

SADDLEWORTH & LEES LOCAL BOARD

Wednesday 4 June 2008 at 5.30 pm
Springhead Community Centre, Ashes Lane (off Station Street),
Springhead, OL4 4PF

Members Present:

Brian Lord (Chair); Val Sedgewick; Mike Buckley; Bill Hullah;

FCHO Officers Present:

Joanne Bentley; Joanne Griffin; Diane Thompson

Other Officers Present:

Mark Julius

Members of the public present:

Heather Rushton
 Carole Wild

Meeting Convened At:

Brian Lord took the Chair and convened the meeting at 6.40 pm.
 Brian informed the Board Members of the sad news that Jean Bradley had recently passed away. As a mark of respect, all present stood for one minute's silence.

Apologies:

Winnifred Dillon

Members Absent:

No members were absent without apologies.

Declaration of Interests:

There were no declarations of interest.

Items of Urgent Business:

There were no items of Urgent Business.

Item No / Title	Item 4 Approval of Minutes and Recommendations from last meeting held on 23 April 2008 and Matters Arising
Purpose	To approve the minutes and recommendations from the last meeting held on 23 April 2008 and discuss matters arising.
Recommendations	To Board is recommended to note the contents of the minutes and recommendations.
Relevant Debate	Joanne Bentley introduced Carol Wild, who had expressed an interest in becoming a tenant member of the Board and who had come along to observe.
Resolution	The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

Item 5 – Public Questions

No members of the public were present. No questions from the public had been received prior to the meeting.

Item No / Title	Item 6 Options Appraisal Update
Purpose	To update Local Board members of progress on the Housing Stock Options Appraisal process following the presentation made at the last Board meeting.
Recommendations	To note the content of the presentation.
Relevant Debate	<p>Due to the road works on Lees Road, Mark Julius had not arrived at the time the agenda item was presented, so an open discussion ensued:</p> <p>Joanne Bentley mentioned that the Area Information Sessions were being delivered and that there had been an excellent response to the questionnaires although there has been very little response from young people. Brian Lord highlighted that there was some concern regarding the stock condition survey. Surveys should be pre-arranged with tenants. FCHO surveyors are spot checking the surveys. Val Sedgewick asked what the cost of the Options Appraisal is. Mike Buckley asked how the final decision would be made on the future of the stock and what decision the tenants are expected to make. Joanne Bentley explained that there will be a ballot, but the Council will have the ultimate decision.</p> <p>Councillor involvement was discussed, and the attendance of Councillors at the scheduled panel meetings. Full panel attendance by FCHO staff and Councillors has not been secured at meetings. Brian Lord said that the tenant chair of the panel is unhappy with poor attendance. Councillors are to report back by the end of September.</p> <p>Joanne Bentley explained the time scales are tight. The Council is working to Government set procedures and time scales.</p> <p>When Mark Julius took over the presentation, he confirmed that the level of return of questionnaires is very good. Comments are being fed back to FCHO. Repairs are the single biggest issue and are being forwarded and recorded.</p> <p>Mark has contacted the company conducting the stock survey: Representatives travelled from London to listen to the complaints, which have now been resolved. Surveyors are keeping to the original instructions and protocols. The survey is on schedule to finish on 24th June 2008. Mike Buckley asked how properties were selected for survey: Mark Julius gave a detailed explanation regarding archetypes etc.</p> <p>Brian Lord asked for a previous issue to be clarified: Do the tenants or the Council have the final say? Mark Julius replied the Council is not legally bound by the recommendation of the panel. There does not need to be a ballot to come to the final decision. The choice of option does not require a ballot: however to deliver the option there has to be a ballot. If the ballot result goes against the Councils selection, then the process must start again. A solution must be found, as the Housing Revenue Account will go into deficit. The Housing Options Panel will visit other organisations where different options have been chosen, to see the people who really understand the process.</p>

	Mike Buckley asked if Housing 21 stock was included: Mark Julius replied that the appraisal only applies to stock owned by the Council and managed by FCHO, so Housing 21 and PFI4 stock is excluded.
Resolution	Members noted the content of the presentation.

Item No / Title	Item 7 Performance Report – Quarterly Update Including Repairs
Purpose	To update members on the quarterly performance figures.
Recommendations	The Board is recommended to note the contents of the report.
Relevant Debate	<p>Repairs: Members commented on the length of time it takes for call centre staff to answer calls.</p> <p>Plastering was discussed. Dianne Thompson offered to take details of outstanding repairs so that she can chase them up.</p> <p>Val Sedgewick added that older tenants ask her to phone repairs through, as it can sometimes take a long time to get an answer.</p> <p>Diane added that diagnostic repairs software may be introduced for contact centre operatives to help them assess the nature of the repair over the phone. The use of a card with handy numbers on it was discussed.</p> <p>Mike Buckley asked about Northgate. The problems around it were discussed.</p> <p>Voids: Joanne Bentley explained the difference between management voids and development voids to Mike Buckley. There was a mistake in the statistics of the report, although the graph is correct. Joanne has amended the mistake, but unfortunately the original report was sent to members. Joanne and Mike discussed the waiting list of 11,500 and the Choice Based Lettings Allocations Policy.</p> <p>Carol Wild commented that when tenants have, for example, fitted their own kitchens they are ripped out and replaced with standard kitchen units. Diane Thompson explained it depends on whether fixtures and fittings comply with health and safety standards.</p> <p>The painting programme was introduced: Diane Thompson mentioned that special fire retardant paint must be used in communal areas. Mike Buckley enquired what the cycle for painting is: Diane confirmed that the inside of tenants homes are not painted, rather the communal areas. Joanne Bentley noted that Saddleworth & Lees is not in the painting programme. Diane replied that the communal blocks had been prioritised and this year the blocks that are in most need are not in the Saddleworth & Lees area.</p> <p>Joanne Bentley went on to discuss performance around rents, and was pleased to report that the level of performance on the collection of arrears had remained constant with Saddleworth & Lees patch achieving the year end target and was the best performer for the quarter.</p> <p>Joanne Bentley also discussed performance on ATS and invited members to attend the Formal Estate Inspection in Diggle on 9 June 2008.</p>

Resolution	Member noted the content of the report.

Item No / Title	Item 8 Respect Agenda – Quarterly Update
Purpose	To inform the Board on progress made around the Respect Agenda.
Recommendations	The Board members note the contents of the report and offer their continued support to the Respect Standard for Housing Management.
Relevant Debate	<p>Joanne Bentley suggested that Joanne Griffin or Sue Walker attend the next meeting to discuss the Sholver Encams and the work done by the team to achieve the Kitemark. The service provided by Community Safety was discussed. Joanne Griffin explained the service offered by Community Safety i.e. the implementation of ASBO's etc. Mike Buckley asked if the ROCA awards were backed with Government Money. Joanne Griffin explained that local businesses support the scheme i.e. OMC Ford, Ribble Packaging, Emanuel Whittaker Ltd. The budget at the moment is £80k. The Council has contributed some, and FCHO funded the start up. The scheme will sustain itself as it becomes more successful.</p> <p>The Project in Saddleworth & Lees is an intergenerational scheme. The idea is around how communities can work together and eradicate ASB.</p>
Resolution	Members noted the content of the report and offered their continued support.

Item No / Title	Item 9 Local Board Annual Plans
Purpose	To discuss the Local Board Plans for 2008 – 2009.
Recommendations	Board members are requested to discuss and suggest items for the Local Board Annual Plans 2008 – 2009.
Relevant Debate	<p>Joanne Bentley brought the 2007/8 Annual Plan to members attention and highlighted that the plans had been established following a Quarterly Networking Session with residents to gather their views about issues effecting them in the areas they live and how enabled priorities to be set for the year ahead.</p> <p>Joanne asked members to comment on the content of the annual plans and whether they had any suggestions or improvements for future plans.</p> <p>Joanne added that proposals were to include further information about how the estate budget money had been spent and performance information around access to services.</p>
Resolution	Members noted the suggested items and await the presentation of the draft Local Board Plan.

Item No / Title	Item 10 Items for Future Meetings and Forward Planning
Purpose	Board Members are invited to suggest possible items for future meetings.
Recommendations	The Board is recommended to note and discuss the contents of the forward planning timetable and suggest possible items for future meetings.
Relevant Debate	Members had agreed earlier to receive the Encams presentation and an update on the tenant elections process.
Resolution	Members noted the contents of the forward planning timetable.

Item No / Title	Item 11 Any Other Business
Purpose	To discuss any other items of business.
Recommendations	N/A
Relevant Debate	To agree the dates for future board meetings: Mike Buckley explained that full planning meetings occur on Wednesdays and these dates must be avoided. Mike Buckley sits on the planning committee and said it is unnecessary to choose the same date. Joanne Bentley and Mike Buckley will resolve these clashes after the meeting. Mike will supply Joanne with the dates that clash
Resolution	Mike and Joanne AGREED to resolve dates for future meetings.

Item No / Title	Item 11a Feedback from Main Board
Purpose	To discuss feedback from the last Main Board Meeting.
Recommendations	To note the contents of the report.
Relevant Debate	The position of Main Board representative was discussed due to the place now vacant.
Resolution	Members noted the content of the report.

Meeting Closed At:

The Chair closed the meeting at 7.20 pm

Item 12 - Next Meeting Date:

Wednesday 9 July 2008 at 5.30pm

Venue: Saddleworth Museum & Art Gallery, Uppermill

Apologies to: Corporate Support Team
Telephone: 0161 770 3536 / 3571 / 3576
Email: fcho.corporate.support@oldham.gov.uk

Signed: _____

Minutes Agreed on: _____
 (Date)