

**FIRST CHOICE HOMES OLDHAM
SADDLEWORTH & LEES LOCAL BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15 March 2006
at Old Mill House, 7pm**

Present: **Councillors:** Brian Lord, Chair; Val Sedgewick

Tenant Members: Jean Bradley; Edith Bentley; Bill Hullah

In attendance: Gary Walsh, Repairs Manager;
 Kath Miller, Housing 21, Michelle Baker, Housing 21;
 Lynn Phillips, Minute Taker

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor John Hudson and Winifred Dillon, Independent Member.

2. ANY ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business.

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 26 JANUARY

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

5. MATTERS ARISING

It was noted that Gateways to Oldham was requested to be carried forward as an agenda item for this meeting. Lynn Phillips, consultation Officer for Gateways to Oldham, gave an overview of the Project for the Board's Information.

Lynn informed the Board that PFI4 has been named 'Gateways to Oldham' as it will address three estates on major routes into Oldham that the FCHO Capital Programme has not been able to fund: Crossley in Chadderton, Primrose Bank on Ashton Road and Clarkwell, on Rochdale Rd. An expression of interest has been submitted to Government and approval of the outline business case will be sought in July 2006. Over £100 million is being sought in order to improve these estates: the refurbishment of Crossley, demolition of flats and maisonettes at Primrose Bank, with a new build development of social housing and homes for sale, and the demolition of Clarkwell, again with a new build development of social housing and homes for sale.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

7. PERFORMANCE CONTRACT AND SETTING LOCAL TARGETS

Gary discussed the latest figures with the Board. Gary explained that voids and allocations performance was moving in a positive direction. Dave Charlesworth, has had low staffing numbers recently, therefore staff need re-organising. Bill mentioned the repair of a down pipe he had reported in November that had not yet been addressed: Gary said he would investigate.

The Chair expressed concern that if the Saddleworth & Lees area were to be merged with East Oldham, performance would be worse. Gary said East Oldham's performance has improved in the last three months. The Board **AGREED** heating figures should be included in the performance contract. Rent collection this quarter has been excellent; however Bill questioned why it wasn't 100%.

ASB performance is good, with three cases currently live. Gary will supply the details to the next meeting. Bill discussed problems at Holland Close each Friday night. Police have been informed that youths gather, drinking alcohol and causing nuisance. The Chair informed the Board he had attended the Area Action Team meeting, and queried the situation in Delph. PCSO's are chasing the youths; however mobile phones mean they are able to avoid apprehension. ASB has decreased in Lees Park and Greenfield; however there are serious problems in Springhead. Cllr Lord said the community needs to report problems in order for action to be taken, however at any one time there could be only 2 PC's operating in the Saddleworth area. A discussion regarding the immediate problems of Springhead then took place.

Gary was unable to discuss customer care performance, and will investigate why some information is unavailable.

8. LOCAL BOARD CO-OPTEEES

There were no volunteers. The Chair commented he had asked to join the Employment & Appeals Committee in the past, but received no response.

9. ANNUAL REPORT – FORMAL INSPECTIONS

The Chair **MOVED** that the report be received by the Board.

10. PFI2

Kath Miller updated the Board on progress. ODPM has approved the subsidy, which will give the re-furbishment programme a cash injection. Letters have been sent to all residents affected, and Steering Group Members have been called. Contracts are to be signed soon, possibly within the next six weeks,

then mobilisation will commence i.e. installation of site cabins, decant of tenants, staff transfers to Housing 21 from First Choice Homes and transfer of information such as standing orders for rents.

Jean Bradley challenged the arrangement for concessions on warden charges, as these were unfair for some tenants. Kath confirmed present rates will remain unchanged.

The Chair asked how close Housing 21 was to mobilising residents from Lees House. Kath replied a successful desk top exercise had been completed, and presently all tenants would be moved into the accommodation they want. Matthias Pilling House in Shaw would also be used as decant accommodation. A meeting is needed for the tenants of Holland Close, and hopefully will be arranged for April.

Housing 21 is now in a position to hand excess decant properties back to FCHO.

The Chair expressed concerns for site security. Kath replied that the contractor, Bullocks, would be responsible for this.

It was **AGREED** that an up to date timetable should be made public as soon as possible.

11. FEEDBACK FROM MAIN BOARD MEMBER

Jean reported that the Main Board is focusing on out of hours emergency repairs call outs, and whether tenants should be charged for this service. No decision has yet been made.

12. FUTURE LOCAL MEETING DATES

Wednesday 24 May 2006 would be unsuitable as it is the Annual Full Council: an alternative date was requested from FCHO. It was also requested that if possible, Wednesday 20 December to be changed to Wednesday 13 December.

AGREED that these changes in dates be resolved for the next meeting.

13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday 26 April 2006 at Old Mill House 7pm

