

## Pennine Area Panel

### Meadow Fields Community Centre

13 February 2008

#### Introductions

1. Every person introduced themselves to the meeting.

#### Meeting Notes November 2007

1. Andy explained why Action Notes rather than minutes were taken because it focuses on what has been agreed rather what has led to the agreement being reached.
2. Tenants mentioned that they felt it's necessary to have minutes rather the Action notes.

#### One off Grants

1. **£635** left in the budget up to the end of March 2008.
2. Giants Foot Youth Group has put in a request for **£320**.
3. After clarification as to the ages of the young people and the general situation with the Giants Foot, the Panel unanimously agreed to award the grant in full.

**Agreed**

#### Environmental Improvements & Quick Wins

1. Ian Adshead introduced the Report (**attached**) and mentioned that the budget for 2008 -09 is now £120,000
2. Tenants asked if sheltered Housing will be considered, in this instance Hare Hill Court. The response was that Hare Hill Court has been surveyed.
3. Tenants from Hare Hill Court mentioned that RoFTRA were supposed to be putting in a grant for them but had heard nothing. They were advised to contact John Rodgers Tenant Participation Unit (TPU) for a 'One Off' Grant Form if Rochdale Federation of Tenants & Residents Associations (RoFTRA) do not respond.
4. Tenants asked how many outstanding schemes were being considered.
5. It was mentioned that the schedule outlines this.
6. Tenants asked about the composition of the Steering Group.
7. The response was that in the interim, the Steering Group is comprised of one tenant from each Township.
8. Tenants asked about the process.
9. Schemes will be brought to the Area Panel on a single A4 sheet with an approximate cost for this panel to consider. To progress very small works that required a quick response it was proposed that the Panel delegate approval to the RBH Principal Housing Manager to progress such schemes up to a value of £1000 per scheme.

10. Councillor Dearnley mentioned that as there is only a finite amount of resources it will be necessary to ensure that it's prioritised and spent on the schemes that need it the most.
11. It was also mentioned that the Budget is from the Council's Resources and agreed at Township Committee.
12. The Township Committee had looked at the report of the proposed schemes are happy with it.
13. Andy outlined and discussed the allocation also Andy commented that hopefully, with greater publicity and the difference made on the ground, more people would attend and support the Panel.
14. If Township is unhappy with the proposals they could suggest further criteria/provisos.
15. It was reported that the Steering Group had looked at and considered areas that are suffering from Anti Social behaviour.
16. Tenants asked that when this Panel is properly constituted will it replace the Steering Group.
17. The response was that from 1<sup>st</sup> April the 'Quick Wins' would be passed to the Steering group for information only following approval by the Area Panel
18. The Steering Group will influence the larger schemes on a strategic level.
19. They will monitor the whole process.
20. It is important to note that the schemes that are ultimately delivered will be those that tenants actually want.
21. Tenants asked that it is important to know who the reps on the Steering Group are so that they can be contacted.
22. Ian responded that he would raise it at the next Steering Group Meeting.

### **Agenda Items**

1. We can add items now for the next meeting and ensure it goes on the Agenda.
2. The date will be set when Susan & Ian have the information regarding the 'Quick Wins' to decide upon. This is likely to be in the middle or end of May 2008 and we will ensure we provide as much notice and relevant information as possible.
3. Tenants mentioned that we need to have terms of reference in order to properly conduct business. Tenants also couldn't understand why the Terms of Reference were not on the Top of this current agenda rather than at the end.
4. Andy responded that we need to conduct the meeting by grappling with the important issues that are of interest to the wider public and not to get mired in controversy at the top of the Agenda that would be off putting for people new to these meetings...that's why its at the end!
5. Councillor Dearnley mentioned that, the Terms of Reference are important but should not distract from the issues of interest to the wider public.
6. There followed a brief discussion on why the Terms of Reference had not already been agreed. It was explained that they needed to be agreed between the Township Committee, RBH, RoFTRA and the Panels.

## Respect Agenda

1. Jonathan Walton went through his presentation on the Respect Agenda and Standards for Housing (**attached**). These are basically standards of delivery.
2. Tenants asked what complex needs are.
3. Jonathan responded that for example 'quality of parenting' and not being given clear enough boundaries for behaviour is often an underlying issue for young people and anti social behaviour. And work toward alleviating this issue would need to be put into place alongside any enforcement action. Rochdale Council has a Parenting Strategy that ought to be considered.
4. Tenants mentioned that some teenagers are beyond help on some of the estates.
5. Jonathan continued that we will tackle this behaviour 'head on'. We need to *demonstrate* that we are tackling these issues.
6. Councillor Dearnley mentioned that we need to recognise that come youngsters have been brought up by parents who are also causing anti social behaviour Tough action is needed but yes we do need to educate too.
7. Tenant from Birch View mentioned they are tackling and trying to engage with young people however, some are still roaming the Streets not being tackled.
8. Jonathan mentioned that RBH are looking at a range of interventions and will try to make them fit the issue.
9. Research links long-term success with interventions that get 'under the skin' of families. It's important to get them to have a stake in the area and want to stay on an estate and this in itself can often lead to a change in their behaviour. Robust action is also important to enable respite for the local community. Long term success should spring from this.
10. Timescales can be an issue.
11. Tenants mentioned that the Rental Agreements are not enforced sufficiently and this clearly is not helping to alleviate anti social behaviour.
12. Jonathan responded that the Council/RBH has a legal duty to Rehouse and unfortunately this leads to anti social behaviour just being moved onto another estate. Also we have to prove before a judge that the tenant has broken the terms of their tenancy and we need to produce a 'significant body of evidence'
13. We n apply for an injunction Anti Social Behaviour Order (ASBO), Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC).
14. Tenants asked, is it that we need more resources to tackle anti social behaviour? Tenants also asked how RBH intended to consult tenants on this issue.
15. Jonathan responded that this would be via forms and questionnaires.
16. Birchview Tenants mentioned that they recently tackled anti social behaviour by targeting the responsible families and obtaining Possession Orders. However, bad behaviour is starting to creep back again and is emanating from the new families moved onto the estate.

17. It was agreed that this is due to what Jonathan mentioned earlier...just moving the problem on elsewhere and not breaking the cycle of bad behaviour through intervention.
18. Tenants asked about timescales for action.
19. Jonathan responded that
20. This varies however, sometimes we have just gone straight to enforcement because the situation demanded this but we do need 'actionable evidence'.
21. We are seeking to improve our timescales through a new computer system and a texting service; we will also provide enhanced support for victims and better access to a range of services. We will have on-line forms for reporting too.
22. Councillor Davidson asked what support RBH gets from Greater Manchester Police.
23. Jonathan responded that we do have some successful partnerships with the Police and also some assistance with supplying evidence.
24. Tenants reported that lack of policing is also an issue.
25. Jonathan mentioned the PACT meetings which are held on a monthly basis.
26. Councillor Davidson reported that the Police have a lot of knowledge. Last week youths rampaged through Milnrow. They are known to the Police & Housing however, nothing has been done. Does this mean the Police are not liaising with Housing?
27. Jonathan responded that RBH does have monthly meetings with the Police at which priorities are established.
28. Councillor Dearnley mentioned that Landlords should know where problems are and sometimes there are far too many questionnaires given out also there are not enough officers visiting the Estates. The rent Collectors used to find out quite a lot of issues and perpetrators whilst collecting the rent.
29. It was reported that the Estate Inspections would help to inform the Service on where the hotspots are. And who the perpetrators are. And also where we are being successful.
30. Jonathan mentioned that he wanted to know what we are doing well and where we need to improve.
31. Tenants responded that the Tenancy Conditions are not applied and there are gardens full of rubbish. It's been reported but nothing has happened. We should be more effectively applying the Tenancy Conditions.
32. Councillor Dearnley reported that he had an issue with accessing the Housing Office. He phoned but was told he would have to wait until the following week for action. Apparently, someone was off work so the Job Stopped. Councillor Dearnley was very concerned that if he as a Councillor received this lack of service then what happens to a tenant?
33. The Principal Housing Manger responded that it is not acceptable for this to happen and would look into the matter.
34. Councillor Davidson
35. mentioned that support is the key for victims of Anti Social Behaviour.

36. Andy asked if RBH should provide an out-of hour's service, evening and weekends?
37. Tenants responded that yes RBH should 24/7 victims can often feel better simply by having someone to talk with. And would probably be happy to hear that RBH would deal with the matter on the next working day.
38. Jonathan mentioned that it's important to make a distinction of RBH and the Council as the Landlord and other agencies that are a responsive service.
39. Councillor Davidson mentioned that it's mainly a victim support role that's required.
40. Jonathan asked if tenants know where and who to contact for help.
41. The general feeling was that the answer to this is no.
42. Jonathan mentioned that he wanted to set-up a Boroughwide Panel to look into these issues and if anyone is interested in being part of it.

### **Estate Inspections**

1. Andy reported that in order to comply with the Audit Commission, we need to have estate inspections. These would be conducted on a 'Housing Officer' patch and would include sheltered housing schemes. Andy asked the Panel for their views.
2. Tenants from Hare Hill Court Sheltered Scheme asked that their tenants association be consulted and not just their warden .
3. It was reported that yes RBH will ensure this happens.
4. Hare Hill Court tenants went on to mention that they have been particularly concerned with a number of security lighting.
5. Susan responded that she will visit Hare Hill but we also need to consider that there is currently an Options Appraisal taking place on Hare Hill.
6. Apparently, Community safety has been involved and it's not clear why nothing has yet happened.
7. Councillor Davidson mentioned she would contact Peter Egan, the Community Safety Officer responsible for the Pennines.

### **Rehousing Policy Changes**

1. Andy reported that there have been some slight changes agreed with the Council, regarding rehousing young people at height. The previous policy has been relaxed because there are very few family houses available due to the Right to Buy Legislation. Therefore, the restriction does not now apply to children over 10 years of age however, there is an issue of children over 10 years of age sharing a bedroom though.

### **Terms of Reference**

1. Latest Draft **attached**
2. These need to be agreed between Tenants groups, RoFTRA, RBH and the Council.
3. Tenants asked if the relevant stakeholders could perhaps get round a table then this could be discussed and an agreement reached. Apparently, Clint Street had spoken to Paul Beardmore, Head of Housing Strategy about this.
4. Andy responded that he had asked for this in the past but didn't get anywhere however; this is definitely a good idea.
5. Andy will set this up.

### **NEED TO ATTACH**

1. **List of attendees**
2. **Environmental Improvements & Quick Wins report.**
3. **Respect Agenda presentation.**
4. **Current Terms of Reference.**

**John Rodgers**  
**Tenant Participation Officer**