as well as explaining the standard to her.

4.1.15 BN felt that the service should be about meeting customer expectations, and she believed that there must be a way forward.

4.1.16 The question of PDAs in relation to customer satisfaction, was raised. GO advised the panel that they are answered personally by the customer and not by the operatives.

AL thanked both GH and GO for kindly attending the meeting.

5.0 Customer Engagement and Inclusion

5.1 Evaluation of Area Panel Bids

5.1.1 AL made reference to the one bid which received more than 50% dissatisfaction, and requested for further information to be provided by Stephen Towler.

The panel noted the contents of the report, circulated prior to the meeting.

5.2 Local Performance Framework

5.2.1 AK provided a summary of the performance for both Armley and Bramley.

5.2.2 New staff have recently been appointed, and Bramley Housing Office should be fully

AL

GO

MH

staffed by the end of April, beginning of May 2012. AK added that this will now show an even greater improvement with performance.

5.2.3 In answer to JW's question, AK informed him that home visits form a three year programme. However, JW replied that since moving into his property, he has only the one visit.

5.2.4 Overall, AK said that he is happy with the performance of both offices. CllrJMC said that he was also happy with the figures, apart from the target for correspondence. He questioned if responding in one working is practical, and perhaps it is too difficult a target to achieve.

AK believed that once both housing offices are fully staffed, this target will be achievable.

5.2.5 The panel were informed of the new initiative of holding Cllr surgeries, and to this end, has sent out an email to all concerned. CllrJMC thought that perhaps after the elections in May 2012, there will be more of a take up by the Cllrs.

5.2.6 The panel were informed by AK that Members enquiries have been centralised.

AK asked the panel if they had any questions regarding performance.

5.2.7 DH said that she would like to say, "Well done to the team" in Bramley Housing Office, as a member of staff went over and above the call of duty, irrespective of her workload.

6.0 Revenue and Capital Expenditure

6.1 Decency Update and Capital Investment 2010/11

6.1.1 The panel noted the contents of the report, circulated prior to the meeting.

6.1.2 AK mentioned to the panel that if they wish, Rebecca Mell could be invited to attend at least once a year.

The panel agreed for Rebecca Mell to be invited to the next meeting, to provide a full update to the panel, and also to attend just one meeting a year.

6.2 Area Panel Bids

6.2.1 It was noted for the second successive panel meeting, that no bids have been put forward for April 2012.

6.3 Area Panel Budget Update

6.3.1 The panel noted the contents of the report, circulated prior to the meeting. However, discussion took place over the budget for last year, and the new financial year, as there is some uncertainty over the amount to be provided.

7.0 Any Other Business

7.1 Community Engagement and Inclusion Team

7.1.1 The panel noted the contents of the report, circulated prior to the meeting.

7.2 Estate Management Framework

7.2.1 Further to the flowchart previously circulated to the panel members, AK explained

the new process for the bids.

- 7.2.2 AL asked if the same process is to be used across all four panel areas, and he was advised that it is.

7.3 Environmental Projects Timeline

- 7.3.1 AK provided an explanation of the diagram.

- 7.3.2 DH thought it to be a long process, and she questioned that the NMO would be able to cope with all the extra work. AK advised her that the NMOs would be able to cope, as they have had some of the work taken off of them and placed with the admin, in the new Customer Services Support Team.

JW felt that the new system will not work, though hopes that it will.

- 7.3.3 AL enquired of the number of bids likely to be received per year, and of the knowledge that customers have received letters regarding their bids. He requested for the timescales to be added to the diagram.

- 7.3.4 CllrJMC thought an appeals process, regarding unsuccessful bids, would be a good thing as just a final 'no' is not really acceptable.

- 7.3.5 HS felt that there are too many links in the process, and he questioned what would happen with that process, should there be a breakdown with one of the links.

- 7.3.6 AL queried the situation, If the NMO is unavailable or off sick.

- 7.3.7 DH asked of the situation if the NMO does not have the required skills for dealing with bids. AK advised that training has been identified for them.

7.4 Rent Arrears Collection

- 7.4.1 AL informed the panel that WNW hit its year end target for rent arrears collection. However he spoke of his future concerns for rent collection, given the government's proposed changes to the benefit system.

7.5 Website Training

- 7.5.1 HS, having recently attended a website training course, which was free of charge, advised that he is able to assist others to set up a website, if they wish.

9.0 Date Time and Location of Next Meeting

- 9.1 Monday, 11th June 2012, at 5.30 pm, in The Board Room, Westfield Chambers.

MPD