

**FIRST CHOICE HOMES OLDHAM**  
**Chadderton Local Board**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 6 July 2006**  
**at Kingfisher School, Foxdenton Lane, Chadderton.**

**Present:** **Councillors:** Colin McClaren;  
**Tenant Members:** Chris Brown; Pat Brown; Julie Kirkham (in the Chair)  
**Independent Members:** Pauline Richardson; Jane Lancaster

**In attendance:**

Martyn Pickles, Area Building Surveyor;  
Deborah Jamieson, Area Service Manager  
Paul Newcombe, Project Manager; Mike West, Environmental Services  
Sue Walker, Board Support Officer;  
Nigel Devereux, Tenant Participation Manager  
Paul Docherty, Project Officer.  
Jan Wade, Tenant Participation Officer.

**1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

**2. ANY ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIR**

None.

**3. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ANY CONTRACT OR MATTER TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 MAY 2006**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

Deborah advised the Board that a meeting had taken place with the contractors at Park Estate and any outstanding work had been rectified. The lighting had been assessed and was confirmed as satisfactory.

**6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

None.

**7. STREET SCENE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT**

The board gave consideration to a report by Paul Newcombe and Mike West regarding the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between FCHO and Streetscene.

Paul Newcombe advised that performance on Grounds Maintenance had been picked up as an area of weakness at the last inspection.

The Board heard that Streetscene was a government initiative. Mike advised that environmental improvements were essential alongside Decent Homes. Further, Paul advised that due to the project, FCHO were now clear as to which areas of land both they and Streetscene were responsible for and that a mapping exercise had resulted in massive savings for FCHO. Paul also stressed the importance of monitoring the SLA with a strict Performance monitoring Framework, with quarterly monitoring meetings planned. He went on to announce plans for a Grounds Maintenance Customer/Client satisfaction survey to commence in August 2006.

Mike and Paul then responded to a number of questions from Board Members. Pauline commented that the completion of this agreement was as a result of an excellent piece of work.

**AGREED:** that the report be received.

## **8. TENANT ELECTIONS**

Nigel Devereux attended the meeting to advise on the recently revised tenant election procedure.

He stated that there was a total of three tenant board member positions on offer in Chadderton and that the closing date for nominations was 31<sup>st</sup> July 2006, after which an Elections Panel would meet to ensure that all the nomination forms were valid.

The change to the procedure was, principally, the inclusion of a short, informal interview with the Panel. He stated that prospective tenant board members must attend for interview if they wished to progress their nomination.

**AGREED:** that the content of the report be noted.

## **9. ENVIRONMENTAL BUDGET – MONITORING OF SPEND**

Paul Docherty attended the meeting to update Members on the current situation relating to the environmental improvements schemes in Chadderton and to agree to the package of measures to reduce the over-programming costs.

The report provided the background to this item and set out those environmental improvements previously agreed:

It also asserted that with existing commitments and £20,000 taken from the budget by Director of Renewal and Repairs, this had resulted in an over-programming of £78,200. The report further set out those items which had contributed to the over-programming and made some suggestions to combat it. A key area of overspend was due to the increasing cost of works undertaken by the Highways Section,

The Board was concerned that tenant's expectations may have been raised but did agree that the suggestions made to combat it were reasonable.

**RESOLVED:** that the Board notes the current situation relating to the environmental improvements schemes in Chadderton and agrees to the package of measures to reduce the over-programming costs.

## **10. UPDATE ON DECENT HOMES WORK AND MONITORING OF SPEND**

Martyn Pickles attended the meeting to provide Board Members with an update of the progression of the Capital Works Programme in the Chadderton Area. The report was for information only.

It set out a number of schemes with the proposed and actual start dates of each, together with proposed and actual completion dates.

Councillor McClaren asked whether all schemes were to be delivered on time. In response, Martyn advised that whilst two of the schemes were late in starting, all schemes would be completed by 31 March 2007.

**AGREED:** to note the content of the report.

## **11. CENTRALISATION OF VOIDS**

The board received a presentation by Deborah Jamieson regarding the proposed changes to the voids process.

The Board heard that poor performance in this area had meant that this issue was a priority for the organisation and it had been agreed to trial a centralised voids team who would work closely with the allocations team. A pilot scheme was to be launched in West Oldham.

Pauline suggested a system whereby all contactors have a key and then the lock is changed as a tenant moves into the property.

Deborah assured the board that the pilot scheme would be evaluated. She commented that other similar organisations that had centralised their voids process had seen positive results.

**AGREED:** that the content of the presentation be noted.

## **12. PERFORMANCE CONTRACT**

Apologies were given, as figures were unavailable at the meeting. It was agreed that the performance contract would be circulated with the minutes with an opportunity to raise any issues at the next meeting.

## **13. FEEDBACK FROM MAIN BOARD**

Julie advised that there was no specific feedback from the Main Board. A debrief from the Main Board would be forwarded in due course.

## **14. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

Board Members were invited to suggest possible items for future meetings. No items were forwarded.

#### **14. ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK**

Sue introduced John Evans from the Enlighten Consultancy, who had assisted in a review of the FCHO Constitution during 2005. The Board was reminded of their responsibilities and their powers.

Sue stated that the Local Boards had come a long way since their constitution was reviewed, not least in the development of their annual plan. However some areas were still to be addressed, most notably monitoring customer satisfaction. A satisfaction survey had been issued to tenants, however the results are on a Borough level. Sue will report back on the findings when local area figures have been identified.

Sue suggested that Local Boards get involved in the review process for the monitoring of impact assessments of policies and strategies. She commented there was an impression that when the new allocations policy was presented to the Local Boards, members felt disenfranchised from the decision making process. Members approved the policy without considering the impact on their local areas.

Sue explained a framework must be put in place so that Local Board input was not lost, but fed back to the Main Board. The Board recognised that the new lettings policy had impacted on the residents of Chadderton.

#### **Agreed:**

- Sue, Deborah, together with Chair meet to review how the Board was performing in exercising its full range of powers and responsibilities so that a forward planner could be completed.
- That the completed forward planner be presented at a future meeting of this Board.
- That in terms of impact assessments, the Board consider the BME strategy at their September meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.00pm.