

**MINUTES
OUTER WEST AREA PANEL MEETING
4pm AT WESTFIELD CHAMBERS
WEDNESDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 2012**

Attendees:

Area Panel Members:	John Aubrey	JA
	David Atkinson (Chair)	DA
	Lydia Appleby	LA
	Corrine Brown	MC
	Brian Falkingham (Vice Chair)	B F
	Paul Tucker	PT

Officers:

Sharon Guy:	Area Performance Manager Wortley/Pudsey	SG
Lorna Bustard:	Community & Inclusion Manager	
Tracey Thorpe:	Minutes	

- 1.0 Apologies:** Councillor R Wood had informed TT that he would not be able to attend this meeting or the next one in April. SM was away on holiday, no other apologies were received. Introductions were made.
- 1.1 SG confirmed that a letter has been sent out to Kevin Sharp thanking him for all his contributions while he was on the Outer West area panel.
- 2.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 5th December 2012 and Matters Arising.**
- (Item 4.2) JA stated that he would like the lights at the Dawson's Corner Sheltered Scheme being looked into as some of the lights have not been done. BF stated this would mean putting in a new bid, JA to speak to BF on this matter.
- BF reported that Fairfield Avenue progress is starting as holes have now appeared in the ground.

Action

3.0 Capital Expenditure.

3.1 Capital Programme.

No update had been submitted by ABCL hopefully there will be one for the next meeting in April.

3.2 External Funding.

This report is only available on a quarterly basis TT is to contact Dawn Appleyard to submit one for April's meeting. Dawn Appleyard is also invited to attend if she wishes to.

TT

4.0 Customer Involvement

4.1 Area Panel Bids.

4.1.2 **AP86 2012 Cow Close Community Corner – Approved subject to funding.**

Armley Juniors Young People's charity propose to take over the running of the old Cow Close Library. The intended usage of the building is for community members to access services including debt management, training and advice, housing support, job search and skills. When the organisation is up and running it will become an incorporated organisation possibly a registered charity.

The total cost of the project will be £26,772.00; the proposed cost to the Area Panel will be £8,000. A lengthy discussion took place around what the project can offer to the area, it was agreed it is a viable scheme. Voting took place and the panel have agreed to part fund £4,000 subject to the availability of monies in April's budget, although it may be June before anything is finalised.

DA raised the question of Asbestos safety why it had not been made safe. SG informed the panel that if asbestos is present it is best left undisturbed, there is no danger or risk until it is disturbed.

4.2 Update on Previous Bids.

SG reported that good progress has been made on all bids. The New Street Grove bid AP47, SG stated at the last meeting that issues on health and safety were raised. An interim measure is to be put in place that recycling is going to be provided.

The CCTV at Fairfield Avenue has started. All other schemes are in works in progress or are awaiting completion dates.

4.3 Community Engagement & Inclusion Update. (LB)

LB gave an explanation of the report to the panel which goes out every month with a summary of the activities of the team.

There are currently no Area Panel evaluations due for reporting in the Outer West area.

There has been one diverse community fund bid from Outer West, from the Rycroft High Rise Residents Association. The aim of the project was to bring residents together from the Rycroft's, Atlanta Street, Claremont's and the Crimble's sheltered scheme together on an excursion to Skipton Christmas market.

The fund continues to be promoted through a variety of mediums including the TRAs, Area Representatives and through the Sheltered Housing Schemes.

If anyone has any new and creative ideas as to how you can involve your community please contact Rukhsana Mahmood the Cohesion & Diversity Officer at WNWHL.

LB stated in order to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our Diverse Communities, twice a year forums are held for each of the Top 6 languages, other than English which is requested by our customers. These are Arabic, Farsi, Kurdish, Polish, Tigrinya and Urdu. The Farsi and Tigrinya forums were held in January. The main themes discussed were issues with repairs, publicity of the forums and customer involvement opportunities. The group was also consulted on the service standards for the community engagement team.

The Tenant Scrutiny Executive has completed their scrutiny of Property Security. This primarily covered fire safety, gas servicing and access to communal buildings. A report on their findings and recommendations was taken to the Board meeting on 24th January 2013. They have made 16 recommendations to improve our service to tenants and leaseholders, these are now being considered by the Board and an action plan for implementing those that are agreed will be developed. LB stated they are awaiting comments back from Paul Elliott.

LB reported on the Social Housing Equality Framework which undertook an external peer challenge assessment with the aim to achieve the "Excellence" level of the SHEF between 2 and 4 October 2012.

WNWhL are delighted to report a positive outcome with the '**Excellence**' standard being awarded.

The Assessment was led by the Local Government Association who will validate and formally recognise the Excellence level

The basis for the peer challenge was a framework where WNWhL equality and diversity performance was benchmarked against the following five areas:

- Knowing your customers
- Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- Customer engagement
- Responsive services, access and customer care
- A skilled and committed workforce

Considerable evidence was provided prior to the assessment including a Self-Assessment, Narrative and Case Studies of examples of work with positive outcomes for tenants.

Any internal findings of weakness an action plan will be put forward.

LB reported on the Tenant and Resident Associations and how they play an important role in developing community spirit. LB showed photographs of a photo competition that had been submitted through the face book page. LB stated that through the TRA we are finding adults and children are good at informing us what is and what is not working on the estates. More involvement is taking place with schools in all different areas we are working closely. Dawn Appleyard our funding officer may be able to get some funding for schools and young people to be involved with any new projects.

MC wanted to highlight the latest news of Leeds 13 postcode being reported as one of the top areas for burglary and crime. LB stated that there is a website www.police.uk which will give any updates on crime.

SG stated the overall crime has dropped; different types of crime in Pudsey/Wortley/Swinnow are not as high as in other areas. WNWhL work very closely with West Yorkshire Police.

PT reported that there is now a walk- in surgery at the Café Lux in Pudsey every Friday, where the police are happy to give feedback.

5.0 Local Issues

5.1. Local Performance Framework.

SG went through the statistics; an indication of red on the charts implies we are not meeting targets. Estate grading is still not good, although this has improved in January by excellence. SG is in negotiation with Morrison to see if they can help with any action days in Farsley and Wortley within the next six weeks.

The surveys show that 85.60% customers are satisfied with the overall service; the call centre shows improvement on customers waiting time.

We are on target with complaints that have been responded to within 10 days.

SG would like to see a narrative column on the reports, SG to contact Mary Kerr from ABCL to see if this can be provided.

SG

6.0 Grounds Maintenance Update Report.

The report highlights that grass cutting was completed on the 7th November 2013. This was the last grass cut for the season and an extra cut to what was originally planned due to wet weather over the year.

Continental Landscapes have been delivering against WNWhl performance targets with 99.5% overall performance result (99% target) 92% of assets have been cut right the first time (90% target)

A monthly customer satisfaction surveys only take a snapshot of views from our customers. Out of 367 asked, 83% have been very or quite satisfied by performance, and 14% very or quite dissatisfied. Satisfaction in the winter months is always higher than in the height of the growing season and the overall performance data is improving.

Shrub maintenance is due to be completed by mid-February some delays were experienced due to the weather and ground condition. Training has been offered to Neighbourhood management staff to ensure that all staff is confident with monitoring and that they all understand issues around inaccurate mapping and how to rectify this.

Re-stocking of shrub beds that are in a poor condition and are not always fully stocked potentially are leaving large areas which tend to be invaded by weeds. Consideration needs to be given to whether WNWhl wants to restock some of the shrub beds or if it is more appropriate to remove the remaining shrubs and grass the bed over. Area Panels may want to consider whether there are any of these changes they would like to support and fund as may local Councillors.

PT asked the question why when they are removing shrubs that these cannot be replanted to fill in gaps within boundaries. SG informed everyone that when the shrubs are removed the root is cut off so they cannot transplant them.

SG reported on the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board, the report highlighted that during November Leeds City Council Scrutiny board; made 10 recommendations related to the Leeds wide ground maintenance contract.

The most significant recommendation (2) to WNWhl is to explore a move towards an extended shrub maintenance service; and a fortnightly grass cut frequency to achieve a better quality of service.

The response is WNWhl need to make sure that they prioritise the best use of their limited funds in these difficult financial times. WNWhl want to retain flexibility and phasing will be adopted in 2013 which will use climate condition to direct the overall frequency. It is believed that this approach offers the best value for money. The increased frequency of grass cutting on “premium” sites in response to customer concerns raised during 2012 will be retained.

Recommendation 4 ask for a number of departments and continental to review the existing litter picking responsibilities and opportunities for more joined up working.

The response is some consideration is being given for Continental to expand litter collection to cover adjacent hard surface where applicable in co-ordination with street cleansing activities.

Recommendation 10 is to develop a Communication Strategy aimed at promoting public awareness of behaviour that is obstructive to the delivery of a good quality grounds maintenance service (e.g parking on public verges).

The response it is proposed that this takes place ahead of the grass cutting season in 2013.

7.0 Any Other Business

Elaine Rey from Corporate Support attended the meeting to report on the Almo review. The report has gone to the Executive board in early January; there are two options to consider. One is to go back under the direct control of Leeds City Council, two the Almo will be run as one. Letters and questionnaires have all been sent out to customers. Area Panels will continue to operate, Leeds City Council is interested in what the Area Panel's thoughts are for the future i.e. would they like to see any changes. ER stressed to the panel that no final decisions had been made.

JA reported that he would not be happy for the Almos to come back under Leeds City Councils authority.

DA asked the question is it a preferred option to come under Leeds City Council. ER stated that Leeds City Council do not have a preferred option at the moment.

A discussion took place around merging Area Panels with Area Committees, SG mentioned that this could weaken the role of the Area Panels. DA also asked would Leeds City Council still have a obligation in providing good training to members of Area Panels. ER stated that if the Almo's do come back to Leeds City Council then it would be thought any training that is needed will be delivered.

8.0 Date and Time of Next Meeting.

Wednesday 3rd April 2013 4.30pm Westfield Chambers.

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