

FIRST CHOICE HOMES OLDHAM SHAW AND ROYTON LOCAL BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 27th October 2005, Laburnum Avenue,
Shaw, 6:30pm

Present:

Tenant Representatives: Margaret Kelly (Chair); Mark Doyle;
Barbara Stringer

Independent Representatives: Maureen Peters; Lynn Pertoldi; Les Herring

Council Representatives: Angela Farrell

In Attendance:

Mike Beaman (ASM for Royton & Shaw, FCHO)

Paul Newcombe – Caretaking Manager

Steve Yorke – Director for Management and Operations

Nick Summerscales – previously Tenant Participation Officer for Royton & Shaw

Dawn Edwards – Assistant Caretaking Manager

Frank Brierley – new Caretaking Supervisor for Royton & Shaw.

Nimisha Mistry - MINUTES (Tenant Participation / Board Support Assistant, FCHO).

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES.

The Chair, Margaret Kelly welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. People present went round the table and introduced themselves. Apologies had been received from Cllr Rod Blyth (OMBC Council Representative) and Cllr Bernard Judge (OMBC Council Representative)

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

Mike Beaman led this item to elect a new chair and vice chair for the Royton & Shaw Local Board. Mike asked the board for nominations; Mike Doyle nominated Margaret Kelly for the position, Maureen Peters seconded this. By a unanimous vote Margaret Kelly was re-elected as the chair for the Royton & Shaw Local Board.

Margaret Kelly in the chair.

Nominations for the position of vice chair were sought. Maureen Peters nominated Mark Doyle and Margaret Kelly seconded this. By a unanimous vote Mark Doyle was voted the vice chair.

3. ANY ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIR.

The Chair agreed to take a report from the interim Caretaking Manager, Paul Newcombe, on the reorganisation and decentralisation of the caretaking service. The report was to inform the local board of the proposed changes to the caretaking service. Paul introduced Dawn Edwards and Frank Brierley to the board. A recent review of the Caretaking Service had looked at managers

and staff, levels of satisfaction with the service by OMBC and residents and others. Pinnacle Consultants had been commissioned to undertake that review and had made several recommendations as a result. One of the key recommendations was that the service should be decentralised.

Paul discussed the proposed distribution of caretakers to local areas; Royton and Shaw and Chadderton will share 9 x caretakers including 1 x supervisor and confirmed that that would include residential and community caretakers.

The board asked how often the caretaker will be visiting the areas. Paul responded that there will be 2 x visits in a month and there will be 10 days to action problems on the estate. As the caretakers get used to the areas, they will get to know what is needed for individual estates.

Paul pointed out that another way that the service will be monitored is a Housing Service Inspection now with a further inspection in 6 months time. Frank said that he would be attending local board meetings too so any concerns could be addressed.

AGREED: to note the content of the report.

4. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ANY CONTRACT OR MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING.

There were no declarations of interests.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 15TH SEPTEMBER 2005.

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2005 were agreed as a correct and accurate record by Mark Doyle and seconded by Barbara Stringer.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

From the any other business item from the last minutes, Mike discussed with the board the matter that was raised at the last meeting regarding a member of the Repairs and Renewal division, who had caused concern with the board. Margaret apologised for mentioning the individuals name at the last meeting and said that it was an accident. Mike and Margaret have drafted a letter to Colin Greenwood regarding this issue and they brought it along to this meeting to ask the board to approve the letter and whether they still agree with the action proposed.

Margaret explained the nature of the concerns; Lynn asked if the problem was with the lack of feedback or lack of action been taken. Margaret said that there are a lot of many unhappy tenants and tenant groups and Nick Summerscales added that every possible avenue had been tried to get some solution to this. This letter will allow a resolution to be reached. Les said that it was troubling that it has to get to this stage in order for some action to be seen. The board approved the content of the letter and **AGREED** that a copy is sent to Colin Greenwood, Director of Repairs and Renewal Division.

7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

8. FEEDBACK FROM AUDIT COMMISSION INSPECTION – STEVE YORKE

Steve Yorke provided a verbal summary of the Audit Commission inspection based on the strengths and weaknesses of the company. The initial feedback has shown that there were more services with strengths than those with weaknesses and outlined how all services had been scored.

Steve said that at the last inspection FCHO were awarded 2 stars with uncertain prospects for improvement. Achieving 2 stars with promising prospects would be a good result as it shows that as a company we have improved.

The Chair said that she was not happy with what was said by the inspectors. She felt 90% of the weaknesses highlighted were not FCHO fault and were attributable to the council. Steve added that if tenants were being let down e.g. aids and adaptations, FCHO should challenge this.

Members questioned whether FCHO were to ask for a re-inspection in the hope of achieving 3 stars. Steve said that this has been asked and the inspectors said the earliest they can offer a re-inspection is 18 months.

The board thanked Steve for his helpful and informative report.

AGREED: that the content of the report be noted.

9. FORMAL ESTATE WALKABOUT UPDATE & TENANT GROUP ISSUES

Nick Summerscales was in attendance to provide an update on the Formal Estate Walkabout on Holly Estate on 23rd August 05.

Nick informed the Board that this would be his last report to this board as he had secured a secondment as Housing Team Leader at Sholver.

Margaret Kelly thanked Nick for all the hard work he had done in Royton & Shaw and said that he had a great understanding of the problems in the area.

In regard to Buckstones Estate, Mike stated that there has been a lot of work currently being carried out.. Car parking had been a big issue and some work has been approved to address this, however, it was noted that FCHO could not tackle all the issues in isolation and will need input from the Council. The board asked for an update on this at a future meeting and this to be watched for any future environmental improvements.

AGREED: that a further update on environmental improvement at Buckstones Estate be provided to this Board at future meeting.

That a letter of thanks go to Nick Summerscales for all his hard work in the area.

10. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

Mike presented the new look performance contracts, the board **AGREED** the objectives of the contract but raised concern about the amount of jargon in the document and asked for a glossary to explain for example what a development void is and a management void etc.

Mike agreed to follow this up.

Mike said that the performance on voids had slipped a little but ways to speed up the process will be looked at so targets can be reached. The board suggested perhaps looking at Failsworth & Hollinwood as they were doing very well with their targets on voids and perhaps looking at some best practices. Mike agreed to follow this up.

Rent Collection was good and targets had been reached. It was commented, however, that this normally get worse as the year progresses. Repairs were also on target. Mike commented that the repairs operatives are closely monitored and this is reflected in the excellent performance.

AGREED:

- (i) Mike to request that Quality Assurance include an explanation regarding the different type of voids in the Performance Contract.**
- (ii) Mike agreed and said that were possible, best practice is always shared between areas.**

11. CONFIRMATION OF LOCAL BOARD DATES AND VENUES

Nimisha went through the agreed dates and venues for the local board meeting and asked for the board to confirm the dates and venues. The board **AGREED** the dates and venues.

AGREED: that future dates for Board meetings, as set out in the report now presented, be approved.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Hartington Court – Mark Doyle reported that there was a burglary on Hartington Court on Monday 24th October at 3.00am. The lack of lighting behind these properties was raised as an issue.

Oswald St – Cllr Farrell said that work on Oswald St had not started. The first date that was given was July 2005 but this was changed to October 2005. In response, Mike said that a contract meeting had taken place and he will look into this. **AGREED** Mike to look into this and feed back to Cllr Farrell.

Away Day – Mike Beaman asked the board if they were still ok for the local board away day on the 5th November 05. On a vote it was **AGREED** that the away day will still go ahead and it will be held at Matthias Pilling in Shaw. The board asked for a map to be provided for the session.

13. DATE & TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Thursday 15TH December 2005, 6.30pm at Whittaker St, Royton.

The meeting closed at 9:15pm