

FIRST CHOICE HOMES OLDHAM
CHADDERTON LOCAL BOARD

*Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday 20th April 6.15pm
At Falcon Centre.*

1. WELCOME INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Present:

Councillors: Dave Hibbert, Jeremy Sutcliffe

Tenant Members: Chris Brown, Pat Brown, Julie Kirkham

Independent Member: Jane Lancaster, Pauline Richardson

FCHO: Deborah Jamieson, Steve Yorke, Matthew Jackson, Paul Shelmerdine
(minutes)

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and introduced all Members present.

No apologies had been received.

2. ANY ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIR

There was no urgent business.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 2ND MARCH

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 2nd March were agreed as a correct record with the following amendments.

It was noted that Pauline Richardson had passed on her apologies to the last meeting, these were not received. The board asked that the previous minutes be amended to reflect this.

RESOLVED: to accept the minutes as an accurate record of the discussions, subject to the amendment above.

5. MATTERS ARISING

The following items were dealt with as matters arising:

Bins at Park View

Deborah Jamieson reported that a meeting had taken place between herself and environmental services. Work had now been completed on the hard standing. The board asked that thanks be passed on to all those involved in the project.

Work Completed on Park Estate

Cllr Sutcliffe asks that compliments for the work completed thus far on the estate be passed on to the appropriate teams.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair reported that no questions had been submitted by the public under the Public Question Time forum.

7. GATEWAY TO OLDHAM

Richard Outram of the Gateway to Oldham Project provided a briefing on the consultation conducted at the Crossley Estate Chadderton for PFI 4. Key issues raised were:

- Consultation with youth: Working with schools, Youth Services etc
- Consultation with the elderly and Disabled: Working with “Keyring”
- Establishment of the “Advise Surgeries” on three different sites

The board noted the contents of the briefing, however a number of issues were raised.

Cllr Sutcliffe expressed concern that the expectations of tenants may be being raised and stressed the impatience of many tenants in the delivery of improvements. Pat Brown reiterated this by telling the board that tenants require reassurance and keeping up to date with progress

Cllr Sutcliffe and Cllr Hibbert enquired whether there would be changes to the layout of Crossley Estate as the current layout enabled youths to “Starburst” through alleys etc. They also asked if the Secure by Design Programme was being taken into account.

Julie Kirkham enquired if board members were to be involved in future consultation

Pat Brown raised concerns over heating in void properties on Crossley estate following a recent property inspection.

In response, Richard Outram explained that tenants had been told that if finances were received for the programme then it is expected that the work will be

completed by no earlier than the second half of 2008 and reassurance of a long term commitment of around five years. He also explained an interim period between securing funds and work starting.

He also explained that concerns over “Star bursting” were being addressed and that the “Secure by Design” programme is being taken into consideration

Richard confirmed that Board members would be involved in future consultation

Deborah Jamieson explained that heating in Lansdowne and Stockfield is via a communal heating system. Although the heating cannot be turned off it could be controlled. Deborah Jamieson to check that the Repair Team Leaders do this as part of the void inspection.

RESOLVED: that the content of the report be noted.

that Board Members be involved in any future consultation

that Deborah check that Repairs Team Leaders control the communal heating system on Lansdowne and Stockfield as part of their void inspections.

8. ASB/RESPECT AGENDA (PRESENTATION ATTACHED)

The Board gave consideration to a presentation by Steve Yorke regarding the newly introduced government Respect Agenda which was to inform members of the Respect Agenda and its potential impact on the future plans of FCHO.

Key points raised

- Making Housing Officers more visible on estates
- Increased partnership working with partnership agencies
- Use of initiatives such as “Firefly” with Fire Brigade
- “Opportunity Gain” v’s “Opportunity Loss”

Members of the board raised the issue of the recently resolved ASB problems on Clevedon Rd Chadderton. They explained that a petition had been raised and expressed happiness that as a result of working between the TRA, PCSO and the threat of eviction to ring leaders by FCHO staff had lead to the problem being resolved.

Jane Lancaster expressed gratitude that the issue was resolved but felt that there should be more stringent procedures in place.

The board discussed the implications of the “Firefly Project” they agreed in principle that it was a good idea but felt that the cost of around £350 per day would take some justifying. Steve Yorke explained that 95% of youths on the course had not re-offended and that the costs could be balanced against costs for graffiti clean up, replacement windows etc. Julie Kirkham expressed her believe

that areas such as Chadderton who are pro-active in ASB prevention should be given preference if the scheme be taken up

Pauline Richardson explained the need to eradicate the culture of blame. For example Housing Officers claiming that Tenants were not providing the necessary evidence. She explained that this could be down to a number of reasons such as illiteracy, fear of a visit to court, fear of reprisals and lack of understanding of process. Steve Yorke explained that Housing Officers were audited on what they were doing regarding ASB.

Cllr Sutcliffe stated that it was human nature to leave the reporting of a problem until they can no longer abide the problem. He also stressed the importance of partnership working especially in the light of increasing Right to buy and stock transfer.

Steve Yorke agreed that Housing Officers need to be more pro-active and need to have more confidence that they do not need to deal with everything on their own and to use other agencies expertise. He also reiterated the importance of using external resources such as GMP mapping of ASB hotspots.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

9. Market Testing of the Repairs Service

Steve provided a report which provided an update regarding the recent Market Testing of the Repairs Service conducted in Autumn 2005 which was won by the FCHO repairs service.

Steve Yorke accepted that there were still many issues to be addressed with the repairs service such as the increased activity of repairs staff with regards to Voids Repairs. He explained that a "Contract Monitoring board" was to be established to provide a challenge and ensure that targets are delivered.

He explained that ten new apprentices were to be employed. However, overall the workforce needed to be reduced by 26 to meet the budget. The board agreed that it is vital to get the right balance of trades to meet repairs needs.

The board noted that the importance of Staff retention and agreed that "Tradesmen" were increasingly working independently and earning substantial sums of money.

Cllr Hibbert agreed that it is important to retain staff but expressed that FCHO's main priority should be to provide a quality service to customers and not to provide a career path for workers.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

10. LOCAL BOARD ANNUAL PLAN AND TARGET SETTING (ATTACHED)

The Local Board gave consideration to the local Board annual plan and Target setting documents presented by Deborah Jamieson and Matthew Jackson respectively. Members of the board were invited to comment.

Annual Plan

A sample of the Annual Plan was distributed to members of the board. The board agreed that the layout is good

Deborah Jamieson explained that the annual plan was to be written in Chadderton context with very localised targets and priorities.

The Chair agreed that whilst the Chadderton context is important it is still important to know about other areas.

Target Setting

Matthew Jackson explained the move away from the current "Team Contract" to a simpler format with targets linked to the annual plan. He went on to explain the format of the document and asked for comments and suggestions.

The Chair asked for figures to be included alongside percentages

The chair asked to what extent is ASB a business link within FCHO? Does ASB of non-FCHO tenants the business of FCHO?

Deborah Jamieson highlighted that figures come from cases in which FCHO are involved alongside partnership agencies.

Overall, the board were happy with the new concept but asked that a completed version be brought as soon as possible to the local board for further consideration.

11. Door Entry System on Dairy Street (attached)

The Local Board gave consideration to a report by Deborah Jamieson on the option of a door release system on the Dairy Street estate.

Deborah Jamieson explained that a Door entry system on Dairy Street was not really appropriate as properties have their own entrances and such systems are more useful to properties with communal entrances.

A discussion ensued regarding the security needs of individual properties in the area, and the potential need of a intercom system to a property.

Pauline Richardson stated the need to look at individual needs as a separate issue and that funding for such work could be found from other sources. In light of the main issue being "Mobility" she suggested that the case should be dealt with by Social Services rather than FCHO. The Chair agreed that there were two issues, security and mobility to be taken into account. He suggested funding from the "Disabled Adaptations" fund.

12. BOARD MEMBER ATTENDANCE (ATTACHED)

The board gave consideration to a report by Sue Walker presented by Deborah Jamieson. The board agreed that attendance at the Chadderton board was healthy.

13. UPDATE FROM MAIN BOARD

Board Members had received a copy of the main board update. There were no issues raised.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr Hibbert and Councillor Sutcliffe requested that a "Thank you" letter be sent to Cllr Jacobs for his work not only with the Chadderton board but also as a councillor for the people of Chadderton. This was seconded by the board. Deborah Jamieson to send letter as requested.

15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Local Board noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 18 May, 6.15pm Falcon Centre

The meeting commenced at 6.15pm and closed at 8.30pm