

MIDDLETON AREA PANEL

20th November 2007

Notes of Meeting

Attendance: Natalie Stokes (RBH), Debbie Hopwood (RBH), Ken Wilson (Middleton), Barbara Barningham, Roy Thompson (RBH). Andy Wadsworth

Apologies: Lois Tinker

Terms of Reference

Roy gave an update on the matter. The Board agreed that the Terms of Reference will be standard for every panel. Barbara queried what the differences between each were. The following response was given by Andy Wadsworth:

- Heywood will have open membership.
- Pennines will have fixed membership with 2 members from each TRA and one Councillor from each Ward.
- Rochdale will give non-tenants a say only on wider issues up a maximum number (less than the quorum).

The Terms of Reference will now be decided centrally by the RBH Board, RMBC and RoFTRA. Barbara asked that each Area Panel have an influence rather than one Term of Reference being centrally imposed. Bob queried whether Area Panels can pull out the differences and decide together just on the differences and compromise on them. It is recommended that one representative from each Panel should make the Terms of Reference decision. A suggestion was made that ex-Chairs of Panels could undertake this.

Training and Expenses

Expenses are payable for all meetings. Training needs of all Panel members both individually and as a group can be made available. Bob requested that a list of training be made available for Panel members to choose from. Barbara requested an Expenses Policy detailing to whom expenses will be available. Andy stated that for the first year all who attend Tenants and Residents meetings will be entitled to expenses payments in order to encourage attendance. This is in line with the standard Expenses Policy.

Debbie suggested using the RBH Conference Training Model. Natalie and Roy suggested drawing up Training Programmes for each Panel and

Induction training for all tenants new to the borough and Panel representatives.

Barbara reported that she had not received an invitation to attend or become a member of the RAMP group. It was also pointed out that Repairs Market Testing Group members need to have RAMP membership.

Action: Andy will ensure Barbara is added to the Membership Mailing List and that she receives an invitation to the next meeting.

Election of Tenant Chair

As the meeting was not quorate, election of a Tenant Chair was not undertaken.

Code of Conduct

Andy circulated a draft Code of Conduct. Debbie requested an amendment on Point 1 of the document. This was duly noted.

Additional Items – Open Forum

With regard to this it was reported that many non-RBH issues had been raised. Andy referred to the Terms of Reference and the following recommendations were made:

- In Township – the standard form to be completed should be directed to Township.
- Open Forum should be kept for issues to be raised. These should be referred to Township.
- A Standard Action Sheet should be completed and forwarded to Janet in Township (**Action:**? Natalie to draft).

Agenda Items for Future Meetings

This matter is to be open to all Panel representatives to influence. Items will need to be agreed with the Chair prior to the meeting.

Quick Wins

All Area Panels have some delegated responsibilities and each has the following budgets:

- One-off Tenant Participation Grants
- EDI Quick Win Budget. This is a rolling programme and consists of £625K per annum for all 4 areas.

It was suggested that responsibility for Quick Wins be delegated to Area Panels. If the Area Panel cannot make a decision on one-off Tenant Participation Grants or EDI budgets then in order to deliver “quick wins”, RBH

officers will take this decision in order to encourage attendance. The Environmental Improvements Quick Wins Budget cannot be under spent.

Debbie referred to the Environmental Improvement Schemes draft programme (attached). She had sent a letter detailing environmental improvement suggestions from TRA's. This will be considered for improvements up to £20K in costs.

Roy reported that he attends the Environmental Steering Group so that he can feedback at each Panel meeting the decisions made on EDI proposals put forward. Councillors also use estate inspections for officers to identify environmental proposals. Roy requested that an Environmental Steering Group representative from each area should visit each EDI proposal prior to these meetings. This would allow them to see the proposal first hand before making a decision.

Andy explained that EDI's are now part of the Quick Wins budget. Decision-making is therefore delegated to RBH and the Area Panels rather than the Environmental Steering Group.

Roy requested that extra information be provided for each EDI proposal to allow informed decisions to be made, eg number of tenants who will benefit. Debbie suggested that a standard EDI Report Template could be drafted so that all additional applicable information is included. In response to this Andy stated that RBH officers will identify and highlight any concerns if proposals are not felt to be of benefit to tenants.

Attendees agreed that the subject of EDI/Quick Wins money be a delegated decision for Area Panels.

One-off Tenant Participation Grant

The amount of the grant is £1288. A standard letter stating the amount of budget still available for spending by April is to be sent to all TRA's with the suggestion that relevant applications be made as soon as possible. It was agreed that a £500 one-off grant be made to Lonsdale Court. Further grants will not be made available next year unless the one-off Tenant Participation Grant is under spent.

Dates/Times/Locations of Future Meetings

Attendance: it was agreed that Natalie will speak to groups, explaining the purpose of the Area Panels and the importance of attending.

Locations: Hollin Sure Start, Hollin Primary School, Stannycliffe, Middleton Civic, Middleton Polytechnic. Venues will be rotated to encourage attendance.

Dates/Times: A provisional date of next meeting was agreed: Tuesday, 5th February 2008. This date and the venue are yet to be confirmed.

